Translanguaging as an Agentive, Collaborative and Socioculturally Responsive Pedagogy for Multilingual Learners

by

Shakina Rajendram

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
University of Toronto

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Abstract

The translanguaging turn in language education offers a new perspective on multilingualism by positing that multilingual learners have one linguistic repertoire rather than two or more autonomous language systems (García & Li Wei, 2014). When learners engage in translanguaging, they draw on all the features from their repertoire in a flexible and integrated way (Otheguy, García, & Reid, 2015). While many studies have advocated for the use of teacher-led pedagogical translanguaging, less research has documented the affordances of student-led collaborative translanguaging, and the factors that may constrain their use of translanguaging. My study is a step in this direction as it provides evidence of the potential of translanguaging as an intentional and agentive student-led collaborative pedagogy for multilingual learners. My research was a case study of two trilingual Grade 5 English language classes in a Malaysian elementary school – one class with an English-only policy, and one class without. Over 6 months, I recorded learners’ interactions as they worked in groups of 3-5 on collaborative learning activities. My data sources also included interviews with 55 learners and their two teachers, artefacts, field notes, and reflexive journal entries. Using sociocultural critical discourse analysis (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997; Mercer, 2004), I conducted qualitative and quantitative analyses of 100 30-minute to 1.5-hour long transcripts of learners’ interactions, and
conducted a thematic analysis (Nowell, Norris, White & Moules, 2017) of the interviews. The results revealed that learners in both classes used translanguaging agentively to fulfil 100 cognitive-conceptual, planning-organizational, affective-social and linguistic-discursive functions that supported their individual and collective learning. Even with an English-only policy in place, learners harnessed the affordances of translanguaging using multimodal resources such as symbols, images, videos, and gestures. However, their specific language choices and beliefs about language were influenced and at times constrained by the teacher’s language policies and practices, parental discourses about linguistic capital, and ethnic tensions in the country. My research positions translanguaging as collaborative and agentive, socioculturally situated and culturally responsive, and a resource for learning as well as a process of learning. As an outcome of this study, I provide recommendations for a collaborative translanguaging pedagogy approach.
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<td>Content and Language Integrated Learning</td>
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<td>EAL</td>
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<td>EFL</td>
<td>English as a Foreign Language</td>
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<td>EL</td>
<td>English Learner</td>
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<tr>
<td>ELL</td>
<td>English Language Learner</td>
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<td>EO</td>
<td>English-only</td>
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<td>ESL</td>
<td>English as a Second Language</td>
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<td>Intermental Development Zone</td>
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Study

Classrooms around the world are becoming more linguistically and culturally diverse as a result of global migration, the internationalization of education, and increased student mobility. In Canada, more than 200 languages other than English and French are spoken as a home language or ‘mother tongue’ (Statistics Canada, 2011). In Toronto schools, at least 115 languages are spoken by students from over 190 countries, the top five of these languages being Chinese, Tamil, Urdu, Bengali and Gujarati (Toronto District School Board, 2013). The rich diversity of these classrooms calls for pedagogical practices that draw on learners’ linguistic and cultural resources to support their learning. Substantial research has demonstrated the advantages of using multilingual strategies that allow learners to use their home languages to communicate with others, express their ideas, talk about themselves and engage in meaning-making, rather than silencing learners until they develop the capacity to do so in English (Wiley & García, 2016). By designing lessons that build on learners’ entire linguistic repertoire, teachers can facilitate the transfer of knowledge and language skills across languages, scaffold students’ learning of a new language, affirm their linguistic and cultural identities, and enhance their engagement in learning (e.g., Creese & Blackledge, 2015; Cummins, 2017; García & Li Wei, 2014; Karlsson, Larsson & Jakobsson, 2018; Stille, Bethke, Bradley-Brown, Giberson & Hall, 2016). Integrating learners’ home languages into the classroom also helps teachers to build a strong bridge between learners’ home and school language practices, thereby making learning more authentic and meaningful for them.

In response to the growing number of learners from newcomer families, the Ontario Ministry of Education has developed and implemented several programs over the past decade to build teacher capacity for supporting the needs of linguistically and culturally diverse English Language Learners (ELLs) in K-12 classrooms (Stille et al., 2016). Acknowledging the various positive outcomes of promoting the use of home languages in the classroom, the Ministry of Education exhorts all teachers to “tap the rich resource of knowledge and understandings that ELLs bring to school” by “continuing to promote the ongoing use and development of ELL’s first languages” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2008, p. 8-9). Educators, researchers,
policymakers and teacher educators in Ontario have initiated various projects that engage the multilingual repertoires of learners in the classroom, for example through identity texts, dual language books and multilingual word walls (Stille et al., 2016). Many of these multilingual strategies are based on the theory of translanguaging, which posits that multilingual learners can use all their language practices in a dynamic, flexible and functionally integrated way, shuttling between them to co-construct meaning, shape their experiences, and gain understanding and knowledge (Baker, 2011; Canagarajah, 2011a, 2011b; Lewis, Jones & Baker, 2012a, 2012b). A translanguaging pedagogy involves teachers integrating the diverse language practices of students in the classroom to create more equitable learning opportunities (García & Li Wei, 2014).

Although translanguaging has been discussed widely in the literature on language learning in the past few years, García and Li Wei (2014) argue that it is rare to find schooling contexts where translanguaging is used as a legitimate pedagogical practice. In most educational contexts, separating languages by subject or topic is still the dominant form of teaching. For example, in the United States in Two-Way Immersion and Dual Language programs aiming to build biliteracy, the two languages of instruction are used separately on alternate days, half-days, or during different lessons (Howard et al., 2018; Lewis, Jones & Baker, 2012a). Similarly, in complementary schools in the United Kingdom which aim to develop literacy in the heritage language, there is usually a One Language Only or One Language at a Time policy (Li Wei & Wu, 2009). This compartmentalization of languages is usually premised upon the beliefs that: (i) maximizing exposure to the majority language will help learners acquire it more easily; (ii) carving out a protected time for the heritage language will help to build more fluency and confidence in it; and (iii) teaching the two languages separately will avoid inefficiencies in translation and prevent confusion among learners (Lewis, Jones & Baker, 2012a). The regulation of learners’ bilingualism through the designation of languages for different purposes is what Lippi-Green (1997) calls separate-but-equal language policies, where learners’ home languages are not denied but rather redirected to situations and environments in which they are deemed most appropriate. Mackinney (2016) asserts that although these policies acknowledge learners’ home languages, they still undermine learners’ complete linguistic repertoire.

In many English as a Second Language (ESL), English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and English as an Additional Language (EAL) classrooms, home languages are kept out of
instruction altogether through official or unofficial English-only policies. Some meso-level policies explicitly require teachers to separate languages at all times (Spolsky, 2004), and some macro-level influences create contexts where ESL courses are always presumed to be English-only (Carroll & Sambolín Morales, 2016). In order to ensure that teachers only teach through English, the hiring practices in many ESL, EFL and EAL contexts, especially in the Global South, privilege “native English speakers” over local teachers regardless of their teaching qualifications (e.g., Gómez-Vásquez, Nieto, 2018; Jeon & Lee, 2006; Ruecker & Ives, 2015). Teachers who teach monolingually in English are often positioned as the ‘gold standard’ and yardstick of teaching competence, and those who mix languages are seen as deficient or inadequate in their language and teaching expertise (Carroll & Sambolin Morales, 2016; Galloway, 2013). The implication of this is that although in theory, translanguaging is advocated as an effective pedagogical practice for multilingual second language learners, in practice, monoglossic and monolingual ideologies still permeate the field of English language teaching (Stille et al., 2016).

Although monolingual policies and practices are prevalent in many educational contexts, Canagarajah (2011a) argues that translanguaging cannot be completely restrained because it is a naturally occurring phenomenon for multilingual learners. Describing the translanguaging practice of bilingual Chinese children, Li Wei and Wu (2009) write that it is “the most distinctive behaviour of the bilingual speaker; there is no better behavioural indicator to show that a speaker is bilingual than when s/he is using two languages simultaneously in social interaction” (p. 193). There is an abundance of evidence to show that in classrooms where there are multilingual learners, learners move between their languages naturally (García & Li Wei, 2014). In the majority of studies on translanguaging in school contexts, Canagarajah (2011a) found that acts of translanguaging occur with minimal pedagogical effort from the teacher. Even in classrooms with English-only policies, learners were found to still use translanguaging behind the backs of their teachers. Although the natural and spontaneous translanguaging of multilingual learners in English-only contexts may be of pedagogical value in their language learning, it has been “rarely institutionally endorsed” (Creese & Blackledge, 2010, p. 105) and remains under-researched as a legitimate learning strategy. In addition, translanguaging research has tended to focus on bilingual learners or bilingual contexts, with inadequate attention paid to the natural translanguaging practices of learners in trilingual contexts (Shank Lauwo, 2018). This study aims
to address this gap in the research by documenting the pedagogical affordances of collaborative peer-to-peer translinguaging in a unique trilingual educational context.

Research Questions

This research explores the affordances of translinguaging during collaborative language learning among trilingual students in two Grade 5 English classrooms in Malaysia. I draw on van Lier’s (2004) concept of affordances which refers to “what is available to the person to do something with” (p. 91). From this perspective, “learning arises from, and is mediated through, various types of affordances, or a myriad of opportunities for meaningful action and interaction offered to an engaged participant” (da Silva Iddings, 2018, p. 509). Van Lier’s concept of affordances also relates actions to social context, and learners’ actions are believed to be “mediated by social, interactional, cultural, institutional and other contextual factors” (van Lier, 2008, p. 171). In my study, I see collaborative learning as a social context that provides opportunities for learners to engage in translinguaging through peer interactions. I propose that within the social context of the collaborative small groups and the broader context of the classroom, there are factors that can enable or constrain the affordances of translinguaging. Thus, my study aims to answer the following research questions:

(1) What are the affordances of translinguaging in collaborative learning among multilingual learners in two Grade 5 English language classrooms in Malaysia? (Chapter 5)

(2) What are learners’ reasons for translinguaging during their collaborative peer interactions, and the factors influencing their use of translinguaging? (Chapter 6)

Background of the Study

This study took place in Malaysia, where 137 languages and dialects are spoken by a multicultural population made up of Malays, Chinese, Indians, Indigenous peoples and immigrants from countries such as Indonesia, Philippines, India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Thailand, Vietnam, Myanmar, Cambodia and China (World Atlas, 2018). Most Malaysians are
multilingual and speak Malay, English, and their home language or dialect. In the two classrooms where this research was conducted, the teachers and learners are trilingual and speak Tamil as their home language, and Malay and English. Despite the rich linguistic diversity of the Malaysian population and the widespread use and presence of translanguaging in the environment, in schools, languages are compartmentalized and taught as separate subjects. Nevertheless, studies have found that although languages such as English, Malay, Tamil and Mandarin are taught as separate subjects in Malaysian schools, translanguaging is a common practice among Malaysian teachers and is used for purposes such as classroom management, clarifying the meaning of lexical items or concepts, explaining grammatical structures, and ensuring learners’ understanding of the content (e.g., Ahmad, 2009; Lee, 2010b; Low, 2016; Martin, 2005; Selamat, 2014). However, English teachers who use translanguaging or allow their students to do so report feeling guilty and ashamed because of the negative perceptions in Malaysia towards English teachers who do not teach only in English (Selamat, 2014).

Although there is no official policy that either prescribes or proscribes the use of translanguaging in the English language classroom in Malaysia, several policy changes and programs over the years have put immense pressure on English teachers to teach monolingually. For example, in 2003, the English for Teaching Mathematics and Science (ETeMS) policy which changed the official medium of instruction for Mathematics and Science from Malay to English required all Mathematics and Science teachers to start teaching their subjects only in English. This placed a very high expectation on English teachers to improve the English language outcomes of their learners (Rashid, Abdul Rahman, Yunus, 2016). In 2012, the ETeMS policy was replaced by the Upholding the Malay Language and Strengthening Command of English (MBMMBI) policy. The MBMMBI policy has reverted the medium of instruction back to Malay in national schools and Mandarin and Tamil in national-type schools (schools that use a ‘vernacular language’ as the medium of instruction).

However, in the name of strengthening teachers’ and learners’ command of English, all teachers are now required to take the Cambridge Proficiency Test (CPT). Teachers’ performance in the CPT is measured against the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), and they are required to attain a C1 or C2 band which represents a ‘proficient user’ (Council of Europe, 2018a). The rationale given by the Ministry of Education for this requirement is that they needed to “stick to Britain’s standards of teaching the language in order to enhance the
quality of teaching English in Malaysia” and a C1 or C2 band in the CPT would be “equivalent to the requirements for their [English teachers’] teaching counterparts in Britain” (Rajaendram, 2015). After a study in 2012 found that two-thirds of the 70,000 English teachers in Malaysia had “failed to reach a proficient English level” as determined by their CPT results (Jalleh, 2012), the Ministry of Education launched several ‘upskilling’ and ‘upgrading’ initiatives to ensure that all English teachers would “achieve a level of fluency in the language to match those of native speakers by 2020” (The Sun Daily, 2016). One of these initiatives is the Native Speaker Programme which has brought in over 360 “native English speakers” from the United States, Britain, Australia, New Zealand and other Western English-speaking countries to train local English teachers and improve their English proficiency (The Star, 2015).

The belief that the “native English speaker” is the benchmark for English proficiency in Malaysia has its roots in its colonial history. As Ricento (2006) writes, the language policies and practices in post-colonial sociolinguistic contexts have continued to serve the interests of the former language of colonization instead of the languages and rights of the local and indigenous peoples. During British colonial rule in Malaysia from the 1700s up to 1957, the hegemony of the colonizing state was maintained through raciolinguistic ideologies (Rosa & Flores, 2017) which positioned English as superior to racialized local languages. English served as the language of government, commerce, education, and the media, and proficiency in English symbolized socioeconomic mobility, power and prestige (Low & Ao, 2018). Although Malay was chosen as the official language to signify a new national and cultural identity when Malaysia attained independence from the British in 1957 (Gill, 2014), the ‘colonial habitus’ (Rassool, 2007, p. 16) has continued to influence the practices of many educators who believe that English-only instruction is better than multilingual instruction.

**Significance of the Study**

This study will contribute to the field of second language learning both in terms of pedagogy and research. My study will also offer significant pedagogical implications for ESL, EFL and EAL teachers in Malaysia who may be resistant towards the use of languages other than English in their classrooms. I believe that the results of my study will help teachers to recognize the pedagogical value of translanguaging and suggest how they can plan and facilitate activities
that create opportunities for learners to leverage the full affordances of translanguaging. This is significant not only for teachers in the Malaysian context but also other educational contexts such as Canada where there are English Learners (ELs) from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds in mainstream classrooms. As Canadian classrooms continue to grow in diversity as a result of global migration, it may be challenging for teachers to know all the home languages of their learners or plan lessons that incorporate all these languages. Nonetheless, the linguistic diversity of the classroom does not need to be a barrier to successful learning. Teachers can make the most of this diversity by setting up project-based instruction and collaborative groupings so that learners with the same home languages can maximize translanguaging to support each other’s learning (García & Li Wei, 2014). My research will provide evidence of the various pedagogical benefits of using a collaborative translanguaging approach in the classroom.

Most of the research on translanguaging to date has focused on the benefits of teacher-directed translanguaging, and has been “conducted in a product-oriented manner, leaving processes out of consideration” (Canagarajah, 2011a, p. 5). My study makes an important contribution to this body of research by adopting a process approach and documenting the learning that occurs throughout the collaborative process by which learners interact and engage with each other using their shared languages. In doing this, my research positions translanguaging as a shared social practice, and demonstrates its potential as an intentional and agentive student-led collaborative pedagogy for multilingual ELs. Garza and Langman (2014) assert that more scholarly research should also study the student-led translanguaging practices of students from a sociocultural perspective, paying close attention to the social and cultural environments in which students are situated. There is particularly a need for more research on the educational affordances of student-led translanguaging in post-colonial Asian contexts, where monolingual ideologies and English-only policies are dominant despite the multilingualism of its classrooms (Martin, 2005) At the time of this research, there were only two other studies on translanguaging in Malaysia, one focusing on how translanguaging could be a more pragmatic approach to building proficiency in English in a dual-language program (Norhayu & Shuki, n.d.) and another exploring the translanguaging practices and identity construction of young adults in digital media (Lee & Si, 2019). My study addresses this gap in the research on translanguaging by studying the student-led translanguaging practices of multilingual ELs in Malaysia, showcasing how their discursive practices are situated within a unique political, linguistic and
sociocultural landscape. The method and data sources that I employ in my research allow me to describe students’ use of translanguaging, interpret the reasons for their translanguaging, and explain through their own examples the complex relationship between their language, culture, race, and identity.

Structure of the Dissertation

There are seven chapters in this dissertation. In Chapter 1 (Introduction), I provide the background information of this research, and describe the purpose and research questions guiding my work. I also explain the significance of this study and the contributions it makes to second language learning pedagogy and research.

In Chapter 2 (Literature Review), I introduce the concept of collaborative learning and elaborate on its main characteristics and components. I also discuss the benefits of using a collaborative learning approach in the classroom with reference to examples and evidence from research. In the following part of the chapter, I review the literature on the role of learners’ first language (L1) in second language (L2) learning, the linguistic, cognitive, social and affective benefits of L1 use in the second language classroom.

In Chapter 3 (Theoretical Framework), I discuss how translanguaging theory has changed the way that the L1 and L2 are viewed. I elaborate on the theoretical underpinnings of translanguaging, and review the recent literature on the role and affordances of translanguaging for learning. Following this, I explain the principles of sociocultural theory, and describe the key sociocultural concepts informing my study: Zone of Proximal Development, scaffolding, collective scaffolding, exploratory talk, and affordances. I conclude this chapter by discussing the intersections between translanguaging and sociocultural theory, and presenting my conceptual framework which ties together translanguaging and sociocultural theory in the context of collaborative learning.

In Chapter 4 (Methodology), I outline the case study approach and interpretative sociocultural critical discourse analysis method that I used in this research. I provide more contextual information about my research site and the participants in my study, and explain my data collection and analysis procedures. To conclude, I address the limitations of using a case study approach and outline the ways that I established the trustworthiness of the study.
In Chapter 5 (Findings: Affordances of Translanguaging in Collaborative Language Learning), I present the results of the discourse analysis and report the findings related to my first research question. In Chapter 6 (Findings: Reasons and Factors Influencing Learners’ Use of Translanguaging in the Classroom), I draw on the findings from the student and teacher interviews and classroom observations to answer the second research question.

In Chapter 7 (Discussion, Implications and Future Directions), I present three major themes related to translanguaging with reference to the findings from Chapter 5 and Chapter 6. I then discuss the implications and recommendations arising from my study, and I propose a collaborative translanguaging pedagogy approach. Finally, I discuss the limitations of the study and suggest future directions for research.
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter begins with a review of the literature and research on collaborative learning, discussing the unique characteristics and components of collaborative learning, conditions for effective collaboration between learners, and the benefits of collaborative learning approaches. Following this, I review the literature on the role of learners’ L1 in second language (L2) learning, and the linguistic, cognitive, social and affective benefits of L1 use for L2 learners, and I identify areas in the literature that warrant further research.

Collaborative Learning

The Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013-2025, which serves as a roadmap for the systemic transformation of English language education in Malaysia, recognizes the importance of collaborative learning for the 21st century classroom. To help students develop 21st century skills and competencies such as critical thinking, creativity, communication, and decision-making, the Blueprint recommends the implementation of pedagogical models such as collaborative problem solving and collaborative inquiry projects (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2015). Collaborative learning was first proposed in North America in the 1970s as an instructional method for classroom teaching (Lin, 2015). Gokhale (1995) defines collaborative learning as “an instructional method in which students at various performance levels work together in small groups toward a common goal” (p. 22). Extending this definition, Lin explains collaborative learning as a formal group of students “working together on specific collaborative learning tasks… to mutually construct and maintain a shared conception of knowledge” (p. 17). As suggested in Lin’s definition, the collaborative learning approach is based on the idea that knowledge is constructed collectively when students actively interact with each other in group settings. This approach is rooted in Vygotskian sociocultural theory (SCT) which views learning as an inherently social process, mediated by social interactions and relationships (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006; Vygotsky, 1978, 1986). A fundamental idea in SCT is that learning is embedded within social events and occurs through learners’ interactions with the people, objects and events in the environment (Vygotsky, 1986). As Vygotsky (1978) posited:
Every function in the child’s cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first, between people (interpsychological) and then inside the child (intrapsychological)… All the higher functions originate as actual relationships between individuals. (p. 57)

According to Panitz (1999), collaborative learning is not just an instructional technique but a “philosophy of interaction…which respects and highlights group members’ abilities and contributions. There is a sharing of authority and acceptance of responsibility among group members for their group actions” (p. 4). For Mercer (1996, 2010), it is not sufficient for students just to share their knowledge; rather, knowledge construction during collaborative learning must be collectively built on all group members’ thoughts and ideas. This model of learning is rooted in the belief that students already have the necessary skills to work together, and that when given the opportunity, they will build on their existing skills to achieve their goals (Matthews, Cooper, Davidson & Hawkes, 1995). Panitz (1999) posits that when students work together by building on their collective skills, their interactions lead to a greater understanding than would have occurred if they had worked independently of each other. Similarly, Hämäläinen and Vähäsantanen (2011) explain that in collaborative learning:

…group learning takes place by distributing participants’ own thoughts and expertise, by listening to and elaborating on the views of the others and by the creative and shared knowledge construction of different thoughts and conclusions to reach common goals. In other words, the aim is that, in addition to the individual learning goals in successful collaborative learning, group members negotiate and adopt new, shared goals; shared goals may in turn lead to a broader shared understanding (p. 173)

From a Vygotskian sociocultural perspective, the processes described above are mediated by the social context in which the collaboration occurs. The interactions that take place between students, and the process of collective knowledge construction that occurs during collaborative learning reflect the social and cultural practices of the communities in which educational institutions are situated (Hämäläinen & Vähäsantanen, 2011; Rojas-Drummond et al., 2013; Stahl, 2004).
Differences Between Collaborative and Cooperative Learning

Since its introduction in the 1970s, collaborative learning has been used as an umbrella term to refer to specialized forms of group learning such as cooperative learning. However, collaboration researchers such as Dillenbourg, Baker, Blaye and O’Malley (1996) and Oxford (1997) assert that collaboration and cooperation are two separate communicative strands in language classrooms. Oxford (1997) explains that cooperative learning is typically more structured, prescriptive, and targeted. In cooperative learning, a task is divided into subtasks and distributed among the participants in the group, and when each student has completed the portion of the task that they are responsible for, the subtasks are merged into a joint output (Qin, Johnson & Johnson, 1995). Cooperative learning activities are typically teacher-structured, as each student is assigned a specific role and task by the teacher, and the activities usually follow a structure or a prescribed series of steps. The teacher assesses the final presentation or product, which is usually content-specific. In contrast, collaborative learning is group-structured rather than teacher-structured, as students are responsible for organizing and dividing the work among themselves, and they assess their own individual and group performance. Thus, the responsibility for learning is shifted away from the teacher as expert to the student as expert (Panitz, 1999).

According to Tolmie et al. (2010), the variation between collaborative and cooperative learning stem from their differing theoretical backgrounds. Cooperative learning has its origin in social psychological work on teams, and it focuses on creating structured conditions that are conducive to teamwork. Meanwhile, collaborative learning, particularly the kind that relates to younger students, originates in socio-cognitive research on learning that focuses on how conflict, differences, and negotiation can lead to conceptual change. Despite these differences, researchers such as Lin (2015) and Panitz (1999) argue against treating collaborative and cooperative learning as two dichotomous instructional models, as elements of cooperative learning can be used in collaborative learning activities. Panitz (1999) provides the example of jigsaw activities (Aronson & Bridgeman, 1979), where there are prescribed steps, but students assume independence and responsibility over their learning by becoming “experts” on a concept assigned to them and teaching it to their group members. Another example provided by both Lin and Panitz is the Think-Pair-Share activity, where students consider a topic individually, and then
discuss and negotiate the topic with a partner to reach consensus, and then share the results of their discussion with other peers and eventually the whole class.

**Characteristics and Components of Collaborative Learning**

Drawing from Zhang’s (2010) comparison between collaborative language learning and traditional language teaching methods in China, Lin (2015) describes the characteristics of collaborative learning as shown in Table 1 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Collaborative learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goal structure</td>
<td>Collaborative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner’s roles</td>
<td>Active participators, autonomous learner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher’s roles</td>
<td>Facilitator and guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials</td>
<td>Materials are organized according to the goals of the lesson. Usually, each group shares one complete set of the materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Types of activities</td>
<td>Various types of group work to engage students in a shared learning community. Activities involve processes such as sharing information and negotiating meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction</td>
<td>Intense student-student interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom physical arrangement</td>
<td>U-shaped or collaborative small groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher-student relationship</td>
<td>Collaborative and equal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student expectations</td>
<td>All members in a group should contribute to the success of the task</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning expectations</td>
<td>Group as well as individual progress</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Adapted from Zhang (2010, p. 82) and Lin (2015, p. 15)

Elaborating on some of the characteristics of collaborative learning described above, Lin (2015) proposes that the four main components of collaborative learning are (1) simultaneous interaction, (2) positive interdependence, (3) individual accountability, and (4) equal participation. In traditional classrooms, the teacher typically does most of the talking, and students speak one at a time in response to the teacher. In contrast, in classrooms where collaborative learning is practised, there is more active participation by students as they interact
simultaneously with each other. The aim of collaborative learning is for group members to engage not in individual tasks, but in interdependent group interactions and processes (Hämäläinen & Vähäsantanen, 2011). Thus, positive interdependence is evoked when students work together and rely on each other to arrive at a shared understanding of a problem and accomplish their shared goals. Furthermore, collaborative learning also encourages individual accountability because every student in the group is responsible for making an active contribution to the group effort. This is why ensuring that every student has an equal opportunity to participate in the collaborative process is considered an important element of successful collaborative learning. When there is positive dependency as well as individual accountability during learning, the group is able to create something that exceeds what any individual student could have achieved alone (Stahl, 2004; Vass & Littleton, 2009).

Dillenbourg (2002) and Hämäläinen and Vähäsantanen (2011) warn that a collaborative activity in itself does not automatically lead to high quality learning. There are various difficulties involved in ensuring that collaborative learning is successful for all participants in a group. These challenges include ensuring that the tasks do not cause confusion for students, students do not spend too much time off-task, arguments and conflict do not go unresolved, and students do not dominate and marginalize other students in the group (Schmitz & Winskel, 2008). Moreover, in a heterogeneous classroom where there are students of mixed abilities and personalities, it can be a challenge to create groupings that benefit all students. Some studies suggest that not all students participate equally in collaborative learning activities (Celik, Aytin & Bayram, 2013), and that low-intermediate students may not benefit from collaborative discussions to the same extent that high-proficiency students do (Shehadeh, 2011).

According to Etelapelto and Lahti (2008), successful collaborative learning also requires the creation of an emotionally safe atmosphere where differences are addressed critically and respectfully. Social and emotional components such as social behaviour and motivation are also factors that play a role in determining how successful a collaborative learning activity is (Hämäläinen & Häkkinen, 2010). Apart from a positive attitude towards collaboration, Williams and Sheridan (2010) explain that the main conditions for effective collaborative learning are the organization of the learning environment, and an understanding of the meaning of learning. In relation to the learning environment, students need to be given the opportunity to collaborate within an open and permissive climate where the focus is not on individual competence but on
the collective knowledge of the group. In relation to gaining an understanding of the meaning of learning, students need to become aware of their own competences and their ability to share their knowledge with their group.

Summarizing a wide body of research on successful collaborative learning groups, Hämäläinen and Vähäsantanen (2011, p. 173) explain that students’ learning during a collaborative activity depends on whether the group is able to build new knowledge and improve their shared understanding through their interactions. They posit that effective collaborative learning is usually characterized by:

(a) *shared learning processes* such as shared knowledge building (Arvaja, Salovaara, Häkkinen & Järvelä, 2008; Hong & Lin, 2018; Scardamalia & Bereiter, 2006), joint creation of understanding (Barron, 2003; Littleton & Whitelock, 2005; Puntambekar & Young 2003), conceptual knowledge construction (Kränge & Ludvigsen, 2008), intersubjective learning (Suthers, 2005), and developing group cognition (Stahl, 2006)

(b) *shared learning activities* such as negotiation of shared meaning (Miell & Littleton, 2004), coordination (Barron, 2000), elaboration and co-elaboration (Baker, 2003), explanation (Sandoval, 2003), argumentation (Andriessen, 2006; Leitão, 2000; Marttunen, Laurinen, Litosseliti & Lund, 2005), questioning (Chin, 2002), problem-solving (Barron, 2003), reasoning (Mercer, Dawes, Wegerif, & Sams, 2004), synthesizing multiple perspectives (Bielaczyc & Collins, 2006), evaluating other group members’ ideas and thoughts (Arvaja, 2007), and giving and receiving constructive criticism (Sawyer, 2007)

**Affordances of Collaborative Learning**

Collaborative learning has been found to have many positive affordances for students. Firstly, collaborative learning encourages students to take a more active role in their own learning, representing a shift from teacher-centred to student-centred learning. Stagg Peterson and Rajendram’s (2019) study of peer interactions during collaborative writing and writing-mediated play in 10 Canadian primary classrooms found that collaborative activities created spaces for learners to become actively involved in constructing meaning without feeling constrained by the fear of making mistakes. Similarly, McKehan and Ellis’ (2012) study of 63 primary school teachers in Scotland reported that using a collaborative approach enabled their
students to develop autonomy and become more independent learners. The teachers in this study used the Critical Skills pedagogy which aimed at developing collaborative learning communities in the classroom through experiential, problem-based learning. As an outcome of using this collaborative approach, the teachers reported that their students “know what they’re trying to achieve and they just go ahead and do it. It gives them ownership of their own learning” (McKechan & Ellis, 2012, p. 480). Other reported benefits of the CS collaborative approach included increasing student engagement in lessons, improving subject knowledge, and enhancing interpersonal and social skills.

The potential of collaborative learning for improving students’ social skills has been documented by various studies. Investigating the social effects of collaborative learning among 575 9-12-year-old students in urban and rural schools in Scotland, Tolmie et al. (2010) found that collaborative approaches lead to improvements in students’ social skills and group relations. Similarly, Stahl, Koschman and Suthers (2006) and Tinto and Pusser (2006) found that through group work, students learn to work together as part of a community in which the value of learning is not the individual accumulation of knowledge, but rather on supporting each other academically as well as socially. Reporting on collaborative learning in the Malaysian context, Seng (2006) writes that students enjoy collaborative learning activities because they allow them to work with their peers in small groups in a more communicative and enjoyable learning environment. Although a few studies (e.g., Roschelle & Teasley, 1995; Shachar & Fischer, 2004) have reported that students feel temporary hostility towards a partner or disengagement from the group when they encounter a breakdown in communication, Azmitia (2000) and Tolmie et al. (2010) argue based on their review of research on collaborative learning that it is relatively unusual for there to be negative social outcomes of collaborative work. On the contrary, the collaborative interactions among learners provide a safe space for them to practise and develop their social interaction skills, as reported in Tolmie et al.’s (2010). Tolmie et al. also found that the social gains in collaborative learning were a positive predictor of cognitive gains, in terms of students’ measures of understanding of scientific concepts. Similarly, Khairiyah (2012) and NoorAileen et al. (2015) discovered in their respective studies conducted in Malaysian universities that collaborative learning approaches created a more conducive and positive social environment for students, while improving their academic outcomes. The findings of all these studies suggest that collaborative group work has a dual social and cognitive impact on students.
The conclusions of Tolmie et al.’s research are consistent with the results of an experimental study by Gallardo-Virgen and DeVillar (2011) on 4th grade students in Mexico. In this study, students in the control group worked individually on a computer-integrated natural science unit, while students in the experimental group worked in collaborative dyads on the unit using variations of the Jigsaw II method and Take protocol for turn-taking. The results of the study demonstrated that students in the experimental collaborative groupings showed statistically greater academic gains in a written test on the subject matter than students who worked individually on their computers. Mercier and Higgins’ (2013) study, which also utilized technology-assisted collaborative learning, similarly found that the collaborative approach led to greater mastery of the content area. In their research on collaborative learning using multi-touch technology among upper primary school students in England, Mercier and Higgins found that having the opportunity to collaborate to complete activities fostered deeper engagement with the content, and led to more flexibility and adaptive expertise among students. Through their collaborative interactions, the students came to recognize how they could use their existing knowledge in a flexible way to solve problems, rather than needing to be taught novel content. This supports the research of Lin (2015) who suggests that during collaborative learning activities, students learn to work actively with their peers to create new ideas or reorganize existing ones by integrating what they already know. Lin also proposes that collaborative learning activities require students to exercise their critical thinking, reasoning, and problem-solving skills, and in so doing, develop these skills in students. The research of Barkley, Cross and Major (2005) and Brijlall (2008) on collaborative learning in high school and college confirms that students who work collaboratively share information and guide each other in a way that helps them solve problem-solving tasks more accurately and effectively.

**Affordances of collaborative learning for language learning.** There is a burgeoning body of research focusing on the potential of collaborative learning to help students master academic subject matter and develop problem-solving skills in the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) disciplines (e.g., Baines, Blatchford & Chowne, 2007; Bouta & Retalis, 2013; Hong, Yu & Chen, 2011; Kershner, Mercer, Warwick & Staarman, 2010; Sung & Hwang, 2013). Although there has been comparatively less research on the benefits of collaborative learning in the language classroom, several studies have found it to be effective for language learning (e.g., Aminloo, 2013; Ammar & Hassan, 2018; Di Nitto, 2000; Lin, 2015;
Zhang, 2010). The results of a study examining the effects of collaborative strategic reading among Grade 7 and 8 language arts students in Texas found that students who applied reading comprehension strategies in collaborative groups outperformed other students on a reading comprehension test (Vaughn et al., 2011). The collaborative discussions between L2 learners has also been found to improve not only their language comprehension (reading and listening) but also their language production (speaking and writing). In a study involving 5th grade Spanish-speaking English language learners in Chicago, teachers engaged their students in Collaborative Reasoning activities over the period of four weeks (Zhang, Anderson & Nguyen-Jahiel, 2013). Students discussed topics such as friendship, fairness, justice, and ethnic/racial identity in small groups using strategies such as prompting, thinking out loud, asking for clarification, challenging, encouraging, and summing up. Students then completed post-tests assessing their English listening, speaking, reading and writing skills, and surveys of students’ engagement in discussions, motivation and attitudes towards learning English. Results of the tests indicated that students who participated in the collaborative activities performed better than students in the control group in all four language skills. In addition, students’ collaboration improved their interest and engagement in discussions, and their attitudes towards language learning.

In Aminloo’s (2013) experimental study on the effect of collaborative writing on Turkish English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners’ writing ability, students in the treatment group worked together on different stages of the writing process such as brainstorming, drafting and editing while students in the control group worked on the same stages individually. The results of the post-test showed that students who wrote collaboratively scored half a band higher on the writing score rubric than students who wrote individually. In another experimental study of 79 learners of L2 French in Montreal, students in the experimental group who engaged in collaborative dialogue during grammar activities significantly outperformed students in the comparison group in terms of their grammatical morphology development and proficiency level (Ammar & Hassan, 2018). Interestingly, although Ammar and Hassan hypothesized at the onset of their study that students with higher proficiency levels would benefit from the collaborative dialogue approach more than their peers with lower proficiency levels, their results proved that both high- and low- proficiency students benefitted equally from the collaboration. This parallels the results of other research by Wilkinson (2009) which suggests that collaborative dialogue is an effective approach for all L2 learners, regardless of proficiency level. Reflecting on their
findings, Ammar and Hassan (2018) state that what made it possible for students of all proficiency levels to benefit linguistically from the collaboration was the collective scaffold (Donato, 1994) that was built through students’ collaborative dialogue. The collective scaffolding that students provided each other during their dialogue assisted them in moving through their Zone of Proximal Development (Vygotsky, 1978), and this became an important factor in the development of their L2 (Van Lier, 2004).

**Peer scaffolding and collaborative language learning.** Peer scaffolding is one of the most active strands of sociocultural (Vygotsky, 1978) research in collaborative L2 learning (Mitchell & Myles, 2004). In a number of studies on scaffolding in collaborative English as a Second Language (ESL) writing, Storch (2002, 2005, 2007) found evidence of improvement in L2 writers as a result of group scaffolding. Storch’s research revealed that learners who engaged in peer-scaffolded collaborative interactions produced better texts in terms of complexity, grammatical accuracy and task completion in comparison with learners who worked individually. In addition, a transfer of knowledge occurred as group members collectively co-constructed knowledge about language. Investigating the nature of Taiwanese and Chinese tertiary students’ interactions in a wiki-based collaborative writing project, Chao and Lo (2011) and Li and Zhu (2013) found that learners scaffolded each other’s learning by making joint efforts to conduct the group work and engaging actively with the contributions of their group members. In a similar study exploring the benefits of a wiki-based collaborative writing project undertaken by Malaysian ESL student teachers, Cullen, Kullman and Wild (2013) found that students’ interactions involved “planning talk” to make collective decisions about the linguistic content and structure of their writing, and “social talk” to establish group cohesion and “positive interdependence” within the group (pp. 428-429). Chao and Lo’s (2011) and Li and Zhu’s (2013) studies also both found that peer scaffolding resulted in reduced anxiety and more positive perceptions towards the collaborative writing environment. This finding is consistent with earlier work on collaborative learning (e.g., Crandall, 1999; Jiang, 2009; Long & Porter, 1985) suggesting that collaborative approaches can reduce learners’ language anxiety, build their self-confidence, and create more positive attitudes towards language learning. As Long and Porter (1985) stated, collaborative activities release students from the “requirement for accuracy at all costs” and allows “entry into the richer and more accommodating set of relationships in small
group interaction, in which a more comfortable and safe environment can be therefore created” (p. 212).

Researchers such as Shehadeh (2011) and Nguyen (2013) have suggested that peer scaffolding during collaborative L2 learning enhances not only students’ writing competence but also other language skills such as their oral communication. Garbati and Mady (2015)’s review of research on L2 oral skill development suggests that peer scaffolding within collaborative groups is one of the most effective strategies to improve students’ L2 oral language. Nguyen’s (2013) study on university EFL students provided evidence of the potential of collaborative learning activities in developing L2 learners’ oral language skills. Nguyen found that the feedback learners gave each other during their group interactions helped them to improve their pronunciation and speaking pace during their class presentations, and supported them in answering the audience’s questions during these presentations. However, Nguyen’s research did not examine whether and how learner collaboration could develop other aspects of learners’ L2 oral language ability, for example, the social and communicative functions of their L2 oral language. Considering the importance of oral language to language acquisition, it is important for research to document how learners can collectively scaffold each other’s learning through their spoken interactions during collaborative learning activities.

Johnson (1995) writes that while the more structural aspect of language lends itself to formal teacher-student interaction, the social and communicative aspects of oral language are usually acquired through more informal interactions with peers. As Brown (1994) states, “the best way to learn to interact is through interaction itself” (p. 159). Since student-student interaction is usually less structured and more spontaneous than teacher-student interaction, it can increase the opportunities for students to explore and use language for a greater variety of communicative purposes. In support of this idea, Johnson (1995) provides the example of interactions between learners in an EFL conversational class in the Czech Republic and an ESL listening and speaking class in the United States. In both classes, Johnson found that collaborative interactions created optimal conditions for L2 oral language development because learners participated in a variety of language functions such as asking for and/or providing clarification, requesting information, stating and supporting opinions, agreeing and disagreeing, and giving compliments. The functions performed by the students in Johnson’s (1995) study are similar to the interactional, personal, representational and heuristic categories proposed by
Halliday (1969, 1975) in his taxonomy of language functions. Halliday posited that through their interactions with each other, children learn how to use language to make meaning and accomplish a wide range of functions (e.g., instrumental, regulatory, interactional, personal, heuristic, imaginative, representational).

While studies such as Ambrosio, Binalet, Ferrer and Yang’s (2015) analysis of children’s classroom discourse have examined how students perform these types of functions during their interactions with each other, a gap in research that warrants further investigation is how these functions can scaffold and assist collaborative L2 learning. Additionally, although research has documented the educational benefits of collaborative L2 learning, relatively fewer studies have focused on the language used to collaborate (Knight & Mercer, 2015), let alone on how multilingual learners use their home languages to collaborate (Martin-Beltrán, Daniel, Peercy & Silverman, 2017). Given the linguistic and cultural diversity of many classrooms today, it is important to understand how multilingual L2 learners draw on their L1 during their spoken interactions to collaborate in a way that collectively scaffolds their learning.

**Role of Learners’ L1 in L2 Learning**

The role of the L1 in language learning is a highly debated topic which can be traced all the way back to the introduction of the grammar-translation method in the early 1500s, where the recourse to students’ mother tongue was considered necessary for language teaching (Richards & Rodgers, 2003). However, with the development of language teaching methods such as the natural approach and communicative language teaching in the late 1970s and early 1980s, L1 use began to be viewed as counterproductive and detrimental to students’ learning (Moore, 2013). Advocates of these approaches based their arguments against L1 use on Krashen’s (1985) input hypothesis which maintained that the greater the exposure to the L2, the greater learning would be. Therefore, L1 use was seen to limit students’ practice and impede their acquisition of the L2. Mainstream second language acquisition (SLA) theories also suggested that the influence of the L1 could have a negative effect on L2 communication, especially in classrooms where learners shared the same L1 (Lee & Macaro, 2013). SLA researchers suggested that because learners with a shared L1 had comparable representations of the L2 system, they usually understood each other when using interlanguaging patterns influenced by their L1 (Ammar, Lightbown & Spada, 2010). As a result, they unknowingly reinforced each other’s erroneous L2 forms by providing
input containing those forms in their interactions with each other. Such interactions were argued to inhibit the critical ‘negotiation for meaning’ process in which learners discover gaps in their language and seek to clarify meaning (Ammar, Lightbown & Spada, 2010).

As part of the social turn in applied linguistics, mainstream SLA researchers were urged to consider learner variation in terms of multilingualism, and to adopt a “more interdisciplinary and socially informed approach to SLA research” (Block, 2003, p. vii). SLA research informed by Vygotskian sociocultural theory (SCT) suggested that the use of languages other than English could reduce learners’ anxiety, enhance the affective learning environment, account for sociocultural factors, facilitate the incorporation of learners’ life experiences into their interactions, and support the development of a learner-centred curriculum (Auerbach, 1993). Importantly, this new strand of SLA research also showed that using learners’ L1 allowed language to be used as a meaning-making tool and “a means of communicating ideas rather than an end in itself” (Auerbach, 1993, p. 20). In light of this, Auerbach (1993) emphasized the importance of allowing learners to draw on their L1 resources to develop their knowledge of the English language. In recent years, many more scholars have argued against monolingual English language teaching and advocated the use of learners’ L1 in the classroom through linguistically responsive (Lucas & Villegas, 2013) or linguistically appropriate teaching practices (Chumak-Horbatsch, 2012), or what Cummins and Persad (2014) call teaching through a multilingual lens (Cummins & Persad, 2014). This approach has been largely informed by empirical research in language education and applied linguistics that document the linguistic, cognitive, social and affective benefits of L1 use for multilingual students (e.g., Cummins, 2007; Cummins & Early, 2011; García, Johnson & Seltzer, 2017; Lewis, Jones & Baker, 2012a, 2012b; Naqvi, McKeough, Thorne & Pfitscher, 2012).

Swain and Lapkin describe the L1 as learners’ “most formidable cognitive resource” (2005, p. 181) and assert that “to insist that no use be made of the L1 in carrying out tasks that are both linguistically and cognitively complex is to deny the use of an important cognitive tool” (2000, p. 269). From a linguistic and cognitive perspective, language learners have been found to consciously use a variety of mental strategies to make L1-L2 connections in their minds, as well as to make predictions about what will work in the L2 based on their knowledge of the L1 (Cook, 2001; Gass & Selinker, 1994). Cummins (2007, 2009) argues that teachers should pay explicit attention to teaching for the transfer of knowledge and skills from students’ L1 to their
L2 in order to maximize the benefits of students’ L1 use in academic learning. Dispelling the myth that L1 use will limit students’ practice in the L2, Cummins (2007) points out that “extensive communication interaction in the [L2]… and the utility of students’ L1 as a cognitive tool in learning the [L2]” are not incompatible ideas (p. 226-227). Affirming the role of the L1 in the cognitive processing of the L2, Villamil and de Guerrero (1996) found that Spanish ESL learners use their L1 in almost all of their interactions to retrieve language from memory, make sense of texts, and explore and expand content. More recent studies of the cognitive benefits of L1 use for L2 learners provided evidence that learners use both the L1 and L2 when they engage in private verbal thinking during the reasoning and problem-solving stages of L2 language tasks (Centeno-Cortés & Jiménez, 2004), and during vocalized private speech as a means for self-mediation (Yaghobian, Samuel & Mahmoudi, 2017).

Research on the communicative and social functions of the L1 have highlighted its benefits for scaffolding and building participant relationships among L2 learners. In Neokleous’ (2017) study of 15-17-year-old students in eight EFL classrooms in Cyprus, the students reported that sharing a common L1 with their peers made them part of “a family” (p. 328) and created a more congenial and pleasant atmosphere in their classroom. An analysis of students’ discourse also revealed that they used their L1 to fulfil various communicative and social functions such as asking, clarifying, suggesting, requesting, instructing, favour-asking, affirming, apologizing, encouraging, and joking. Investigating the functions served by L1 use during collaborative learning among Iranian high school EFL students, Yaghobian, Samuel and Mahmoudi (2017) found that students used their L1 interpersonally to build relationships with their peers, and in metatalk about language and about the task. Another study that addresses L1 use in learner collaboration, though not as its focal point, is French’s (2016) ethnographic case study of a multilingual, multicultural girls’ secondary school in Australia where more than 40 languages and cultural backgrounds were represented in the student population. In spite of the linguistic and cultural diversity of the students, the curriculum materials, instructional approaches, and assessment practices used in the school were predominantly based on English monolingual ideologies. However, through data from classroom observations, focus group interviews, and questionnaires, French found that students challenged the dominant monolingual orientation of the school by connecting, supporting and collaborating with each other in the classroom using not only their home languages, but also other lingua francae, such as a common language used in
their previous country of residence. The “multilingual connection and collaboration” between students were important factors in students’ language development and content learning (p. 310). In their collaboration, they used elements of their multilingual repertoires such as their linguistic knowledge, conceptual knowledge, metalinguistic understanding, and complex cross-linguistic communication strategies.

Encouraging the use of the L1 in the L2 classroom has also been shown to have affective benefits for learners. Cummins (2001) asserts that “to reject a child's language in the classroom is to reject the child” (p. 19). In contrast, welcoming learners’ L1 into the classroom validates who learners are as individuals, and affirms their lived experiences. Various studies on L1 use in the classroom have suggested that it increases the enjoyment and confidence of learners, relieves language anxiety, and provides a sense of security (Sa’d & Qadermazi, 2015; Schweers, 1999; Scott & De La Fuente, 2008). When learners are able to ask and answer questions in a language in which they are proficient, they will feel more confident to participate in lessons (Neokleous, 2017). In addition, making space for students’ L1 in the classroom affirms their identity as multilingual learners (McMillan & Rivers, 2011; Norton & Toohey, 2011). When learners’ identities are affirmed in the classroom and they are enabled to invest their identities in their learning, they will engage more academically not only in language learning but across the curriculum (Ntelioglou, Fannin, Montanera & Cummins, 2014). For example, in Gagné and Soto Gordon’s (2016) study on leadership education for English Language Learners, their findings indicated that allowing learners to showcase their L1 cultures and teach their L1 to their peers successfully enhanced their identity investment, and affective and cognitive engagement.

Another way that the L1 has been used to fulfil important identity functions is through the creation of identity texts. An identity text is a written, spoken, visual, musical, dramatic or multimodal text that “holds a mirror up to students in which their identities are reflected back in a positive light” (Cummins et al., 2006, p. 5-6). Cummins, Hu, Markus and Montero (2015) argue that the affirmation of identity embedded in students’ process of creating these texts “constitutes a counter-discourse that repudiates the devaluation of identity that is frequently embedded in educational structures and relationships” (p. 558), particularly for students whose languages, cultures, and religions have been marginalized in society.
Research on the Role of Learners’ L1 in L2 Learning in Malaysia

Although substantial research has recognized the various benefits and importance of learners’ L1, in the Malaysian context, there has been a dearth of research on the role of the L1 in the English language classroom, perhaps due to the prevailing belief that monolingual instruction in the target language is more pedagogically effective for L2 learners. Discussing this situation, Martin (2005) writes that in Malaysia:

> the use of a local language alongside the “official” language of the lesson is a well-known phenomenon and yet, for a variety of reasons, it is often lambasted as “bad practice,” blamed on teachers’ lack of English language competence ... or put to one side and/or swept under the carpet. (p. 88)

Although more studies are now being conducted on codeswitching (the alternate use of two or more languages or language varieties during discourse) and codemixing (the mixing of two or more languages or language varieties) in Malaysia, a common perception is that codeswitching and codemixing are “coping strateg[ies] employed by… instructors to mask their linguistic competence” (Ariffin & Husin, 2011, p. 239) or that the “major reason for code switching is limited proficiency in a language” (David & McLellan, 2011, p. 293). However, several Malaysian studies have attempted to break this stigma by documenting students’ perceptions towards L1 use, and the functions of L1 for their learning. Selamat’s (2014) study exploring codeswitching in two secondary schools in Malaysia found that while teachers were concerned that codeswitching would undermine students’ language learning, students perceived it as an effective resource in their learning. Students used their L1 when they did not know how to express something in English, when they needed to explain difficult words and sentences to their peers, or to interact with peers who share the same language and maintain the flow of conversation with them. Interestingly, Selamat also found that despite the teachers’ negative perceptions towards codeswitching, they frequently used their students’ L1 to explain the meaning of words and sentences, explain grammatical concepts, introduce unfamiliar topics and materials, and explain differences between students’ L1 and English. The teachers also codeswitched for interpersonal reasons such as to alleviate students’ anxiety in learning English, increase motivation, encourage students’ participation, and build relationships with them.
In Ahmad’s (2009) study investigating the perceptions of undergraduate students towards their instructors’ use of codeswitching in a public university in Malaysia, learners believed that their instructors’ use of codeswitching could be productive for providing affective support to them, checking their understanding, explaining the meaning of new vocabulary and concepts, teaching grammatical structures, and for classroom management purposes such as explaining procedures, tasks and materials to them. More than half of the 257 students also indicated that their instructors’ code-switching made them feel less anxious and more relaxed during lessons, encouraged them to participate more confidently in discussions, and helped them to carry out tasks more successfully. However, since all the students in Ahmad’s study had low English attainment levels in the Malaysian University Entrance Test, Ahmad concludes that code-switching is an effective teaching strategy for students with low English proficiency. The results of Lee’s (2010) study similarly suggest that teachers see codeswitching as most relevant for lower level learners. Lee’s study on the perceptions of 42 secondary school English language teachers towards codeswitching found that teachers generally had positive opinions towards codeswitching and used it to explain concepts, ensure comprehension, and help learners make connections between their L1 and English. However, teachers’ use of codeswitching depended on their students’ level of proficiency, and most of them believed that “codeswitching is almost unnecessary for the good classes” (p. 26). In another study by Ariffin and Husin (2011) on codeswitching in a public university in Malaysia which prescribes English as the medium of instruction for all courses, they found that there was a difference between the perceptions of students depending on their level of English proficiency. Students with lower proficiency levels had positive perceptions towards their instructors’ use of the L1 and felt that it aided their comprehension of the lecture content. In contrast, students with higher proficiency levels felt that the use of the L1 should be minimized during lectures so that they could improve their own English and be better prepared for their future careers.

**Need for further research from a translanguaging perspective.** What all the studies on L1 use in Malaysia have in common is that they position the use of the L1 as a resource only for learners with lower proficiency levels, and only as a temporary bridge to attaining proficiency in their L2. In classes where learners are more proficient in English, the use of the L1 is seen as a barrier to successful learning. With the *translanguaging turn* (García & Li Wei, 2014) which will be discussed in the following chapter, much of the current research on L1 use
has been conducted from the theoretical lens of translanguaging, that is, the process by which multilingual learners draw on all their available linguistic resources as part of one integrated system, and engage in multiple discursive practices to make meaning, shape their experiences, and gain understanding and knowledge (Otheguy et al., 2015). My study aims to counter the current discourses on L1 use in Malaysia from a translanguaging perspective by positioning all the languages of multilingual students as integral to their learning, regardless of their level of proficiency.
CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

My theoretical framework is informed by sociocultural theory (SCT) and translinguaging. In the following sections, I expand on the concept of translinguaging, discussing its connections to bilingualism, multilingualism and plurilingualism, and differentiating between various forms of translinguaging. Following this, I describe the fundamental tenets of sociocultural theory (SCT) and explain the various sociocultural concepts that are relevant to my research. Finally, I present my conceptual framework which amalgamates the concepts of SCT and translinguaging within a framework of learner collaboration.

Translinguaging

The Evolution of Models of Bilingualism

In 1974, Wallace Lambert proposed two models of bilingualism which went on to dominate the literature and research on bilingualism in the 20th century – subtractive bilingualism and additive bilingualism. In the subtractive bilingualism model, the L1 of a child who spoke a minoritized language was removed as the new majority language was learned, thus resulting in monolingualism in the dominant L2 (L1 + L2 – L1 = L2). In contrast, in the additive bilingualism model, an additional language is added to a child’s linguistic repertoire without the loss of their first language (L1 + L2 = L1 + L2). In proposing these models, Lambert (1974) stressed that additive bilingualism would result in social and cognitive benefits for the child, whereas subtractive bilingualism would result in poorer academic achievements.

However, researchers such as García (2009b) and García and Li Wei (2014) have suggested that both the additive and subtractive models of bilingualism are inadequate to address the linguistic complexities of the 21st century. The multilingual turn (May, 2013) in language and education has raised awareness of the increasingly multilingual nature of contemporary societies affected by globalization and mass migration. In these superdiverse linguistic environments (Arnaut, Blommaert, Rampton, & Spotti, 2015; Blommaert, 2010; Jørgensen, 2008; Vertovec, 2007; Vogel & Garcia, 2017), more complex interactions take place between heterogonous speakers who have diverse language repertoires, identities, and histories. García (2009b) and
García and Li Wei (2014) argue that bilingual education cannot be merely additive or subtractive as there are no homogenous groups of speakers using the exact same language practices in these superdiverse environments.

Moreover, García (2009b) believes that these traditional models of bilingualism are problematic as they are based on monolingualism as the norm. The subtractive model upholds the idea of an ideal monolingual L2 speaker. The additive model, while not denying the importance of the L1, proposes that learners can develop a second full language that can be accessed separately from the L1. Thus, it fundamentally supports the idea of double monolingualism or what Grosjean (1982) called the monolingual view of multilingualism, where each of the languages in a multilingual learner’s linguistic repertoire is seen as an autonomous system or a linear whole, instead of as part of one integrated linguistic system.

In the last 50 years, bilingual/multilingual education has expanded to include various types of programs such as immersion bilingual education, developmental bilingual and multilingual education, Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), transitional bilingual education, and mother-tongue based multilingual education (García, 2019a). However, García (2019a) and García and Tupas (2019) assert that these programs continue to be based on the teaching of standardized forms of dominant languages as natural and separate entities, and the bilingualism/multilingualism of learners is still interpreted through a colonial European lens. In addition, these models of bilingualism do not consider the multimodality of the 21st century (García, 2009b) where communication includes complex discursive practices that rely not only on written-linguistic modes of meaning, but also interconnected modalities such as audio, visual, and spatial semiotic systems (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009; Kress, 2003; New London Group, 2000).

To address the constantly evolving linguistic realities and multimodal landscapes of the 21st century, García (2009b) proposed that there are two models of bilingualism – recursive bilingualism and dynamic bilingualism. The concept of recursive bilingualism considers the ethnolinguistic complexities of communities who have undergone significant language shift as they work to revitalize language practices which have been suppressed in the past. Bilingualism in these communities is recursive because it is not simply the addition of the L1, but the reaching back to ancestral heteroglossic language practices and their reconstitution for new purposes. The model of dynamic bilingualism was proposed to account for the multilingual and multimodal interactions and linguistic interrelationships that take place among multilingual speakers in
different spaces. Dynamic bilingualism contrasts the additive and subtractive models of bilingualism because it is meant to go beyond the traditional notions of bilingualism as two autonomous language systems and the bilingual speaker as two monolinguals in one person (Grosjean, 1982; Heller, 2007). The dynamic bilingualism model is based on the theory that there is only one linguistic system in an individual, and in this system are language practices and features that are integrated throughout (García & Li Wei, 2014). The language features in an individual’s linguistic system are sometimes used to conform to societal constructions of ‘language’, but at times used differently to produce new practices. García (2009a) explains dynamic bilingualism as “the varying degrees of abilities and uses of multiple language practices needed for people to cross physical or virtual borders” (p. 144). The model of bilingualism proposed by García is similar to the Council of Europe’s concept of plurilingualism, defined in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) as the ability:

> to use languages for the purposes of communication and to take part in intercultural action, where a person, viewed as a social agent, has proficiency, of varying degrees, in several languages and experience of several cultures. This is not seen as a superposition or juxtaposition of distinct competences, but rather as the existence of a complex or even composite competence on which the social actor may draw (Coste, Moore & Zarate, 2009, p. v).

According to the CEFR descriptors (Council of Europe, 2018b), plurilingual competence involves abilities such as switching from one language or dialect to another, expressing themselves in one language and understanding a person speaking another language, drawing upon their knowledge of different languages or dialects to make sense of the meaning of texts, experimenting with alternative forms of expression in different languages and dialects, and mediating between individuals who do not have a common language. Although the CEFR’s concept of plurilingualism has moved much of the literature and research on language education away from monolingual ideologies, García and Li Wei (2014) argue that the terms bilingualism, multilingualism, and plurilingualism still refer to the existence of multiple languages, and they treat languages as autonomous codes with different structures. Furthermore, even when a philosophy of plurilingualism is followed, raciolinguistic ideologies (Flores & Rosa, 2015) may still underpin these practices (García & Otheguy, 2019). For example, black and brown plurilingual refugees in European schools are required to demonstrate proficiency in the
dominant language of the country, and to be able to use the language according to ‘native’ norms in order to gain access into higher education (García & Otheguy, 2019, p. 7).

Makoni and Pennycook (2007) too have argued that the concepts of bilingualism, multilingualism, and plurilingualism reproduce mainstream, colonial ideas about languages. They argue that “languages do not exist as real entities in the world and neither do they emerge from or represent real environments; they are, by contrast, the inventions of social, cultural and political movements” (p. 2). Critical and post-structuralist sociolinguists and scholars who agree with Makoni and Pennycook’s critique of language as being an outcome of nation-state/colonial ideologies have chosen to use the term *languaging* instead to emphasize the agency of *languagers* who use the semiotic resources at their disposal in an ongoing process of interacting, communicating and making meaning (Canagarajah, 2007; Jørgensen, 2008; Juffermans, 2011; García & Li Wei, 2014; Shohamy, 2006). The fluid *languaging* practices of diverse speakers have been referred to by various scholars using different terms such as ‘polylexicalism’ (Jørgensen, 2008), ‘transidiomatic practices’ (Jacquemet, 2005), ‘metrolinguistic’ (Otsuji & Pennycook, 2010), ‘translinguistic practices’ (Canagarajah, 2013a), and most prevalently, ‘translanguaging’ (e.g., Canagarajah, 2011a; García, Johnson & Seltzer, 2017; García & Kleyn, 2016).

**Definitions and Conceptualization of Translanguaging**

The term ‘translanguaging’ was first coined by Cen Williams (1994) in Welsh (*trawsieithu*) to refer to the pedagogical practice of alternating between English and Welsh for receptive and productive purposes, for example, reading in English and writing in Welsh (Baker, 2011). When the term was first translated into English by Baker (2011), it was defined as “the process of making meaning, shaping experiences, gaining understanding and knowledge through the use of two languages” (p. 288). This definition has been extended by many scholars (e.g., Blackledge & Creese, 2010; Canagarajah, 2011a; Creese & Blackledge, 2010; García, 2009a, 2011a, 2013; García & Li Wei, 2014; García & Sylvan, 2011; Hornberger & Link, 2012a, 2012b; Lewis, Jones & Baker, 2012a) to account for the complex language practices of multilinguals, and for pedagogical approaches that draw on those practices (García & Kano, 2014). Lewis, Jones and Baker (2012a) build on Baker’s (2011) definition of translanguaging by adding that in
translanguaging, “both languages are used in a dynamic and functionally integrated manner to organise and mediate mental processes in understanding, speaking, literacy and not least, learning” (p. 1). Another definition that is commonly referred to is Canagarajah’s (2011b) idea that translanguaging is “the ability of multilingual speakers to shuttle between languages, treating the diverse languages that form their repertoire as an integrated system” (p. 401).

Although these extended definitions of translanguaging go beyond additive concepts of bilingualism, García and Kano (2014) and García and Li Wei (2014) argue that they still refer to separate languages. García and Lin (2016) make a distinction between a strong and a weak version of translanguaging. They argue that the idea of students switching between languages or transferring their knowledge from one language to another is part of a weak version of translanguaging because it still maintains boundaries between languages. For García and Lin, translanguaging is not merely the synthesis or hybrid mixing of separate languages. Neither is it something that multilinguals do only when they lack the necessary vocabulary to express themselves monolingually (Vogel & García, 2017). A strong version of translanguaging should take, as its starting point, the idea that bilinguals and multilinguals have only “one linguistic repertoire from which they select features strategically to communicate effectively” (García, 2012, p. 1) in different contexts to fulfil different communicative needs (García & Li Wei, 2014; Otheguy et al., 2015). Thus, from a translanguaging perspective, Kleyn and García (2019) argue that the emergent bilingualism or multilingualism of learners is not seen as linear or sequential, and teachers do not just add an autonomous language such as English to learners’ repertoires, as theorized in traditional additive language learning approaches. Rather, learners’ emergent bilingualism or multilingualism is viewed as dynamic and constantly expanding as they add new linguistic features (e.g., vocabulary, meaning, constructions) to their unitary and integrated repertoire (Kleyn & García, 2019; Otheguy et al., 2015, Otheguy, García & Reid, 2018).

Based on this theory of language learning, García and Kano (2014) propose a definition of translanguaging as “a process by which students and teachers engage in complex discursive practices that include all the language practices of all students in a class in order to develop new language practices and sustain old ones, communicate appropriate knowledge, and give voice to new socio-political realities by interrogating linguistic inequality” (p. 261). This understanding of translanguaging positions the language practices of bilingual and multilingual speakers as the norm (Kleyn & García, 2019), and it privileges the linguistic and semiotic practices of bilingual
and multilingual speakers above the named language systems of nation-states (García & Li Wei, 2014; Li Wei, 2011; Vogel & García, 2017). García (2019a) and García and Otheguy (2019) emphasize that a translanguage pedagogy is a tool for social justice as it affords linguistically minoritized speakers the power to make meaning by leveraging their whole communicative repertoire rather than exerting over them the power and hierarchies of named languages. A translanguage pedagogy views multilingual learners’ language as complete at every stage of their learning, and focuses on “building the agency of the learner to language in order to act and mean” (García & Otheguy, 2019, p. 12).

For García and Li Wei (2014), the trans-prefix in translanguage relates to the concept of transculturación coined by Cuban anthropologist Fernando Ortiz in the 1940s (1940/1978). Transculturación refers to “a process in which a new reality emerges, compounded and complex; a reality that is not a mechanical agglomeration of characters, not even a mosaic, but a new phenomenon, original and independent” (García & Li Wei, 2014, p. 21). An emphasis on the trans aspect of translanguage should lead to the acceptance of new language realities that go beyond traditional understandings of language, and disrupt socio-politically constructed language hierarchies and “named languages” (Otheguy et al., 2015, p. 286). García and Li Wei (2014) explain that a trans focus in translanguage leads to three innovative ways of considering language and education:

1. Referring to a trans-system and trans-space – the recognition of fluid discursive practices that go between and beyond language systems and spaces to engage learners’ multiple meaning-making resources
2. Referring to its transformative nature – the transformation of old cognitive and social structures, shifting of orders of discourse, and headlining of the voices of Others
3. Referring to the transdisciplinary effects of languaging and education research – the creation of tools for understanding not only language and education, but also human cognition and learning, human sociality, social relations, and social structures (p. 224)

According to García and Li Wei, the transdisciplinarity connected to translanguage broadens the disciplinary lens of language learning and brings a sociocultural and sociocognitive approach to it. Drawing on Garcia and Li Wei’s (2014) exposition of the trans focus in translanguage, Mazak (2017) proposed more recently that translanguage is an umbrella term that includes five tenets:
(1) Translanguaging as a language ideology that sees bilingualism as the norm

(2) Translanguaging as a theory of bilingualism that is based on the lived experiences of bilinguals

(3) Translanguaging as a pedagogical stance where teachers and students can draw on all their linguistic and semiotic resources to teach and learn both language and content

(4) Translanguaging as a set of practices that are not limited to what was traditionally known as “code-switching”, but rather is inclusive of all practices that draw on an individual’s linguistic and semiotic repertoires (e.g., reading in one language and discussing the reading in another language)

(5) Translanguaging as transformational because it invents and reinvents language practices through a continuous process of meaning-making

**Characteristics and affordances of pedagogical translanguaging**

Lewis, Jones and Baker (2012b) make a distinction between teacher-directed and pupil-directed translanguaging. Teacher-directed translanguaging (Lewis, Jones & Baker, 2012b), also known as pedagogic or pedagogical translanguaging (Cenoz, 2017) or official translanguaging (Williams, 2012), involves planned and structured teaching strategies that build on multilingual learners’ diverse linguistic practices in flexible ways that develop new language practices and understandings (García & Li Wei, 2014). The core characteristics of a translanguaging pedagogy, as described in García, Johnson and Seltzer (2017) and Vogel and García (2017) are as follows:

(1) **Stance** – the belief that the diverse linguistic practices of learners are valuable resources that the teacher should draw on and use in the classroom

(2) **Design** – the design of strategic plans (including instructional units, lesson plans, and assessments) that are informed by learners’ diverse language practices and ways of knowing, and the creation of opportunities for learners to practise the language features that are necessary for various academic tasks

(3) **Shifts** – the ability to make necessary moment-by-moment changes to one’s instructional plans according to feedback from learners
García and Li Wei (2014, p. 120-121) explain that pedagogical translanguaging can help teachers to accomplish the following goals in their classrooms:

1. To differentiate and adapt instruction to meet the needs of diverse students in the classroom (e.g., through translation)
2. To build background knowledge so that students can make meaning of the lesson content (e.g., through collaborative dialogue, collaborative grouping, reading multilingual texts, and multilingual listening/visual resources)
3. To deepen understandings, extend new knowledge, and develop critical thinking and socio-political engagement (e.g., through multilingual writing, and inner speech)
4. To enable cross-linguistic transfer and metalinguistic awareness to help students fulfil their communicative needs (e.g., through word walls, sentence starters, multilingual vocabulary inquiry, and comparing multilingual texts)
5. To build cross-linguistic flexibility so that students can use language practices competently (e.g., through alternating languages and media, and translanguaging in writing and speaking)
6. To engage students through identity investment and positionality (e.g., through multilingual writing)
7. To interrogate linguistic inequality and disrupt existing linguistic hierarchies and social structures (e.g., through project learning, thematic units, and research)

Baker (2011) advocates for the use of translanguaging as a pedagogical practice because it can promote a deeper and fuller understanding of the subject matter, suggesting that in monolingual teaching situations, it is possible that learners may answer questions or write whole sentences or paragraphs without actually understanding or internalizing their meanings. Baker suggests that more learning can occur when learners are able to expand on their available knowledge using all the languages they know. In line with this, various studies have demonstrated the affordances of translanguaging for expanding learners’ cognitive and linguistic knowledge. Martin-Beltrán’s (2014) research among students in a culturally and linguistically diverse high school in Washington D.C., found that translanguaging created an expanded zone for learning where students were able to access their wider linguistic repertoire and draw upon their multilingual funds of knowledge (González, Moll & Amanti, 2005) as tools for learning. The students in Martin-Beltrán’s study used translanguaging in Spanish and English to ask
questions about language, explore different language possibilities in their oral and written texts, reflect on form and meaning, build on each other’s ideas, and correct themselves and their peers. Students’ frequent *languaging* or *thinking in process* (Swain, 2006) using Spanish and English were opportunities for them to do sophisticated literacy work such as reflecting on and mediating their language use, demonstrating metacognitive thinking, and solving linguistic problems. Martin-Beltrán’s analysis also suggested that language-minority students had the most linguistic dexterity because they used more translanguaging as well as more of the target language than language-majority students. However, both language-minority and language-majority students demonstrated evidence of expanded learning through appropriating new language in their spoken interactions and written texts.

According to García (2009a), the strategic use of pedagogical translanguaging in the classroom can support learners in comprehending complex academic texts and content, constructing a better understanding of their L2 learning, and developing new linguistic practices. As an example of this, Garza and Langman’s (2014) analysis of the classroom discourse in an elementary school in Texas demonstrated that by allowing bilingual students to use translanguaging while participating in classroom discussions, the teacher enabled them “to access academic content through the linguistic resources and communicative repertoires they bring to the classroom while simultaneously acquiring new ones” (Hornberger & Link, 2012a, p. 268, as cited in Garza & Langman, 2014, p. 45). By validating students’ use of translanguaging, teachers also promoted the value of biliteracy skills and translanguaging identities. In line with this, Johnson and Seltzer (2017) write that translanguaging makes space for students’ bilingualism, and supports their bilingual identities and socioemotional development. By encouraging translanguaging, teachers show students that they value their multilingual identities, linguistic repertoires, lived linguistic experiences and cultural knowledge (Carroll & Sambolin Morales, 2016). This makes learning more personal, authentic and meaningful for them, and improves the links between school, home and community (Creese & Blackledge, 2010).

Various forms of pedagogic translanguaging are being increasingly implemented into second language classrooms around the world (Adinolfi & Astruc, 2017). However, studies such as the ones conducted in Malaysia have found that translanguaging is typically used by teachers only as a means to an end, whereby learners are allowed to use their L1 until they have attained the target English language proficiency, or as a last resort for learners at beginning levels of
English proficiency (Escobar & Dillard-Paltrineri, 2015; Rivera & Mazak, 2017). In line with this, Caroll and Sambolín Morales’s (2016) study of translanguaging in a college ESL classroom in Puerto Rico found that home languages were often used only “as a scaffold toward understanding and using the target language” (p. 256). Similarly, in Duarte’s (2018) study of translanguaging in mainstream classrooms in Luxembourg and Netherlands, she found that translanguaging often served as a temporary bridge between the L1 and L2. For this reason, Duarte points out that although translanguaging has been received positively in research, it is not part of the pedagogical status quo in mainstream classrooms because it clashes against prevailing monolingual ideologies about strictly keeping languages separate and using immersion models to teach language. Some researchers even claim that there are limits to the use of translanguaging. For example, Lewis, Jones and Baker (2012a) write that there are “boundaries when translanguaging can operate in the classroom that are… about a child’s dual language competence” (p. 644). In making this claim, they refer to Williams’ (2002) suggestion that translanguaging is more appropriate for learners who already have a good command of both languages, and is not as valuable in classrooms where learners are still in the beginning stages of learning their second language. Translanguaging needs to be seen as more than just a way of scaffolding lower proficiency learners. García and Li Wei (2014) assert that “[r]ather than just being a scaffolding practice to access content or language, translanguaging is transformative for the child, for the teacher and for education itself, and particularly for bilingual education” (p. 68).

**Learners’ Use and Perceptions of Translanguaging**

For translanguaging to be transformative, García and Li Wei (2014) suggest that teachers’ translanguaging pedagogies need to be connected empirically to the translanguaging that multilingual children naturally and regularly engage in in the classroom. Lewis, Jones and Baker (2012b) suggest that most of the translanguaging that occurs in classrooms is actually pupil-directed, or what Williams (2012) refers to as natural translanguaging and Cenoz (2017) refers to as spontaneous translanguaging. While Rosiers (2017) describes spontaneous translanguaging as a type of covert pedagogical practice that emerges spontaneously among multilingual students, Garcia (2011) presents pupil-directed translanguaging as being more intentional and agentive. Even in classrooms where the goal is for learners to speak the target language that is
being taught, learners still “perform their language in unmonitored situations with learners who are also bilingual,” selecting features of their unitary language system based on who they are communicating with (Kleyn & García, 2019, p. 71). For García, an example of this agentive pupil-directed translanguaging is when learners self-regulate their learning by using linguistic practices and meaning-making resources that are not explicitly included in the classroom or lesson, or with which their teachers may be unfamiliar with. In García, Makar, Starcevic and Terry’s (2011) study of bilingual kindergarteners in the U.S., she found that although only one language was supposed to be used in the classroom, learners used pupil-directed translanguaging for *metafunctions* such as: (1) mediating understanding among each other, (2) co-constructing meaning of what others are saying, (3) constructing meaning within themselves, (4) including or excluding others, and (5) demonstrating knowledge.

While substantial research has discussed the use of translanguaging by teachers and teachers’ perspectives towards translanguaging (e.g., eBaker, 2011; Canagarajah, 2011a; Celic & Seltzer, 2012; García, Johnson & Seltzer, 2017; McMillan & Rivers, 2011; Nambisan, 2014; Williams, 2012), there is still a lack of research focusing on learners’ perspectives towards incorporating translanguaging practices in the classroom, especially in the elementary setting (Neokleous, 2017). Rivera and Mazak (2017) highlight the importance of studying the role of learners’ attitudes towards translanguaging because it determines how effective a translanguaging pedagogy is. They point out that it is possible for learners who use translanguaging in their day-to-day communication to be opposed to using it in the classroom if they have been conditioned by the mindset that languages should be kept separate to avoid detrimental language interference. In their study of bilingual students’ perceptions of translanguaging in an undergraduate psychology class at the University of Puerto Rico, they found that learners were indifferent towards their instructor’s strategic use of pedagogical translanguaging. Rivera and Mazak argue that if learners are not receptive towards a translanguaging approach, teachers’ attempts to incorporate a translanguaging pedagogy may be counterproductive, as shown in their research.

In Kaufhold’s (2018) study exploring how multilingual Swedish undergraduate students negotiate and develop their academic writing repertoires, Kaufhold found that students felt conflicted because they recognized the advantages of translanguaging in academic writing but had to comply with their institutional requirements of keeping languages separate. Kaufhold
argues based on their findings that learners’ linguistic ideologies and experiences can either enable or restrict their capacity to draw on their varied language repertoires. Similarly, in another study on professors’ and students’ beliefs about translanguaging in an undergraduate EFL classroom in Costa Rica, Escobar and Dillard-Paltrineri (2015) found that learners considered translanguaging to be an ineffective practice because they believed that L2 learning was most effective in an L2-only environment. Both professors and students expressed deficit views towards L1 use as they believed that translanguaging would hinder the cognitive processes that were necessary for L2 learning, create a “habit of laziness,” and detract from communicative language teaching methods (p. 312). However, Escobar and Dillard-Paltrineri found that professors and students expressed conflicting opinions at times because while they believed that English-only instruction was most effective for their learning, they admitted that translanguaging was what they naturally did outside the classroom. In Neokleous’ (2017) research on learners’ use of translanguaging in monolingual EFL classrooms in four private schools in Cyprus, the findings similarly revealed that there were tensions in learners’ attitudes towards using their L1 in the classroom. Neokleous found that learners naturally used translanguaging for a wide variety of purposes such as asking and answering questions, translating, suggesting, clarifying, requesting, affirming, encouraging, instructing, favour-asking, apologizing, joking and greeting. Learners reported that the use of their L1 deepened their understanding, ensured their comprehension of content, and made them feel more confident and self-assured. They also felt that translanguaging created a more pleasant and friendly atmosphere, built trust among each other, and made them feel like they were a part of “a family” (p. 328). However, despite the general consensus among learners that L1 use was beneficial and had positive affordances for their learning, learners voiced their concern over the scarce opportunities they had to practise their English. Due to their lack of exposure to English in the environment, learners actually preferred for their teacher to use English in the classroom and to “take advantage of every opportunity to make us use English” (p. 332).

Daniel and Pacheco (2016) posit that the conflicting and complex attitudes of teachers, students and families towards language use in the classroom can pose “ideological constraints on translanguaging” (p. 654). Their research on the translanguaging practices and perspectives of four multilingual learners’ in an English-dominant secondary school in the United States found that just as in Kaufhold’s (2018), Escobar and Dillard-Paltrineri’s (2015) and Neokleous’s
research, the learners in their study experienced tensions in their use of translanguaging. They had a strong desire to maintain their home languages, and used translanguaging strategically for purposes such as note-taking in the L1, drafting written assignments in the L1 first before using English, using bilingual dictionaries, making cross-language comparisons while reading, and discussing assignments with their friends in their L1. However, all four learners felt conflicted because they seemed to have internalized dominant ideologies and discourses in their school environment about the importance of English-only instruction. Often, the only place where learners felt comfortable using translanguaging was in ESL classrooms or after-school programs. Similarly, in Stille et al.’s (2016) study, it was discovered that many learners did not use translanguaging in the mainstream classroom because they assumed that the use of their home languages was not welcome in the classroom and that they were only allowed to use English, even though their teachers had not discouraged them from using their L1. Thus, Stille et al. emphasize the importance of noticing and challenging assumptions about multilingualism and the inclusion of home languages in the classroom, and partnering with learners to adopt an asset-oriented mindset towards translanguaging.

**Sociocultural Theory**

Like traditional cognitive approaches to learning, Vygotskian SCT (Vygotsky, 1962, 1978) is fundamentally concerned with understanding how cognitive processes are developed (Zuengler & Miller, 2006). However, what makes SCT distinct from the cognitive tradition is its social dimension. Traditionally, cognitive psychologists such as Piaget did not focus very much on the interconnected and constitutive relationship between interaction and language development (Ohta, 1995). Although a relational aspect was present in Piaget’s ideas, his approach was fundamentally oriented towards a model of the autonomous learner (Lourenco, 2012). Piaget theorized that cognitive development occurred through the “child’s solo mind taking in and interpreting information about the world” (Papalia, Olds & Feldman, 2011, p. 34). According to Piaget, cognitive development occurred in universal stages, and learners progressed through these developmental stages by actively constructing knowledge through their interactions with their physical and social environments (Piaget, 1995). Piaget emphasized that this development was an “autonomous process” (Inhelder & Piaget, 1969, p. 292) because
learners were ultimately the main constructors of their own knowledge, and were responsible for all their social interactions (Piaget, 1970). From this Piagetian perspective, the focus of teacher-learner interaction in an L2 setting would therefore be on revealing the abilities and potentials that learners already possess independent of instruction (Lantolf & Poehner, 2014). Teachers would do this by providing and modelling L2 input, and reinforcing learners’ attempts at using that input correctly (Johnson, 1995).

A criticism of the Piagetian theory of learning is that it places too much emphasis on individual cognitive development, without consideration for the social context in which the individual’s learning occurs. In contrast, the SCT of learning, grounded in a Vygotskian perspective, is oriented towards the “heteronomous individual” whose “development depends heavily on the existing diverse social structures with which he or she is confronted” (Lourenco, 2012, p. 284). Vygotsky (1978) asserted that “the social dimension of consciousness is primary in time and fact. The individual dimension of consciousness is derivative and secondary” (p. 30). In a recent formulation of SCT, Lantolf (2000) explains that “the central and distinguishing concept of sociocultural theory is that higher forms of human mental activity are mediated” (p. 80). This mediation occurs through social interactions that use cultural tools such as language for making meaning (Dunn & Lantolf, 1998). Thus, a key distinction between Piagetian and Vygotskian theories is centred around their different positioning of language in cognitive development. Piagetian theory suggests that cognitive processes are first and foremost constructed internally, and language is an external outcome of development in one’s internal cognitive abilities. Vygotskian theory, on the other hand, views language and thought as dynamic, interdependent processes. It highlights the primacy of social interactions in the development of one’s language, which then stimulates the development of thought. Based on this view of language as developing thought (Close, 2002), SCT posits that L2 learners first establish social relationships with people through their interactions, and these interactions that use language as a medium form the starting point of the learners’ cognitive developmental processes (Lourenco, 2012).

**Zone of Proximal Development**

One of the most well-known SCT concepts related to the developmental process occurring through social interactions is the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). Vygotsky
(1978) theorized that children progress through two developmental levels: (i) the actual developmental level which he defined as “the level of development of a child’s mental functions that has been established as a result of certain already completed developmental cycles” (p. 85), and (ii) the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) which he defined as “the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance, or in collaboration with more capable peers” (p. 86). In simpler words, the ZPD is the area in which learners can achieve a goal with the guidance and support of knowledgeable others (Mahon, 1996). Chaiklin (2003) suggests that Vygotsky uses the term “development” instead of “learning” because the focus of the ZPD is not on the acquisition of skills, but on developmental growth occurring through interactions (p. 42). Vygotsky saw the interactions that unfolded in the ZPD not as being unidirectional from more capable to less capable individuals, but as involving mutual cooperation where the child would share responsibility for a task with a more competent adult or peer (Johnson, 1995; Lantolf & Poehner, 2014; Wertsch, 1985). Emphasizing the mutual nature of interactions in the ZPD, Wells (1999) argues that the ZPD is not a “fixed” attribute of the learner but rather a “potential for learning that is created in the interaction between participants as they engage in a particular activity together” (p. 330). In agreement with this idea, Swain, Kinnear and Steinman (2011) write that the “ZPD requires co-authorship or co-construction” (p. 24). Similarly, Hammond and Gibbons (2001) explain that the ZPD is co-constructed through the talk occurring between teachers and students when they participate together in a particular task. In the L2 classroom, co-authorship and co-construction could occur when the teacher discovers the ZPD of the learners in order to determine if help is required, and then involves the learners in determining how to approach their tasks, set goals, select strategies, evaluate outcomes, and reformulate learning plans and actions to develop their higher cognitive processes (Lantolf & Poehner, 2014).

Scaffolding

According to Aljaafreh & Lantolf (1994), discovering the ZPD of learners is, at its core, a dialogic activity. Dialogue is an essential component of the ZPD and SCT in general because it is through dialogic negotiation that the teacher helps the learner move from other-regulated (intermental) to self-regulated (intramental) actions (Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994, p. 467).
However, Lantolf and Poehler (2014) echo Wertsch’s (1984) reminder that not all forms of interactions and dialogue necessarily relate to the ZPD. Wood, Bruner and Ross’ (1976) concept of scaffolding has been commonly employed to explain the type of interactions that do pertain to the ZPD. Although scaffolding was originally a constructivist construct, Hammond and Gibbons (2001) write that the theoretical basis of scaffolding “lies very much within Vygotskian framework” (p. 8), and Verenikina (2008) suggests that the SCT framework is “at the heart of the concept of scaffolding” (p. 163). According to Wells (1999), scaffolding is a way that the concept of working within the ZPD is operationalized. In particular, it operationalizes the transition from other-regulation to self-regulation that Vygotsky theorized (Van der Veer, 2007).

Wood et al. (1976) first used the term scaffolding to describe the support offered by parents when tutoring the language development of their children. They explained that scaffolding serves six main functions: (1) recruitment – getting children interested in tasks, (2) reduction in degrees of freedom – dividing tasks into multiple, smaller tasks, (3) direction maintenance – motivating children to pursue tasks, (4) marking critical features – drawing children’s attention to relevant areas of the tasks, (5) frustration control – decreasing children’s stress levels during the tasks, and (6) demonstration – modelling the desired outcome (p. 98). Wood et al.’s concept of scaffolding has been taken up in the context of classroom interaction to explain the temporary assistance that teachers provide their learners to help them complete a task or develop new understandings, so that they will later be able to complete similar tasks on their own (Hammond & Gibbons, 2001). Scaffolding in the classroom requires the teacher to take control of the portions of a task that are beyond the learner’s current competence level, thereby allowing the learner to focus on elements that are within his or her range of ability. Through the teacher’s sequencing of teaching activities, and the quality of the teacher’s guidance, support, and dialogues with learners, learners should be challenged to go beyond their actual developmental level and internalise new understandings (Hammond & Gibbons, 2001). The structure of the dialogue and collaborative interactions between teachers and learners is what Bruner (1978) refers to as verbal scaffolds.

In the context of L2 learning, a great deal of research has focused on the verbal scaffolding strategies that teachers use when they interact with students, and the characteristics of teacher-student dialogue in mediating children’s cognitive development (McNeil, 2012). However, Stone (1998) expresses his concern that too literal an interpretation of the scaffolding
concept can result in the imposition of structures on learners, and a narrow view of teacher-learner interaction as predominantly teacher-driven and one-sided. On the other hand, interpretations of scaffolding that are too liberal may lead to inconsistencies in how it is operationalized. Michelle and Sharpe (2005) suggest that scaffolding is most effective when it engages learners in tasks where there is a critical balance of challenges and supports. Similarly, Walqui (2006) proposes that in pedagogical contexts, there needs to be a balanced dynamic between the “scaffolding structure” (i.e., the planned tasks and procedures) and “scaffolding process” (i.e., the collaborative process of interaction) (p. 164). For the purpose of my research, I adopt this conceptualization of scaffolding as a flexible balance between pedagogical structures and fluid interactional processes.

**Collective scaffolding.** Since the concept of scaffolding was first introduced by Wood et al. (1976), it has been used more widely in the literature to explain various educational processes that are not restricted to teacher-learner interaction but also include activities such as learner-learner interaction in collaborative small groups (e.g., Rojas-Drummond & Mercer, 2003; Rojas-Drummond, Torreblanca, Pedraza, Vélez & Guzmán, 2013). Van de Pol, Volman and Beishuizen (2010) and Rojas-Drummond et al. (2013) highlight the role of peer interaction in fostering learning in a more symmetrical environment through scaffolding strategies such as questioning, modelling, explaining, instructing, providing hints, and feeding back than teacher-peer. According to Rojas-Drummond et al., scaffolding is enacted through collaborative dialogic interactions that “harness the power of talk to engage children, stimulate and extend their thinking, and advance their learning and understanding” (Alexander, 2008, pp 37-38; as cited in Rojas-Drummond et al., 2016, p. 13). Jennings and Di (1996) believe that collaboration is the backbone of Vygotskian SCT because the dialogical aspect of learning that is described in SCT inevitably leads to the idea of collaboration. Vygotsky often drew attention to the influence that collaborative learning had not just on language acquisition, but on all types of cognitive development (Jennings & Di, 1996). He argued that learners’ cognition could benefit from interaction with more experienced learners if the level of their interaction fell within the range of their ZPD (Vygotsky, 1962). According to Lin (2015), collaboration in the Vygotskian tradition essentially aims at social interaction that assists students in advancing through their ZPDs.
Bringing together Vygotsky’s ZPD and Wood et al.’s (1976) concept of scaffolding to study collaboration, Donato (1994) introduced the concept of **collective scaffolding** to talk about the “dialogically constituted guided support” that peers provide each other during collaborative activities (p. 53). Donato hypothesized that collaborative work among language learners could provide the same opportunity for scaffolded help as in adult-child or teacher-student relationships. Based on Vygotsky’s idea that the “more expert other” could be another child instead of a teacher (Smidt, 2009, p. 129), Donato (1994) was interested to find out how scaffolding structures such as modelling, repetition, and linguistic simplification were used by more knowledgeable peers to support learners during social interactions, and to enable them to function inside their ZPD. To test his hypothesis, Donato designed a study exploring whether L2 learners of French could exert a developmental influence on each other’s interlanguage systems in observable ways, and how their social interactions could result in the appropriation of linguistic knowledge by the individual learner. While observing three students working together on an open-ended oral activity, Donato observed that they were able to construct a collective scaffold for each other’s performance (p. 46). Donato believed the learners did this in their interactions by jointly managing components of a problem, marking critical features of discrepancies between what had been produced and the ideal solution, modelling the ideal solution to a problem, and minimizing frustration and risk by relying on the collective resources of the group, among other things.

Donato’s (1994) study differed from other studies that had been conducted on scaffolding at that time because it rejected the notion that scaffolded help was always unidirectional and provided from knower to non-knower. A major critique of Wood et al.’s (1976) original concept of scaffolding was that it could be interpreted as a one-way act, or as an experience constructed by the expert alone (Verenikina, 2008). To an extent, this mirrored the classic Vygotskian view that the ZPD involved interactions between an ‘expert’ and a ‘novice’. Donato’s study led to an alternative understanding of scaffolding within the ZPD because it suggested that L2 learners could “mutually construct a scaffold out of the discursive process of negotiating contexts of shared understanding” (p. 42). During the students’ interaction with each other, they were “at the same time individually novices and collectively experts, sources of new orientations for each other, and guides through this complex linguistic problem solving” (Donato, 1994, p. 46). Donato’s study challenged the view that scaffolded help could only be provided by a more
capable peer. Instead, it suggested that learners were capable of providing support to each other, and that the collective scaffolding process was dependent on the experience and interaction of all learners (Drake, 2014). In light of this, Donato argued that the role of second language learners should be recast so that they are seen as being capable of expanding their own L2 knowledge and extending the linguistic development of their peers through the “collective acquisition of the second language” (p. 53). Donato’s research is significant because it contributed to the expansion of scaffolding to consider ‘expertise’ rather than ‘experts’ (Carmichael-Wing & Vine, 2004) in scaffolding within the ZPD.

Several studies on collective scaffolding in L2 learning have supported Donato’s (1994) theory that learners do not have to be more proficient than their peers to scaffold one another. For example, investigating how ESL learners’ interactional behaviours were influenced by their peers’ language proficiency levels while working on group writing tasks, Watanabe (2008) found that both high- and low- proficiency learners could mutually provide opportunities for learning by sharing ideas and making equal contributions to writing. In a more recent study of small group interaction during a collaborative writing task, Dobao (2014) found that even learners who seemed passive were in fact actively involved as listeners and observers who benefited from the interaction in their groups. Dobao (2014) explains that because no two learners share the same strengths and weaknesses, their roles while working together are dynamic and they can benefit from their interactions in ways that may not be immediately obvious. Brooks and Swain’s (2009) study of the collaborative dialogue among adult ESL learners working together on a story-writing task supports this dynamic shifting of learners’ roles. Analyzing the *languaging* of learners, that is the “process of meaning-making and shaping knowledge and experience through language” (Swain, 2006, p. 98), Brooks and Swain (2009) found that different sources of expertise emerged, depending on the needs of the group. Learners took on the role of expert at different moments during their languaging, and together, they became “more expert” (p. 79), as evidenced by their correct solutions to language problems and the improvements to their stories.

**Exploratory Talk**

Since Donato, other researchers including Swain and Lapkin (1998), Mondada and Pekarek Doehler (2004), Cekate (2007), and Reichert and Liebscher (2012) have challenged the traditional expert-novice model and proposed that expertise is co-constructed by participants in
their collaborative interactions with each other. In keeping with the SCT perspective that language is the primary cultural tool for co-construction of knowledge and expertise, neo-Vygotskian studies focusing on classroom interactions have commonly attempted to identify what types of collaborative talk are productive for children’s learning (Barnes & Todd, 1995; Cazden, 2001; Dawes, Fisher & Mercer, 1992; Mercer, 1995, 2000; Mercer & Littleton, 2007; Michaels, O’Connor, Hall, & Resnick, 2002; Wood, 1992). Mercer (1995, 2000) proposes that for learning to occur during children’s interactions, several interaction functions such as questioning, recapping, eliciting, reformulating, and elaborating play an important role. These functions are typical features within the type of talk referred to as exploratory talk. The concept of exploratory talk was first identified by Douglas Barnes (Barnes & Todd, 1995) as a way of using reasoning language. Drawing on their observational research of children’s talk in collaborative groups, Dawes, Fisher and Mercer (1992), Knight and Mercer (2015), Mercer (1994, 1995, 2000, 2002), and Mercer and Littleton (2007, p. 58-59) offer a frame of reference to make sense of the variety of talk in the classroom. They categorize children’s group interactions into three broad types of talk: disputational, cumulative, and exploratory. Table 2 below outlines the characteristics of each of these three types of talk.

Table 2. Three-part typology of talk

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<tr>
<th>Type of talk</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
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<td>Disputational</td>
<td>Characterised by disagreement and individualised decision making. There are few attempts to pool resources, to offer constructive criticism or make suggestions. The atmosphere is competitive rather than collaborative. Talk in the group does not lead to clear resolutions, or to resolutions supported by agreement.</td>
<td>Short exchanges, consisting of assertions and challenges or counter-assertions (“Yes, it is”, “No, it’s not!”).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cumulative</td>
<td>Speakers build positively but uncritically on what the others have said, simply accepting and agreeing with each other. Partners use talk to construct “common knowledge” by accumulation, without evaluating what is said carefully.</td>
<td>Cumulative discourse is characterized by repetitions, confirmations and elaborations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exploratory</td>
<td>Partners engage critically but constructively with each other’s ideas.</td>
<td>Interactions include:</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Listening actively</td>
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Statements and suggestions are offered for joint consideration. These may be challenged and counter-challenged, but challenges are justified and alternative hypotheses are offered. Partners all actively participate, and opinions are considered before decisions are jointly made. Progress emerges from the joint acceptance of suggestions. Compared with the other two types, in exploratory talk knowledge is made more publicly accountable and reasoning is more visible in the talk.

Note. Adapted from Dawes et al. (1992); Mercer & Littleton (2007, p. 58-59), Mercer (2000, p. 98) and Knight & Mercer (2015, p. 310)

Exploratory talk in the Intermental Development Zone. Describing the three types of talk described above as “social modes of thinking,” Mercer (1995, p. 104) suggest that exploratory talk provides the greatest opportunities for learning within learners’ Intermental Development Zone (IDZ). The IDZ is a theoretical construct that is meant to capture the important role of language and joint action for creating shared knowledge between learners in a group. However, unlike the ZPD, the IDZ is not a characteristic of an individual learner’s ability, but rather “a dialogical phenomenon, created and maintained between people in interaction” (Fernandez, Wegerif, Mercer & Rojas-Drummond, 2002, p. 42). For the IDZ to be created, learners need to be mutually attuned to each other’s shifting states of knowledge and understanding through dynamic dialogue as they negotiate their way through a joint activity (Mercer & Littleton, 2007). Essential to the IDZ is the concept of intersubjectivity, or what Wertsch (1985) describes as the establishment and maintenance of mutual understanding by participants in a joint activity. The notion of intersubjectivity emphasizes collectivity and dialogue, thereby transforming the view of learning as a rigid scaffolding or passive transmission of knowledge from teacher to learner, to a process of fluid and mutual scaffolding where learners themselves are actively involved in creating, negotiating, sharing, and exchanging knowledge (Mercer & Littleton, 2007). In this way, Mercer (2000), Mercer and Littleton (2007) and
Staarman (2009) argue that more than the ZPD, the concept of the IDZ can be used to examine and explain the dialogic process by which *interthinking* and the creation of joint understanding occurs amongst learners through their talk.

In applying the IDZ concept to their analysis of talk among children, Fernandez et al. (2002) explain that the IDZ embodies three claims. Firstly, any joint, goal-directed group task requires the creation and maintenance of a contextual basis of shared knowledge and understanding. Secondly, the language used during this joint task both generates and relies on the creation of this shared contextual framework. Thirdly, the success of the collaborative task depends on the communication strategies that participants in the group use to combine their intellectual resources. However, the research of Fernandez et al. (2002), along with the research of Rojas-Drummond and Mercer (2004) and Mercer, Dawes, Wegerif and Sams (2004), all suggest that in order for communication strategies such as exploratory talk to occur in the group and to be effective, they have to be taught explicitly by the teacher. Few studies have focused on how learners engage in exploratory talk within their IDZ when the teacher is not involved or leading the group discussion (Duarte, 2016). In particular, very little research has examined how multilingual learners agentively draw on their collective multilingual resources to scaffold each other during collaborative tasks, which is where my study makes a contribution.

**Translanguaging and Sociocultural Theory**

The *trans*- aspect of translanguaging theory relates to the sociocultural concept of the *Third Space* (Gutiérrez, 2008; Gutiérrez, Baquedano-López & Tejeda, 1999; Martin-Beltrán, 2014; Moje et al., 2004). The Third Space has been described as a “bridge across official and unofficial discourses, or as a navigational space where students actively cross discursive boundaries” (Martin-Beltrán, 2014, p. 210). Martin-Beltrán (2014) and Moje et al. (2004) explain that the Third Space is a transformational space or a collective ZPD in which “the potential for an expanded form of learning and the development of new knowledge are heightened” (Gutiérrez, 2008, p. 152). This depiction of the Third Space corresponds with the trans-system, trans-space and transformative aspects of translanguaging, where learners engage in fluid discursive practices that cross the boundaries of language systems and spaces, and transform existing cognitive and social structures (García & Li Wei, 2014). In line with this, Martin-Beltrán (2014) propose that when learners translanguish in a Third Space, they bridge
discourses, navigate boundaries, and appropriate new knowledge within a space of collective
development and expanded learning. The sociocultural concept of the Third Space has been
applied by translanguaging scholars in many ways (Jaspers, 2018), for example through Flores
and García’s (2013) work on the linguistic third space, García, Flores and Woodley’s (2015)
work on the in between space, García and Li Wei’s (2014) work on the trans-space, and Li
Wei’s (2011) work on the translanguaging space, which is “a space for the act of
translanguaging as well as a space created through translanguaging” (p. 1223). Like the Third
Space, a translanguaging space has a cognitive as well as a social dimension because learners
bring to this space “not only their own cognitive capacity but also personal histories and
experiences, attitudes, values and ideologies that they have acquired through interactions with
others under specific socio-historical conditions” (Li Wei, 2011, p. 1223).

García and Li Wei’s (2014) concept of translanguaging as co-learning also embodies the
key principles of SCT. Translanguaging as co-learning takes place in classroom environments
where there is individual as well as collective learning and meaning-making, and learners form a
collaborative community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Research has pointed to the
potential of translanguaging to encourage co-learning and collaborative talk among students. A
study that demonstrates this is Duarte’s (2016) sociocultural discourse analysis (Mercer, 2004) of
the peer-peer interaction among 59 10th grade subject matter classes across 4 secondary schools
in Hamburg, Germany. The aims of Duarte’s study were to examine to what extent students who
shared linguistic repertoires used translanguaging during their interactions, and which functions
the use of translanguaging assumed for learning/acquiring new knowledge. These aims were
based on the assumptions that developmental processes occur through peer interaction, and that
for multilingual students, translanguaging was a natural process that played an essential role for
their learning through collaborative talk. Duarte’s study found that students translanguaged both
in their private and class-related talk, but primarily in cognitively demanding on-task talk. Duarte
also found that students predominantly used translanguaging to scaffold meaning through their
interactions, demonstrate higher-order thinking, and jointly solve tasks. For example, students
translanguaged in order to hypothesize, negotiate meaning, show agreement/disagreement and
appraisal, provide counter-arguments, and solve managerial aspects of the task. These functions
were characteristic of high-quality ‘exploratory talk’ (Dawes et al., 1992; Mercer, 1995; Mercer,
Wegerif & Dawes, 1999) that led to more effective content-matter learning. Duarte concludes
based on these findings that the flexible use of students’ linguistic repertoires in a collaborative context allowed them to work within their IDZ (Mercer, 1995), and extended their learning.

Another study on translanguaging conducted from a SCT perspective is Martin-Beltrán’s (2014) study on the discursive practices of culturally and linguistically diverse ELLs in Washington D.C.. Guided by the concept of the Third Space, Martin-Beltrán’s study looked at how learners’ translanguaging practices acted as mediational tools to create a space for collective development and expanded learning. The analysis of learners’ collaborative interactions found that translanguaging enabled peers to co-construct knowledge, allowed learners to meet halfway between their diverse linguistic expertise to co-construct meaning, recognized learners as multilingual language users, and created transformative spaces and expanded zones for learning (Gutiérrez, 2008). In another study on translanguaging informed by SCT, Martin-Beltrán, Daniel, Peercy and Silverman (2017) explored how multilingual kindergarten and 4th grade learners in the mid-Atlantic United States mediated their thinking and learning through buddy pairs. Martin-Beltrán et al.’s analysis of buddy interactions, which was guided by Mercer’s (2005) sociocultural discourse analysis approach, revealed that learners provided cognitive support (e.g., identifying and synthesizing information, developing metacognitive awareness), linguistic support (e.g., providing vocabulary support, making input comprehensible), and socio-emotional support (e.g., building relationships, using body language and physical closeness) to each other. Learners also co-constructed a *zone of relevance* by drawing upon their shared linguistic and cultural backgrounds through translanguaging.

**Conceptual Framework**

Fundamental to the practice of translanguaging is the belief that learning is a *process*, not a product (García & Li Wei, 2014). This resonates with SCT which views learning as a dynamic interdependence of social and individual processes situated in social interaction and the co-construction of knowledge. In agreement with the view that learning is a process, language researchers who use a sociocultural lens argue for the importance of analyzing learner discourse in order to understand how learning occurs during moment-by-moment interaction, and not simply as an outcome of it (Martin-Beltrán, 2014). According to Vygotsky (1978), the learning process involve three essential components: language, culture, and the ZPD. As the learner engages with their sociocultural environment, they learn language and other semiotic means that
mediate their participation in social interactions and processes. In the sociocultural environment of the classroom, learners acquire knowledge interpersonally through their relationships and interactions with others (Vygotsky, 1978). Research informed by SCT has documented how the use of learners’ shared L1 enables them to work within their ZPD by providing dialogic scaffolded support to each other (Antón & DiCamilla, 1999). Learners with shared linguistic and cultural backgrounds often draw on their culturally acquired knowledge and patterns of communicating to make meaning during their collaborative interactions (Fuller, 2007; Johnson, 1995). When students are able to draw on their linguistic and cultural funds of knowledge through translanguaging, the quality of their interactions is enhanced, and they are able to build a scaffold for each other in the co-construction of knowledge (Duarte, 2016; Engen, 2009). Baker (2011) and García and Li Wei (2014) also propose that when learners use all the languages in their repertoire through translanguaging, their linguistic and cognitive capabilities are maximized, thus extending their ZPDs.

Bringing together translanguaging and SCT, I theorize that translanguaging is a way that learners expand their individual and collective learning through their collaborative interactions in the classroom. This is because when a translanguaging space is created collaboratively through their dialogue, learners can draw on their shared knowledge, experiences, and multilingual repertoires to scaffold each other cognitively, socially, and linguistically in a way that expands their individual and group learning. I propose that expertise within these collaborative contexts is distributed because all learners are empowered to take on the role of language experts when they are able to use all the language practices and features (García & Li Wei, 2014) in their linguistic repertoire. I believe that this process is both a cognitive and a social activity (Martin-Beltrán, 2014) informed by the unique sociocultural contexts that learners are situated within. Learning cannot be seen independently of the culture in which a learner is a member of (Bakhurst, 1995). Therefore, translanguaging practices will differ across different speakers in different sociocultural contexts (Martin-Beltrán, 2014). Thus, Garza and Langman (2014) assert that more research should study the translanguaging practices of students from a sociocultural perspective, paying close attention to the sociocultural environments in which students are situated. My research is a step in this direction, as it studies the translanguaging practices of multilingual students in Malaysia, showcasing how their discursive practices are situated within a unique linguistic and sociocultural landscape and educational context.
CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

Case Study Research

This research employed a case study approach (Yin, 2014) grounded in a critical sociocultural framework. A case study design was well-suited to the nature of my research as it allowed me to use a naturalistic and interpretive approach to my data, where I could study my phenomena of interest in their “natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 3). A case study is an “empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context” (Yin, 2009, p. 18). This approach fit well with my research which aimed to provide detailed and holistic descriptions of naturalistic language use among a specific population of learners within a specific sociocultural context and learning setting (Mackey & Gass, 2005). Using a case study allowed for rich contextualization which provided insights into the complex how and why questions related to the language use of the particular groups of learners in my research (Yin, 2014).

Moreover, I found the three unique distinctive characteristics of a case study, as described by Merriam (1998), to complement my data analytic procedures which are described in the subsequent sections of this chapter. Firstly, a case study is always particularistic because it focuses on a particular event, situation, phenomenon, or program. The particular phenomenon I was interested in studying was learners’ use of translanguaging to scaffold each other during their collaborative interactions. The particular groups I studied were two multilingual Grade 5 classrooms, and the particular setting was a Tamil-medium public elementary school in Malaysia. Secondly, a case study is always descriptive because it yields rich and thick descriptions of the phenomenon being studied. My data analysis process involved generating in-depth descriptions of learners’ language use during their interactions with each other. Thirdly, a case study is always heuristic because it helps to illuminate the readers’ understanding of that phenomenon. My analysis was heuristic as it focused not only on describing learners’ language use, but on helping readers to understand the reasons and complex factors surrounding learners’ language choices.
To ensure the systematicity of my case study research, I used Yin (2013)’s four-step framework for designing case studies as guidelines in designing my study. The first step in this process is defining the case which would serve as the main focus of the analysis in the case study. I defined the case in my study as the use of translanguaging in classrooms in a second language context. Step two of this process involves deciding whether the study will be a single- or a multiple-case study. I chose to work with a multiple-case study design involving two cases of two classrooms in order to determine whether my analysis would yield similar or contrastive results across two groups of learners with different proficiency levels and classroom language policies. In the third step in Yin’s framework, it is recommended that case study researchers compile multiple sources of evidence to support the findings of the research. My evidentiary base includes audio- and video- recordings of classroom interactions, interviews with learners and teachers, student records, physical documentation of students’ work, participant-observation notes, photographs of learners in class and at other school events, and other documentation such as Parent-Teacher Association meeting agendas, and staff meeting minutes.

The fourth step in designing a case study involves choosing the most suitable method to analyse the data. The method used by case study researchers often depends on their epistemological standpoints (Crowe et al., 2011). Case study researchers may choose to take on a critical approach which involves questioning their own assumptions and accounting for wider social and political discourses, an interpretivist approach which involves understanding individual and shared social meanings, processes and contexts from multiple perspectives with a focus on theory building, or a positivist approach which involves testing and refining theory through the results of the study (Crowe et al., 2011). Doolin (1998) recommends that as case study researchers take on interpretative case studies, they keep a critical and reflective perspective that accounts for the wider social and political contexts that shape the case in study. In keeping with Doolin’s recommendation, and in keeping with my theoretical framework which views classroom interactions as a shared sociocultural process framed within and informed by larger social and political discourses around race, ethnicity, power, and privilege, I drew on an interpretative sociocultural critical discourse analysis approach to analyse my data.
Vygotsky (1978) explained that a fine-grained moment-by-moment analysis of talk could help researchers to “grasp the process [of learning] in flight” (p. 68, as cited in Martin-Beltrán, 2014, p. 210). In line with this, SLA language researchers using a Vygotskian sociocultural lens have argued that micro-analyses of discourse can lead to a better understanding of how language learning occurs during students’ interactions with each other, and not just as a result of it (Martin-Beltrán, 2014). Following this research tradition, studies focusing on classroom talk have commonly attempted to identify what types of talk are productive for children’s learning (Barnes & Todd, 1995; Cazden, 2001; Mercer, 1995, 2000; Michaels, O’Connor, Hall, & Resnick, 2002; Wood, 1992). This type of research is valuable because it provides a micro-analysis of the communicative events and actions by which learners become “successful” in a relevant knowledge domain (Black, 2007, p. 20). However, studies that take this approach to classroom talk tend to use methods of discourse analysis (DA) that operationalize discourse as being constructed through a particular combination of utterances and exchanges that achieve a particular effect, instead of studying how learners’ interactions are shaped by sociocultural and ideological influences from beyond the classroom (Black, 2007). Florio-Ruane and Morrell (2011) argue that classroom discourse is not neutral because it is “a system of sociolinguistic identification partly created by teachers and students anew in their day-to-day interactions and partly constrained by social, historical, cultural, and political forces and factors” (p 89). Gee, Michaels and O’Connor (1992, p. 228) and Florio-Ruane and Morrell (2011) suggest that DA should not applied to the study of learners’ talk without addressing three features of discourse as sociocultural activity: (i) it is jointly constructed by participants, (ii) it is produced by speakers situated within a particular sociohistorical context, and whose cultural, political, economic, social, and personal realities shape the discourse, and (iii) it is rule-governed in order for it to be held in common with other speakers, but at the same time, it is also creative with improvisation made necessary as the conversation moves to different turns, topics, and speakers.

In keeping with the view of discourse as sociocultural activity, my case study uses sociocultural discourse analysis (SDA) (Mercer, 2004) to describe English learners’ discourse within their collaborative classroom settings. The SDA is a methodology for analysing classroom talk that differs from “linguistic” DA because it is less focused on the linguistic aspect of spoken
language, and more on its functions for the pursuit of joint activity (p. 141). It aims to understand how spoken language is used by learners as a tool for collective thinking and the joint construction of knowledge. The SDA methodology is based on a sociocultural view of the nature and functions of language, thought, and social interaction (Mercer, 2004). The sociocultural perspective considers learning a second language as a semiotic process occurring through learners’ participation in social interaction rather than solely through the internal mental processes of the individual learner (Block, 2003; Lantolf & Thorne, 2005). These interactions are social as well as linguistic because embedded in them are the social norms, values, and practice within shared activity systems (Florio-Ruane & Morrell, 2011). The focus of a sociocultural approach would thus be to explicate the relationships between learner discourse and the shared sociocultural, institutional, and historical contexts in which discourse occurs (Wertsch, 1998).

Adding an interpretative dimension to this approach, I attempted to understand these relationships as perceived from multiple perspectives (myself as a researcher-participant, students, and teachers).

One critique of sociocultural research is that it does not satisfactorily explain how subjects are produced through language and discourse (Lewis & Moje, 2003). Lewis and Moje (2003) argue for a sociocultural approach that extends traditional notions of SCT by considering relationships of agency, power and identity, and how these elements can shape learning and knowledge production. In keeping with this suggestion, I incorporated a critical dimension to my SDA approach because I believed there to be a relationship between learners’ discourse and issues of race, ethnicity, social reproduction, power, and identity within their particular sociocultural context. I view discourse as an important form of social practice which “both reproduces and changes knowledge, identities and social relations including power relations, and at the same time is also shaped by other social practices and structures” (Philips & Jorgensen, 2002, p. 65). This representation of discourse as social practice implies that there is a dialectical relationship between a discursive event (e.g., a classroom conversation) and the situations, institutions, and social structures which frame that event (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997). The three procedures of analysis associated with Fairclough’s (1995) critical discourse analysis framework are: description, interpretation, and explanation. I incorporated these analytic procedures into my sociocultural critical discourse analysis (SCDA) approach by describing the language use of the learners in my study, interpreting the reasons for their language use, and explaining the
complex relationships between their classroom language use, their personal discourses related to identity and race, and the conflicting discourses and social practices (Florio-Ruane & Morrell, 2011) of their teachers, parents, community, and society.

**Research Context**

My research was conducted in Malaysia, a Southeast Asian country which consists of two parts – Peninsular Malaysia (or West Malaysia), and Sabah and Sarawak on Borneo island (or East Malaysia). As of 2017, the population in Malaysia was estimated at 32 million people. 68.8% of the total population comprises the Bumiputera (native status) ethnic group. The Bumiputeras consist of Malays who are mostly concentrated in West Malaysia, and local indigenous populations who are mostly concentrated in East Malaysia. The Chinese ethnic group made up 23.2% of the population, the Indian ethnic group made up 7% of the population, and the remaining 1% is made up of non-citizens (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2018). In West Malaysia where my research took place, all Malays speak Bahasa Melayu, or the Malay language, with various Malay dialects being spoken in different states. Most Chinese in West Malaysia speak Mandarin, and according to the dialect group they belong to and the state they live in, speak other Chinese dialects such as Hokkien and Cantonese. Most Indians in Malaysia speak in Tamil, with a smaller population of Indians who originate from Northern parts of India speaking other Indian languages such as Hindi and Bengali.

Malaysia (known as Malaya pre-independence) has a long history of colonial occupancy by the Portuguese, Dutch, Japanese and British. During British colonial rule from the late 1700s to 1957, the British established different schooling systems for the three main ethnic groups (Malays, Chinese and Indians) with different languages of instruction to keep them segregated in socioeconomic roles associated with their ethnicity (Daniels, 2005). The co-naturalization of language and race functioned to perpetuate raciolinguistic ideologies (Rosa & Flores, 2017) which positioned the Malays, Chinese and Indians as racial Others who were inferior subjects of their English-speaking European colonizers.

Malay-medium schools were established in rural areas to provide basic education for Malays and keep them in their roles as farmers and fishermen. Chinese-medium schools were set up for the Chinese in rural areas, and their education was intended to maintain their ties with
China (Ibrahim, Muslim & Buang, 2011). The Indians were given basic Tamil-medium education in the plantations to keep them in their roles as plantation labourers. A small number of Malay elites and Chinese located in urban areas were given opportunities to attend English-medium British and missionary schools, which allowed them upward socioeconomic mobility through jobs working for the new British colonial order as civil servants, or in the Chinese industrial and commerce sectors.

As a result of the British colonists’ divide-and-rule policy, and the “pyramidal colonial education system” (Ibrahim, Muslim & Buang, 2011, p. 1005) they created, Malayan society had become ethnically, economically, and politically divided, and there were severe inequities in the distribution of opportunities for social mobility and education among the three ethnic groups. Thus, as Malaysia approached its independence from the British after World War II, it was clear that nation-building would be of utmost importance to the nation’s decolonization efforts (Brown, 2007). The Malay language was declared the new national and official language of the country and English was relegated to the status of second language (Hashim, 2009). The rationale for this initiative was multilayered. Whereas on one hand, the selection of Malay was seen as a signifier of national identity and unity among the various ethnic groups in Malaysia, on the other hand it was considered a way to affirm the identity and legitimacy of the Malays as the dominant, ruling ethnic group in Malaysia (Gill, 2014).

Education was also seen as central to the newly-independent Malaysia’s nation-building efforts. This was made manifest in the Barnes Report, a government report published in 1951 on the reform of the education system, which stated that “the primary school should be treated avowedly and with full deliberation as an instrument for building up a common Malayan nationality” (Malaya, 1951, p. 20). However, the Barnes Report was controversial as it recommended the establishment of a national public school system where “two languages, and only two languages should be taught… these two must be official languages of the country, namely, Melayu (Malay) and English” (Article 7). This proposal was met with great resistance from Chinese and Indians educationists who were willing to accept Malay as the official language of the country, but unwilling to accept a bilingual national education system where only Malay and English were represented. The Fenn-Wu Report on Chinese education was published 1951 in response to the Barnes Report, and it took a complete opposite approach to the
Barnes Report, recommending that the Chinese be educated in Chinese-medium schools, with Malay and English taught separately.

As a type of compromise, and out of political expediency, the Razak Report of 1956 proposed the establishment of two public school systems – Sekolah Kebangsaan or “national” schools where Malay was the medium of instruction, and Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan or “national-type” schools where Mandarin or Tamil was the medium of instruction, provided that these schools adhered to curricula and examinations prescribed by the government (Hashim, 2009; Raman & Tan, 2010). However, of the two national-type schools, only the Chinese Mandarin-medium schools were allowed to continue into the secondary and university levels, while the Tamil-medium schools were not allowed to continue beyond the primary school level. All students in the Tamil-medium schools would need to switch into the Malay-medium secondary schools, conditional upon passing a Malay language examination in the national Primary School Achievement Test.

This relegation of Tamil-medium schools to a lower status than Malay- and Mandarin-medium schools has led to a continuous decline in the number of students registered in Tamil schools through the years, and the closing-down of more than 477 Tamil schools between 1957 and 2016 (Ramasamy, 2016). Currently, more than 63% of Tamils schools are classified as under-enrolled, and there are fewer than 150 students registered in each school (Ibrahim, 2018). Many Tamil schools also lack funding because of uncertainty in land ownership. For a school to be fully-aided by the government, the school needs to be built on land owned by the government, or its land title needs to be handed over to the government. As more than half of all Tamil schools are still located on private rubber and palm oil plantations, there is ambiguity in terms of land ownership, which has resulted in 70% of Tamil schools only receiving partial funding from the government (Bernama, 2016; Chin, 2017). As a result of low student enrolment and insufficient funding, Tamil schools commonly face issues such as the lack of infrastructure and facilities, and the shortage of qualified, permanent teachers. This has resulted in more than 40% of Malaysian-Indians choosing to send their children to Malay primary schools which they believe will give their children more upward mobility through better quality primary, secondary and higher education, or to Chinese primary schools which usually have the financial support of wealthy Chinese parents, communities and private organizations (Kenayathulla, 2015).
Research Site

According to Crowe et al. (2011), a central consideration that case study researchers must make when selecting their research site is access. The researcher should get to know the research site well, and the site should be welcoming and trusting of the researcher, so that they can work well together, and the information obtained at the research site is substantive (Crowe et al., 2011; Yin, 2013). For these reasons, I selected as my research site I was very familiar with and had access to – Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan Tamil Bukit Mawar (Rose Hill National Type Tamil Primary School; hereafter Bukit Mawar) (all names used here are pseudonyms). Bukit Mawar is a Tamil school situated in a semi-urban community in a central city in West Malaysia. I taught English (Grades 1-6) in Bukit Mawar from January 2010 to March 2014, and during my time there, built very strong friendships and good working relationships with the teachers, students, parents, and administration. Having attended a national (public) school in Malaysia, and then becoming a teacher in a public school myself, I was also very familiar with the educational and linguistic landscapes of Bukit Mawar and its broader social context.

At the time of my study in June-December 2016, Bukit Mawar had a student enrolment of close to 1,000 students and 60 teachers. The large student enrolment in this school (which was unlike most other Tamil schools) was due to the central location of the school, and its reputation as being one of the best Tamil schools in the district in terms of its academic and co-curricular achievements. Bukit Mawar has an active Parent Teacher Association which has successfully campaigned and raised funding for new facilities including a computer lab and school canteen. In recent years, the school has also received additional funding and academic support from Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO). At the time of the study, students from poor families received free weekend English language classes from the Educational, Welfare and Research Foundation, an NGO aiming to “improve the social, educational and economic welfare of the marginalized Malaysian Indians” (Educational, Welfare & Research Foundation, 2017).

The academic day in Bukit Mawar is divided into two sessions. Students in Grades 1-3 attend school in the afternoon session (1:00pm-6:20pm), while students in Grades 4-6 attend school in the morning (7:30am-12:50pm). Almost all the students in the school are Malaysian-born Indians, with a few being of mixed ethnicity (Chinese-Indians). Most of the teachers are also Indians, with the exception of four Malay teachers who teach the Malay language. All of the
school administrators (Headmistress, Senior Administrative Assistant, Senior Assistant for Student Affairs, Senior Assistant for Co-curriculum, Senior Assistant for the afternoon session Senior) are Indians, while the office administrative staff are Malays.

The official medium of instruction in this school is Tamil, and English and Malay are taught as compulsory subjects from Grade 1 onwards. Most subjects apart from English and Malay are taught in Tamil. An exception to this is Mathematics and Science, which have been taught at different points in time either monolingually in English or Tamil, or bilingually in English and Tamil, Malay and Tamil, or English and Tamil due to frequent shifts in government-mandated policies regarding the medium for teaching Mathematics and Science. At the time of the study, Mathematics and Science were taught in Tamil.

Tamil is used at all official school events such as the weekly school assembly held every Monday, the weekly Hindu prayers held every Friday, the Annual General Meeting of the Parent-Teacher Association, the annual Prize-Giving Day, and the annual Sports Day. Tamil is also the official language used in school documents, such as in letters sent to parents, and student report cards. However, in recent years, most school events and school documents have become bilingual (Tamil and Malay) or multilingual (Tamil, Malay and English) to accommodate the requests of parents who may not be able to read documents only in Tamil, and so that school events can have a wider and more diverse audience. The school environment in Bukit Mawar is a multilingual one, as Tamil, Malay and English are used together on notice boards, signs, handouts, and other artefacts, as shown in the figures below.

Figure 1. Bilingual (Tamil, Malay) sign on a school notice board

Figure 2. Bilingual (Tamil, English) inspirational signs in the school library
Participants

The participants for my study were two Grade 5 (ages 10-11) classes in Bukit Mawar National-Type Tamil Primary School – 5 Seroja and 5 Kekwa. In Bukit Mawar, students are streamed into six classes yearly based on their overall achievement in their year-end final examination which assesses their performance in all their subjects (e.g., Malay, English, Tamil, Math, Science, Moral, Visual Arts). 5 Seroja comprises students with upper-intermediate level of proficiency in English (comparable to a B2 in the CEFR), and 5 Kekwa comprises students with low-intermediate level of proficiency in English (comparable to an A2 in the CEFR). There are 31 students in 5 Seroja (18 girls and 12 boys), and 24 students in 5 Kekwa (8 girls and 16 boys). Most of the students in 5 Seroja come from upper middle-class families, with their parents.
working as bank managers, engineers, teachers, lecturers, lawyers, business and sales executives, and so on. Almost all of the students in 5 Kekwa, on the other hand, come from working-class and lower middle-class families, with most of their parents working as bus, lorry and taxi drivers, tailors, or factory workers. All of the students in 5 Kekwa and 5 Seroja are Malaysian-born Indians, and all of them speak Tamil as their home language, and Malay and English.

The English teacher of 5 Seroja is Ms. Shalini (pseudonym), who has taught at Bukit Mawar for 26 years, and the English teacher of 5 Kekwa is Ms. Kavita (pseudonym), who has taught English there for 8 years. Both Ms. Shalini and Ms. Kavita are also Malaysian-born Indians who speak Tamil as their first language, and Malay and English. In 5 Seroja, there is an English-only (EO) policy in place. Ms. Shalini constantly reminds her students not to use any language other than English when speaking to each other, although she occasionally uses Tamil and Malay herself when interacting with them on matters not related to the content of the lesson, for example when making jokes with them. In contrast, there is no English-only (NEO) policy in 5 Kekwa, and Ms. Kavita does not stop her students from speaking in Tamil or Malay if she overhears them using those languages, although she does not actively encourage it. Ms. Kavita herself frequently uses Tamil and Malay intentionally while teaching, for example, to describe the meaning of new vocabulary and explain complex concepts to them. From time-to-time, Ms. Kavita encourages her students to try to speak in English when they are working together so that they can improve their oral language. Hereafter, I will refer to 5 Seroja as 5S (EO) and 5 Kekwa as 5K (NEO).

The reason for my selection of Grade 5 classes was because based on my experience teaching in the school, I was aware that teachers had more flexibility to implement collaborative learning activities in Grade 5 classrooms. The focus of English lessons in Grades 1-3 are usually on developing basic English literacy skills. In Grade 4, students move from the afternoon session to the morning session, so they usually spend most of the year adapting to a new schedule, teachers and subjects, and different types of assessments than ones they typically experience in Grades 1-3. In Grade 6, English lessons are more exam-oriented, where the focus is on preparing students for the national Primary School Achievement Test that they take at the end of Grade 6. With these considerations in mind and upon consultation with the administrators and teachers in the school, I found Grade 5 classes to be the most accessible, and their lessons to be the most collaborative and interactive, which suited my research objectives very well.
Data Collection

Classroom Data

The school year in Malaysia begins in January and ends in November, with Term 1 going from January to May, and Term 2 going from June to early December. I conducted my research in June – December 2016. Before starting the data collection process, I spent a few weeks getting to know the learners so that they would feel comfortable with my presence in the classroom. In Grade 5, English is taught four times a week, in two one-hour lessons, and two half-hour lessons. I collected the data for my study from all four English lessons in 5S (EO) and all four English lessons in 5K (NEO) every week during the period of my study. I audio- and video-recorded students’ interactions using digital voice recorders and mini wireless camcorders as they worked together on various collaborative activities in small groups of 3-5 in each lesson. I also took photos or made copies of the lesson materials, worksheets, textbooks, notebooks, and students’ work.

The English lessons were structured around thematic units from the Standard Curriculum for Primary Schools (KSSR) Grade 5 textbook. The KSSR uses a modular curriculum approach, whereby five language modules (Listening and Speaking, Reading, Writing, Language Arts, Grammar) are taught separately and in sequence through a series of units that integrate content and language. Examples of these units include Malaysian Folk Tales, Money Matters, Tales from Other Lands, Stories to Learn From, Safety Issues, and the Digital Age, Friends from Around the World, and Pollution, with each unit usually taking two weeks (eight lessons) to complete. In most lessons, there was a collaborative activity related to the topic and focus for the day. Below is an example of a typical 1-hour lesson structure with a collaborative activity (see Table 3). In this example, the teacher is introducing the unit on Safety Issues. This lesson is based on the Listening and Speaking module, with Grammar integrated through a focus on imperative verbs.

Table 3. Sample 1-hour lesson structure on the Safety Issues unit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:00 – 8:15a.m.</td>
<td>Teacher introduces the topic of safety and engages the class in a discussion on how they can be safe in different places in school, outside school, and at home (e.g., school field, playground, computer lab, shopping mall, roads, kitchen). The</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
teacher asks students to think about common safety rules they have heard or seen in those places. The teacher then models how safety rules are formed using imperatives (e.g., Walk slowly) and negative imperatives (e.g., Do not run).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:15 – 8:20 a.m.</td>
<td>Teacher gives students instructions about their task: Each group is assigned a picture of a specific location (from their textbook). The students need to discuss how they can be safe in that location, and come up with five or more safety rules using imperatives and negative imperatives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:20 – 8:45 a.m.</td>
<td>Students work on their task in groups of 3-5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:45 – 8:55 a.m.</td>
<td>Each group takes turns to present their safety rules orally to the rest of the class. The teacher gives them feedback on the relevance of their safety rules, and on the accuracy of their sentences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:55 – 9:00 a.m.</td>
<td>The teacher assigns homework to the students to consolidate what they have learned, and to prepare for their next lesson (e.g., writing the rules down in their English notebook in preparation for the following lesson focusing on writing skills where they will be creating safety posters).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples of collaborative activities in other lessons included writing and reciting poems, writing stories, reports and essays, reading and answering comprehension questions, creating posters, planning, rehearsing and presenting dramas, creating and solving puzzles, giving directions on a map, discussing current events, recreating a graphic novel, inventing gadgets, and so on.

Transcription of classroom data. I selected 100 videos from my data – 50 videos from 5S (EO) and 50 videos from 5K (NEO) – to be transcribed and analysed. My selection criteria for the videos were: (1) videos where learners were working together on a collaborative activity in small groups of 3-5, (2) videos where learners were collaborating and interacting with each other without much interruption, and (3) videos representing a variety of collaborative activities and language skills. Examples of the collaborative activities represented in the videos that were selected for analysis include:

- Rearranging story strips and role-playing the story
- Predicting the ending of a story based on pictures
- Creating safety rules for different settings (e.g., road, park, kitchen, online)
- Writing sentences using different grammatical structures (e.g., interrogative pronouns)
- Rewriting and acting out scenes in a graphic novel (Gulliver’s Travels)
• Identifying the components of a food label and answering questions based on it
• Inventing a food or beverage product and creating a poster to promote it
• Reading and presenting a poem on endangered animals
• Writing emails about their school Children’s Day celebration
• Creating a budget for the month
• Inventing gadgets and creating visual representations of it
• Debating the pros and cons of technology
• Mapping out directions to a place in the neighbourhood
• Writing the dialogue for a story
• Creating riddles and brain teasers
• Writing an expository text about pollution

I transcribed the video-recordings in terms of the audible language that was produced by the learners. I transcribed their audible speech word-for-word using the Inqscribe transcription software, and I used conventional orthography to represent their speech in English and Malay, and Tamil script to represent their speech in Tamil. The transcription conventions I used are detailed in the table below. The different colours that I use to represent Tamil and Malay are not intended to position these named languages as separate entities, but rather to showcase the diversity of language practices present in learners’ translanguaging repertoires.

Table 4. Transcription conventions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Convention</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Green</td>
<td>Words in Tamil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>Words in Malay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( )</td>
<td>Words in round parentheses provide the English translation of Tamil/Malay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;&gt;</td>
<td>Words in angle brackets provide the context of the interaction or the non-verbal actions that were carried out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( )</td>
<td>Words in double round parentheses describe the specific function of the speech acts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>Words in square brackets indicate added words that were not part of the original quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPPER CASE</td>
<td>Emphasis on a word</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Since theory and research on translingual practices suggest that learners use multiple semiotic resources during their interactions (Canagarajah, 2013b; Pacheco, 2016), I made annotations in the angle brackets regarding the paralinguistic and extralinguistic features of learners’ interactions that were directly related to their verbal communication, for example if they pointed at a page in a book while saying “This sentence is in the past tense” or if they did a thumbs-up gesture while complimenting a peer. As an understanding of the shared sociocultural, institutional, and historical contexts in which the discourse occurs is fundamental to the SCDA approach (Mercer, 2004; Wertsch, 1998) which formed my framework for analysis, I also made detailed analytic notes regarding the social, cultural, situational, relational and temporal contexts in which learners’ talk occurred. For example, I recorded in my notes how important cultural festivals and historical celebrations such as Merdeka (Malaysia’s Independence Day) influenced the topic of conversation among the learners, and how the power dynamics in certain groups were represented in terms of the physical and verbal positioning of learners.

Field Notes and Reflexive Journal

In addition to audio- and video-recording these activities, I observed and made field notes of each lesson in its entirety, paying attention to elements such as the teachers’ instruction and scaffolding of activities, teacher-student interactions, teachers’ language use, interactions between small groups, and other multimodal (e.g., non-verbal) elements of the teachers’ and students’ classroom behaviour and interactions. After each lesson, I read through my field notes, watched clips from the video-recordings, and wrote detailed reflections in an electronic reflexive journal (Anney, 2014) based on what I observed. In multiple case studies such as mine which involves 15 small groups in two classes, data sources need to include detailed descriptions of each individual case, and also consider similarities and differences across the cases (Crowe et al., 2011). Thus, each of my reflections included detailed narratives about the teacher, class or groups in the lesson, as well as analytic comparisons to my observations in other lessons. Because of my close collegial relationship with the teachers in my study, both teachers often asked me for feedback and ideas related to their lesson plans, and occasionally asked me to teach a part of, or an entire lesson. For the purpose of this study, I only selected and analysed data from the lessons taught by the two teachers. However, I reflected throughout the study on my own role as participant-observer in the research, and on how my own personal history, background,
interests and perceptions could have an influence on my research process (Anney, 2014; Krefting, 1991). Figures 7 and 8 below are examples of small sections of my field notes and reflection from one lesson.

**Figure 7. Field notes**

**Figure 8. Daily reflexive journal entry**

**Interviews**

Most studies on students’ views towards the use of their L1 have employed data from university and adult ESL or EFL students, and these are usually done using questionnaires (e.g., Dujmovic, 2007; Tang, 2002). In response to Neokleous’ (2017) call for more research that captures the voices of young learners, I interviewed all 55 learners in the study to elicit their perspectives on translanguaging. I conducted semi-structured interviews with the learners in their collaborative small groups, as learners indicated they would be more comfortable being interviewed together instead of individually. During my interviews with learners, I asked them questions about their feelings and perceptions towards their teachers’ respective classroom language policies, their feelings about the languages they spoke, their language choices in the classroom, outside the classroom, at home, during different subjects, with their parents, friends, and teachers, and the reasons for their language choices across these different contexts. As I
considered these interviews as a form of member-checking, I also showed or read out to learners excerpts of their interactions during various collaborative learning activities, and prompted them to talk about the reasons for their use of translanguaging during these activities, and the role of translanguaging in their collaborative process and product. Since I speak the same three languages as the learners (English, Tamil and Malay), they felt comfortable using all three languages during our interviews. This, along with the rapport I had built with the learners throughout the study, allowed me to obtain rich perspectives from them.

I also conducted interviews with the two teachers and the School Improvement Specialist Coach from the district education office who came in every few weeks to observe and evaluate the teachers. During these interviews, I asked them about their beliefs about language learning, their teaching philosophy and pedagogy, their expectations for teachers and learners, and their attitudes towards the use of other languages in the English language classroom. I also attended all school events, teacher meetings and professional development events, and Parent-Teacher Association meetings, and I made field notes on any discussions that related to the learners’ and teachers’ interview responses. The data from all my interviews helped me to present a “mosaic of reality that represents the voices” of my participants (Pacheco, 2016, p. 72), and ensure the trustworthiness of my analysis through the triangulation of my findings.

Data Analysis

My data analysis was conducted in two stages, each stage corresponding with one of the two overarching research questions in my study. According to Lewis, Jones and Baker (2012a), “translanguaging concerns effective communication, function rather than form” (p. 1). Thus, the first stage of the analysis focused on examining the functions and affordances of translanguaging, and the differences in these functions across classroom and translanguaging constellations (Duarte, 2016, p. 7). For the purpose of this study, I defined translanguaging constellations as the different combinations of language features in learners’ language repertoire. This analysis drew on data from learner-learner collaborative interactions in the two classrooms. The second stage of analysis, which focused on learners’ reasons for translanguaging and the factors influencing their language choices, drew on data from my interviews with the learners. In both stages, the analyses were supplemented by data from a variety of sources: my classroom
observations, field notes, reflective journal entries and student artefacts. I used a mixed-methods analysis strategy as it allowed for triangulation (i.e., corroborating my results across different data sources), complementarity (i.e., providing elaboration and clarification of the results from one data source with results from another data source), initiation (i.e., discovering contradictions that helped me to reframe my research focus), and expansion (i.e., allowing me to expand the breadth of my inquiry) (Greene, Caracelli & Graham, 1989; Johnson, Onwuegbuzie & Turner, 2007).

Stage 1: Functions and Affordances of Translanguaging

Qualitative data analysis. The overarching purpose of this stage of data analysis was to find out the affordances of translanguaging for supporting collaborative language learning among students. I aimed to examine the specific functions that were accomplished through learners’ use of translanguaging, and whether these differed according to classroom (each class having a different proficiency level and classroom language policy) and according to translanguaging constellation. The primary data sources for this stage of analysis were 100 transcripts of learners’ collaborative interactions – 50 from 5S (EO) and 50 from 5K (NEO). Each transcript was 30 minutes to 1 hour 30 minutes long. I conducted an inductive SCDA of all 100 transcripts. The unit of analysis was the speech act, which Cohen (2004) defines as “an utterance which serves as a functional unit in communication” (p. 302). According to Neokleous (2004), speech acts have a “literal” and an “illocutionary” meaning (i.e., the intention that the speaker wishes to convey) (p. 320). I operationalized a speech act as an utterance serving a function, such as a statement, request, or a command, separated from other speech acts through pauses, or changes in function (Crookes, 1990; Pacheco, 2016; Saville-Troike, 2008). The length of the speech acts ranged from a string of words to complex sentences.

In total, I analysed 8257 speech acts across the 100 transcripts – 3868 speech acts by the students in 5K (NEO), and 4389 speech acts by the students in 5S (EO). I analysed each of the 8257 speech acts inductively by creating a code to describe the specific function that act served within the context of the collaborative activity. This process was guided by the notes from my classroom observations, the student artefacts I gathered during the observations, and the notes I made during my member-checking interviews with learners, where they talked about the
purposes and functions of their translanguaging during their collaborative interactions with each other.

After developing an initial list of 150 codes, I refined the codes by going through all the analysed speech acts and taking note of codes that were redundant, infrequent, vague, or not representative of the speech acts they refer to. I merged codes that overlapped with each other or were too similar to each other, deleted codes that were used too infrequently, and reworded the codes to increase their clarity. To ensure the confirmability of my analysis, I also shared my codes and parts of my transcripts with two colleagues – a doctoral student and a teacher. This process generated 92% inter-rater reliability. I refined the codes further according to the feedback I received. Through this process, I developed a final list of 100 specific functions.

Next, I grouped the 100 specific functions into four categories according to the broader affordances they served in the collaboration: cognitive-conceptual, planning-organizational, affective-social, and linguistic-discursive. The inductive development of these categories was guided by a review of studies on peer discourse during collaborative learning and classroom scaffolding strategies (e.g., Belland, Kim & Hannafin, 2013; Duarte, 2016; Hill & Hannafin, 2001; Martin-Beltrán, 2017; Masters & Yelland, 2002; Neokleous, 2017; Pawan, 2008; Staarman, 2009; Stålbrandt & Hössjer, 2007; Wielander, 2016), and grounded in the principles of SDA (Mercer, 2004). Using the refined list of specific functions and broad affordances, I applied these codes to re-analyse all the speech acts in the transcripts.

I also identified the translanguaging constellation (i.e., the language features or combination of language features in learners’ repertoires) that was used in each speech act and counted the frequencies of speech acts that occurred through each constellation. The seven translanguaging constellation categories in this coding process were (1) English, (2) Malay, (3) Tamil, (4) English and Malay, (5) English and Tamil, (6) English, Malay and Tamil, (7) Malay and Tamil. Although in theory, translanguaging challenges the social construction of named languages and the dichotomies between them, in practice, translanguaging “often acquires material substance as national ‘languages’” (García, Seltzer & Witt, 2018, p. 64). Translanguaging does not ignore the fact that schools exist in societies with dominant and subordinate languages, and that the practice of language education inevitably involves the use of these languages (García et al., 2018). As the learners in my study were situated within a sociocultural context where proficiency in the dominant languages of English and Malay was seen as a marker of overall language ability, I
believed that it was important to make visible the diverse linguistic practices and rich features of these learners’ translanguaging repertoires. Additionally, in response to Li Wei and Ho’s (2018) suggestion that the different languages in multilingual learners’ minds “play different roles and interact with one another in complex and dynamic ways for different purposes and under different conditions” (p. 36), I was interested in identifying whether there were significant patterns or pertinent differences between the purposes and functions accomplished through the various translanguaging constellations in learners’ repertoire, with the ultimate aim of expanding their repertoire to include all their language practices.

In addition to identifying the specific functions and broad affordances accomplished through translanguaging during learners’ collaborative interactions, I was also interested in examining whether translanguaging moved learners’ interactions towards exploratory talk (Mercer, 1995, 2000; Mercer & Littleton, 2007). The analysis of learners’ interactions in this stage was based on Mercer and Littleton’s (2007) three-part typology of talk, as detailed in Table 2. While Mercer does not examine the role of translanguaging in creating opportunities for exploratory talk, I posit, as Duarte (2016) does, that translanguaging plays a key role in moving learners’ collaborative interactions towards exploratory talk. In order to identify the role of translanguaging in facilitating exploratory talk, I used the speech event as the unit of analysis. Like Saville-Troike (2008) and Pacheco (2016), I defined a speech event as a unified set of speech acts that have the same participants, the same general topic, and the same general purpose for communicating. Li Wei (2011) proposes an analytic focus on moments where specific actions lead to transformations. In line with this, I identified moments during learners’ collaboration where the use of translanguaging led to significant transformations in the type of interactions between learners. To do this, first I identified two types of speech events in the transcripts: (1) speech events where learners translanguaged throughout the task, and where group members encouraged the use of translanguaging, and (2) speech events where learners’ use of translanguaging was limited, usually because one or more group members enforced an English-only policy within the group and/or monitored the language use of their peers. I analysed each speech event by determining whether the speech acts within that speech event contained specific functions that were characteristic of disputational, cumulative, or exploratory talk (Mercer, 1995, 2000; Mercer & Littleton, 2007). Mercer (2004) advises that these three categories are not meant to be a rigid coding scheme, but rather a heuristic device to recognize the extent to which
learners are acting collaboratively, and engaging in critical reflection or the mutual acceptance of each other’s ideas. Mercer adds that the analysis of children’s talk needs to maintain a “crucial involvement with the contextualised, dynamic nature of talk” (p. 146).

**Quantitative data analysis.** According to Mercer (2004), the SDA should not be limited to only qualitative or quantitative methods of data collection and analysis because different types of methods can enable different types of data to be obtained, and different types of research questions to be addressed. Mercer explains that SDA may employ qualitative analysis methods such as the coding scheme approach used here where speech acts are assigned to categories, and also quantitative methods such as measuring the frequencies of occurrence of particular types of language use. Therefore, after coding learners’ speech acts across all 100 transcripts according to their specific function, broad category, and translanguaging constellation, I employed the mixed methods analysis strategy of transforming the qualitative data into quantitative form (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003) by calculating the frequencies and percentages of the codes. I used SPSS Statistics software to conduct cross-tabulation analyses (tests that determine whether there is a relationship between multiple categorical variables) and chi-square tests of independence (correlation tests that determine whether specific categorical variables are significantly associated to each other) in order to identify whether there were statistically significant differences in the frequencies and percentages of the affordances according to classroom and translanguaging constellation. I consolidated the results of these quantitative data analysis with the findings from the qualitative discourse analysis, interviews with learners and teachers, classroom observations, and student artefacts.

**Stage 2: Reasons and Factors Influencing Learners’ Use of Translanguaging**

From a sociocultural perspective, learners’ language practices can be understood in relation to the affordances and constraints in a particular context (da Silva Iddings, 2018). Thus, the purpose of this second phase of data analysis was to understand learners’ reasons for translanguaging, and the factors that enabled or constrained their use of translanguaging and the specific language choices they made. The primary data sources for this stage of analysis were semi-structured interviews with the 55 learners, and the secondary data sources were my classroom observations, reflexive journal entries, and interviews with the two teachers. I
conducted an inductive thematic analysis (Nowell, Norris, White & Moules, 2017) of interview responses that related to their reasons for translanguaging, and factors that influenced the language choices they made. While reading through the transcripts, I highlighted pertinent quotes from learners that addressed the research question. Next, I grouped together quotes that were similar to each other or that addressed the same issue into themes and sub-themes. For example, when a learner made reference to their culture (e.g., “I’m a Tamilian”) in response to the question on why they chose to speak in Tamil during their interactions, I categorized that under ‘asserting cultural identity’, and when a learner made reference to friendship or relationships (e.g., “Using Tamil helps us to mix with friends”), I categorized that under ‘building rapport with peers’. Throughout this process, I moved backwards and forwards between the interview transcripts, field notes, student artefacts, and reflexive journal entries to corroborate the emergent themes from the interview data with information from the other sources.

Since Mercer’s (2004) SDA approach aims to examine the relationships between learners’ discourse and the sociocultural, institutional, and historical contexts in which their discourse occurs, I also wanted to identify the broader factors influencing learners’ use of translanguaging in the classroom. Thus, I attended to responses that indexed broader discourses related to these factors. For example, when learners referenced the marginalization of Malaysian-born Indians in response to my question on why they used more Tamil than Malay (e.g., “This is their country, their language”), I discussed this response in relation to current discourses on ethnic tensions and marginalization in the country. In keeping with my SCDA approach, I paid attention to the discourses or ideologies that surfaced in learners’ conversations, the social identities that were enacted, power relations that were produced or that were reproductive of larger power systems, and aspects of talk that were considered agentive (Lewis & Moje, 2003).

**Trustworthiness and Limitations**

Lincoln and Guba (1985) propose “trustworthiness” as a measure for evaluating the validity, reliability and worth of naturalistic studies. Establishing the trustworthiness of a study requires that a researcher establish credibility (confidence in the ‘truth’ of the findings), dependability (the consistency of the findings over time), confirmability (the extent to which the findings are neutral and not biased by the researcher, and the degree to which it can be
corroborated by other researchers), and transferability (applicability of the findings in other contexts) (Anney, 2014; Baxter & Eyles, 1997; Holloway & Wheeler, 2002; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Macnee & McCabe, 2008). To ensure that my research was trustworthy, I employed several techniques recommended by Lincoln and Guba (1985).

Firstly, in order to establish the credibility of my research, I used the technique of prolonged engagement in the research site. Extended engagement with the participants can help the researcher to gain the participants’ trust, and to understand participants’ culture and context better, thereby minimizing distortions of information that could arise because of the researcher’s presence in the site (Anney, 2014). Although my data collection per se only lasted for 6 months, I had spent 4.5 years in the school before beginning my research there and was thus very familiar with the culture and context of the school. In addition, I spent a few weeks prior to my data collection building relationships with the teachers and students in 5S (EO) and 5K (NEO), and observing not only their English lessons, but other subjects as well. I also ensured the credibility of my classroom data by conducting member-checking interviews with the students, as described in the Interviews section above, and by triangulating and corroborating the classroom data with the other data I collected. I drew on Denzin (1978)’s within-method triangulation approach (i.e., using multiple qualitative data collection methods, such as the classroom observations, interviews, field notes, reflections, and artefacts) and between-methods triangulation approach (i.e., using both qualitative and quantitative data analysis approaches). According to Phoenix and Orr (2017), the omission of outliers or exceptional data, that is, “data which, while telling us something about a central theme, deviates significantly from its defining plotline and characteristics” (p. 272), can impact the rigour and credibility of qualitative and quantitative research. Phoenix and Orr remind researchers not to disregard exceptions in the data in their pursuit of commonalities, patterns and prevalence. In line with this suggestion, in addition to reporting the most frequent functions and themes that emerged in my quantitative and qualitative analyses, I highlight and discuss important exceptions in the data.

I also established the dependability of my research by creating an audit trail, whereby I kept detailed accounts of my case selection, data collection, and data analysis (Anney, 2014; Bowen, 2009; Li, 2004), as well as a record of my raw data, transcripts, interview notes, field notes, reflections, and all documents collected from the research site for transparency cross-checking (Guba & Lincoln, 1982). I also used peer examination (Bitsch, 2005; Krefting, 1991) or
respondent validation (Crowe et al., 2011), meaning, I discussed my research process and findings with my doctoral colleagues with expertise in qualitative and quantitative research before, during and after my data collection, so that they could help me see my methods, data, and analyses from multiple perspectives, and help me become more reflexive. The audit trail and peer examination also helped me to establish the confirmability of my study.

In addition, I kept a reflexive journal which included daily reflections on the lessons I observed, personal reflections such as any “Aha” moments I experienced throughout the course of my study, accounts of how my presence in the classroom may have influenced the teachers’ or learners’ actions and interactions, and details of all the events that took place in the school (Anney, 2014; Krefting, 1991). Keeping this reflexive journal also helped me become more aware of my own biases as an insider-outsider (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009). As a former teacher in the context I was researching, reflecting on my data collection and analysis through this reflexive journal made me more critically conscious of how my own biases could influence how I perceived and interpreted the data. Finally, I accounted for the transferability of my research by providing thick description, which involves the researcher providing rich and descriptive accounts of the methodology and context – from the data collection procedures, research site, to the reporting of the findings and production of the final report (Anney, 2014; Li Wei, 2004). By describing the research in great detail, Lincoln and Guba (1985) posit that the researcher can evaluate the extent to which the conclusions of the study are transferable to other contexts.

Crowe et al. (2011) reminds case study researchers that they should select a context or case “not because it is representative of other cases, but because of its uniqueness, which is of genuine interest to the researchers” (p. 5). While I was genuinely interested in the uniqueness of the Malaysian context, one of my main objectives in conducting this research was to suggest implications and recommendations based on my research findings for language researchers, educators and policymakers in multilingual contexts such as Canada. With this in mind, I selected my participants using purposive sampling, which is “selecting units (e.g., individuals, groups of individuals, or institutions) based on specific purposes associated with answering a research study’s questions” (Teddlie & Yu, 2007, p. 77). Since my research questions related to the use of translanguaging among multilingual English learners, I purposefully selected a context where students were linguistically diverse and learning English as a second language, and where the students could provide in-depth findings on the phenomenon of translanguaging.
CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS – AFFORDANCES OF TRANSLANGUAGING IN COLLABORATIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING

This chapter explores the affordances of translanguaging in collaborative language learning among trilingual ELs in two Grade 5 classrooms in Malaysia. Specifically, it addresses the following research question: What are the affordances of translanguaging in collaborative language learning among multilingual learners in two Grade 5 English language classrooms in Malaysia? In the first section of this chapter, I present the results of my discourse analysis of learners’ collaborative interactions. This analysis includes an overview of the translanguaging constellations used in learners’ interactions, and the cognitive-conceptual, planning-organizational, affective-social, and linguistic-discursive affordances of their translanguaging use. I expand on each of the four broad affordances categories to show the specific functions accomplished through translanguaging within that broad category, and I discuss the affordances of those functions for scaffolding students’ learning. I also discuss how the cognitive-conceptual, planning-organizational, affective-social and linguistic-discursive affordances of translanguaging facilitate exploratory talk during learners’ collaborative interactions. In the second section of the chapter, I discuss significant differences in the use of translanguaging by learners in 5K (NEO) and 5S (EO), and differences in the affordances of translanguaging according to the translanguaging constellations that were used.

Learners’ Use of Translanguaging During Their Collaborative Interactions

Learners used translanguaging widely in all 100 transcripts that were analyzed. In each transcript, learners’ speech acts were coded into seven translanguaging constellations (Duarte, 2016, p. 7): (1) English, (2) Malay, (3) Tamil, (4) English and Malay, (5) English and Tamil, (6) English, Malay and Tamil, (7) Malay and Tamil. The most frequently used translanguaging constellation overall was English and Tamil, with 37.1% of all 8257 speech acts using a combination of these two languages. Tamil speech acts were the second most frequent type of language use during learners’ interactions, with an overall percentage of 35.7%. English speech acts were the third most frequent language use overall, with a percentage of 24.2%. Translanguaging constellations with Malay in them (Malay and Tamil/English and Malay/Malay,
English, Malay and Tamil) were less frequent. Figure 9 below displays the overall distribution of translanguaging constellations in learners’ speech acts, and Figure 10 presents the general breakdown of these translanguaging constellation by classroom.

**Overall Translanguaging Constellations Used in Learners’ Speech Acts (%), n = 8257**

*Figure 9. Overall translanguaging constellations used in learners’ speech acts (%)*
The results of a chi-square test of independence indicated that there was a statistically significant difference between the class that learners were in and their translinguaging constellations ($\chi^2(6) = 564.14, p = 0.000$). Results of follow-up cross-tabulation analyses revealed that learners in 5S (EO) used English ($z = 22.3$), English and Malay ($z = 2.3$) and Malay ($z = 4.6$) significantly more than learners in 5K (NEO). Learners in 5K (NEO) used significantly more Tamil ($z = 14.2$), English and Tamil ($z = 6.0$) and Malay and Tamil ($z = 2.8$) than learners in 5S (EO). The reasons for these differences are explored in the subsequent part of this chapter, and discussed further in Chapter 6.
To identify the affordances of translanguaging during learners’ collaborative interactions, I conducted an inductive discourse analysis of 8257 speech acts across 100 transcripts. For each speech act, I identified the specific function it served within the context of the collaboration. This analysis yielded a list of 100 specific functions. Appendix A provides a full list of these functions, with illustrative examples and contextual notes for each function. The 100 specific functions developed through the inductive analysis of learners’ speech acts were then grouped into four broad affordances categories (25 functions per category) as follows:

1. **cognitive-conceptual affordances** – functions that focus on understanding the concepts and content related to the task, and the exchange of information and ideas
2. **planning-organizational affordances** – functions that focus on planning and organizing roles, responsibilities and tasks within the group, and coordinating the collaboration
3. **affective-social affordances** – functions that focus on building rapport, engaging peers in social interactions, providing socio-emotional support, and assisting each other
4. **linguistic-discursive affordances** – functions that focus on learning and using the linguistic structures and discourse required to complete the task, and supporting peers’ linguistic and discursive knowledge

Overall, the most frequent category that emerged in learners’ collaborative interactions was cognitive-conceptual (28.2%), followed by planning-organizational (27.5%), affective-social (24.5%), and linguistic-discursive (19.8%).

**Cognitive-Conceptual Affordances**

The cognitive-conceptual affordances category encompasses specific functions which provided a supportive framework within the collaboration for the effective sharing of information and knowledge, the exchange of ideas and concepts, and the application of cognitive strategies to complete tasks and solve problems. Table 5 below presents the 25 specific functions that were coded under the cognitive-conceptual category, and examples of speech acts for each function, organized from most frequent to least frequent.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specific Cognitive-Conceptual Function (%)</th>
<th>Example of Speech Act (* indicates that it is the example of the specific function)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Working out/explaining the answer to a question/solution to a problem (13.0%) | Vijay: Bank-ல் மொழிப் பெறுவது போலாக கொண்டிருக்கு, parents fifty வருடத்தில் வந்தது, dictionary எப்பதின் வாங்கமும்? (If I put thirty dollars in the bank, give fifty dollars to my parents, how can I buy the dictionary, too?) <during an activity requiring learners to create a budget with a hypothetical allowance of $100>  
Amira: Dictionary பற்றி தெரியாது, கதத்து எண்கூறல் செய்யப் பதிேசலேயேபாலன் (If the dictionary is less than twenty dollars, you can buy it) |
| Making a suggestion related to the content of the task (10.9%) | Nisha: Okay, we take a phone, கொண்டிருக்கேற்று போலேயேகொண்டிருக்கேற்று, அல்லது தொடர்வட்டேலேயே GPS-ல் என்று கொண்டிருக்கேற்று (Okay, we take a phone, if we don't know where an object is, we can use the GPS to find it) <inventing a new gadget based on an existing one> |
| Building/elaborating on peers' answers/suggestions (10.4%) | Prashant: Free prizes வெளிப்படுத்த அருங்களேயே, pack-ல் என்று எல்லெனேயேர்களேயே (You know how they have free prizes, let's write that on the pack) <creating a food label for their own imaginary food product>  
Kishen: iPad, hmm, இல் இல் iPad, iPod, என்று என்று இல் iPad, hmm, no, no, iPod, if someone buys it, they'll get an iPod |
| Providing a rationale/explanation for an answer/suggestion (5.5%) | Risha: தேனே digital camera என்று, தேனே mobile phone என்று (Instead of the digital camera, we could pick the mobile phone) <selecting the gadget they would buy as a gift for a parent>  
Divya: தேனே mobile phone (No)  
Risha: தேனே வெளிப்படுத்தம் mobile phone என்று, என்று என்று photo என்று, call என்று, mobile phone என்று என்று (You know why we should pick the mobile phone, we can take photos with it, we can make calls, we can write a lot about the mobile phone) |
<p>| Checking/asking peers for the answer to a question/solution to a problem (5.2%) | Sivashakti: Bank balance, balance என்று, mobile phone என்று, balance என்று (How much will the bank balance be? I haven't calculated it) &lt;during an activity requiring them to create a budget&gt; |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity Type</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Providing/drawing peers’ attention to information in books/texts/other materials (4.8%)</td>
<td>Bavani: Here expiry date, here is <a href="#">maklumat pemakanan</a> (Here's the expiry date, here's the nutritional information) &lt;pointing out parts of a real food label to her peer during an activity where they have to create their own food label&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking for/providing factual information related to the topic (4.7%)</td>
<td>Harini: Water pollution <a href="#">வாழ்வு குற்று?</a> (How does water pollution happen?) &lt;while writing about the causes and effects of pollution&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looking for answers/ideas/information in books/texts/other materials (4.3%)</td>
<td>Tanushri: Water pollution happens when the rubbish goes into the water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thinking out loud to brainstorm ideas/answers/course of action (4.2%)</td>
<td>Sivashakti: <a href="#">தருண் ஆனையையைச் செய்தல் வைத்தும் பொருள்? தான்?</a> (How much would I give my mother? One hundred?) &lt;thinking out loud during a budgeting activity&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking peers for clarification/elaboration on their suggestions/instructions (4.0%)</td>
<td>Divya: <a href="#">அதி கெதோ ஆதிக் பொருள்</a> (Put the rubber band there)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recounting events/details from one's personal life that are related to the topic (3.7%)</td>
<td>*Tanjooa: <a href="#">இந்த பெண் பெண் குடும்பத்துக்கு, இன்னும் குடும்பத்துக்கு, இன்னும் குடும்பத்துக்கு</a> (I've done that before, supposed to climb down, but I ran up)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making a counter-suggestion/offering an alternative answer (3.4%)</td>
<td>Yashwin: Mobile phone-ம் camera-யும் combine <a href="#">பனலாம்</a> (We can combine the mobile phone and camera) &lt;inventing a gadget by combining two existing ones&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrating to peers how to answer a question/solve a problem (2.8%)</td>
<td>Vetti: Three thousand [முற்றத்], thousand minus <a href="#">பனலாம், அப்பொருட்கள் விளக்கம்</a> (Write three thousand, then subtract a thousand, that's how you will know the balance) &lt;while showing his peer how to do a math calculation&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggesting a topic/idea for the group to work on (2.8%)</td>
<td>Tarun: <a href="#">தனியான கண்டத்துக்கு என்று, தனியான கண்டத்துக்கு அரங்க வருடத்தில் வெளியூர்</a> (Let's create a story, let's write about what happened in our lives) &lt;while creating a script for a drama&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity Description</td>
<td>Excerpts</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Evaluating peers' suggestions/the group's work based on certain criteria (2.6%) | Priya: Okay first, interesting <deciding whose suggestion to choose based on which one was the most interesting and unique>
*Manickam: Interesting நட்டை...interest பெருமை Rohit மாசைக் கருவி, unique நட்டை அவர்கள்படி தருவா|*
(If interesting... the one that is interesting is Rohit's, his is the one that's unique) |
| Clarifying/elaborating on own answer/suggestion (2.4%) | Silvia: 120 gram okay ah? (Is 120 grams okay?)<deciding on the weight of their created food product>
Meena: How many pieces?
*Silvia: ஒரு பிற்கு ஒரு மாசை, 120 ஗ிராம் நெட்டு வெட்டு (One piece, 120 grams net weight) |
| Challenging peers' ideas/answers by providing a rationale (2.2%) | Sivashakti: Do not touch the gas? <reading a kitchen safety rule a peer has created>
அந்த பெருமை விளையாட்டுகள், நாம் முடிய பாலத்திற்கு நெட்டு வெட்டு? (If you've run out of gas in your stove and you're fixing a new gas [canister], you have to touch it right?) |
| Explaining how one arrived at an answer/the logic of a solution (2.0%) | Kartik: செவ்வக பரப்புடன் லார், R-ன் செவ்வக்கள் (I saw it, I looked for it under R) <explaining how he found the meaning of a word in the dictionary> |
| Asking for information from books/texts/other materials (1.9%) | Meena: Gulliverன் பெருமை nurse பெப்பேதர்பத்தின்? (Is the name of Gulliver’s nurse Glumdalclitch? <referring to their Gulliver’s Travels graphic novel> |
| Asking for the rationale/explanation for peers' actions/answers/suggestions (1.8%) | Kishen: This one forty-two <stating the page number where an answer to a question can be found>
*Suren: Forty-two பட்டை என்று பதிவு? (How do you know it's forty-two?) |
| Getting ideas/information for the task from local/popular culture (1.6%) | Kamini: Star Trek, you watch the new one ah, they wearing big glasses, want to see anything, can turn and see, you want to do like that? |
| Identifying/correcting a mistake in one’s own answer/work (1.6%) | Tanuja: Silap-ன் chapter one இன்றையப்பாத்துத் (I mistakenly read from chapter one) |
| Discussing cause and effect relationships/pros and cons of an idea/action (1.5%) | Amira: Rule தோன்றும்போது, accident தந்தும்போது (If there are no rules, accidents will happen) <discussing the importance of safety rules> |
| Analyzing/discussing a topic/issue from multiple perspectives (1.5%) | Kamini: சோகம் பதுக்கும், முச்சக்கத்தில் என்று பதிவு பதிவு (If I was the judge, I’d give the same judgement to everyone) <discussing what she would do if she was the judge in a story they are reading> |
| Using objects/materials in the environment creatively as part of the task (1.1%) | Divya: மார்க்கம் (These are mangosteens) <tearing up paper and putting into a basket to use as props in their drama> |
As shown in the examples above, translanguaging played an important role in helping learners perform important cognitive-conceptual functions, which in turn scaffolded their collective learning. Learners most frequently used translanguaging to work out answers to questions and solve problems together. They also offered suggestions related to the content of the task, and built on each other’s suggestions through a combination of languages, most commonly, English and Tamil. In addition, learners demonstrated higher-order and critical thinking skills through their translanguaging interactions (e.g., rationalizing their suggestions, justifying their answers, evaluating each other’s suggestions and work based on specific criteria, challenging and counter-challenging each other’s ideas, clarifying and elaborating on ideas, analyzing topics and issues from multiple perspectives, and discussing cause and effect relationships). This is consistent with the findings of Carroll and Sambolín Morales’ (2016) and Duarte’s (2016) studies which found that translanguaging helped students to perform higher-order thinking functions such as hypothesizing, negotiating, and solving problems. The higher-order and critical thinking functions demonstrated through learners’ translanguaging are characteristic of exploratory talk where learners engage critically and constructively with each other’s ideas (Dawes et al., 1992 & Mercer, 1995). One of the factors that facilitated the use of higher-order thinking skills during learners’ interactions in 5K (NEO) was Ms. Kavita (NEO)’s use of translanguaging to explain terms such as ‘cause’ and ‘effect’ in her speaking and in her visual aids (see Figure 11 below). This helped learners to understand the meaning of those concepts, and consequently be able to engage in discussions in their own small groups about cause and effect relationships in different issues such as pollution.
Translanguaging was also a significant part of learners’ individual learning and metacognition. Learners drew on all three languages when thinking out loud to brainstorm ideas and answers, or to plan their work. They showed critical awareness of themselves as learners by thinking out loud when identifying mistakes in their own work and planning solutions to those mistakes.

Although learners in both 5K (NEO) and 5S (EO) did not use much translanguaging in their writing as their final written work needed to be in English, they demonstrated agency in seeking out information from bilingual and multilingual books, texts, and other materials, and this helped them to accomplish specific cognitive-conceptual functions such as ‘Providing/drawing peers’ attention to information in books/texts/other materials,’ ‘Looking for answers/ideas/information in books/texts/other materials,’ ‘Asking for information from books/texts/other materials’ and ‘Discussing cause and effect relationships/pros and cons of an idea/action.’ For example, before learners in 5K (NEO) identified the pros and cons of technological devices such as mobile phones, they used bilingual Tamil-English dictionaries provided by Ms. Kavita (NEO) to find the meaning of key vocabulary on the topic, as shown in the figure below.

Figure 11. Ms. Kavita (NEO)’s use of translanguaging to explain cause and effect relationships
In another example, learners used bilingual dictionaries to complete an individual activity in their textbook on endangered animals. Later on, when learners in 5K (NEO) had to write a paragraph in their small groups on an endangered animal, they searched their Science textbook (which was in Tamil) to find facts about their chosen animal. Once they had obtained this information, they used their bilingual dictionaries to look for the English vocabulary they needed to write the information. Getting factual information in Tamil from their Science book and linguistic support from their bilingual dictionaries resulted in learners being able to write paragraphs with accurate factual information and advanced English vocabulary (see Figure 13).
Planning-Organizational Affordances

The planning-organizational affordances category was used to classify interactions that dealt with the planning and organization of the task, rather than on the content of the task itself. This category included specific functions which focused on planning and organizing roles, responsibilities and tasks within the group, and on coordinating the process of collaboration. Table 6 below presents the 25 specific functions that were coded under the planning-organizational category, and examples of speech acts for each of these specific functions, organized from most frequent to least frequent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specific Planning-Organizational Function (%)</th>
<th>Example of Speech Act</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distributing/negotiating roles/responsibilities/tasks in the group (8.7%)</td>
<td>* Tanuja: எல்லையும் பார்வையில் பெறுகை அடையாளம்  கொண்டு வாக்கியங்கள் பல கோட்டங்கள் (All of us will read, we'll read one sentence each) &lt;planning the presentation of their work&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning/organizing materials for the activity (7.2%)</td>
<td>Gayatri: Malay Utusan மலாய் உட்சனா, மாலாய் தேசியச்சார் (If we get the Malay Utusan [a newspaper in the reading corner], that'll be good)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task Description</td>
<td>Example Interaction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asking to borrow/offering to lend/negotiating for books/stationery/other material (7.2%)</td>
<td>Hema: Ravi, வாய்ந்தது கவனம் dictionary வந்தார் (Ravi, give us the dictionary for a while)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offering to work on a specific task (7.1%)</td>
<td>Harini: நான் dialogue எழுதுமாம் (I'll write the dialogue) &lt;when the group is preparing a drama based on a story in their textbook&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explaining the procedures/instructions of the task (6.1%)</td>
<td>Poorna: எது கையில் வந்து கொள்ளலாம் harmful எது கையில் வந்து useful எது (If the question [statement] is bad, we must write 'harmful', if the question [statement] is good, we must write 'useful') &lt;activity requiring them to decide whether each statement about the Internet indicates whether it is useful or harmful&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giving peers directions about what to do during the task (6.0%)</td>
<td>Sunny: என் Maggie மை (Cut one more Maggie [label]) &lt;while pointing to where her peer should paste the label on their poster&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning/rehearsing the group's presentation of their work (5.9%)</td>
<td>Amira: Okay first, good morning everyone, my name is Amira, என் எள்ளட ஀ச்சார் (Okay first, good morning everyone, my name is Amira, I'll say that loudly) &lt;rehearsing the group’s presentation of their finished work&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning how to execute/complete a task/solve a problem (5.7%)</td>
<td>Tanuja: முதல் chapter-ல் பார்க்காலாம், அதன் முன்னையே பார்க்காலாம் அதன் பதிப்பால் அத் பதிப்பால் (We need to read the first chapter, then whichever sentence matches that chapter, we'll put that as number one) &lt;during an activity where they have to rearrange sentences according to the sequence of events in Gulliver's Travels&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checking/identifying what has been done/what else needs to be done (5.5%)</td>
<td>Monisha: Okay மேலும் negative இன்றியாக்கம் (Okay we've written three negatives &lt;writing about the pros and cons of social media&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meena: Next, positive things</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Checking about the instructions/procedures of the activity (5.1%)</td>
<td>Premil: எங்கே எங்கே எங்கேே தேர்தலும்? Post office தேர்தலும்? (Where are we going? Post office, right?) (Where are we going? Post office, right?) &lt;during an activity where they have to map out directions to the post office&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keeping track of the allocated time/reminding peers of the remaining time (3.4%)</td>
<td>Saravanan: வந்தார் வந்தார் வந்தார் வந்தார் வந்தார் (Only four minutes left, let's do this fast)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requesting for a turn/role in the task (3.3%)</td>
<td>Thiva: இயல் வாழ்க்கை, நான் மீண்டும் வாழ்க்கை please? (If you're not writing, can I write one, please?)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Example</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disagreeing with peers' suggestions/telling peers not to do something</td>
<td>Suren: Who murdered the Prime Minister? &lt;suggesting sentences using interrogative pronouns&gt;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>*Tilly: என் என்! Murder எப்படிக்கும் (No! Don't write murder)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asserting own role in the task</td>
<td>Dinesh: நான் என்னும் நாய்கள் (I'll be the narrator) &lt;when the group has to plan and present a</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>drama&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moving the task along/getting peers back on track</td>
<td>Divya: பட்டை வளைவு, பட்டை வளைவு வளைவு வளைவு வளைவு வளைவு வளைவு வளைவு வளைவு வளைவு வளைவு வளைவு வளைவு வளைவு (Not now, we need to discuss what we should choose first) &lt;when her group members each start cutting out different gadgets from their worksheet before deciding which gadget the group wants to select&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussing/deciding on the goals/scope of the task</td>
<td>Risha: தமிழ் எழுதி எழுதி எழுதி எழுதி எழுதி (Let's write six) &lt;deciding on how many safety rules to write&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reminding peers about the teacher’s instructions</td>
<td>Tanuja: நான் என்னும் தயாரிப்பாளர் குறைப்பு குறைப்பு குறைப்பு குறைப்பு குறைப்பு குறைப்பு (Teacher said to write that sentence first)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessing a situation/making a suggestion to solve a problem</td>
<td>Elango: நீ என்னும் வரலாறு, பிரச்சனை எண்ணின் (If you come over here, there won't be a problem) &lt;to a peer who does not have space to work on his side of the table&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reporting on own progress/completion of a task</td>
<td>Lingkam: நான் என்னும் எழுதியே, நீ என்னும் எழுதியே (I finished already (I've finished already))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking peers for instructions/directions on what to do</td>
<td>Hema: நான் என்னும் மேலும் கூறியே என்னும் மேலும் கூறியே (What do I need to find? Tell me and I'll find it quickly)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directing peers to stop speaking in Tamil/to speak in English</td>
<td>Yashwini: Don't talk in Tamil! Talk in English!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checking on peers' progress/completion of a task</td>
<td>Tilly: எங்கள் என்னும் எழுதியே என்னும் எழுதியே? (How many have you written?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offering to ask/suggesting that peers ask the teacher for clarification on the task</td>
<td>Amira: Teacher-து என்னும் என்னும் என்னும் என்னும் (We can ask teacher what jumlah [amount] is)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assigning roles/asking peers to take over tasks based on their skills/expertise</td>
<td>Lingkes: என் என்னும், என் என்னும் என்னும் என்னும் என்னும் (Let her draw, her handwriting is nice)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping peers to make a decision/making a decision on behalf of the group</td>
<td>Kartik: Black என்னும் பாடும் பாடும் பாடும் (Black? Nevermind, yellow?) &lt;trying to decide what colour to use on a poster&gt; *Sugita: Black பாடும் yellow பாடும் (Put both black and yellow)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Translanguaging played an important role in helping learners to plan and organize their collaborative work, especially since they did not receive much scaffolding from their teachers in terms of *how* to collaborate. Apart from giving the learners general instructions about *what* they needed to collaborate on in their groups and what their finished product should be, the teachers in both classrooms did not provide instructions or recommendations to learners about how to break the task down into smaller steps, distribute roles and sub-tasks within the group, or how to ensure there was effective collaboration between group members. Since learners did not receive this form of support from their teachers, translanguaging played an important role in helping learners to take control over their own learning, self-regulate as a collaborative unit, and achieve the characteristics of effective collaborative learning described in the Literature Review. Through translanguaging, learners actively and regularly reviewed, negotiated, regulated, and coordinated their joint tasks, planned the scope and structure of the activity, organized their materials according to their group’s goals, gave each other instructions about what to do, kept the task moving along within the given time, assessed situations and suggested solutions to problems, and planned the presentation of their work to the rest of the class.

An important exception in the functions that fell within the planning-organizational affordances category was ‘Directing peers to stop speaking in Tamil/to speak in English’ as it was the only function that was not conducive to the collaboration. This function occurred more regularly among learners in 5S (EO), usually in response to their teacher’s reminders for them to stop speaking in Tamil and to use only English when interacting with each other. Not surprisingly, while most of the other specific planning-organizational functions were carried out in Tamil or English and Tamil (81.5%), directing peers to stop speaking in Tamil was done exclusively through English. Of all the English-only speech acts coded in this category across both classrooms, this specific function was also the most frequent one (12.0%). The following excerpt from a group in 5S (EO) demonstrates how the policing of language by one learner led to individualistic rather than joint decision-making.

Tina: Four four ஒன்று? (Is it four <in a group>?)
Sarala: Eh ஆப்போ தமிழ் தந்திரும் தமிழ்? (So that means the four of us are together)
Elango: நான்கு ஒன்று chance இல்லாமல் lah, to write (Please give me a chance to write)
Kamini: Speak in English!
Sarala: Okay you pick lah <asking Kamini to pick who gets to write the group’s answers>
Tina: Who’s the leader of group?  
Kamini: Me of course <no one disagrees with her, so Kamini proceeds to decide on the topic and does most of the writing herself>

In the example above, Kamini, who is the most proficient English speaker in the group, monitors her peers’ language use by directing them to speak in English when they were translanguaging in order to plan who was in the group, and discuss who would take on which roles. Immediately after Kamini stops her peers from using Tamil, they defer to her decisions and do not argue when she asserts leadership in the group. This seemed to be a recurring pattern in groups where one learner would regulate the language use of their peers. In contrast, in groups where learners were encouraged to use translanguaging by their peers, there were more equitable decision-making processes within the collaboration and all group members contributed to the success of the task. The following excerpt presents an example of this from another group in 5S (EO):

Tanuja: நீ எடுக்க (You write it)  
Kishen: பாத்திரிக்கும் you write (Never mind, you write)  
Tanuja: இந்த இருக்கும் idea என்பில்லாம் (I don’t have an idea)  
Kishen: இங்கு அல்லது இங்கும் வரும், இங்கிலாந்தில் எழுதாமல்கே (say your sentence in Tamil, I'll say it in English) <as Tanuja seems hesitant to express her idea in English>  
Kishen: இங்கு தமிழ் இருக்கும் idea என்பில்லாம், இங்கிலாந்தில் translate எழுதவே (Tell me your idea in Tamil, I'll translate it)  
Tanuja: Okay என்பில்லாம் ஒன்று எழுதவே (Okay, I'll do one)  
Risha: இரும்பில் ஒரு கல்லாரை எழுதும் கல்லாரை எழுத வேண்டும் (Okay, we can each work on one)

Prior to the interaction above, the progress of Kishen’s group was slow as his group members seemed hesitant to suggest any ideas. It was only after Kishen encouraged Tanuja to make her suggestion in Tamil and offered to translate it into English that she agreed to take on a role in the task. This led to Risha suggesting that each group member could work on one sentence each, and all of them then began participating actively in the collaboration. Here, the use of translanguaging was essential for creating positive interdependence, equal participation, and individual accountability, all components of successful collaborative learning.
Affective-Social Affordances

The affective-social affordances consisted of specific functions which served to build rapport, engage peers in social interactions, and provide socio-emotional support and assistance to one another. These types of interactions situated the task within a social context based on relationship-building and created a collaborative community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991) among learners where learners looked out for each other’s interests and needs. Table 7 presents the 25 specific functions that were coded under the affective-social category, and examples of speech acts for each of the specific functions in this category, organized from most frequent to least frequent.

Table 7. Affective-social functions (%; n = 2027)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specific Affective-Social Function (%)</th>
<th>Example of Speech Act (* indicates that it is the example of the specific function)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Affirming/agreeing with peers' suggestions/answers (10.3%)</td>
<td>Silvia: Suraj ஓட idea nice (Suraj's idea is nice)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offering peers a turn/encouraging peers to contribute their ideas or take on a task (8.4%)</td>
<td>Kishen: நீன் ஒன்றாவனும் செய்தேன் சோகுள் (I've said one [idea], someone else say their idea)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking peers for their opinion on a topic or task (6.9%)</td>
<td>Pravin: மேல்நோயாக கொண்டு வேண்டுமா? (If you were the judge, what would you do?) &lt;in response to a story in their textbook about a judge who has to make a difficult decision&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talking about one's personal life/interests/events not related to the task (6.2%)</td>
<td>Lingkam: இன்று மாசம் இந்தியா (I'm going to India in December)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joking with peers/expressing amusement at peers' ideas (6.0%)</td>
<td>Suren: என், உன்னுக்கு செய்யலாம் வைக்கிறேன் (I know, we can make a watch for people who don't know anything) *Pravin: பல்கலைக்கழன் பெண் வேலியேன் (We'll need it for our exam) &lt;everyone laughs&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inviting peers to join in the collaboration/to work together on a task (5.2%)</td>
<td>Hema: மாணவர் வாழ்க் பயின்றி கேட்டான் (The two of us can share this and do it together) &lt;brings her paper closer to her peer so they can both work together&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouraging group effort/collaboration among group members (4.6%)</td>
<td>Tanuja: இவ்வால் வாழ்க் பயின்றித் கேட்டான் (We should do it together as a group)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Sample Dialog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping peers to identify/correct mistakes in their answers/work (4.6%)</td>
<td>Amira: Durian ஸ்ரீராம் கால்பாத்து, betik (You shouldn't write durian, it's betik [papaya]) &lt;correcting a mistake in her peer’s work&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking peers about their actions/work/plans (4.0%)</td>
<td>Danusha: உங்களைக் காண்க வேண்டும்? (What colour are you going to use?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeking affirmation from peers about one's own answer/idea/work (3.8%)</td>
<td>Ashvin: அக்கா அக்கா? (Is this nice?) &lt;showing peers his work&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparing own work to peers' work/learning from what peers are doing (3.5%)</td>
<td>Amira: ஓவிய மூன்று சதுரங்கரங்கள் கற்றுபோகளாம். (For each type [of animal], they're using five words) &lt;making an observation about what another group is doing, during an activity where they have to describe animals&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking for peers' help/offering to help peers (3.4%)</td>
<td>Nareesh: உங்கள் நன்பர் இனக்கட்டை செய்யுங்களா மா? (Shall I help you?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checking peers' answers or work/providing feedback on how it can be improved (3.3%)</td>
<td>Divya: ஓவிய ஐந்து சதுரங்கரங்கள், ஐந்து ஐந்து கற்று நம்புகின்றேன். (There are five [syllables] here, but here there are five, five, five, if so, it won't rhyme at the end) &lt;counting the number of syllables in each line of a poem her peer wrote&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describing own actions/work/plans to peers (3.3%)</td>
<td>Gayatri: எனக்கு துளை குறியானை மாிர்ட்டேன்மானை இல்லாகட்டை செய்யுங்களா மாங்களும் (I’m going to put an arrow and write the manufactured date and all here)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking peers about their family/personal life (3.2%)</td>
<td>Tarun: என்ன வாய்ந்த பெயரும் என்ன? (What's your dad's name?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complimenting peers for their work/drawing peers' attention to it (3.2%)</td>
<td>Thiva: Tanuja அழகா எபது எபது (Tanuja is writing beautifully)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correcting peers' actions/resolving conflict (3.1%)</td>
<td>Tanuja: மாத்து மாத்து, வேண்டும, okay? (No fighting, okay?) &lt;when two group members begin to argue&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping peers to find the answer to a question/solve a problem (2.8%)</td>
<td>Divya: அது இடம் வந்திருக்குமா? (It'll be on this page) &lt;helping her peer to find the answer to a question in the textbook&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offering peers a suggestion about how to do something (2.7%)</td>
<td>Tanuja: ஒரு செவ்வி பெண்ணையர், old man மையப்பட்டு வந்திருக்கும். (Use a stick, and act and talk like an old man) &lt;giving her peer ideas about how to act in their drama&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asserting own ability or showing self-confidence (2.5%)</td>
<td>Kishen: எனது கையேறட்டையை கையேற்கும் பண்டைய தெரியும். (My idea will be good)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivating peers to work harder/do something well (2.4%)</td>
<td>Lingkam: அப்பது எப்பில் எப்பில் (We have to write it nicely)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Saravanan: பக்த மித்தியை பக்த அழகா எபது எபது (If we want to get the prize we have to</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As mentioned earlier in this chapter, a significant finding in the analysis of learners’ affective-social interactions was that Tamil was the language used most commonly, regardless of learners’ proficiency level and classroom language policy. The use of Tamil in learners’ translanguaging interactions made learning more personal to them and helped them invest their identities in it. Learners talked about and showed interest in their peers’ personal lives, interests and opinions, joked with their group members, expressed their emotions and empathized with their peers, affirmed and agreed with one another’s ideas and work, and motivated and helped each other to do well so that all learners were successful in their respective tasks. These findings are consistent with Neokleous’ (2017) study which found that learners used their home languages to accomplish social and affective functions such as joking, greeting, apologizing, affirming and encouraging. The three most common specific affective-social functions accomplished through Tamil in various translanguaging constellations, as shown in Table 6 above, were ‘Affirming/agreeing with peers’ suggestions/answer,’ ‘Offering peers a turn/encouraging peers to contribute their ideas or take on a task’ and ‘Asking peers for their opinion on a topic or task.’ The excerpt from 5S (EO) below demonstrates how the use of these
and other specific affective-social functions (indicated by an asterisk) led to greater individual as well as collective self-efficacy and confidence in the group.

Harini: இல்லாது வருமான கூட்டம் முறையாலும் (We have to do this together as a group) (**Encouraging group effort/collaboration among group members))

Tanuja: Laptop பொருளிய வருமான முறையாலும்? (What can we say about the laptop?) (**Asking peers for their opinion on a topic or task))

Kishen: பாரும் ஒரு பொருள் இல்லாமலேனம் (I’ll say one idea) (**Requesting for a turn/role in the task))

Tanuja: வருமான வேண்டும் (Okay, say it) (**Offering peers a turn/encouraging peers to contribute their ideas or take on a task))

Kishen: Our new product can... our laptop can capture the photos ((Making a suggestion related to the content of the task))

Divya: நல்ல ஒரு பொருள், laptop can capture photos, நல்ல பொருள் (Yes, laptop can capture photos, good idea) (**Affirming/agreeing with peers' suggestions/answer))

Kishen: நல்ல ஒரு பொருள் இல்லாமலேனம் பொருள் (My idea will be good) (**Asserting own ability or showing self-confidence))

Kishen: நல்ல ஒரு பொருள் இல்லாமலேனம், இல்லாது பாருமான ஒரு பொருள் இல்லாமலேனம் (I've said one [idea], someone else say their idea) (**Offering peers a turn/encouraging peers to contribute their ideas or take on a task))

Divya: Laptop சிக்கலே என்னைப்பொருள், பார்வை என்னைப்பொருள், GPS கால் பொருள் பார்வை, ஆக்கு மார்பிளி (We can make the laptop small or big, we can also use it as a phone with GPS, something like that) (**Making a suggestion related to the content of the task))

Tanuja: வருமானம் வேண்டும்! (Very creative!) (**Complimenting peers for their work/drawing peers’ attention to it))

Kishen: அழகு வேண்டும், பொருளிய என்னை சிக்கலே! (Write that down nicely, we'll get extra marks) (**Motivating peers to work harder/do something well))

**Linguistic-Discursive Affordances**

The linguistic-discursive affordances category encompassed specific functions which focused on teaching, learning and using the linguistic and discursive features required to complete the task and communicate effectively in oral and written modes. Within this category, learners supported each other’s working knowledge of grammatical rules, punctuation, pronunciation, spelling, syntax, genre, and vocabulary usage. Learners also used subject-specific
vocabulary, explained the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary to their peers, provided translations of words and phrases to teach their peers new vocabulary, and used linguistic prompts to help their peers express their ideas. These functions made language learning more accessible for their peers. These findings are consistent with the research on translanguaging which highlights its role in building learners’ metalinguistic awareness and the metacognitive ability to use features of their linguistic repertoire selectively and purposefully (Hesson, Seltzer & Woodley, 2014; Wiley & Garcia, 2016). Table 8 presents the 25 specific functions carried out through translanguaging within the linguistic-discursive category, and examples of speech acts for each specific function, organized from most frequent to least frequent.

Table 8. Linguistic-discursive functions (%; n = 1632)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specific Linguistic-Discursive Function (%)</th>
<th>Example of Speech Act (* indicates that it is the example of the specific function)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Suggesting a complete answer/idea using the target linguistic structure (21.3%)</td>
<td>Riya: நான் வேண்டும் இல்லாதிருந்தன, please throw the rubbish in the bin (I thought of one, please throw the rubbish in the bin) &lt;creating park rules and regulations using imperatives&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggesting an incomplete answer/idea using the target linguistic structure/inviting peers to complete one's answer/idea (10.2%)</td>
<td>*Varma: Make sure that you...ahh, make sure you do not touch any electrical...electrical? &lt;creating kitchen safety rules&gt; Silvia: Electrical things with your wet hands செய்ய (Write 'electrical things with your wet hands')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping peers to spell a word/correcting their spelling (9.1%)</td>
<td>Silvia: Weight எப்படி spellபட்டி? (How do you spell weight?) *Meena: W, e, i, g, h, t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correcting peers' grammar/syntax/vocabulary (7.7%)</td>
<td>Sarala: To whom you give the necklace &lt;suggesting a question using an interrogative pronoun&gt; *Monisha: To whom DID you give மேலும் (It should be to whom DID you give)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing the translation of a word/phrase/sentence (4.6%)</td>
<td>Bavani: The Malay is maklumat pemakanan, in English is the nutritional information (In Malay it's maklumat pemakanan [nutritional information], in English it's nutritional information)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraphrasing own or peer's answer/suggesting another way to say something (4.5%)</td>
<td>Divya: I like it very much *Harini: I enjoy it very much</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Asking for/checking the spelling of a word (4.5%) | Vettiri: Fever கூட்டுப் படி spellபட்டி? (How do you spell 'fever'?)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Dialogue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explaining grammar rules/syntax/vocabulary usage (4.0%)</td>
<td>Tanuja: My friends is like… *Divya: Friends le -s பணியாள், குறு குறு கவலை? (There's no -s in 'friends' because it's just one person)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explaining the meaning of a word/phrase/sentence (3.6%)</td>
<td>Tarun: Tropical நெருங்கிய மலை ('Tropical' means a hot place)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking for/checking the meaning/usage of a word/phrase (3.4%)</td>
<td>Kartik: Interact நெருங்கிய? (What does 'interact' mean?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking about grammar/syntax/vocabulary (3.4%)</td>
<td>Amira: Glass plural நெருங்கிய? (What's the plural form of 'glass'? )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking for/checking the translation of a word/phrase/sentence (3.3%)</td>
<td>Malini: Isi bersih நெருங்கிய, இன்றைய வைகள் ah? (What's isi bersih, is it net weight?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working out the meaning/usage of vocabulary using contextual cues (3.1%)</td>
<td>Harini: Bow நெருங்கிய ஒளி? Oh, ஆண்டுக்கு முன்னிலை ஐந்தாக்கும் ஒளி (What is bow? Oh, there's a bow in their arrows) &lt;working out what 'bow' means based on the words and pictures on a page in Gulliver's Travels&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing verbal prompts/asking questions to help peers formulate their ideas (2.3%)</td>
<td>Larishan: நெருங்கிய, Gulliver sees…Gulliver sees நெருங்கிய? (Say this, Gulliver sees… What does Gulliver see?) &lt;prompting his peer to come up with a sentence to describe what Gulliver sees on the island&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking about/explaining punctuation rules/writing conventions (2.0%)</td>
<td>Danusha: ஆண்டை, comma இலளை (Next, write a comma)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requesting to use translanguaging/encouraging peers to use translanguaging (2.0%)</td>
<td>Harini: Internet நெருங்கிய நெருங்கிய நெருங்கிய நெருங்கிய? (What shouldn't we do on the Internet?) *Riya: நெருங்கிய நெருங்கிய? (Can I say it in Tamil?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessing own linguistic knowledge (1.8%)</td>
<td>Monisha: Gold உண்மையான நெருங்கிய உண்மையான நெருங்கிய உண்மையான நெருங்கிய (Let's write 'gold'…. I don't know the word for it in Tamil yet)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using newly learned vocabulary/linguistic structure in spoken/written language (1.7%)</td>
<td>Thiva: Don't jump into the water… &lt;coming up with safety rules for the swimming pool&gt; Kishen: Dive நெருங்கிய நெருங்கிய (Dive means going in face first) *Thiva: என்போள், please don't dive into the water (Okay, please don't dive into the water)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing information/examples to help peer understand new vocabulary (1.7%)</td>
<td>Monisha: Bracelet நெருங்கிய நெருங்கிய நெருங்கிய? (What do you do with a bracelet) Kesha: ஆண்டுக்கு முன்னிலை அண்டுக்கு முன்னிலை நெருங்கிய நெருங்கிய (I was just thinking of asking you the same thing) *Monisha: இன்றைய வைகள் பொருள் வைகள், அகது டார்கு (When we put it like this, that's what it is) &lt;demonstrating the action of putting something around her wrist&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modelling to peers what to say/how to speak during a presentation (1.6%)</td>
<td>Tarun: தவம் விளக்கம், welcome, my name is Bavani: வாப்பின் பெயர் வாப்பின் (This is how to say it, &quot;Welcome, my name is Bavani,&quot; then say everyone's names)</td>
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<td>---</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Showing peers examples of target language use in books/other materials (1.5%)</td>
<td>Manickam: Kepada siapakah, கேப்பா சிபாகார், to whom did you give (Like this, kepada siapakah [to whom]. Look here, to whom did you give) &lt;showing his peer examples of interrogative pronouns in their Malay and English textbooks&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correcting peers' pronunciation of vocabulary (1.2%)</td>
<td>Nisha: Escolator எஸ்கவாடர் எகுவாக்கார், (In the escalator, my father usually tells me...) &lt;pronouncing 'escalator' as 'escolator'&gt; *Suren: Escolator எஸ்கவாடர், escalator (It's not escalator, it's escalator)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explaining the format/genre of a text (0.8%)</td>
<td>Tarun: Letter லேடர், message (This is not a letter, it's a message)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correcting one's language use based on peers' feedback (0.6%)</td>
<td>Naveen: iPhone is importable… Guna: Importable ஈபான், PORTABLE (Not importable, PORTABLE) *Naveen: Ah, PORTABLE, iPhone is portable…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checking the pronunciation of vocabulary (0.4%)</td>
<td>*Nareesh: Hon [own] business ah, ஹோன் [அவ்வுள்] own business ah? (Is it hon [own] business or own business?) &lt;pronouncing 'own' as 'hon'&gt; Vettri: Own business</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An important finding concerning the linguistic-discursive affordances of translanguaging relate to the two most frequently used specific functions, as indicated in the table above. ‘Suggesting a complete answer/idea using the target linguistic structure’ and ‘Suggesting an incomplete answer/idea using the target linguistic structure/inviting peers to complete one's answer/idea’ usually worked in tandem with each other. Before learners were able to answer or suggest an idea using the focus linguistic structure of the lesson correctly, they would usually first suggest an incomplete or incorrect answer or idea and/or invite their peers to complete their answer. Group members would respond to this speech act by providing a grammatical explanation, suggesting a word or phrase to complete the sentence, correcting their vocabulary, grammar or sentence structure, or extending other linguistic-discursive support to scaffold their peers and help them arrive at a linguistically complete answer. This corroborates the results of Dahlberg’s (2017) study of multilingual ESL learners in Sweden which found that translanguaging can be used as a linguistic scaffolding structure to help learners access their
existing linguistic and academic knowledge, and make associations between English and their L1. In the excerpt below, a group of learners from 5S (EO) are working on writing questions using interrogative pronouns (e.g., who, whose, what, which). Sarala attempts to use the to-whom structure in her suggested question, but does so incorrectly. The excerpt demonstrates how Sarala’s peers use translanguaging to scaffold each other’s linguistic knowledge, and how the use of their linguistic-discursive functions (indicated by an asterisk) lead to Sarala being able to suggest a grammatically accurate question using the to-whom structure.

Sarala: To whom you give the necklace… (*Suggesting an incomplete answer/idea using the target linguistic structure/inviting peers to complete one's answer/idea))
Monisha: To whom DID you give the necklace (*Correcting peers' grammar/syntax/vocabulary))
Kesha: தங் கசங்��ையெகா�த்தாய் (In Tamil, it’s to whom did you give the necklace?) (*Providing the translation of a word/phrase/sentence))
Tina: Necklace என் எசால்? (What do you do with a necklace?) (*Asking for/checking the meaning/usage of a word/phrase))
Kesha: நம் பிளேபாலேபா�ேவாேம், அது தான் (When we put it like this, that's what it is) <demonstrating the action of putting a necklace around her neck> (*Providing information/examples to help peers understand new vocabulary))
Monisha: தங் கசங்��ையபற்�ேலாமா? (Should we write about a gold necklace?) (Making a suggestion related to the content of the task))
Kesha: பரிமம் எனற்ற கசங்��ையெகா�த்தாய் (To whom did you give the gold necklace) (Building/elaborating on peers' answers/suggestions)
Sarala: தங் கசங்��ைய் Englishில் பம்பு வாங்கலாமா? (How do you say தங் கசங்��ைய் [gold] in English?) (*Asking for/checking the translation of a word/phrase/sentence))
Kesha: Gold [Providing the translation of a word/phrase/sentence in another language]
Sarala: கசங்��ைய்…gold கசங்��ைய்…Gold necklace (கசங்��ைய் [gold necklace]…Gold கசங்��ைய் [necklace]…gold necklace) (*Using newly learned vocabulary/linguistic structure in spoken/written language))
Sarala: To whom did you give the gold necklace (*Suggesting a complete answer/idea using the target linguistic structure))
Monisha: ஆய்வர் correct answer (Yes, correct answer) <nodding her head at Sarala> ((Affirming/agreeing with peers' suggestions/answers))
Apart from providing linguistic-discursive support to their peers during their translanguaging interactions, the learners in Sarala’s group supported each other through other cognitive-conceptual and affective-social functions such as building on each other’s suggestions, and affirming each other’s answers. The use of these various specific functions across all four categories encouraged and helped learners to make more accurate and relevant suggestions using the target linguistic structure being taught, which is why ‘Suggesting a complete answer/idea using the target linguistic structure’ was the most frequent speech act across the four categories.

The linguistic-discursive affordances of translanguaging could not always be captured through the analysis of learners’ discourse alone, as learners also scaffolded each other’s linguistic knowledge through modes other than spoken language. For example, as demonstrated in the excerpt above, Kesha performed the gesture of putting a necklace around her neck while explaining to Tina what a necklace was. In 5S (EO), when Ms. Shalini (EO) was close, instead of translanguaging out loud, learners sometimes wrote down translations of words, phrases or sentences in different languages to explain them to their peers or to work out which linguistic structures to use in their answers, as shown in Figure 14 below.

![Figure 14. Learner writing Tamil translations and drawing pictures next to English vocabulary](image-url)
Learners also helped each other to work out the meaning of vocabulary by drawing their attention to images in books and videos on computers (see Figures 15 and 16 below).

![Figure 15. Learners looking at images in a graphic novel to help each other understand the meaning of new vocabulary](image1)

![Figure 16. Learner looking at videos online to help each other understand the meaning of vocabulary and concepts](image2)

The examples above demonstrate that even when an English-only policy was in place, learners in 5S (EO) were still able to use translanguaging through multimodal semiotic resources (e.g., writing, using symbols and images, combining spoken language with gestures) in order to support each other’s learning.

**Exploratory Talk Accomplished through Translanguaging**

After identifying the cognitive-conceptual, planning-organizational, affective-social and linguistic-discursive affordances of translanguaging in learners’ collaborative interactions, I was interested in examining whether these affordances moved learners’ interactions towards disputational, cumulative, or exploratory talk (Mercer, 1995, 2000; Mercer & Littleton, 2007). When learners’ collaboration is marked by exploratory talk, learners engage critically and constructively with each other’s ideas, reason with each other and challenge each other’s ideas respectfully, decisions are made collectively, all group members participate and contribute actively to the work, and there is an atmosphere of trust and a sense of shared purpose. Table 9 below shows the examples of specific functions that were categorized under each type of talk.
Table 9. *Examples of functions in disputational, cumulative and exploratory talk*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Talk</th>
<th>Examples of Specific Functions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Disputational | • Disagreeing with peers' suggestions/telling peers not to do something  
|              | • Directing peers to stop speaking in Tamil/to speak in English |
| Cumulative   | • Building/elaborating on peers' answers/suggestions  
|              | • Clarifying/elaborating on own answer/suggestion  
|              | • Reminding peers about the teacher’s instructions  
|              | • Affirming/agreeing with peers' suggestions/answers  
|              | • Paraphrasing own or peer's answer/suggesting another way to say something |
| Exploratory  | • Providing a rationale/explanation for an answer/suggestion  
|              | • Making a counter-suggestion/offering an alternative answer  
|              | • Evaluating peers' suggestions/the group's work based on certain criteria  
|              | • Challenging peers' ideas/answers by providing a rationale  
|              | • Explaining how one arrived at an answer/the logic of a solution  
|              | • Discussing cause and effect relationships/pros and cons of an idea/action  
|              | • Analyzing/discussing a topic/issue from multiple perspectives  
|              | • Assessing a situation/making a suggestion to solve a problem  
|              | • Encouraging group effort/collaboration among group members  
|              | • Motivating peers to work harder/do something well  
|              | • Providing verbal prompts/asking questions to help peers formulate their ideas |

My analysis of learners’ speech events revealed that when learners used translanguaging widely during their collaboration, they accomplished more functions that fell within the exploratory talk category. Since translanguaging was used widely by most learners in both 5K (NEO) and 5S (EO), most speech events were exploratory in nature, which is why there are many more examples of specific functions in the exploratory talk category as compared to the disputational and cumulative talk categories. Below is an example of a speech event in which learners used translanguaging to scaffold each other in ways consistent with exploratory talk. In the speech event below, four learners from 5S (EO) – Roshana, Kishen, Nisha and Pravin – are working together to create rules about Internet safety.

Roshana: ఇంటెర్నెట్ తో సంబంధించిన చేతులను చేయడానికి వాడడాన్ని అదే విషయానికి చేసినదే? (What do we need to avoid on the Internet, what do you think?) ((Asking peers for their opinion/perspective on a topic or task))

Kishen: సందర్భానికి ప్రతిరోధించండి, ఆహ్ర (Do not call the strangers, about that)
Nisha: Internet ପାଇବେ normalର call ପାଇବେ ମାନ୍ୱୀରେକୁ, chat ପାଇବେନାରକ (No, people don’t usually call on the Internet, they chat)

Nisha: Do not chat with the strangers ((Making a counter-suggestion/offering an alternative answer))

Roshana: With ପାଇବେ, with the ପାଇବେ, with ମାନ୍ୱୀ ପାଇବେ ମାନ୍ୱୀ (It should be with, not with the, just with) ((Correcting peers' grammar/syntax/vocabulary))

Nisha: Oh, ଦିଇ do not chat with strangers (Oh right, do not chat with strangers)

Kishen: Okay, ଗ୍ରଥ ଗ୍ରଥା (Okay, what else?) ((Moving the task along/getting peers back on track))

Pravin: ଏବଲେ ବାଳାର (What can I suggest?) ((Thinking out loud to brainstorm ideas/answers/course of action))

Kishen: Internet ପାଇବେ ନାଙ୍କ, ନାଙ୍କ ପାଇବେ କାର୍ତ୍ତିକ, ମାନତତ୍ତିକ? (What should we not do on the Internet that’s dangerous?) ((Providing verbal prompts/asking questions to help peers formulate their ideas))

Pravin: କରିବେ ଏକାକାରାଣ? (Can I say it [my idea] in Tamil?) ((Requesting to use/encouraging peers to use the L1))

Pravin: କରିବେ ଏକାକାରାଣ ଆପଣର ଆପଣର ବର୍ଣ୍ଣ (If I say it in Tamil, then you’ll understand it) ((Requesting to use translanguaging/encouraging peers to use translanguaging))

Kishen: କରିବେ ଏକାକାରାଣ (Say it in Tamil) <The other group members nod> ((Requesting to use translanguaging/encouraging peers to use translanguaging))

Pravin: ତିଆରୀ photo ପାଇବେ ପାଇବାକୁ (We should not put our photos up) ((Making a suggestion related to the content of the task))

Nisha: ତିଆରୀ photos ପାଇବାକୁ, Facebook ପାଇବାକୁ ପାଇବାକୁ? (Why can’t we put our photos, we can put them on Facebook, right?) ((Challenging peers' ideas/answers by providing a rationale))

Pravin: ତିଆରୀ ତିଆରୀ photos ପାଇବେ ପାଇବେ ପାଇବାକୁ, regret ପାଇବେନାରକ (Bad people can take the photos and do bad things, we’ll regret it) ((Discussing cause and effect relationships/pros and cons of an idea/action))

Roshana: ଏହାର! (Yes!) ((Affirming/agreeing with peers' suggestions/answers))

Roshana: Do not send the photos, our photos to strangers (Do not send the photos, our photos to strangers) ((Building/elaborating on peers' answers/suggestions))

Kishen: To strangers or with strangers ଏହାର? (Will it be to strangers or with strangers?) ((Asking about grammar/syntax/vocabulary))

Nisha: Don't share photos with strangers ଏହାରାର (It should be don’t share our photos with strangers) ((Explaining grammar rules/syntax/vocabulary usage))
Kishen: Do not share your photos with strangers ((Suggesting a complete answer/idea using the target linguistic structure))

Nisha: பார்த்து பட்டக்கை பிட்டார்யு? (Who's going to read them [the sentences] out?) ((Planning/rehearsing the group's presentation of their work))

Pravin: எல்லாவர்களாம் (We can all read it together) ((Encouraging group effort/collaboration among group members))

Roshana: நம் பசிய் பட்டக்கையாம், நம் stop பல்ல செய்யாம் (Let's read it well, let’s not stop [hesitate]) ((Motivating peers to work harder/do something well))

In the speech event above, we see that learners translanguaged while carrying out a variety of cognitive-conceptual, planning-organizational, language-linguistic, and affective-social affordances representative of exploratory talk. Learners’ interactions were not limited to agreeing with and repeating each other’s suggestions. Rather, they engaged actively with each other’s ideas by asking and answering questions about them, providing rationales, offering alternative suggestions, exchanging knowledge, and building on others’ contributions. There was an atmosphere of trust and shared purpose in the group because group members affirmed each other’s ideas, encouraged joint effort, and motivated the group to perform the task well. The exploratory talk carried out through translanguaging was productive for the learning of individual group members as well as for the group as a whole. For example, after Pravin’s request to use Tamil to express his idea was supported both verbally by Kishen and non-verbally by the other group members, he was able to offer a valuable suggestion and justify his suggestion when challenged by Nisha. It is important to note the significant role of non-verbal communication (e.g., the group members nodding to affirm Pravin’s use of translanguaging) in this context. The use of non-verbal communication in this excerpt confirms García & Li Wei’s (2014) theory that “all translanguaging is multimodal” (p. 40) and Li Wei’s (2018a) argument that multimodal meaning-making is part of the wider repertoire of semiotic resources that language users have at their disposal and draw on during their social interactions. The learners in this study acted as creative meaning-makers (García, 2018, p. 53) and creative language users (Sánchez, García & Solorza, 2018) who used the linguistic and semiotic resources available to them to communicate with each other.

Pravin’s use of translanguaging helped Nisha to learn an important lesson about Internet safety, and it also prompted the other group members to build on Pravin’s suggestion and
negotiate the grammatical structures to use in the statement. Thus, translanguaging created space for a process of mutual scaffolding where there was an active exchange of linguistic and content knowledge, and provision of socioemotional support. By crossing discursive boundaries, learners created a translanguaging space (Li Wei, 2011) and a Third Space (Gutiérrez, 2008; Gutiérrez, Baquedano-López, & Tejeda, 1999; Moje et al., 2004), within which co-learning and collective development occurred (Martin-Beltrán, 2014). In contrast, in groups where translanguaging was limited because of language policing by one or more group members, there was more disputational and cumulative talk. The speech event below from another group in 5S (EO) demonstrates this. This speech event occurred during the same lesson as the one above, where learners had to work together to come up with a list of safety rules, but this group was specifically assigned the task of creating rules about household safety.

Gayatri: Okay, idea ஒகக்கங்க (Okay, give your ideas) ((Asking peers for their opinion on a topic or task))
Guna: English only ((Directing peers to stop speaking in Tamil/to speak in English))
Guna: I’m leading the group ((Asserting own role in the task))
Guna: Do not off the switch with… <uses a writing gesture to tell Gayatri to write his idea down> ((Suggesting an incomplete answer/idea using the target linguistic structure/inviting peers to complete one's answer/idea))
Thiva: With wet hands <Guna puts out his hand to motion for her to stop speaking and looks at her disapprovingly> ((Building/elaborating on peers’ answers/suggestions))
Prashant: Don’t take the sharp things… sharp things… do not use the sharp things… <thinking out loud to himself> ((Thinking out loud to brainstorm ideas/answers/course of action))
Prashant: Eh, do not take the sharp things அழுத்தையுல்லை or do not use the sharp things அழுத்தையுல்லை? (Would it be do not take the sharp things or do not use the sharp things?) ((Asking about grammar/syntax/vocabulary))
Guna: Keep quiet please! ((Disagreeing with peers' suggestions/telling peers not to do something))
Gayatri: No Tamil ((Directing peers to stop speaking in Tamil/to speak in English))
Guna: Make sure off the stove ((Suggesting an incomplete answer/idea using the target linguistic structure/inviting peers to complete one's answer/idea))
Gayatri: Off the stove… s, t? <writing down what Guna is dictating> ((Asking for/checking the spelling of a word))
Prashant: Stove means அுத்துள் (Stove means aduppu [stove]) ((Explaining the meaning of a word/phrase/sentence))
Gayatri: Shh! I know lah! <in an offended tone> ((Disagreeing with peers' suggestions/telling peers not to do something))

Thiva: Don’t use sharp things… ((Suggesting an incomplete answer/idea using the target linguistic structure/inviting peers to complete one's answer/idea))

Gayatri: Do not open the door… <ignoring Thiva’s suggestion> ((Suggesting an incomplete answer/idea using the target linguistic structure/inviting peers to complete one's answer/idea))

Guna: No, no, no ((Disagreeing with peers' suggestions/telling peers not to do something))

Thiva: Do not… do not use… ((Suggesting an incomplete answer/idea using the target linguistic structure/inviting peers to complete one's answer/idea))

Guna: Do not use don’t want <cutting Thiva off> ((Disagreeing with peers' suggestions/telling peers not to do something))

Thiva: Ah! TV socket (About TV socket) ((Making a suggestion related to the content of the task))

Prashant: (about TV socket) ((Building/elaborating on peers' answers/suggestions))

Thiva: Don’t use mechanical pencil in socket… ((Building/elaborating on peers' answers/suggestions))

Guna: Are you crazy? Mechanical pencil is for writing, lah! ((Disagreeing with peers' suggestions/telling peers not to do something))

Prashant: (what it means is mechanical pencil socket (No, no, what it [she] means is that you should not put a mechanical pencil inside a socket) ((Providing a rationale/explanation for an answer/suggestion))

Guna: Don’t talk in Tamil! <and starts telling the teacher, “Teacher, Prashant is talking in Tamil!”> ((Directing peers to stop speaking in Tamil/to speak in English))

<Prashant and Thiva stop speaking after that>

In the speech event above, Gayatri uses translanguaging to invite her peers to contribute their ideas to the discussion. As soon as she does this, Guna, who speaks primarily in English, asserts his leadership over the group and enforces the teacher’s English-only policy in the group. Guna then begins giving his own ideas and motions non-verbally for Gayatri to write them down. Gayatri follows his instructions, and stops translanguaging. When Thiva tries to build on Guna’s idea by completing his sentence, Guna stops her using his hand gestures and facial expressions. Similarly, when Prashant joins in the conversation by asking his peers a vocabulary-related question using Tamil and English, Guna stops him from speaking and Prashant loses the
opportunity to make his suggestion. Gayatri reminds him and Thiva not to speak in Tamil. The language policing by Guna and Gayatri leads to cumulative and disputational talk, rather than exploratory talk.

Overall, the interactions between learners in the group were marked by disagreement and individualized decision-making (e.g., Guna taking on leadership without consulting his peers). Instead of challenging and building on each other’s suggestions critically and constructively, learners accepted their peers’ suggestions even when they were inaccurate or incomplete (e.g., Gayatri writing down all of Guna’s suggestions without questioning or engaging with them critically), or they disagreed with their peers’ suggestions without justifying their disagreement (e.g., Guna rejecting Thiva’s and Gayatri’s suggestions without explaining why). This created an atmosphere of competition rather than collaboration. Although there were several instances when learners’ interactions could have led to exploratory talk, for example when Prashant and Thiva built on each other’s suggestions, and when Prashant tried to provide the reasoning for Thiva’s suggestion to Guna, their interactions were cut short because of language policing by the teacher or their peers.

A comparison of the two speech events from the same lesson in 5S (EO) suggests that when learners did not use much translanguaging, usually because they were stopped from doing so by their teacher or peers, their interactions were more disputational, or at best, cumulative in nature, and there were fewer opportunities for collective scaffolding to occur through exploratory talk. On the other hand, when learners used translanguaging actively during their interactions and encouraged each other’s use of translanguaging, there were greater opportunities for them to accomplish various cognitive-conceptual, planning-organizational, affective-social, and linguistic-discursive affordances characteristic of exploratory talk.

**Differences in the Use and Affordances of Translanguaging by Classroom and Translanguaging Constellation**

The results of a chi-square test of independence analyzing the relationship between the broad affordances categories and classroom revealed that there was no statistically significant association between just these two factors ($\chi^2(3) = 4.70, p = 0.195$). This means that the frequencies and distribution of broad affordances categories in 5K (NEO) were not different
from 5S (EO) in any way that was statistically significant. However, when the translanguaging constellation variable was added to this analysis, the results proved that there was, in fact, a statistically significant difference between the affordances of translanguaging by classroom and translanguaging constellations.

**Relationship Between Affordances and Translanguaging Constellations**

The results of a chi-square test of independence revealed a statistically significant association between the category of affordances and the translanguaging constellations used ($\chi^2(18) = 877.76, p < 0.001$), particularly English and Tamil. Figure 17 below presents the overall percentages of affordances in learners’ speech acts according to the translanguaging constellation used.

**Figure 17. Affordances in learners’ speech acts by translanguaging constellation (%)**
As shown in the figure above, Tamil was the predominant translanguaging constellation used during interactions that fell under the planning-organizational (45.0%) and affective-social (52.4%) affordances categories. Tamil utterances were most frequently used when learners’ interactions were not focused on the content of the task per se, but rather on dealing with the collaboration in organizational terms by planning the task, organizing materials, distributing roles and responsibilities within the group, and giving instructions to keep the task going. Tamil was also most frequently used when learners were interacting with each other for the purpose of building rapport, helping one another, affirming and supporting their peers, ensuring effective collaboration among group members, and bringing in aspects of their personal lives and culture into the discussion.

English and Tamil was the most frequent translanguaging constellation used for cognitive-conceptual (39.9%) and linguistic-discursive (42.0%) functions. The majority of speech acts serving a cognitive-conceptual affordance contained a translanguaging constellation of English and Tamil because most of the talk in this category revolved around brainstorming ideas for the task, exchanging information about the content and concepts related to the task, and working out answers and solutions. Learners would typically use English when using subject-specific vocabulary, mentioning the key vocabulary and content related to the task, and making reference to information in their textbooks and handouts (e.g., scientific terms, names of gadgets, types of pollution). These English terms would be included within utterances in Tamil that accomplished cognitive functions such as asking for and providing information, analyzing, describing, elaborating, evaluating, explaining, and rationalizing. An example of this is when Harini asked her peer, “Water pollution எப்போம்? (How does water pollution happen?). In this speech act, Harini used English to refer to a key concept they were studying in class (water pollution), and Tamil to perform the cognitive function of asking for factual information.

The English and Tamil translanguaging constellation was also used most frequently during interactions that fell under the linguistic-discursive affordances category (42.0%). It appears that learners primarily used English and Tamil to scaffold each other’s English language during collaborative learning activities that were more linguistically focused (e.g., writing sentences using specific linguistic structures, searching for the meaning of words in dictionaries). Learners used a combination of English and Tamil to perform specific linguistic-discursive functions such as asking about and explaining the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary, correcting
peers’ grammar, and helping peers to translate their ideas and writing in Tamil into English. Once learners received the linguistic-discursive support they needed from their peers, they would attempt to apply their newly learned linguistic knowledge in their speaking or writing, and perform the task in English. They would also use English to suggest an answer using the target linguistic structure (e.g., simple past tense, interrogative pronouns, active and passive sentences). For this reason, English utterances constituted the second most frequently used speech acts in the linguistic-discursive category (39.6%).

**Relationship Between Affordances, Translanguaging Constellations and Classroom**

Consistent with the findings above, the analysis of the broad affordances in learner’s collaborative interactions according to translanguaging constellation and classroom revealed interesting similarities and differences in the use of the English, Tamil, and the English and Tamil translanguaging constellations for different specific functions by learners in the two classrooms. Figure 18 below presents the results of the detailed breakdown of affordances by translanguaging constellation and classrooms.
As seen above, a statistically significant difference between the translinguaging constellations used by learners in 5K (NEO) and 5S (EO), \( \chi^2(8) = 1663.82, p < 0.001 \), pertained to the linguistic-discursive affordances. Learners in 5S (EO) used mostly English (50.4%) for linguistic-discursive functions while the majority of 5K (NEO) learners (53.5%) used English and Tamil together to accomplish these functions. Apart from the English-only policy and frequent monitoring of learners’ language use, another reason why the learners in 5S (EO) used mostly English in their linguistic-discursive talk was because they knew the English vocabulary to talk about linguistic structures, grammar and syntax, and explain the meaning and usage of words to their peers. For the most part, they were also able to express their answers and ideas in English in a grammatically accurate way, which suggests why 74.4% of all speech acts coded under the most frequent function of ‘Suggesting a complete answer/idea using the target linguistic structure(s)’ were from 5S (EO), compared to only 25.6% from 5K (NEO).
In 5K (NEO), much of the collaborative talk between learners in the linguistic-discursive category revolved around scaffolding each other’s English linguistic knowledge using Tamil, thus explaining the high frequency of the English and Tamil translanguaging constellation in this category. Speech acts that were coded as ‘Suggesting an incomplete answer/idea using the target linguistic structure/inviting peers to complete one's answer/idea’ were often followed by verbal prompts from peers to help them express their ideas, explanations of the meaning, structure and usage of various linguistic structures, and the translation of words, phrases and sentences from Tamil into English. Learners in 5K (NEO) also more frequently used English and Tamil together for the purpose of ‘Assessing own linguistic knowledge,’ and this often led to the learners asking their peers for help in the areas they felt they needed to improve in. While learners in 5S (EO) often directed their peers to stop speaking in Tamil because of the class English-only policy, the interactions of learners in 5K (NEO) were often coded as ‘Requesting to use translanguaging/encouraging peers to use translanguaging.’ The linguistic-discursive talk by learners in 5K (NEO) largely involved encouraging their peers to use Tamil to express their ideas, for example, “தமிழில் சொல்ல” (say it [your idea] in Tamil), offering to translate for their peers, for example, “உங்கள் எச்சல் உங்களின் சொல்லால், தமிழில் சொல்ல, ஆங்கிலத்தில் சொல்ல” (say your sentence <in Tamil>, I’ll say it in English”), and asking peers to check and correct their English use, for example, “தமிழில் உங்களின் சொல்லால், ஆங்கிலத்தில் சொல்ல, அப்படி சொல்லாமல், கீழ் பார்க்கும், எஞ்சிய தமிழ் ஆங்கிலத்தில்” (First I’ll say it <my answer> in Tamil, you see if it's right first, then I'll say it in English).

Learners in 5K (NEO) also used English and Tamil together most frequently (42.7%) in the category of cognitive-conceptual talk. The use of these two languages provided the necessary scaffolding for them to think through concepts, ideas and information, and work out answers and solutions to their task. An interesting similarity between both classrooms was that Tamil was the language used most frequently for affective-social purposes – 60.6% in 5K (NEO) and 45.1% in 5S (EO). As learners in both classrooms stated that they usually used Tamil during their social interactions with peers outside the classroom, it was not surprising that Tamil was their language of choice when building relationships and creating a sense of community among their peers during their collaboration. In 5K (NEO), this also extended to the planning-organizational phases of their collaboration which involved functions such as distributing equal roles to all group members, negotiating responsibilities, offering to take on tasks, and deferring to their peers’
expertise. An area for further analysis would be to determine whether there were statistically significant co-relations between specific functions, for example, whether the frequent use of ‘Complimenting peers for their work/drawing peers' attention to it’ co-related to ‘Asserting own ability or showing self-confidence.’

**Summary of Findings**

In summary, the discourse analysis of learners’ interactions revealed that learners in both classrooms, regardless of their proficiency level or classroom language policy, used translanguaging widely during all their collaborative learning activities. Learners used seven specific translanguaging constellations flexibly throughout their interactions: (1) English, (2) Malay, (3) Tamil, (4) English and Malay, (5) English and Tamil, (6) English, Malay and Tamil, (7) Malay and Tamil. The use of translanguaging provided many affordances in their learning. The analysis of 8257 speech acts across 100 transcripts produced a comprehensive list of 100 specific functions accomplished through translanguaging in the collaboration. These functions were grouped into four broad affordances categories, as shown in the figure below.

*Figure 19. Overview of the affordances of translanguaging in collaborative language learning*

The cognitive-conceptual affordances of translanguaging allowed learners to share information and knowledge, engage with each other’s ideas critically and constructively, build on their peers’ suggestions, utilize higher-order, critical thinking and problem-solving skills, and apply cognitive strategies to scaffold each other’s understanding of concepts. The planning-
organizational affordances of translanguaging helped learners to demonstrate autonomy in organizing and coordinating their own collaborative work, planning tasks, distributing roles and responsibilities, and ensuring effective collaboration between group members. The affective-social affordances of translanguaging made learning more personal and created a collaborative community of practice among learners. Through translanguaging, learners built rapport, provided socio-emotional support and affirmation to their peers, showed interest in each other’s lives, and assisted each other. This resulted in a collective sense of self-efficacy and confidence within the group. The linguistic-discursive affordances of translanguaging helped learners to acquire and use the target grammatical structures and discursive features to complete their tasks, and scaffold each other’s linguistic knowledge. Through translanguaging, learners demonstrated metalinguistic awareness and the metacognitive ability to use specific features of their linguistic repertoires intentionally and purposefully during their learning. Translanguaging also facilitated more exploratory talk which made the collaboration more productive and supported individual as well as collective learning.

Overall, learners in 5K (NEO) used significantly more Tamil, English and Tamil, and Malay and Tamil during their interactions than learners in 5S (EO) because there was no English-only policy in 5K (NEO) and their teacher frequently used Tamil herself for pedagogical translanguaging purposes. In contrast, the English-only policy and constant policing of language in 5S (EO) resulted in learners’ significantly lower use of Tamil and higher use of English. The results of the statistical analyses also revealed that there were significant differences in the affordances accomplished through different translanguaging constellations. Tamil was most frequently used for planning-organizational and affective-social purposes, while the Tamil and English constellation was most frequently used for cognitive-conceptual and linguistic-discursive purposes. Learners with upper-intermediate proficiency in 5S (EO) used more English for linguistic-discursive functions as they had the relevant vocabulary to talk about grammar, syntax, and semantics in English. Learners with lower-intermediate proficiency in 5K (NEO) used English and Tamil more frequently for linguistic-discursive and cognitive-conceptual purposes as their interactions focused on supporting each other’s English language learning, conceptual understanding and content knowledge using Tamil. The reasons and factors underlying learners’ language choices in 5K (NEO) and 5S (EO) are discussed further in the following chapter with reference to data from the interviews, classroom observations, and reflexive journal entries.
CHAPTER 6: FINDINGS – REASONS AND FACTORS INFLUENCING LEARNERS’ USE OF TRANSLANGLUAGING IN THE CLASSROOM

This chapter explores the reasons and factors surrounding learners’ use of translanguaging and their specific language choices in response to these research questions: What are learners’ reasons for translanguaging during their collaborative peer interactions, and the factors influencing their use of translanguaging? In the first section of the chapter, I draw on findings from my interviews with all 55 learners in 5K (NEO) and 5S (EO), interviews with Ms. Shalini (EO) and Ms. Kavita (NEO), classroom observations, my reflexive journal entries, and student artefacts to discuss the reasons for learners’ use of translanguaging in the classroom. In the second section of the chapter, I discuss the factors that influence learners’ decision to use or not to use translanguaging and the specific language choices they make while translanguaging, in connection with the respective language policies of each class. The findings presented in the second section are also based on data from the interviews with learners and teachers, classroom observations, and reflexive journal entries.

Reasons for Learners’ Use of Translanguaging in the Classroom

To identify the purposes for learners’ use of translanguaging during their interactions, I conducted a thematic analysis of my interviews with the 55 learners. I corroborated the themes that emerged from this analysis with data from my classroom observations, reflexive journal entries, student artefacts, and interviews with the two teachers. This analytical process resulted in four themes related to learners’ reasons for translanguaging: (1) supporting each other’s language learning, (2) building rapport with peers and resolving conflict, (3) asserting cultural identity and preserving culture, and (4) drawing on knowledge and making connections across languages.

Supporting Each Other’s Language Learning

During the student interviews, the most commonly cited reason for translanguaging was to support each other’s language learning. Learners informed me that they used “Tanglish, Tamil and English mix up” when they had questions about the meaning of difficult or unfamiliar words to their peers. Describing her language choices, Thiva (5S-EO) explained that she usually used
Tamil to ask her group members about words she did not know, “எனக்கு கேட்டும் வாரத்தால் நான் கேட்டு பார்த்து, நான் தமிழின் பார்த்து” (When I'm asking about words I don't know, I'll speak in Tamil). Many learners said that they translanguaged to help their friends who were having difficulties understanding words, phrases or sentences in English. For example, Silvia (5S-EO) recalled that “If one sentence my friend didn't understand, if I tell in English she cannot understand the word. If we can explain in Tamil, then only she can understand and she will improve her language.” In support of this, her classmate Suren said that “Sometimes if we don't understand in English, we speak in Tamil, because some of them, they all very weak in English, so we explain to them in Tamil.” Likewise, learners in 5K (NEO) also suggested that using Tamil helped their group members to improve their comprehension. For example, Lingkam (5K-NEO) explained that “வர் என்று பெரிய தமிழுக்கு, தமிழின் வெளியில் பெரிய வேபாம்” (If someone does not understand something, we'll say it in Tamil and help them understand it) and his classmate Amira confirmed that “If some friends don't know English, we all say in Tamil, so they can understand.” Kishor suggested that his group’s use of translanguaging was intentional, as they would strategically make a plan to use English and Tamil to help their friends who did not understand English, “If somebody don't understand English, so we start, we do the plan, we plan first we talk in Tamil, then 50% English 50% Tamil. Somebody can't understand English, we talk in Tamil with them.”

Students who were at the receiving end of this translanguaging support from their peers confirmed that it helped them to understand the lesson content better, learn new vocabulary, and be able to perform tasks on their own. According to Danusha (5K-NEO), “எனக்கு கேட்டும் வாரத்தால் அவர்கள் என்று பெரிய வேபாம் பெரிய பெரிய வேபாம்” (What I didn't understand, they taught me, now I understand it). In the same way, Rubin (5K-NEO) emphasized that “இப்போது நான் என் கேட்டத்தால் Englishவில் வெறும் அவர்களின் கேட்டத்தால், கேட்டத்தால் தமிழின் பார்த்து, அவர்களின் கேட்டத்தால் தமிழின் பார்த்து” (Now if I ask my friend what an English word is, he will explain it in Tamil, so I'll understand the meaning of the word). Kartik (5K-NEO) suggested that the support he received from his peers through Tamil helped him to internalize new learning and in turn apply that knowledge in other contexts to support his peers:
Like Kartik, other learners implied that translanguaging established a mutually supportive relationship in their collaborative groups as there were times when they received support from their peers, and times when they themselves provided the same type of support to their group members. Elango (5S-EO) alluded to the reciprocal nature of scaffolding that was provided through translanguaging when he stated that “நம் பக்கு என் ன் னரில் ஈலனா நம் பவங் காவாங்க, அவங் க ா ன் ஜல் லாம் நா ன் தல் லாம்.’’ (If I don't understand something, they will teach me, they will tell me the meaning in Tamil. I'm a little better at English now, but some words that I know in Tamil, I still don't know in English. So, I'll ask about all that in Tamil, and they'll tell me [what the words are] in English. The next time, I’ll be able to explain [the words] myself.)

Like Kartik, other learners implied that translanguaging established a mutually supportive relationship in their collaborative groups as there were times when they received support from their peers, and times when they themselves provided the same type of support to their group members. Elango (5S-EO) alluded to the reciprocal nature of scaffolding that was provided through translanguaging when he stated that “நம் பக்கு என் ன் னரில் ஈலனா நம் பல்வாங்கள ் அப்பத்த காலம் நாேன சால் வன் வன்.” (If we don't understand something, we can share it with our friends. If I don’t understand anything in English, I’ll ask Pravin. Other times, Pravin will ask me). Confirming this, his group member, Pravin (5S-EO) explained that “Sometimes I couldn't memorize, so he [Elango] will help me to memorize the Tamil words. Sometimes he also don't know some words, he will ask me.” Pravin then gave an example from a local Malaysian educational comedy, ‘Oh My English!’ to illustrate how his group members supported each other’s language learning, “For example, in Oh My English, Mr. Henry will teach Ayu English, Ayu will teach Mr. Henry Malay, so they exchange their language, so they get better in that, so that's how we do the group work.”

The reasons for translanguaging illustrated in all the quotes above are consistent with the results of the discourse analysis presented in Chapter 5, which showed that learners used translanguaging strategically and intentionally in order to scaffold each other’s language learning. The reasons and examples learners provided in their interviews match many functions within the linguistic-discursive affordances category, such as ‘Asking for/checking the meaning/usage of a word/phrase,’ ‘Explaining the meaning of a word/phrase,’ ‘Providing the translation of a word/phrase/sentence,’ ‘Providing information/examples to help peers
understand new vocabulary,’ ‘Correcting one's language use based on peers' feedback,’ and ‘Using newly learned vocabulary/linguistic structure in spoken/written language.’

**Building Rapport with Peers and Resolving Conflict**

Building rapport and resolving conflict were also among the top reasons cited by learners for their use of translanguaging in their collaborative groups. Several learners from 5K (NEO) indicated in their interview responses that translanguaging helped them to “mix with friends” better. Likewise, when 5S (EO) learners were asked why they chose to use languages other than English during their interactions with each other despite the English-only policy in their class, they explained that translanguaging made their collaboration more enjoyable as it established a friendly atmosphere within the group where everyone felt “very comfortable” and “very happy” with each other. Summarizing her reasons for translanguaging, Tanisha (5S-EO) stated, “If we mix the languages, it will be more fun and enjoyable. We will enjoy the subject.” Describing the benefits of translanguaging for his, Lingkam (5K-NEO) stated that it enabled his group members to work together more collaboratively and avoid conflict, “ஒற்றை மையாக ஒருவடிவமானது, ஒன்றுகொண்டு மேலேசுமானது, அதனால் வளரவில்லை” (we can work together in a united way, without a single fight, we work together well, that's why I like it). Similarly, Ravi (5K-NEO) explained that by translanguaging, “தான் வளரவில்லை, தான் வளரவில்லை” (we could work together without fights), and his classmate Hema (5K-NEO) added that “எல்லோரும் வளரவில்லை, எல்லோரும் வளரவில்லை” (Everyone works together happily, altogether). My observations of learners as they worked together supported their accounts of how translanguaging helped them build more cohesive groups and resolve conflict among group members. In groups where translanguaging was used often, I observed that learners spoke more freely with one another and there was more friendly banter and social talk. Whenever there was a misunderstanding between two group members, all of the other group members would get involved in order to solve the problem and bring the task back on track.

In contrast, I observed that in groups where learners’ language use was monitored by one or more group members, there was far less social talk among group members, and the tone of conversation was more serious and matter-of-fact. The way that where learners were streamed
into classes according to their academic ability and language proficiency played a role in creating hierarchal structures in the classes, whereby several learners who had a higher level of English proficiency than their peers took on the role of the group leader and enforced an English-only policy within their groups. These learners tended to dominate discussions and make most of the decisions regarding the task. When there were misunderstandings between group members, they were often resolved in an inequitable manner as the English-speaking group member would have the final say in the conversation. Learners whose language use was controlled by their English-dominant group members complained that their ideas were ignored if they could not convey the ideas only in English. Meena (5S-EO) expressed her dissatisfaction that “If we say anything we want to share, Suren don't let us because he only must tell all the creativity in English, his idea only must use for all the group work. That's what I don't like. He didn't take our idea.” When I asked learners what the atmosphere was like in groups with an English-only policy, Guna (5S-EO) reported that, “Some people won't talk much <because of the policy>, but they have talent.”

On the other hand, learners in 5K (NEO) felt that translanguaging in their small groups enabled them to pool all their intellectual and creative resources and work more collaboratively. For example, Bavani (5K-NEO) reported that she really enjoyed working in her group “because many people have many types of creativity, then they can share the creativity with us.” French’s (2016) study similarly found that learners were able to better demonstrate their creativity using their home languages. The excerpt below from my reflexive journal provides an example of the different group dynamics in groups with language policing and groups with translanguaging:

“Today, 5S (EO) was doing a reading and writing activity based on the topic of Tales from Other Lands. First, students looked at two story titles on the board and had to guess what the stories were about. After this whole class discussion, the groups worked together to predict the ending of one of the two stories, write it, and present it to the class. As I was walking around, I noticed that as usual, a few students would take on the role of the “English police” in each group. I also noticed that these same students tended to take on the role of group leader and dominate the group discussions, making most of the decisions without getting much participation from the other group members. The other students in the group are usually very quiet and they just listen quietly as the leader does all the talking in English. On the other hand, I noticed that in another group where both Tamil and English were used in the discussion, there was more equal participation from all the group members. This group seemed livelier too. They were teasing each other, making jokes, and more members would contribute to the conversation. It didn’t seem to
me like any one student was taking on the role of the leader; the playing field seemed more equal and there seemed to be less implicit power structures and more positive group dynamics.”

Consistent with the observations recorded in the excerpt above, learners from groups which used translanguaging conveyed during their interviews that the group work was not controlled or led by any one individual. Instead, everyone participated and led the group equally, and this created greater rapport among group members. As Tilly (5S-EO) stated enthusiastically, “All of we must leader, everybody can participate. We can do our group work with our best friends.” Likewise, Premil (5K-NEO) expressed positive feelings towards his group, “English class will be very fun with the group work, it will be very fun all to do together, can enjoy with the group, feel happy, like friends.”

Learners in both 5K (NEO) and 5S (EO) also explained that they used Tamil instead of English whenever they wanted to joke around with each other. For example, Suren (5K-NEO) asserted that “When friends joke in English, no too funny, won’t enjoy that much” and Elango (5S-EO) similarly explained that “When we talk in Tamil, funny. Joke in English won't be funny, like one word in English won't be funny, but if you tell it in Tamil, will be funny.” Consistent with this, I noted in my reflexive journal how the use of Tamil helped learners use humour effectively during a riddle-writing activity I conducted with them when their teacher was absent:

“After reading a story together about a grandmother who tells her grandchildren riddles during a power outage, I asked the students to work in their groups to think of some riddles. I told them that they could think of teka tekis (riddles) or தைகைதல் (riddles) in Malay, Tamil or English. They had a really good time with this activity and used a lot of Tamil to first tell each other riddles they already knew. Kamini’s group made some clever connections between English and Tamil in their riddle, for example pronouncing “orange” with a Tamil intonation so it sounded like the word for “five” in Tamil. Learners’ use of translanguaging during this activity fulfilled two functions: English aided comprehension by helping students understand the content of the riddles, and Tamil served a pragmatic function by making their riddles and jokes funny.”

According to Ashvin (5K-NEO), telling jokes in Tamil also helped to relieve tension between group members, “When we do group work, if we is marah (angry), Tamil joke is like a fun, it's laughing, we are laughing already, so no more marah (angry).” Ashvin’s response
suggests that apart from being a source of amusement, joking with each other in Tamil helped to resolve conflict between group members. Accordingly, the analysis of learners’ interactions in Chapter 5 revealed that learners used translanguage very frequently to accomplish the affective-social functions of ‘Joking with peers/expressing amusement at peers' ideas’ and ‘Correcting peers’ actions/resolving conflict.’ Interestingly, I observed that although Ms. Shalini (EO) encouraged students to speak in English only, she would very translanguage herself to add humour to her lessons and liven the classroom atmosphere whenever she sensed that learners were disengaged. Ms. Shalini (EO) explained that she used Tamil to make jokes because “In Tamil, certain jokes are very sharp so it will go to them. In English, it’s very surface only, but the meaning is very deep in Tamil.” Ms. Kavita (NEO) similarly always used Tamil when joking with her learners because “that way we will enjoy them more.” This finding resembles the results of Rosiers, van Lancker and Delarue’s (2018) study which showed that in the context of a school with a policy that did not allow learners to use other languages in the classroom, teachers switched from the target language to learners’ home language for socio-emotional purposes such as talking more informally to learners about their shared experiences.

**Asserting Cultural Identity and Preserving Culture**

Learners associated the use of Tamil during their translanguage with asserting their cultural identity and preserving their culture. In 5S (EO), despite the teacher’s constant reminders for learners to use only English during their group work, learners still used Tamil widely while working together. To justify their use of Tamil, many 5S (EO) learners asserted that “I’m a Tamilian,” and referred to Tamil recurrently as their “mother tongue,” “mother language,” and “own language.” Tanisha (5S-EO) related during her interview that although she had to speak in Tamil very quietly so that her teacher would not overhear her, it made her feel “happy, because Tamil is our mother language.” Like Tanisha, Silvia (5S-EO) emphasized that “Tamil is important because Tamil is mother tongue… mother tongue means my grandmother, mother, father, grandfather all speak Tamil.” The theme of Tamil being a generational language was present in other learners’ interview responses as well. Meena (5S-EO) talked about Tamil being “our generation language” and Tilly (5S-EO) emphasized that “Tamil is my பரம்பார்வெளி” (Tamil is my ancestral language).
Cummins (2011) asserts that learners will only engage academically to the extent that their classroom interactions are identity-affirming. The findings of the interviews with learners confirmed that learners felt dejected when their cultural and linguistic identity was not affirmed. Although there was no formal English-only policy in place in 5K (NEO), learners in that class recalled being stopped from using Tamil by their English teachers in previous years. Recounting those experiences, they expressed sadness and suggested that being prevented from speaking in Tamil contradicted their identity as Tamilians. Malini (5K-NEO) acknowledged that “I feel very sad. We born Tamil girl, but the teacher say we must talk in English only” and Premil (5K-NEO) agreed that he felt “sad, because for me I am Tamil boy in the Tamil school.” Learners also connected speaking in Tamil with preserving their culture. For example, Meena (5S-EO) explained that “Then only we can bring our culture [into the classroom], then only we won't forget our culture, so I think Tamil is important.” Consistently, learners used Tamil widely when talking about aspects of their culture and religion, for example when talking about going to the temple and discussing various Hindu traditions such as shaving one’s head as an offering to their Hindu gods. Lingkam (5K-NEO) advocated for the use of translanguaging by stressing the importance of all three languages – English, Malay and Tamil – and specifically highlighting the role of Tamil in helping him maintain ties with people from the same culture “மேலானும் வண்டிதல் கேட்டது... நம் பயிற்சியார் நம் வல்லூர், அது பயிற்சிக் கார்க்கார். இன்று மேலானும் வண்டிதல் கேட்டதும், தமிழ் மேலானும் கவர்க்கார்கன் சமும பல்வேயாம், Englishவே வெள்ளை விருப்பத்தக்கவன் கிளிக்கு பல்வேயாம், அந்தக் கிளிக்கு Malay வண்டிதல் நிற்ப வண்டிதல் நிற்கவத்தக்கது Malay கார்க்கார் கிளிக்கு பல்வேயாம்” (All three are important...we will speak in Tamil, that is our culture. I want all three languages, why, because we speak in Tamil with people from our own culture, we speak English with people we will work with, we speak Malay with our neighbours).

In my classroom observations, I observed that despite the English-only policy she usually implemented, Ms. Shalini (EO) would speak in Tamil or Malay herself whenever she wanted to make references to aspects of Indian or Malaysian culture, for example, to talk about Hindu beliefs, Indian festivals, or popular Malaysian food. Ms. Shalini (EO) also used age-old Tamil proverbs when she wished to convey cultural knowledge and values, or give advice to her students. Her rationale for using Tamil for these purposes was as follows:
“Some Tamil proverbs, in Tamil they will understand them better. I don’t need to explain too much because they’ve already learned this in Tamil, so they can keep it in their head, they will learn it more. They feel it more, because it’s their mother tongue.”

The School Improvement Specialist Coach, Ms. Saro, similarly related during her interview that using Tamil to explain the meaning of proverbs was more effective than using English:

“If they have similar proverbs in their own language, it’s easier to make them understand it [using their L1]. I believe as a teacher that’s good because what you want them to know is the proverb, the effect of it, how you can use it. So, if they know it in their mother tongue, straight away they will know how to connect it in English, it’s like you shorten the time of explaining it to them. I will call it scaffolding, you’re supporting them using their mother tongue.”

The excerpt below from my reflexive journal provides the example of a lesson where Ms. Shalini (EO) used translanguaging and even allowed her learners to translanguage for the purpose of discussing Malaysian food traditions and beliefs.

“Ms. Shalini started a discussion with students in 5S on the food labels they had brought from home. They talked about what terms on the labels such as ‘halal’ meant, and this led to an extended discussion on what foods are forbidden for Muslims and Hindus, and the different beliefs about food in different cultures. Interestingly, Ms. Shalini used Tamil when talking about the food traditions and beliefs of Indians, such as the belief among Hindus that cows are sacred and cannot be eaten. She also used Malay to explain some of the terms on the food labels. For example, she asked students jokingly whether they thought that ‘net weight’ meant ‘tangkap ikan besar’ (catching a big fish), and then went on to explain what the term meant. I was surprised that Ms. Shalini allowed students to use Tamil and Malay for the first time since I’ve been in this class. For example, when she asked students what foods people can be allergic to, Silvia said “udang” (shrimp). Instead of asking for the English translation of the word, Ms. Shalini complimented Silvia and said that her answer shows that she understood what allergies meant. Ms. Shalini then went on to encourage other students to answer in another language if they did not know the word for it in English! This led students to use Tamil and Malay words to describe their favourite Malaysian delicacies such as “mee” (noodles) and “தெய்களை” (dosa) and their favourite “restoran” (restaurants). This goes to show that translanguaging is necessary to showcase culture, as so many references to Malaysian culture are only authentic in Malay and Tamil. It seems impossible to make a lesson culturally relevant without the use of translanguaging to talk about culture.”
Learners demonstrated the same language use patterns, whereby one of the functions accomplished through translanguaging was ‘Getting ideas and information for the task from local/popular culture.’ An example of this is when learners brought a trilingual Hindu prayer book to class (see Figure 20 below), and used the information in it for a writing task.

Figure 20. Trilingual (English, Malay, Tamil) Hindu prayer book used by learners in class

**Drawing on Knowledge and Making Connections Across Languages**

A significant theme that arose in the interviews relates to the role of translanguaging in helping learners to draw on their knowledge and make connections across the different named languages or language practices in their repertoire. Talking about how all the languages in their linguistic repertoire were connected, learners gave examples of similarities between the languages, especially between Tamil and Malay. For instance, Nareesh (5K-NEO) explained how the word ‘ship’ sounded the same in Tamil and Malay:

“In Tamil we say kapal. In Malay, kapal, so even if we say kapal, they will understand us. It’s enough if we just say I go kapal/.”
Similarly, speaking about how Malay borrows words from Tamil, Lingkam (5K-NEO) explained:

“Almari தமிழில் தான் இருக்கு, அலமாரி. அவங் அப்பேய் பிட்ச் பால் குழுக்கு தேடு கிப்பாக்கு”
(Almari <Malay for cupboard> is in our Tamil, அலமாரி <Tamil for cupboard, pronounced as /aləmaːri/>. They ‘kidnapped’ the word just as it is. They take a lot of it <words>).

After giving more examples of Tamil words that were used in Malay and also English, Lingkam went on to assert that “எ ன் எபாத்தவைரக் கம், தமிழ் உடவ க், English உடவ, English உதம்” (As far as I'm concerned, Tamil helps English, and English helps Tamil). English and Malay help to Tamil, Tamil is help English and Malay.”

Like Lingkam, several other learners talked about the reciprocal relationship between the languages. Several learners suggested that translanguaging helped them to think about concepts and ideas in one language and express them in another, thereby allowing them to draw on knowledge from a unitary language repertoire. Describing their thought process while working, Naveen (5S-EO) and Riya (5S-EO) explained that thinking and talking about their work in Tamil with their group members helped them to express their ideas more clearly in English, “First we think and talk in Tamil, then reply in English.” Likewise, Ashvin (5K-NEO) explained that his group always used a mix of Tamil and English because it helped them to first think through and write down ideas in Tamil, and then work together to translate their ideas into English, “Group work is campur (mixed), Tamil and English. First, we think and write Tamil, then give to, replace those words, and we will give to the English.” The process of transferring ideas across languages seemed to improve learners’ understanding of the content. Speaking about an activity where learners had to translate a passage in English into Tamil and Malay, Ashvin (5K-NEO) asserted that “When we transfer it to Tamil and Malay, then only we understand.” Without the use of different languages to decode the meaning of the passage, he argued that “The work will be slow, and the ideas will get lost, then the work can't finish.”

During my classroom observations in 5K (NEO), I noted that Ms. Kavita (NEO) always allowed learners to respond to questions during whole-class discussions in Tamil and Malay. She explained, “I let students use any language to answer my questions because maybe they know the
answer but don’t know how to say it in English, or maybe they have learned about it in their other classes.” This strategy seemed to successfully allow learners to relate what they learned in English to what they had learned in other languages. For example, discussing the topic of food allergies, Ms. Kavita (NEO) asked the class, “What is peanut?”, to which a learner responded “kacang” (Malay for peanut). This prompted another learner to say கடைல (Tamil for peanut). Allowing learners to demonstrate their understanding of the word ‘peanut’ by stating the word for it in Malay and Tamil helped the whole class to learn new vocabulary in not one, but three languages. When I asked learners afterwards how they had felt about this lesson, they confirmed that it helped them to learn more words across all three languages. Kesha (5S-EO) emphasized that “Because we use three language also, we can learn all three.” In another lesson on food nutrition in 5K (NEO), I observed first-hand how the use of translanguaging allowed learners to draw on the content knowledge that they had learned in Tamil and Malay, and to use this knowledge to make connections across all of the languages in their repertoire. The excerpt from my reflexive journal describes this episode in 5K (NEO) further:

“While answering questions in a worksheet based on a food label (see Figure 21), students were having trouble understanding words like ‘nutrition’ and ‘nutrients.’ At first, Ms. Kavita tried to explain the word ‘nutrition’ to them in English, but since they were still struggling to grasp its meaning, Ms. Kavita decided to give them the Tamil translation of the word. As soon as Ms. Kavita said one word in Tamil, “சத்தா” (nutrition), the whole class atmosphere livened up, and the students excitedly started calling out other words related to nutrition in English, Malay and Tamil, for example, carbohydrate, protein, iron, etc. What’s even more amazing is that they also began explaining those terms to each other! This made me realize that the students actually knew so much related to the topic, but they had not been able to demonstrate the full extent of their knowledge until they could use the language they know! Allowing them to translanguage (and this was not even explicitly done, all it took was the teacher to start) helped them not only to understand difficult concepts, but to explain them to their friends. Many activities planned by the teacher are situated within learners’ ZPDs, but without the scaffolding of translanguaging, students may not be able to draw on what they already know to extend their learning and reach their full potential.”
The findings above suggest that learners’ use of translanguaging was not merely a transfer of linguistic knowledge or skills from the L1 to the L2. Rather, their unitary language repertoire was leveraged metacognitively so that they could perform various functions using the sociopolitical definitions of the named languages in their repertoire (O. García, personal communication, July 17, 2019).

The scaffolding provided through the whole-group discussion above helped learners to mobilize their background knowledge to support each other’s learning during their subsequent small group collaborative activities. This is an example of the Vygotskian ZPD in practice, where the use of translanguaging enabled learners to stretch their pre-existing knowledge to further their learning (Lewis, Jones & Baker, 2012a; Vygotsky, 1978). Accordingly, the results of the discourse analysis reported in Chapter 5 revealed that learners in 5K (NEO) used translanguaging to accomplish cognitive-conceptual affordances more frequently than learners in 5S (EO). The knowledge that had been activated through their use of other languages enabled learners to fulfil functions such as ‘Asking for/providing factual information related to the topic’ and ‘Making a suggestion related to the content of the task’ more readily and effectively.

I also observed that learners were able to draw on their content knowledge gleaned from different languages and subjects, and apply this knowledge to new tasks through the use of authentic multilingual materials in class. For example, during another unit on food, Ms. Kavita (NEO) asked learners to bring in real food and beverage packages and labels to use as samples.
when creating their own food or beverage label. All of the packages and labels that learners brought from home were multilingual and contained terms related to food ingredients and nutrients in different languages (see Figure 22 below), for example, maklumat pemakanan (nutritional facts/information), tenaga (energy), lemak (fat), air gula (sugar syrup), pati perahan laici (lychee puree) and pengawet (preservatives).

![Examples of multilingual food labels](image)

Figure 22. Examples of multilingual food labels

Learners were quick to recognize the Malay terms on the labels as they had learned those terms in their Malay and Science lessons. Thus, they could apply their knowledge of the familiar Malay terms to make sense of the unfamiliar English terminology on the food labels. Not only were learners able to understand and use these new terms while discussing ideas for their own food products, but they also used the terms correctly in the food label posters they created and presented (see Figure 23). This corroborates the results of studies which suggest that translanguaging helps learners to develop a fuller understanding of subjects such as math and science because it allows learners to interweave their linguistic and cultural resources with cross-disciplinary content (e.g., Karlsson, Larsson & Jakobsson, 2018; Lewis, Jones & Baker, 2012a).
In contrast, I observed in 5S (EO) that learners had to use monolingual food labels in their textbook (see Figure 24) as reference points for their own food labels. As the labels in the textbook only contained terms in English as opposed to the multilingual terminology found in authentic food labels, learners did not easily connect the terms used on the labels with concepts they had learned about in Malay or Tamil.
Factors Influencing Learners’ Use of Translanguaging and Language Choices

As discussed in Chapter 5, there was a statistically significant relationship between learners’ language choices and the class they were in. Learners in 5K (NEO) used significantly more Tamil and translanguaging constellations with Tamil (English and Tamil, Malay and Tamil) than learners in 5S (EO). On the other hand, learners in 5S (EO) used significantly more English than learners in 5K (NEO). An interesting similarity between the language choices of learners in both classes was their infrequent use of Malay and translanguaging constellations with Malay (Malay and Tamil, English and Malay, English, Malay and Tamil). The factors influencing learners’ use of translanguaging and the language choices they made while translanguaging include the teachers’ classroom language policy and language use, parental discourses about the importance of different languages, and ethnic tensions and feelings of marginalization. The following sections discuss these factors using evidence from the interviews with learners and teachers, classroom observations, and reflexive journal.

Teacher’s Classroom Language Policy and Language Use

The language policy and language use of Ms. Kavita (NEO) and Ms. Shalini (EO) in their respective classes was a crucial factor affecting learners’ decision whether or not to translanguaging, and learners’ specific language choices. Although Ms. Kavita (NEO) did not implement or enforce an official language policy during her lessons, she regularly used pedagogical translanguaging herself to explain abstract concepts to learners, translate vocabulary, elicit their background knowledge, check their understanding, and answer questions. The quote from Saravanan (5K-NEO) below provides examples of Ms. Kavita (NEO)’s use of pedagogical translanguaging to support learners:

“Teacher வந்தெல் எலாம் தெசால் எனக்கு, Saya suka, kalau saya tak faham, cikgu, அவங்க வந்தெல் எலாம் தெசால் எனக்கு, tak bertiadais untuk menjawab, tak perlu melangkah ke bahasa lain, English,甘拜, 交流, எனக்கு எனினால், என் ணேவாட, meaning எனக்கு என்றொருக்க, கபிலிண்.”
(Teacher teaches and writes on the board in Tamil as well as English. She explains to us all the words we don’t understand in Tamil. I like it, if I don't understand something, teacher teaches it to me in Tamil, she explains the meaning of it in Tamil).

Figure 25 below shows an example of an activity where Ms. Kavita (NEO) allowed learners to write sentences on the board using different languages:

Figure 25. Sentences written by learners on the board in English, Tamil and Malay

When I asked Ms. Kavita (NEO) during her interview about her reasons for using translanguaging with her learners, she explained that this was how she herself had been taught, “My English teacher used Tamil and Malay when teaching us, and that helped me to learn English better.” This suggests that translanguaging is a long-standing practice in multilingual classrooms, although it has not always been legitimated. Learners were appreciative of Ms. Kavita (NEO)’s use of pedagogical translanguaging, and believed that it supported their learning effectively. Kartik (5K-NEO) explained, “நம் பென் னன வயல் இன் தைல் தமிழ் கரட் பெலிலேலாம், அதனால் வந்து Englishைல் மைத் காற்றும் காற்றும் பெபில்லிலேலாம், அப்போ தைல் காற்றும் காற்றும் காற்றும் பெபில்லிலேலாம், அதனால் வந்து, அது Englishைல் குறிப்பிட்டு காற்றும், காற்றும் தமிழ் தமிழ் காற்றும்” (We've been speaking Tamil since we were young, so if we don't
understand something in English a little, the reason she says it in Tamil is because we understand Tamil. So, if she says it in English and Tamil, we will understand it very well).

Kartik and other learners interpreted Ms. Kavita (NEO)’s use of pedagogical translanguaging as permission for them to translanguage themselves. Thus, they felt very comfortable using Tamil while communicating with her as well as with their peers, which was a significant factor influencing the high frequency of Tamil use among learners in 5K (NEO). Lingkam (5K-NEO) reported that anytime he did not understand a word in English, he would not hesitate to ask Ms. Kavita (NEO) in Tamil as he knew she would explain it to him immediately, “எனக்கொன்றை வார்த்தை தருமான், teacher தமிழில் விளக்கம் செய்ததால், teacher தமிழில் விளக்கம் செய்ததால்” (If I don't understand a word, if I show it to teacher, teacher will use Tamil to explain it well to me). Lingkam’s feeling of ease in asking Ms. Kavita (NEO) for help stood in stark contrast to how he felt about his former English teachers who had a strict English-only policy, “Teacher say don't talk Tamil, sad, don't know meaning, எனக்கொன்றை வார்த்தை தருமான், teacher தமிழில் விளக்கம் செய்ததால், teacher தமிழில் விளக்கம் செய்ததால்” (Teacher says don't talk in Tamil, sad, phrases I don’t know, we will be too afraid to ask about the meaning of words we don’t understand. Some teachers, if I speak even a little Tamil, they'll hit me on the hand, so I’ll just shut my mouth and keep quiet because I’m too afraid). Learners’ use of translanguaging with Ms. Kavita (NEO) extended beyond using Tamil to ask her about English words they did not understand. Learners also felt comfortable asking for Ms. Kavita (NEO)’s help with their Tamil, as illustrated in Ravi’s (5K (NEO)) explanation, “தமிழ் வார்த்தை பாருவம் செய்ததால், Englishவை தமிழில் teacher சந்திக்கும்” (If I don't understand Tamil words, I'll ask teacher in English). This further attests to the point made in the section above on the role of translanguaging in strengthening the connection between languages. Ravi’s account is also reflective of the general language use patterns in the 5K (NEO), whereby learners commonly used the English and Tamil translanguaging constellation, much more frequently than learners in 5S (EO).

In 5S (EO), learners used less Tamil because of the English-only policy in place and Ms. Shalini (EO)’s infrequent use of translanguaging. Ms. Shalini (EO) usually drew her learners’ attention to the English-only policy through constant reminders throughout the lesson for them to
“use English only” or “don’t speak in Tamil”. However, although Ms. Shalini (EO) instructed her learners to only use English during her lessons, she herself sometimes used Tamil and Malay when joking with learners, making cultural references, or talking to her colleagues who visited the classroom. A few learners who observed this felt it was unfair that Ms. Shalini (EO) could use languages other than English in class but did not allow them to do the same. Suren (5S-EO) argued that “We feel how come teacher has the rights to talk [in Tamil], but we can't talk!” His group member, Rohit (5S-EO) added that Ms. Shalini (EO) should allow them to translanguage just as she herself did because they would only use it for learning purposes, “If teacher give us permission we can talk in Tamil, we don't misuse the chance. We just use it for vocabulary, if we don't understand.” On the other hand, some learners agreed and complied with Ms. Shalini (EO)’s language policy because they felt that it was meant for their own good. For example, Yashwin (5S-EO) explained that “Teacher scold us for speak in Tamil because we must know how to speak English fluently, that's why” and Pravin (5S-EO) agreed that “The teacher scold us for our good only. If the teacher is not strict, we won't do the work properly, so teacher is advising us for our good.”

While some learners in 5S (EO) tried to use English as much as they could to comply with Ms. Shalini (EO)’s English-only policy, other learners admitted that speaking in Tamil came naturally to them. For Silvia, it was inevitable to use Tamil because it was the language she felt most comfortable in, “Teacher says like that to improve our English, but sometimes we speak in English, and unfortunately the Tamil words will come. We feel more comfortable in talking Tamil.” Prashant (5S-EO), too, confessed that “If teacher let, everyone will talk in Tamil.” This is why most learners continued to use translanguaging during their small group collaborative interactions. They also used multilingual materials such as bilingual dictionaries discreetly (e.g., hiding them under the table) to assist each other (see Figure 26 below). This finding parallels the work of other research which demonstrates how learners exercise their agency in using language practices that challenge the monolingual norms of their classrooms (Pacheco, 2016). For example, Henderson and Palmer’s (2015) study with Grade 3 students in a two-way dual language classroom found that learners resisted the English-dominant norms of the classroom by creating their own space where they could use Spanish and hybrid language forms.
During my interview with Ms. Shalini (EO), I asked her about the reasons for her English-only policy. She explained that her intention for requiring learners to speak only in English was to improve their English language proficiency. Ms. Shalini (EO) regrets not learning English from a younger age, and believes that it prevented her from achieving her dream of becoming a lecturer. She confessed that she feels inferior to her English-speaking relatives and asserted that she did not want any of her learners to ever feel the same way she did. Ms. Shalini (EO) also felt pressured to use English-only instruction in her class because she believed that to be the expectation placed upon her by her superiors. Ms. Shalini (EO) related that in the Professional Upskilling of English Language Teachers (Pro-ELT) mandatory course she had attended, teachers were shown videos of “native speakers” and taught how to pronounce words like them. Ms. Shalini (EO) confessed that she felt very demotivated because she felt that she would never be able to speak like the “native speakers” in the videos. Ms. Shalini (EO) believed that by requiring learners to speak in English, she could help them build up the confidence and boldness that she felt she herself lacked:

“I regret I’m not that good in English. If from young I learn everything in English, I think I might be someone. I love to be a lecturer, I love to be a learned person, but my English is not that powerful… I think they [my relatives] look down upon me. It hurt me also… I don’t want my students, I know a few of my students having this inferior feeling. They are so shy to speak, I don’t want them to be like that… I became brave at a late age, so I want them to be brave earlier. There are many students are shy to speak in English at all, so we need to do something, encourage them, motivate them.”
Ms. Shalini (EO) clarified that she had a different language policy for the different classes she taught. For classes where learners had a lower proficiency level, she allowed them to use Tamil, “When it comes to other classes, I’m a bit different, I use a different method. I will tell them it’s okay to speak in Tamil to get the content.” However, because learners in 5S (EO) had a higher level of proficiency, she felt that she needed to be more strict with them, “But for 5S (EO), they are good, if they think a little more, they can sure come up with the vocab, that’s why I’m a bit strict.” Ms. Shalini (EO)’s response resonated with the School Improvement Specialist Coach, Ms. Saro’s philosophy that translanguaging was only acceptable for learners of a lower proficiency level, and only as long as the teacher herself did not use it:

“The weaker students, most of the time, they tend to answer in the mother tongue. In a situation like that, I don’t use the mother tongue, but I translate what they say in English and make them repeat it. So, slowly, learning takes place. It’s a bit on the slow side, but I don’t believe in stopping them completely. If you do that, they are not going to answer you. They will be quiet in the classroom and the class is going to be boring, you don’t know where you’re heading towards. If they answer in their mother tongue, let them answer, then translate it so they learn the word in English... If they’re good, I try to stick to that [English], because I know they can do it. I feel they have the flair, they have the command. If we allow them to speak more of mother tongue, they tend to take advantage, so with them be strict. Give an allowance of maybe 1% of mother tongue in the class.”

When I asked learners in 5S (EO) how they felt about Ms. Shalini (EO)’s decision, they expressed frustration that having to speak only in English prevented them from demonstrating the full extent of their knowledge. Thiva (5S-EO) felt sad that only students who were highly proficient in English were able to answer Ms. Shalini (EO)’s questions completely in English, “I feel sad. എന്ന ആവശ്യം പറയുന്നത് പറഞ്ഞ് question answer ചെയ്യാൻ പറഞ്ഞു, എന്ന വിദ്യാനിരുണ്ട പറഞ്ഞുകയില്ല?” (I feel sad. Why are only they able to answer the question? Why am I not able to?). Thiva added that she could only feel “clever” if she was allowed to answer in Tamil as well as English because “when I talk in Tamil, I know I won't tell wrong answers.” Likewise, Kamini (5S-EO) argued that the English-only policy masked the true ability and talents of learners, “Every student was very clever. We have lot of talents, but they all don't know our talent.” Although learners demonstrated their agency in translanguaging in their small groups, they confessed that having to use Tamil quietly made them feel like they were doing something
wrong. Reflecting on the English-only policies enforced by her former teachers, Amira (5K-NEO) stated that it made her feel like she and her peers “don’t have freedom, கூறுமாறு நாட்களுக்காக மன்னியும் (like we don’t have independence). தமிழில் கூறுமாறு நாட்களுக்காக, அல்லது இலங்கை சிறந்தகாலம் (Our country has gained independence, but we haven’t)”.

Malini (5K-NEO) echoed the same feeling of being restrained when she confessed that not being able to speak in Tamil made her feel “உடன் மாறி (like we’re prisoners). If we don't have freedom, like a bird in one கூறுமாறு (cage).” Earlier that week, the school had celebrated the Malaysian Independence Day, and as part of this celebration, a few birds were released from a cage to signify the release of the country from its colonizers (see Figure 27). When I asked Malini how she felt when she was able to use translanguaging, she answered by comparing herself to the birds in the cage, “When we open the birds’ locker [cage], the bird will fly like freedom.” Malini demonstrated agency in symbolically opening that lock and cage that the English-only policy represented through her use of translanguaging.

![Figure 27. Birds in a cage prior to being released during the Independence Day celebration](image)
Parental Discourses about the Importance of Different Languages

Another factor that influenced learners’ language choices in the classroom was their parents’ discourses regarding the status and importance of different languages. Most learners in 5S (EO) come from dual-income upper middle-class families. Their parents are educated professionals who work in high-paying positions such as engineers, lecturers, lawyers, business executives, and bank managers. On the other hand, most learners in 5K (NEO) come from single-income working class and lower middle-class families. At the time of the research, 20 out of 24 learners in that class had only one working parent, and their parents were in lower paying jobs such as factory workers, tailors, and drivers. The socioeconomic and educational background of 5S (EO) and 5K (NEO) parents seemed to correlate with their attitudes towards languages, and the discourses about language that permeated their homes. Most 5S (EO) learners reported during the interviews that their parents usually spoke to them in English and placed a greater emphasis on English than on Tamil or Malay because of the linguistic, social, cultural and economic capital (Bourdieu, 1993) associated with it. Several learners whose parents held senior management jobs recalled their parents’ advice to them that proficiency in English would be their best pathway to a good career. According to Prashant (5S-EO), his parents constantly remind him that “When we go to work, they’ll interview us in English, so it's an important subject. If we don't know English, they won't let us work there. Every company uses English, they won't use Tamil, so I talk in English.”

Another common theme in learners’ accounts of their parental discourses was that of English being the only language that would give them “international” experiences such as being able to work and live abroad. Yashwin (5S-EO) stated during his interview that his father who frequently travelled abroad for work encouraged him to pay special attention to English because of its international standing compared to Tamil and Malay, “My father said Tamil means you can speak with all the Tamilians, and then Malay means we can speak whole of Malaysia, but English means we can speak international.” The same belief about English was expressed by Prashant’s (5S-EO) parents who also travelled extensively for work:

“My parents will talk in English, so I'll talk more in English, because if you want to become an international player or talker language, you must know English. If you talk
another language, we don't know nothing. America all don't know Tamil. America, London all know English only, so we'll talk English.”

My interview with Ms. Shalini (EO) suggests that discourses pertaining to the linguistic, social, cultural and economic capital of English, which learners received from their parents, may have also been present in the classroom. Talking about which language(s) she believed to be the most important for learners, Ms. Shalini (EO) stated that without English:

“They can’t get [jobs in] big companies. They [the companies] will never take them because they’re not good in English even if they’re good in other subjects. Only limited, all [opportunities] will be limited, international level they can’t go. To hold a big post you need English… If we do well in English, everything will be covered. You can go to different countries, people will respect you”

Learners seemed to internalize their teacher’s and parents’ views about English. Very early on in my research, I noted in my reflexive journal that when I distributed the parental consent forms in Tamil and English to learners in 5S (EO), several learners including Yashwin and Prashant immediately returned the Tamil forms to me, insisting proudly that their parents would not need them because “my parents know English.” Interestingly, these same learners are the ones who tended to dominate group discussions and control the language use of their peers. Learners’ classroom interactions and interview responses also suggested that they connected English to Western culture, and believed that mastering English would help them become more Westernized. I observed during learners’ interactions that learners in 5S (EO) made many references to Western pop culture, for example, comparing the Lilliputians in Gulliver’s Travels to the Marvel movie Ant-Man, or talking about who had memorized more song lyrics by Ariana Grande. Some learners also internalized their parents’ expectations for them to speak in English to sound more “American” by expressing the same desire themselves:

“With my mother I speak in English. She wants me to go to foreign when I grow up so she wants me to talk like American. She always train me to talk like American. She will tell me to talk in English because we can speak to people from other countries, we can talk with Americans English… I want to marry an American.” (Kamini, 5S (EO))
Although parental discourses played a significant role in influencing the attitudes of 5S (EO) learners towards English, some learners continued to experience an internal conflict when it came to using Tamil and Malay due to the competing discourses around them. For example, while Kamini felt the need to speak more English so that she could fulfil her mother’s expectations of her, she acknowledged that she also did not want to forget Tamil as it was an important part of her culture. Thus, she confessed feeling conflicted about her language choices in the classroom, “I know she [my mother] wants me to talk English and improve, but I'll be tension like that.” Kamini’s realization about the importance of Tamil stemmed from her close relationship with her grandmother who only spoke to her in Malay and Tamil, “My grandmother speaks in two languages, Bahasa Melayu [Malay language] and Tamil. She wants me to talk in Bahasa Melayu and Tamil because then only I won't forget those languages.” Accordingly, Kamini occasionally used Malay and Tamil during her interactions with her group members.

Learners in 5K (NEO) used more Tamil and translanguaging constellations with Tamil (English and Tamil, Malay and Tamil, and English, Malay and Tamil) compared to learners in 5S (EO). Most learners in 5K (NEO) reported that they spoke primarily in Tamil with their parents, and that this made it difficult and unusual for them to only speak in English in school, “In house, we speaking in the Tamil, how can speaking only in the English [in school], it is difficult” (Ashvin, 5K-NEO). Contrary to 5S (EO) learners, 5K (NEO) learners were exposed to discourses from their parents which focused more on the role of multilingual proficiency, particularly in Tamil and Malay, rather than on English alone. Several learners referenced their parents’ belief that Tamil was important for communicating with people in the workplace. For example, Hema (5K-NEO) recounted her parents’ advice to her that “அங்கு எள்ளை செய்யவைக்கால தமிழ் தமிழ் என்று என்று என்று, English எள்ளை செய்யவைக்கால தமிழ் தமிழ் என்று என்று(helpful என்று)” (For people at work who do not know English, who only know Tamil, if we speak in Tamil to them, it will be very helpful). A few parents such as Malini’s (5K-NEO) encouraged their children to learn Malay “because we go to the work, they will ask questions in BM [Malay]”, while other parents such as Nareesh’s (5K-NEO) reminded their children that all three languages were important so that they could interact with everyone they worked with, “பைபைய் என்று என்று English என்று Bangla என்று தமிழ் என்று, English என்று தமிழ் என்று BM என்று தமிழ்” (If I'm
going to work, there will be many speakers of Malay, English, Tamil, Bangla there, so I'll talk to them in English, Malay or Tamil). The emphasis placed by these parents on learning Malay and Tamil was reflective of the socioeconomic and linguistic demographic of their workplaces. As many of these parents worked in entry level factory and warehouse jobs, their co-workers usually comprised mostly of Malaysian-Indians and Malaysian-Malays, and foreign workers from Indonesia, Bangladesh and India. In those contexts, multilingual proficiency, particularly in Tamil and Malay, was more important than proficiency in English alone.

Like their counterparts in 5S (EO), learners in 5K (NEO) also seemed to internalize their parents’ discourse about language. While learners in 5S (EO) used more English in their interactions consistent with their parents’ expectations for them to master that language, learners in 5K (NEO) used more translanguaging consistent with their parents’ focus on multilingual proficiency. Demonstrating the same attitude as his parents’ towards multilingualism, Lingkam (5K-NEO), a strong proponent of using translanguage in the classroom, stressed that “நம் பக்கலாச்சாரத்தை வெளிப்படுத்தும் வம்ச காலமானலாம் கி மல் நம் பேபசேறாம், என்னை மலாய் வந்தலே காற்றன்று மலாய் காரங்கள் கிமு பேபசேறாம்” (All three [languages] are important. We speak in Tamil because that’s our culture, we speak in English and Malay to people we work with, and we speak Malay to people in our neighbourhood).

**Ethnic Tensions and Feelings of Marginalization**

Norhayu and Shuki (n.d.) suggest that the implication of using a translanguaging approach in Malaysian education is that “Bahasa Malaysia [Malay] and English will have equal prominent status” (p. 1). However, the findings of this research suggest that learners did not perceive or use all the languages in their translanguaging repertoire equally (Li Wei & Ho, 2018), particularly when it came to Malay. While the language choices of learners in 5K (NEO) and 5S (EO) differed in terms of the frequency of their English and Tamil usage, a similarity between learners in both classes was that neither of them used much Malay during their collaborative interactions. Learners’ interview responses suggested that their infrequent use of
Malay was tied to ethnic tensions in the country and their feelings of being marginalized as a minority ethnic group.

As discussed in Chapter 4, the Indians in Malaysia have long been disadvantaged socially, economically, politically, and educationally by post-independence policy initiatives that have functioned to fortify the privilege of the Malays. An example of this is the New Economic Policy (NEP) affirmative action program implemented in 1970 which aimed to redistribute wealth by increasing ethnic Malays’ share in the economy and giving them higher quotas for educational scholarships, government contracts, ownership and shares in enterprises, and cheaper housing (Lee, 2010a). Although affirmative action policies such as the NEP were intended to close the economic gap between the ethnic groups, they unintentionally legitimized class discrepancies and created an unequal distribution of wealth and status between the ethnic groups (Kenayathulla, 2015), thereby weakening the socioeconomic and political position of Malaysian Indians. This has put race relations between the Malays and Indians on edge, and triggered riots, racially-charged incidents, and ethnic tensions (Sipalan, 2018).

Language policies in Malaysia have also been used to strengthen the position of the Malay language, to the disadvantage of minority languages such as Tamil. The designation of Malay as the official language of Malaysia and the official medium of instruction in national primary schools resulted in the relegation of Tamil-medium schools to ‘national-type’ primary schools which do not have the same status or funding as their Malay-medium counterparts (Ibrahim, 2018). Furthermore, Tamil-medium schools are not allowed to function at the secondary school level, which means that all students from Tamil-medium primary schools have to switch into Malay-medium education after Grade 6. At the time of the study, a requirement for these students to secure a place in public secondary schools was for them to obtain at least a C-grade in the Malay language in the Ujian Pencapaian Sekolah Rendah (Primary School Achievement Test) at the end of Grade 6, failing which they will need to attend a 1-year transition class which sets students back a year (Kang, 2012). Likewise, students have to obtain a minimum C-grade in Malay for the Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (Malaysian Certificate of Examination) in the final year of their secondary school in order to gain admission into public universities. The same language requirements do not apply for Tamil, which has resulted in the Tamil language, Tamil-medium education, and Tamil speakers being sidelined in many contexts.
When asked during the interviews how they felt about learning Malay, most learners conceded that they needed to do well in Malay regardless of how they felt because it was their only way of gaining access to secondary and higher education, “We must pass BM [Malay] so we can go to university” (Naveen, 5S-EO). They also recognized the value of Malay for getting employment more easily, especially civil service jobs which require proficiency in Malay. In Nareesh’s (5K-NEO) opinion, “ஜலை கோவில்பாடு BM கோவில்பாடு அம்பாள் வலிய கல்லூரிப் பட்டத்து. ஜலை மலைக் கல்லூரிப் பட்டத்து, முன் நான் bahasa malayu தமிழ் வலிய கல்லூரிப் பட்டத்து வலிய தோறால். மலாய் தமிழில் தமிழ் வலிய தொடர்வரைக் கூட்டு செயலோறால், அப்படி” (If we know both Tamil and Malay, they will give us jobs. If we only know Tamil and no other languages, no job. If we don't know Malay, they will think we are lazy). Although learners acknowledged the importance of Malay and could speak in Malay proficiently, their interview responses suggested that they did not consider Malay to be their own language. For example, while talking about her reasons for not using much Malay, Kamini (5S-EO) referred to Malaysia as “their country” and Malay as “their language”, thereby distancing herself from the language. Other learners, despite doing well in their Malay classes, felt that they would never be able to speak in “normal Malay” because they were not Malays. For instance, Malini (5K-NEO) asserted that “They [Malays] are the Malay speakers, we can't talk normal Malay like them.” Pravin (5S-EO) admitted that he did not use much Malay both in and outside school because he was afraid that he would be teased and looked down upon if he did not speak Malay the same way the Malays did, “I don't like Malay because if you tell the wrong word to the Malay people, they will bully us, tease us like that. If we say something wrong, they will keep in their heart, “These Tamil people don't know how to speak in Malay” like that.” Likewise, Ravi (5K-NEO) confessed that he would hide from Malays outside school because he was worried about not being able to speak like them, “அப்படி அதும் மலாய் காரைகள் கூட்டு தொடர்வரைக் கூட்டு தமிழ் வலிய தொடர்வரைக்க. என்ன தமிழில் அல்லது தமிழ் வலிய தொடர்வரைக்க, அது மலாய் காரைகள்” (If we can't speak to Malay people in the same way [as them], they will think badly of us. If I don't know Malay, I’ll be too ashamed to talk and I will run and hide from them).

Learners also expressed strong sentiments regarding the marginalization and othering of Malaysian-Indians in both their interviews and classroom discussions. During a lesson in 5S
(EO) on multiculturalism, a heated conversation commenced when Ms. Shalini (EO) used two Malay terms: *Orang Asli* (“original people”), the collective term used to refer to the native Indigenous tribes of Malaysia, and *Bumiputra* (“sons of the soil”), a controversial term used to grant native status to the Malays. As soon as these terms were mentioned, learners began to talk about the marginalization of the *Orang Asli* (indigenous) populations in Malaysia, and policies that treated Malaysian-born Indians as second-class citizens. The unpleasant feelings evoked through the use of Malay in that particular discussion was consistent with what learners reported in the interviews. Their interview responses suggested that they could not use the Malay language without being reminded of the ethnic tensions between the Malays and Indians. While talking about his reasons for not using much Malay, Shyam (5K-NEO) suddenly asserted that “Malays don't like Tamil people”, and Bavani (5K-NEO) similarly suggested that Malays looked down on Indians because “Tamil Indians was very poor, and we are fighting, shooting, murder for another people, very poor.”

The concerns voiced by learners may have been influenced by ideas being spread in the media about the state of Indians in Malaysia (e.g., Bernama, 2015; Kaur, 2016), and their teachers seemed to share the same sentiments. During her interview, Ms. Shalini (EO) talked about a popular Tamil movie that depicted low-income Malaysian Indians as living in poverty and violence, and her comments resonated with many of the concerns raised by learners, “I feel so sad to look at our Malaysian Indians, because the whole world watch the movie, and they already know Malaysian Indians are like this, they have a bad impression about us. They made our community very cheap.” Ms. Shalini (EO) also expressed her fear that when her students went to secondary school, they would “go and join with their gang only, they will find people who can speak Tamil only” and consequently be rejected by their Malay peers. Malini (5K-NEO) similarly confessed feeling afraid that she would be bullied in secondary school for looking and sounding different from the Malays. Making reference to the difference in skin colour between Indians and Malays, she stressed that “If we [Indians] black, they [Malays] all white right, then they all bully us, like “Blackie Blackie”, like that.”

These findings highlight the importance of recognizing that although translanguaging should ideally involve the use of learners’ linguistic repertoire without regard to individual named languages, this “does not mean that the learner is not aware of the political connotations or the structural constraints of specific named languages” (Li Wei & Ho, 2018, p. 35). Learners
in this study saw themselves as racialized Others in relation to their Malay counterparts because of the raciolinguistic discourses (Rosa & Flores, 2017) surrounding them, and this restricted the use of their whole translanguaging repertoire. Thus, teachers need to be critically aware of the complexities of learners’ language choices and the political and social constraints to translanguaging, so that they can work with learners to mobilize all their language practices despite those constraints.

However, not all learners had the same reaction towards the Malay community and language. Kartik and Lingkam were a notable exception to the pattern of infrequent Malay language usage among learners. They used Malay widely while translanguaging, and expressed positive feelings towards Malays and the Malay language. Responding to his interview questions completely in Malay, Kartik (5K-NEO) professed that “Saya suka Bahasa Melayu dengan Bahasa Tamil. Saya suka Bahasa Melayu kerana saya tinggal di kampung Melayu” (I like using Malay with Tamil. I like Malay because I live in a Malay village). As Kartik’s response suggests, his enthusiasm about using Malay stemmed from the fact that he lived in a Malay neighbourhood. Kartik went on to elaborate that most of his neighbours and friends were Malays, and that his family had established good relationships with them. Another learner who used Malay in his translanguaging was Lingkam from 5K (NEO). Lingkam attributed his love for Malay to his tuition teacher (tutor) who despite being a Malay was fluent in Tamil himself. According to Lingkam, this teacher used Tamil and other languages to teach and motivate his students to learn.

“I have a tuition teacher. He speaks in Tamil. He knows all languages, Hindi, Gawai, and all languages. He tells me in Tamil, “You need to study well, you need to work hard.” Sometimes when I look like I don’t know something, he’ll say, “I’ll teach you in Tamil.”
and all three languages. Don't be afraid, I'll help you.” I like that teacher very much. Because of him, I love speaking in Malay and in all languages.)

Kartik’s and Lingkam’s accounts above suggest that the good inter-ethnic relationships they had with their Malay neighbours, friends and teacher had positively influenced their feelings towards Malays and motivated their inclusion of the Malay language in their translanguaging repertoire.

**Summary of Findings**

The interviews with learners and teachers, and data from the classroom observations and student artefacts indicated that there were four main reasons why learners chose to use translanguaging during their peer-to-peer interactions, and three factors influencing their use of translanguaging and the specific language choices they made. Figure 27 below presents an overview of these reasons and factors.

*Figure 27. Overview of the reasons and factors influencing learners’ use of translanguaging*
The first reason why learners used translanguaging was to support each other’s language learning. The linguistic scaffolding that learners received from their peers helped them to learn new vocabulary, understand the content of the lesson better, and internalize and apply their knowledge to other tasks. Secondly, learners translanguaged to build rapport with peers and resolve conflict. Learners found their collaboration to be more fun and enjoyable when they were able to make jokes with each other using translanguaging, particularly in Tamil. Translanguaging also helped learners to resolve misunderstandings, increased cohesion between group members, and created a more friendly and social atmosphere within the group. This is consistent with Neokleous’ (2017) research which found that the use of translanguaging created a more pleasant and congenial classroom atmosphere as learners could joke around with each other. In groups where translanguaging was used widely, there was also a non-hierarchical collaborative structure, and all groups members contributed to the success of the task. Thirdly, learners used translanguaging to assert their cultural identity and preserve their culture. Both teachers and learners brought elements of their culture into the classroom through the use of translanguaging. Fourthly, translanguaging played an important role in helping learners to draw on their knowledge and make connections across languages. Through translanguaging, learners were able to mobilize their background knowledge and transfer their knowledge and skills across languages and content areas, and this served to reinforce their learning.

The findings of the study also suggest that there were several factors that influenced learners’ use of translanguaging and the specific language choices they made while translanguaging. Learners in 5K (NEO) used significantly more Tamil than learners in 5S (EO), while learners in 5S (EO) used more English than learners in 5K (NEO). This was related to the respective classroom language policy and language use of the two teachers. The use of translanguaging by Ms. Kavita (NEO) in 5K (NEO) to explain concepts, translate vocabulary, ask and answer questions, and check comprehension motivated learners to do the same with their peers. In contrast, the English-only policy of Ms. Shalini (EO) and the peer-to-peer language policing in some groups dissuaded learners in 5S (EO) from using translanguaging too often. My interviews with the teachers suggested that the teachers’ language policies and practices were influenced by their own educational and language learning experiences, and the external pressures placed upon them. Secondly, learners’ language choices were influenced by parental discourses about the importance of different languages. Learners in 5S (EO) who were mostly
from upper middle-class families recalled their parents’ advice that they should prioritize English over other languages because of its linguistic, social, cultural and economic capital. On the other hand, learners in 5K (NEO) who were mostly from lower middle-class families were encouraged by their parents to focus on Tamil as a way of maintaining their culture and communicating with non-English speakers. Thirdly, learners in both classes used less Malay and this was due to ethnic tensions and feelings of marginalization. Societal discourses around the marginalization of Malaysian-Indians and ethnic tensions between the Malays and Indians made learners feel that Malay was not one of their own languages. However, learners who had built good relationships with their Malay teachers and neighbours responded positively towards using Malay in their interactions.
CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Overview of the Research

Despite the cognitive, linguistic, affective and social benefits of integrating learners’ diverse home languages and language practices in the classroom (García & Li Wei, 2014), teachers in many second language classrooms continue to implement English-only policies which may hinder learners from drawing on their knowledge and skills in their first language, and restrict opportunities for learners with shared linguistic and cultural backgrounds to collaborate effectively. The purpose of this research was to explore the affordances of translanguaging for scaffolding collaborative learning among multilingual English Learners in Malaysia. Specifically, this study sought to examine the affordances of learners’ use of translanguaging during their collaborative interactions, learners’ reasons for translanguaging, and the factors that either enabled or constrained their use of translanguaging and the specific language choices they made in the classroom.

Guided by a framework of translanguaging (e.g., Canagarajah, 2011a, 2011b; Cenoz, 2017; García, Johnson & Seltzer, 2017; García & Li Wei, 2014) and sociocultural theory (e.g., Donato, 1994; Lantolf, Poehner & Swain, 2018; Mercer, 2000; Vygotsky, 1978), I conducted a case study (Yin, 2014) of two Grade 5 English language classes in a Tamil-medium elementary school – 5S, an upper-intermediate class where an English-only policy was enforced by the teacher but learners still chose to use translanguaging quietly in their small groups, and 5K, a lower-intermediate class where there was no English-only policy and both the learners and the teacher used translanguaging widely. The primary data sources for this study consisted of 100 video recordings of learners’ interactions while they worked together in small groups over the period of 6 months, each 30- to 90-minutes long. Data also included interviews with all 55 learners in the study, interviews with the 2 teachers, classroom observations, field notes, researcher’s reflexive journal entries, and artefacts of learners’ work.

A sociocultural critical discourse analysis (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997; Mercer, 2004) of learners’ collaborative interactions revealed that while translanguaging, learners in both classes, regardless of their proficiency level or classroom language policy, accomplished a wide range of cognitive-conceptual, planning-organizational, affective-social and linguistic-discursive functions which functioned to scaffold their individual and collective learning and facilitate more
exploratory talk. These findings differ from the early research on translanguaging (e.g., Williams, 2002) which describes it as more appropriate for learners who already have a good grasp of all their languages, and less valuable in classrooms where learners are still developing their second language. Although translanguaging afforded the same benefits for learners in both classes, the English-only policy and peer-to-peer language policing in 5S (EO) resulted in greater use of English among learners in that class, while the use of translanguaging by the teacher in 5K (NEO) encouraged greater use of Tamil among learners in that class. Of significance were findings which revealed that there were differences between the functions carried out through the translanguaging constellation of English and Tamil, with Tamil being used most frequently for planning-organizational functions such as planning tasks, organizing materials, and distributing roles and responsibilities, and for affective-social functions such as building relationships, assisting each other, and affirming and supporting their peers. Tamil also allowed learners to bring in aspects of their personal lives and culture into their interactions, thus making learning more personal, meaningful and culturally relevant.

The results of the discourse analysis were consistent with the findings from the interviews which showed that learners’ reasons for translanguaging were to assert their cultural identity and preserve their culture, build rapport with their peers and resolve conflict, support each other’s language learning, and draw on their knowledge across different languages and subject areas in order to make cross-linguistic and cross-disciplinary connections. Finally, the findings of this study indicated that despite their agency in translanguaging, learners’ specific language choices and beliefs about languages were influenced by their teacher’s classroom language policy and language use, their parental discourses about the status and importance of different languages, and ethnic tensions and feelings of marginalization.

Discussion

The following section discusses three major themes related to translanguaging in reference to the findings summarized above. Three themes are used to draw out the implications and recommendations for using a translanguaging pedagogy to support the learning of ELs.
Translanguaging as Collaborative and Agentive

Multilingual learners have access to a diverse range of cognitive, linguistic and semiotic resources, which are a cumulation of their language competencies, academic histories, prior knowledge, and lived experiences. A major strand of research on second language learning has focused on how individual learners draw on their diverse multilingual resources through translanguaging (e.g., Baker, 2011; Blackledge & Creese, 2010; García, 2009a; García, Johnson & Seltzer, 2017; Martin-Beltrán, 2014). The present study contributes to this body of research by investigating the social aspect of using these resources in collaborative contexts. This is consistent with a Vygotskian sociocultural perspective which treats the linguistic repertoire of an individual as a resource for their learning while giving special consideration to the social and interactional context in which the learning occurs (Vygotsky, 1978, 1986). As discussed in Chapter 3, translanguaging is rooted in the concept of *languaging* which posits that multilingual learners use the various resources at their disposal in an ongoing and dynamic process of interacting and making meaning (Canagarajah, 2007; Jørgensen, 2008; Juffermans, 2011; García & Li Wei, 2014; Shohamy, 2006). Throughout this process, an individual learner’s linguistic repertoire is negotiated in relation to specific contexts and purposes for language use (Canagarajah, 2016; Kaulfhold, 2018). Since these negotiations combine the personal and social dimensions (Li Wei, 2011), translanguaging involves both individual agency and social collaboration.

Van Lier’s (2008) theory of affordances ties agency and social context together. Van Lier emphasizes that agency is interdependent with the social context of second language learning. Consistent with this, the findings of this study indicate that the social context of the small groups played a significant role in determining whether individual learners’ use of translanguaging thrived. As reported in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6, the frequency and specific affordances of translanguaging differed according to specific characteristics of the small groups in which they were working. Learners who used translanguaging frequently to accomplish a wide range of functions did so through dialogic negotiation with their peers within the collaborative environment of their groups. In small groups where multiple languages were used copiously by all group members, learners felt empowered to exercise their agency in translanguaging for the purposes of scaffolding each other’s learning, building rapport, resolving conflict, asserting their
culture and identity, and drawing on their knowledge across languages and subject areas. The supportive context of these groups created a collaborative translinguaging space (Kaufhold, 2018; Li Wei, 2011) and Third Space (García et al., 2011; Gutiérrez, 2008; Gutiérrez, Baquedano-López, & Tejeda, 1999; Martin-Beltrán, 2014, Moje et al., 2004) which brought together learners’ social relationships and shared language practices with the “different dimensions of their personal history, experience and environment, their attitude, beliefs and ideology, their cognitive and physical capacity” (Li Wei, 2011, p. 1223). The space collaboratively created in the small groups was transformative because it influenced the type of interactions that occurred between group members, for example by facilitating more exploratory talk through translinguaging. The relationship between group members in this collaborative space was not of experts and novices, as reflected in traditional Vygotskian models, but of equal peers who supported each other collectively within a shared community of practice (van Lier, 2004). Throughout their interactions, learners functioned as experienced and expert multilinguals, rather than just as learners of English (Seltzer & García, 2019). They drew on their multilingual expertise to mutually build a scaffold for each other through their discursive processes (Donato, 1994), thereby reshaping the classroom space and redefining boundaries of learning.

In contrast, in groups where an English-only policy was enforced, there were limits in the type of interactions between learners, and the affordances of these interactions for individual and collective learning. Learners whose language use was controlled by their English-dominant group members felt constrained in the opportunities they had to express their ideas and contribute their knowledge to the group. In these groups, there was less use of translinguaging for social purposes, and the interactions between group members were more disputational rather than collaborative and exploratory. Compared to groups where there was a joint translinguaging space, learners in groups with an English-only policy could not as easily make use of their cognitive, linguistic and semiotic resources in the context of their collaborative tasks.

Nevertheless, the findings of the research indicated that many individual learners exercised their agency in translinguaging despite the constraints of their small groups and classrooms. Although the language policy in 5S (EO) shaped the language practices of some learners who resisted translinguaging and policed the language use of their peers, many other learners demonstrated their agency in re-shaping their social context through their use of
translanguaging (Pacheco, 2016). These learners resisted the English-only policy of their teacher and peers, found creative ways to access multilingual materials, and used their multilingual repertoire in inventive and flexible ways to fulfil a wide range of functions that enhanced their individual as well as collective learning. This supports the findings of other research (e.g., García et al., 2011; Henderson & Palmer, 2015; Li Wei, 2011) which has demonstrated the agentive ways that students create translanguaging spaces for themselves despite their classroom policies or dominant monoglossic norms.

Translanguaging as a Resource for Learning and a Process of Learning

Studies on translanguaging have highlighted the benefits of drawing on learners’ full multilingual repertoire as a resource to enhance their learning. However, Carroll and Sambolin Morales (2016) point out that many of these studies revolve around the assumption that the primary goal of using a translanguaging pedagogy with multilingual learners should be to “develop skills in their weaker language” (Baker, 2001, p. 281) or to use “one language to reinforce the other” (Williams, 2002, p. 40). While research certainly demonstrates the potential of translanguaging as a resource to support the transfer of linguistic skills and knowledge from learners’ home language to their L2 (Cummins, 2008), and to help them acquire academic content and academic language skills in their L2 (Baker, 2011; Garza & Langman, 2014), these studies position translanguaging as a means to an end, rather than an end in itself. García and Li Wei (2014) assert that “embedded in this practice [translanguaging] is the belief that learning is not a product, but a process” (p. 81). Consistent with this, the results of this research demonstrate that the process of translanguaging is in itself an act of learning because learners are able to practise and develop a wide range of cognitive, linguistic and social skills while translanguaging.

The results of the discourse analysis reported in Chapter 5 demonstrated a wide range of functions that were accomplished during learners’ acts of translanguaging. Firstly, while translanguaging, learners exercised cognitive-conceptual functions that focused on discussing and explaining concepts and content related to their tasks, using cognitive strategies to solve problems, providing logical solutions to answers, and applying analytical and higher-order thinking skills to complete their tasks. Secondly, translanguaging allowed learners to accomplish planning-organizational functions which helped them to coordinate their collaborative efforts, plan how to execute their tasks, distribute roles, and take on responsibilities that matched their
skills and expertise. Thirdly, translanguaging created a social space where affective-social functions could be demonstrated that allowed learners to build rapport, resolve conflict, empathize with each other, affirm and motivate one another, talk about their personal lives, and work in a more collaborative and socially supportive environment. Fourthly, learners demonstrated metalinguistic awareness during their translanguaging interactions, and they scaffolded each other’s language learning through linguistic-discursive functions that focused on learning and using the linguistic structures and discourse required to complete their tasks, gaining awareness of their own linguistic knowledge, and learning together about vocabulary, grammar and syntax across all three of the named languages in their repertoire. These findings suggest that translanguaging can benefit learners not only by acting as a resource to enhance their L2 learning and extend their ZPD, but by affording them the opportunity to practise various functions within their ZPDs which are essential to their cognitive, social, emotional and multilingual development.

Garcia and Li Wei (2014) remind teachers that translanguaging should never become “just another strategy to deal with a problem” (p. 93) or merely a way of scaffolding L2 learning using the L1. By showcasing the functions that learners practised through translanguaging throughout their collaboration, my research positions translanguaging as an integral and inseparable part of the learning process, rather than as a temporary scaffolding structure for lower proficiency learners to promote mastery in the target language. Studies on translanguaging from a traditional SCT approach have generally seen translanguaging as “fulfilling a scaffolding function offering temporary bridges between languages which allow pupils to build links between official instruction languages and between home and school languages” (Duarte, 2018, p. 12). The way that scaffolding was taken up in the interactions of learners in this study suggests that translanguaging was not just a temporary bridge to English proficiency for them; neither was it a rigid structure to be removed when no longer needed. In contrast, the type of scaffolding that learners provided each other had the element of continuity (van Lier, 2004; Walqui, 2006) because learners used translanguaging repeatedly throughout every task, regardless of their progress in the task. Learners’ translanguaging went beyond using the L1 to develop the L2. Rather, they continuously expanded their multilingual repertoire as a whole by adding new language features (e.g., vocabulary, meaning, sentence constructions) to it, and inventing and reinventing new language functions and affordances through a continuous process of meaning-
making (Carroll & Sambolin Morales, 2016; Mazak, 21017). Although learners gained knowledge and grew in confidence through the scaffolding provided by their peers, there always remained an element of interdependence between learners as they continually supported each other through the use of their home languages during different tasks. The continuity of the translanguaging process is consistent with the Vygotskian (1978) approach to learning, which posits that knowledge is acquired interpersonally through a continuous process of interacting with others before it becomes internalized. A translanguaging pedagogy which is focused on process rather than product recognizes the natural and fluid discursive practices that learners engage in through their interactions, and values these practices as opportunities for learning.

Translanguaging as Socioculturally Situated and Culturally Responsive

Traditionally, the ‘social’ and ‘cultural’ aspects of SCT research have revolved around the micro-level interactions of learners as they interact in social-educational settings, and less around the systems of meaning and power that are built, reproduced, or contested in and through their interactions with each other (Lewis & Moje, 2003). This study took a critical perspective on SCT by connecting learners’ use of translanguaging to the microprocesses of power, agency and identity played out in their interactions, as well as to the larger issues of power relations and macro-discourses which influenced their language choices. The findings in Chapters 5 and 6 revealed that the learners’ sociocultural and political context had a significant impact on their attitudes towards translanguaging and their beliefs about languages, identity and race. Although learners acknowledged and saw evidence of the numerous benefits of translanguaging for their learning, their beliefs about the relative importance of each language were influenced by discourses around the linguistic, socioeconomic and cultural capital of English (Bourdieu, 1993). Like their parents and teachers, many learners believed that proficiency in English would provide them with greater educational access, social advantage, and economic mobility. Some learners reproduced these ideologies in both subtle and explicit ways by enforcing an English-only policy during their interactions with their peers, policing the language use of their peers, or choosing to use more English than other languages in their own speech. Learners’ language choices were also shaped to some extent by discourses of ethnicity and nationality, and by the political and ethnic tensions surrounding them. The interview data suggested that learners’ perceptions of the Tamil and Malay languages and communities resonated with sentiments expressed by certain
political groups and minority rights activists in the media. This points to the complex intersections between language, ethnicity, power and ideology, and provides evidence that language learning can never occur in a vacuum as it is deeply embedded within a sociocultural milieu (Walqui, 2006).

The results of this research also highlight the sociocultural situatedness and responsiveness of translanguaging by capturing a perspective on translanguaging that is grounded in the daily language usage of a specific sociocultural and linguistic community. Canagarajah (2007) describes the use of language as “a social process constantly reconstructed in sensitivity to environmental factors” (p. 94). In line with this, the analysis of learners’ interactions demonstrated that their linguistic repertoire was inseparable from the sociocultural context in which they were situated. Learners with shared cultures are known to draw on their culturally acquired knowledge and patterns of communicating to make meaning during their collaborative interactions (Johnson, 1995). These interactions are social as well as linguistic because embedded in them are the social norms, values, and practice within shared activity systems (Florio-Ruane & Morrell, 2011). The ways that learners in this study used their linguistic repertoires were unique to their context and reflective of their social and cultural identities. While translanguaging, learners wove together the personal, social and cultural domains of their lives. For example, they talked about their personal religious beliefs, made references to Indian and Malaysian culture, and enacted the cultural values held in regard by their community.

Although learners’ language use was shaped in some ways by their wider sociocultural context, in other ways, they were responsible for re-shaping their social and linguistic contexts through their idiosyncratic use of translanguaging. García and Li Wei (2014) write that the goal of a critical theory of language learning is to move away from static conceptualizations of language, and to embrace the fluid language practices of local speakers. In line with a critical language perspective which sees language as tools to be re-appropriated by actual language users (García & Li Wei, 2014), the results of this study demonstrated that learners re-appropriated English, Tamil or Malay utterances with new meanings and for new purposes. Throughout their interactions, learners engaged in a continuous process of selecting and mixing different features of the three named languages in their repertoire, and they engaged in ‘soft assembling’ these features in novel ways to suit the immediate task (García & Leiva, 2014). An example of this is
when they changed the pronunciation of the word “orange” in English so that it had the same meaning as “five” in Tamil (அந்தர்) while writing riddles inspired by Indian folk tales, or when they combined words in English and Tamil while adhering to the morphological rules of English (e.g., “television பார்க்கும்” – watching television). Learners also created their own varieties of “Tanglish” and “Manglish” through their use of different translanguaging constellations. This corroborates the findings of other studies, such as Li Wei’s (2018a) research which found that Chinese users of English re-appropriated ordinary English utterances with new meanings, thereby creating their own version of New Chinglish. In addition, the discourse analysis also revealed that learners used the “-lah” discourse particle – a dominant feature of Malaysian dialects – very widely in their interactions, attaching it to English, Tamil and Malay words in creative ways to accomplish various pragmatic functions. This suggests that learners’ language use and their use of translanguaging was representative of the unique features of their sociocultural context. This is why Li Wei (2018a) recommends that a comprehensive description and interpretation of language must consider the characteristics of the sociopolitical and cultural contexts in which the language use occurs.

Implications and Recommendations

The findings of this study hold several implications for language teaching and learning. In the following section, I make recommendations for how translanguaging can be implemented pedagogically. Finally, I propose a collaborative translanguaging pedagogy model that is a culmination of the major findings and implications of this research.

Translanguaging as Pedagogy

In the majority of studies on translanguaging conducted across different social contexts and academic disciplines, translanguaging has been found to be a naturally occurring phenomenon among students rather than an act elicited by the teachers consciously through specific pedagogical strategies (Canagarajah, 2011a). In most cases where translanguaging occurs in the classroom, it is usually spontaneous and pupil-directed (Cenoz & Gorter, 2017; Lewis, Jones & Baker, 2012b). Because translanguaging is such a naturally occurring
phenomenon among multilingual students, there is often an assumption that it does not need to be taught and “there is nothing further for the school to add, other than provide a context for it to be practiced” (Canagarajah, 2011a, p. 9). On the contrary, Li Wei (2018b) emphasizes that translanguaging should not be conceived as a “thing-in-itself”, but rather as a continuous process and practice. Similarly, Canagarajah posits that translanguaging should be treated as a practice and proficiency which can be further developed through teachable translanguaging strategies. Garcia and Li Wei (2014) propose that teachers can use translanguaging pedagogically to help learners at the starting points of their multilingual continuum to engage with rigorous academic content, access and comprehend complex texts, and produce new knowledge and language practices. However, they add that rather than only being a tool for scaffolding, translanguaging needs to also be transformative in that it should change the usual ways of teaching and ways of learning in the classroom. For translanguaging to be transformative as a pedagogy, it “involves leveraging, that is, deliberately and simultaneously merging students’ repertoires of practice, ‘recruited as strengths’” (Garcia & Li Wei, 2014, p. 93). Pedagogical translanguaging fits well into a sociocultural theory of learning when it is done “in a planned, developmental and strategic manner, to maximize a student’s linguistic and cognitive capability, and to reflect that language is sociocultural both in content and process” (Baker, 2011, p. 290).

In the context of this research, while Ms. Kavita (NEO) created a translanguaging space and modelled translanguaging practices for her learners, this was usually done in the moment as the need arose, not deliberately planned and strategically incorporated into her lesson plan. Similarly, Ms. Shalini (EO)’s occasional use of translanguaging was not intentional. What this suggests is that being a multilingual does not equate to having a translanguaging mindset. A recommendation arising out of this is for teachers to consider how they can strategically and intentionally design lessons that are underpinned by a translanguaging pedagogy. As explained in Chapter 2, the core characteristics of a translanguaging pedagogy would require the stance that the diverse languages of learners are valuable resources to be incorporated into the classroom, the design of strategic lesson plans, instructional units, materials and assessments that are informed by learners’ diverse language practices, and the ability to make moment-by-moment shifts to an instructional plan based on learners’ needs and feedback (García, Johnson & Seltzer, 2017; Vogel & García, 2017). In the past few years, significantly more effort has been focused on developing pedagogical translanguaging resources based on these three
characteristics, an example of this being CUNY-NYSIEB’s substantial collection of pedagogical translanguaging resources for teaching bilingual students (e.g., Celic & Seltzer, 2013; Espinosa, Ascenzi-Moreno & Vogel, 2016; Hesson, Seltzer & Woodley, 2014; Rosario & Cao, 2015). More studies have also been conducted to examine how pedagogical translanguaging can be intentionally designed and strategically implemented in various educational contexts. Examples of these include Canagarajah’s (2011b) work on a dialogical and collaborative pedagogy for translingual writing in a graduate-level course on second language writing in the United States, and Mazak and Herbas-Donoso’s (2015) case study on a professor’s translanguaging practices in an undergraduate science course at a bilingual university in Puerto Rico. Another example of a study on pedagogical translanguaging conducted in a context similar to my study is Leonet, Cenoz and Gorter’s (2017) pedagogical intervention implemented in 5th and 6th grade classes in a primary school in the Basque Country. There are several commonalities between the context of Leonet et al.’s study and the context of my research. Firstly, similar to the status of Tamil in my research context, Basque is the medium of instruction in the school in Leonet et al.’s study but a minority language in society. Secondly, the students in both our research contexts are trilingual and learn at least three languages in their curriculum at all levels of education. Thirdly, in both contexts, there is an ideology of language separation, as the schools establish boundaries between the languages. Fourthly, despite the language separation ideology, spontaneous translanguaging is a natural phenomenon among the students both in and outside school. The pedagogical translanguaging intervention in Leonet et al.’s study involved students working together in groups of five to six during their Basque, Spanish and English language arts classes over the period of 16 weeks. They engaged in various translanguaging activities that combined two or three languages, for example, creating a linguistic landscape of their town and writing trilingual narrative texts. Pedagogical translanguaging strategies such as this can raise students’ language awareness about multilingualism, and develop their metalinguistic awareness by drawing on the linguistic skills and resources in their whole repertoire (Leonet et al., 2017).

A Collaborative Translanguaging Pedagogy Approach

Flores and García (2013) remind us that pedagogical translanguaging does not necessitate a fully bilingual or multilingual teacher. What is required is “the teachers’ willingness to engage
in learning with their students, becoming an equal participant in the educational enterprise that should seek, above all else, to equalize power relations” (p. 256). García and Li Wei (2014) assert that both monolingual and multilingual teachers can implement pedagogical translanguaging in the classroom, but this requires giving up their role of authority in the classroom and taking on the role of facilitators. In their facilitative role, teachers can organize project-based instruction and collaborative groupings for learners to engage in collaborative language learning activities. This is consistent with the sociocultural concept of collective scaffolding (Donato, 1994) which reframes students as active participants in learner-centred collaborative interactions instead of passive learners in teacher-led instruction. Using a collaborative approach can eschew the mainstream view that ‘exemplary instruction’ always involves lessons that are planned and directed by the teacher, and instead promotes classrooms where the teachers and learners become co-participants in learning (Stagg Peterson & Rajendram, 2019).

García and Li Wei (2014) and Li Wei (2014) propose a translanguaging as co-learning approach which draws from Brantmaier’s (n.d.) model of co-learning. This model challenges the unequal power relations in the classroom by changing the respective roles of teachers and learners from “dispensers and receptacles of knowledge” to “joint sojourners” on a journey to acquire knowledge and understanding (Brantmaier, n.d., as cited in Li Wei, 2014, p. 169). In the co-learning model, the teacher takes on the role of a learning facilitator who guides students’ learning process, a scaffolder who assesses what students know and provides scaffolding to extend their knowledge, and a critical reflection enhancer who engages students in reflection on what is being learned and in meta-reflection on the learning process. Meanwhile, the learner takes on the role of an empowered explorer who independently or collaboratively explores knowledge, and a meaning maker and responsible knowledge constructor who constructs meaningful knowledge that is relevant to their life (as cited in Li Wei, 2014, p. 169). In a classroom based on translanguaging as co-learning, the teacher would co-construct knowledge with learners through “dynamic and participatory engagement” (García & Li Wei, 2014, p. 112). Below, I propose a collaborative translanguaging pedagogy approach which is based on the principle of dynamic and participatory co-learning among the teacher and learners, and exemplifies the implications of this research (see Figure 28).
My research shows that although learners were capable of using translanguaging independently in their small groups even without their teacher’s guidance (e.g., in 5S-EO), they benefited from the teacher’s use of pedagogical translanguaging during whole-class activities (e.g., in 5K-NEO). Thus, I propose that rather than being only teacher-directed or only learner-directed, an effective translanguaging pedagogy should be a two-way, dynamic and participatory process that is both teacher- and learner-directed. While teachers should be intentional in designing strategic lessons based on the principles of translanguage, these need to be informed by and responsive to the ways that learners naturally and spontaneously use their translanguaging repertoires (Cenoz & Gorter, 2017). The findings of this study suggest that translanguaging happens naturally in language classrooms with multilingual learners, whether it is legitimated by the teacher or not. In view of this, teachers should be flexible and open to making shifts to their
lessons based on the existing language practices of their learners. Their pedagogical scaffolding should help learners to harness the full affordances of their linguistic repertoires in order to deepen their understanding and extend their knowledge. By observing the spontaneous language practices that learners use, teachers can plan pedagogical activities to make learners more critically aware of their language repertoires, and help learners become sociolinguists (Sánchez et al., 2018, p. 11) with the metalinguistic and metacognitive ability to use features of their repertoires selectively and strategically for different purposes and tasks (Cenoz & Gorter, 2017; Wiley & García, 2016). This is a collaborative process because teachers and learners work together and build a collective scaffold within a collaborative community of practice. At the same time, it is an agentive process because each learner is empowered to take ownership of their linguistic repertoire, self-regulate, and become the expert of their own learning. As García (2019a) reminds us, it is only by leveraging all the language practices that make up the repertoire of linguistically minoritized learners that they can engage in their education as agentive learners.

The successful implementation of a collaborative translanguaging pedagogy is dependent on several factors, as indicated by the four components in the outer circle of the model. Firstly, the school structure should provide a positive environment where multilingualism, diversity and translanguaging practices are valued and celebrated. The school structure should also enable teachers’ co-planning and co-teaching, so that learners can develop cross-linguistic flexibility and cross-disciplinary knowledge. Collaborative inquiry among teachers can generate more school-wide openness to the value of translanguaging, and provide teachers with the opportunities to explore and experiment with translanguaging strategies (Stille et al., 2016). These efforts will be more productive with the support of the administration. Secondly, the engagement and involvement of family and community members is essential to the effectiveness of a translanguaging pedagogy. Daniel and Pacheco (2016) remind teachers that some parents may equate English-only instruction to successful school participation. Learners need to be surrounded at home by discourses that are consistent with a translanguaging stance. Teachers should build classroom-home-community partnerships, for example by inviting parents and community members into the classroom to talk about their languages and cultures, read multilingual books to learners, or even conduct language learning activities. This would be particularly helpful in classrooms where the teacher does not share the same languages as their learners. Learners can also engage with their community through field trips that give them the
opportunity to explore the diverse linguistic landscapes around them and use translanguaging outside the classroom.

Thirdly, a collaborative translanguaging pedagogy needs to be specific to the sociocultural context in which it will be implemented, and it should incorporate the languages and cultures of that particular context. At the same time, teachers should encourage *critical consciousness* (Sánchez et al., 2018, p. 11) or *conscientization* (Freire, 1970) among learners of their social and political context so that they can create a space for resistance and social justice by including the language practices of minoritized communities in the classroom (da Silva Iddings, 2018; Rosa, 2010). Seltzer and de los Ríos (2018) write that the teaching of English is inescapably ideological and political because it involves colonial histories and powers. They call for a critical translanguaging approach where teachers make space for the diverse experiences and language practices of racialized and minoritized speakers. Rather than imposing “criticality” in a top-down manner, teachers should respectfully invite all learners, including those who are not typically considered as bilingual or multilingual, to share their diverse language practices and engage in critiquing the dominant language ideologies that depict those practices as deficient (Seltzer & de los Ríos, 2018).

Finally and importantly, a collaborative translanguaging pedagogy holds important implications for language policy and planning. The macro- and meso- level language policies in many contexts may present a barrier to a translanguaging pedagogy by emphasizing decontextualized, monolingual language skills (Carroll & Sambolín Morales, 2016), promoting English at the expense of minority languages and dialects, creating a separation and hierarchy of languages in different social and educational spheres, or by placing restrictions on teachers and learners through medium-of-instruction language policies. The responsibility for implementing instructional strategies to meet the needs of multilingual learners should not be left to individual teachers; explicit policies are needed at the school, district and provincial levels to support the use of learners’ home languages in the classroom (Stille et al., 2016). Policymakers need to advocate for more equitable and transformative policies that promote multilingualism as a norm, and that create official structures and resources within the education system for a translanguaging pedagogy. Wiley and García (2016) recommend that adopting a translanguaging lens in language policy and planning would require three changes: (i) moving away from a definition of language as something that speakers of the same culture or national affiliation have,
but rather seeing language as the ability of a speaker to deploy their entire linguistic repertoire without adherence to socially and politically defined language boundaries, (ii) seeing the learning of an additional language as a continuous rather than linear process, and (iii) replacing the notion that only the target language should be used in instruction with teaching practices that leverage learners’ entire linguistic repertoire. At the micro-level of the classroom, teachers as policymakers (Menken & García, 2010) can “contest or temper those top-down policy mandates by paying more attention to fluid, multilingual, oral, contextualized practices at the local level” (Hornberger & Link, 2012b, p. 245). This study has shown the important role that teachers and even students can play in moving language policies from the ground up through their agentive use of translanguaging (O. García, personal communication, July 17, 2019). A “translanguaging policy” (Wiley & García, 2016, p. 58) has the potential to disrupt the hierarchization of named languages and to empower the language practices of learners from linguistically minoritized communities, thereby decolonizing language education (García, 2019a).

Limitations and Future Directions for Research

There are several limitations to this study which warrant future research. Firstly, as a case study, this research only investigated the language practices of learners in one grade level, and in one type of school in Malaysia. Furthermore, it only focused on learners’ use of translanguaging during their English language classes. The language practices of learners may differ in other grades, other subject areas, as well as in other schools with a different language policy or medium of instruction. In the future, I hope to continue this line of investigation by looking at the affordances of translanguaging in different language classes and subject areas. I would also be interested to see if learners’ language use would differ if they were in a grade with high-stakes standardized tests, for example in Grade 6 where learners usually experience more pressure to achieve higher marks for their Malay language exam in order to obtain direct entry into a national Malay-medium high school. As language and identity are intricately connected to each other, future research could investigate whether the perceptions of learners towards the Tamil language as a marker of their cultural identity and their use of the Tamil language differ according to their social and political contexts and immigration backgrounds. This could be done through a comparative study of translanguaging practices among Tamil speakers in different countries with a South Asian population (e.g., Singapore, India, Sri Lanka, Canada).
Secondly, as the focus of the research was on learners’ use of translanguaging during their interactions, I did not systematically investigate learners’ language use in domains other than their oral language. While I did provide several examples in Chapter 5 of how learners used translanguaging in their writing, these examples were gathered when the opportunity arose rather than documented systematically throughout the research. Future studies could explore the benefits of translanguaging in other areas such as writing, and the implications of using translanguaging in one language domain on the development of their other domains. For example, in the context of this study, further research could be conducted on whether the affordances of translanguaging during learner’s oral interactions were transferable to their reading and writing. An experimental or quasi-experimental study could also be conducted to study the correlation between learners’ use of translanguaging during their spoken interactions and the quality of their written work, thereby establishing the efficacy of a translanguaging pedagogy for language learning purposes.

The third limitation of the study pertains to the perspectives that were reported in Chapter 6. Most of the findings related to learners’ reasons for translanguaging and the factors influencing their language use were reported from the perspective of the learners themselves. Although I was able to corroborate some of these findings with data from the teacher interviews as well as my own classroom observations and reflexive journal entries, I was not able to conduct interviews with parents to verify the information that learners conveyed during their interviews about their parents’ discourses and attitudes towards languages and their home language practices. Future studies in this area could employ an ethnographic approach to study learners’ language use in different spheres of their lives over an extended period of time. A study of Family Language Policy (Spolsky, 2011) could be conducted to investigate how parents’ tacit beliefs about language and their explicit home language policies and practices influence the language use and ideologies of their children. A raciolinguistics framework would also be particularly valuable for interpreting the broader institutional and historical framing of these language practices and policies framework (Rosa & Flores, 2017). On the same note, I recommend that more research should focus on uncovering the underlying intentions for teachers’ classroom language policies and practices, with the goal of helping teachers to see how their practices may be influenced by their own language learning experiences.
Fourthly, although the findings reported in Chapter 5 suggested that learners used non-verbal acts such as pointing, gesturing and nodding to affirm their peers’ use of translanguaging and to support each other’s learning, it was beyond the scope of this study to document and analyze all the multimodal semiotic systems that were included in learners’ translanguaging repertoire. Li Wei and Ho (2018) advocate for a new strand of translanguaging research which will “push the boundaries between different named languages; between speakers’ so-called verbal and nonverbal behaviors; and between language and other cognitive, modal, and semiotic resources” (p. 34). In particular, there is a call for studies that expand translanguaging beyond a strictly linguistic repertoire (García, Johnson & Seltzer, 2017) and explore how learners use their multilingual, multimodal, multisemiotic and multisensory resources in their learning (Li Wei & Ho, 2018). Thus, a potential area for research on translanguaging relates to how multilingual learners combine features of their verbal language with semiotic resources such as gestures, touch, visual cues, objects and sounds when interacting with others as part of a holistic and integrated communicative repertoire. Future research could also focus specifically on the role of technology and digitally-mediated interaction in creating new spaces for translanguaging and expanding learners’ translanguaging repertoire by enabling them to express themselves through multiple modes of representation (e.g., Li Wei & Ho, 2018). García (2019b) suggests that “[b]esides an acto político, translanguaging must also be creative” (p. 92). By unsettling the hierarchies of named languages, translanguaging can liberate sign and semiotic systems that have formerly been constrained in the classroom (García, 2018). Thus, more studies could investigate the affordances of digital technologies for enabling learners to use translanguaging in creative ways through linguistic modes (e.g., blogs), visual modes (e.g., memes), audio modes (e.g., podcasts, music), video modes (e.g., short films, vlogs), and a combination of modes (e.g., voiceover videos, digital storytelling).

Finally, I also acknowledge that my own biases and perspectives as an insider-outsider (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009) would have influenced my interpretations of the data, and the perspectives I chose to report. However, I hope that these limitations were offset by my triangulation of the comprehensive qualitative and qualitative data, and the member-checking interviews I conducted with learners to understand their intentions and interpretations of the data.
Conclusion

The goal of a translanguaging pedagogy should move beyond ‘language maintenance’ to creating sustainable language practices which thrive in functional relationships with other speakers (Otheguy et al., 2015, p. 283). The findings of this research have shown that collaborative learning provides a supportive space for learners’ language practices to thrive relationally through translanguaging. In the context of supportive relationships with their peers, learners were empowered to draw upon their multilingual repertoires to think, talk and learn together. Through their collaborative dialogue, learners were able to harness the rich and diverse cognitive-conceptual, planning-organizational, affective-social and linguistic-discursive affordances of translanguaging for their individual and collective learning. However, this research also revealed that there were factors which prevented learners from drawing on the full range of their language practices. Some learners took up and responded to neoliberal discourses on the linguistic capital of English, and political and racial discourses tying language to ethnic tensions and marginalization by foregrounding certain language practices and eschewing others. Multilingual learners’ access to a wide repertoire of linguistic resources was not sufficient to their knowing how to or feeling comfortable enough to leverage all these resources during their learning. This is consistent with studies which suggest that learners’ language ideologies and experiences can restrict their ability to draw on their entire repertoire (e.g., Kaufhold, 2018; Rivera & Mazak, 2017).

Although translanguaging theory aims to challenge and deconstruct the demarcation and hierarchy of named languages in society (García, 2019a; Otheguy et al., 2015), it is important to acknowledge that multilingual learners rarely use all the named languages in their repertoire equally in all situations, or to an equal level (Li Wei & Ho, 2018). Some named languages may be used more than others in learner’s translanguaging repertoire due to factors and constraints such as the ones discussed in this study. Thus, learners’ translanguaging repertoire may not be their whole language repertoire. If the aim of language learning is to expand learners’ translanguaging repertoire so that they can access all their language resources, it is not enough just to provide a translanguaging space for learners to develop their language expertise on their own (García & Lin, 2014; Turner & Lin, 2017). Teachers play an important role in helping students to intentionally “learn to do translanguaging” (García & Lin, 2014, p. 132) so that their
translanguaging repertoire expands to include *all* their language practices and meaning-making resources. This requires both teachers and learners to have a critical awareness of the factors that may act as barriers to translanguaging, such as the historical, cultural, ideological, political and social factors influencing their language use, the official policies that give different status to different languages, and the unofficial and hidden policies both in and outside the classroom that shape their attitudes towards languages. Even when languages other than English are included in a policy or program, the choice of languages may reflect dominant neoliberal ideological assumptions about which languages matter the most economically and socially (Bale, 2016). Teachers need to help learners interrogate and challenge these implicit or explicit biases about languages so that they are empowered to use their full translanguaging repertoire.

This study has provided evidence of the immense potential of translanguaging to scaffold collaborative language learning, affirm culture and identity, build positive peer-to-peer relationships, develop metalinguistic awareness and interdisciplinary learning, and enable learners to take ownership and agency over their learning in a context where students share a common linguistic and sociocultural background. The successful implementation of a translanguaging pedagogy in other educational contexts will require special consideration of the unique linguistic and cultural landscapes and aims of learning in each context. In educational contexts such as Toronto, Canada where more than 115 languages are spoken by students (Toronto District School Board, 2013), teachers would need a toolbox of flexible and adaptive translanguaging strategies to support the needs of diverse learners in mainstream classrooms and across content areas. Even if teachers are not multilingual themselves or do not share the same home languages as their learners, they can still draw on learners’ diverse home languages as valuable resources for learning, for example by planning collaborative groupings by home language so that students can engage in meaningful interactions and collaborative dialogue through translanguaging. (García & Li Wei, 2014). As Ronan (2019) asserts, even monolingual learners can collaboratively translanguage by drawing from their collective communicative repertoires. This has significant implications for how learners are grouped within a class, as well as what class learners are placed in. Putting learners in mixed-ability groups and classes may be more beneficial than tracking or streaming learners based on their proficiency level, as it can create opportunities for them to learn from their peers’ diverse language skills.
There are several challenges to the successful implementation of a translanguaging pedagogy. Firstly, learners could feel uncomfortable using translanguaging because of the dominant monolingual ideologies they may have been exposed to in their prior schooling experiences (e.g., Kaufhold, 2018). After many years of experiencing English-only instruction, learners may be afraid to use translanguaging in front of the teacher and believe that their home languages are not welcome in the classroom (e.g., Stille et al., 2016). Furthermore, teachers who are accustomed to teaching only in English may feel uncertain about how to support learners when they are discussing concepts in languages that they as teachers do not understand (e.g., Daniel & Pacheco, 2016). Secondly, in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) classrooms where the primary goal of instruction is usually to develop learners’ academic proficiency in English, or in EFL contexts where English is not used much outside the classroom, the learners themselves may want to practise their spoken English as much as possible in the classroom (e.g., Neokleous, 2017) and may see translanguaging as counterproductive to their English learning. In these contexts, teachers need to help students see translanguaging as a resource for their language learning, not as a short-term crutch but as a long-term measure to enhance learning (Adinolfi & Astruc, 2017). The first step in this direction would be for teachers to talk to learners to get to know their language proficiencies, practices, perspectives, and learning objectives (Daniel & Pacheco, 2016). Based on what they glean from their learners, teachers can make the necessary instructional shifts to enhance learners’ metacognitive awareness of their translanguaging repertoire, and “set up the affordances for students to engage in discursive and semiotic practices that respond to their cognitive and social intentions” (García & Li Wei, 2014, p. 93) through translanguaging.

One criticism of the translanguaging approach is that it lacks empirical verification in relation to its tangible impact on educational outcomes (Duarte, 2018). My research has demonstrated the wide variety of ways that learning took place throughout learners’ collaborative interactions with each other. Thus, learning should not be bounded by measurable outcomes alone, and our view of what counts as learning in the classroom should be expanded. Most of the assessment tools currently used in schools privilege reading and writing outcomes, neglecting the sociocultural and multimodal dimensions of learning (Botelho, Kerekes, Jang & Stagg Peterson, 2014). Li Wei (2014) suggests that if translanguaging is to be accepted as a legitimate language practice, then educators need to implement “translanguaged-mode” assessments to allow learners
to demonstrate what they know using their entire communicative repertoire (p. 134). García, Menken, Velasco and Vogel (2018) assert that translanguaging “negates the idea that named languages are linguistic objects that can be assessed separately” (p. 52). Therefore, learners should be given the option to respond to questions or tasks using any and all of the multilingual and multimodal practices that demonstrate their knowledge and understanding. I recommend that teachers employ holistic and formative approaches that capture the wide repertoire of functions that learners demonstrate through their translanguaging, and to embed instruction within assessment.

Teachers need to receive the relevant preparation and training to implement a collaborative translanguaging pedagogy and translanguaged-modes of assessment through initial teacher education and in-service professional development. Teacher education and in-service teacher training programs should also raise teachers’ critical awareness of their own linguistic identities and languaging practices, as well as the linguistic diversity of their learners (Gagné, Kjorven & Ringen, 2009; Zein, 2018). Through this critical reflection, teachers can develop a translanguaging pedagogy that builds on the linguistic repertoires of learners while facilitating language learning and content mastery. As a continuation of this research, I have conducted model lessons and professional development workshops based on the collaborative translanguaging pedagogy for ESL, EAP and ESP teacher candidates, teachers and administrators across schools and universities in Canada and Malaysia. Through these professional development sessions, I have observed a greater receptivity towards a translanguaging pedagogy. I hope that my research will continue to influence the work of educators globally by inspiring them to implement translanguaging pedagogies that bring to the forefront the diverse language practices of multilingual learners, thereby creating more collaborative, equitable and transformative classrooms.
REFERENCES


Mercer, N. (2010). The analysis of classroom talk: Methods and methodologies. The British Journal of Educational Psychology, 80(1), 1–14.


APPENDIX A: Full list of affordances and functions accomplished through translanguaging in learners’ speech acts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Broad Affordance &amp; Specific Function</th>
<th>Example of Speech Act (* indicates that it is the example of the specific function)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive-Conceptual Affordances (Functions that focus on understanding the concepts and content related to the task, and the exchange of information and ideas)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working out/explaining the answer to a question/solution to a problem</td>
<td>*Vijay: Bank-ல் செல்வது விளையாட்டு விளையாட்டு, parents fifty விளையாட்டு விளையாட்டு, dictionary எப்படி பயன்படுத்து? (If I put thirty dollars in the bank, give fifty dollars to my parents, how can I buy the dictionary, too?) &lt;during an activity requiring learners to create a budget with a hypothetical allowance of $100&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making a suggestion related to the content of the task</td>
<td>*Amira: Dictionary இலங்கை கட்டமை உருவாக்கல் வருவாது மட்டும் (If the dictionary is less than twenty dollars, you can buy it)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building/elaborating on peers' answers/suggestions</td>
<td>Nisha: Okay, we take a phone, கை எடுத்து விளையாட்டு, எந்த எடுத்து விளையாட்டு GPS-ல் மட்டும் கணினிப் பயன்பாடுகள் (Okay, we take a phone, if we don't know where an object is, we can use the GPS to find it) &lt;inventing a new gadget based on an existing one&gt;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Prashant: Free prizes விளையாட்டு அளிப்பு விளையாட்டு, pack-ல் வருவாது (You know how they have free prizes, let's write that on the pack) &lt;creating a food label for their own imaginary food product&gt;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>*Kishen: iPad, hmm, அந்த அந் அந், iPod, வாங்க வாங்க ஒடு iPod விளையாட்டு (iPad, hmm, no, no, iPod, if someone buys it, they'll get an iPod)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Sample Response</td>
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<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Providing a rationale/explanation for an answer/suggestion</td>
<td>Risha: தமிழ் digital camera கைதை, தமிழ் mobile phone நீக்கக்கட்டாம் (Instead of the digital camera, we could pick the mobile phone) &lt;selecting the gadget they would buy as a gift for a parent&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Divya: இலங்காடாம் (No)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checking/asking peers for the answer to a question/solution to a problem</td>
<td>Sivashakti: Bank balance, balance செய்துவரவு கூட்டப்பட்டது கணக்கில் பல்தயார் (How much will the bank balance be? I haven't calculated it) &lt;during an activity requiring them to create a budget&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing/drawing peers’ attention to information in books/texts/other materials</td>
<td>Bavani: Here expiry date, here is maklumat pemakanan (Here's the expiry date, here's the nutritional information) &lt;pointing out parts of a real food label to her peer during an activity where they have to create their own food label&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking for/providing factual information related to the topic</td>
<td>Harini: Water pollution கொடுச்சு என்று? (How does water pollution happen?) &lt;while writing about the causes and effects of pollution&gt;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Tanushri: Water pollution happens when the rubbish goes into the water</td>
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<tr>
<td>Looking for answers/ideas/information in books/texts/other materials</td>
<td>Hema: Internet நிதிக்கட்டி, textbook-ல் இலக்கியம் (If we choose the Internet, there must be something about it in the textbook) &lt;flipping through textbook while picking a topic to create safety rules on&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thinking out loud to brainstorm ideas/answers/course of action</td>
<td>Sivashakti: தன்னாள் ஆண்டுள்ள நேரங்களைத் தகுதியவற்றுக்குட்பட்டது? என்று? (How much would I give my mother? One hundred?) &lt;thinking out loud during a budgeting activity&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking peers for clarification/elaboration on their suggestions/instructions</td>
<td>Divya: அதை getah அடுத்த சேர்க்க (Put the rubber band there)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Tanuja: என்றொடர் petiயா? (In that box there?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recounting events/details from one's personal life that are related to the topic</td>
<td>Amira: Escalator எப்பல நெடுங்கையா? (Can we run up an escalator?) &lt;coming up with safety rules for a mall&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role/Action Description</td>
<td>Response</td>
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<tr>
<td>Making a counter-suggestion/offering an alternative answer</td>
<td>Yashwin: Mobile phone-க்கு camera-கு நின்று combine பாலா கைகைகளும் இழுத்துடன் நூற்றாண்டுகளுடன் (We can combine the mobile phone and camera) &lt;inventing a gadget by combining two existing ones&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Pravin: Mobile phone camera இணைத்து combine பிளாஸ்டெடிகளும், mobile phonom இணைத்து smart watch-ம் combine பாலாகைகளும் (Mobile phone and camera have already been combined, let's combine a mobile phone and smart watch)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrating to peers how to answer a question/solve a problem</td>
<td>Vetti: Three thousand பத்தாண்டு, thousand minus பாலா, அப்பளிக்கு வரும் balance கைகையேம் (Write three thousand, then subtract a thousand, that's how you will know the balance) &lt;while showing his peer how to do a math calculation&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggesting a topic/idea for the group to work on</td>
<td>Tarun: நம் ஒரு வாழ்க்கை நடனால், நம் வாழ்க்கையை பாத்துகளிடையே பாலாகைகளும் (Let's create a story, let's write about what happened in our lives) &lt;while creating a script for a drama&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluating peers' suggestions/the group's work based on certain criteria</td>
<td>Priya: Okay first, interesting &lt;deciding whose suggestion to choose based on which one was the most interesting and unique&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Manickam: Interesting இரா...interest இரா Rohit பாலா கைகைகளும், unique இரா அவற்றுடன் பாலாகைகளும் (If interesting... the one that is interesting is Rohit's, his is the one that's unique)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarifying/elaborating on own answer/suggestion</td>
<td>Silvia: 120 gram okay ah? (Is 120 grams okay?) &lt;deciding on the weight of their created food product&gt;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Meena: How many pieces?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>*Silvia: ஒன்று piece, 120 gram net weight (One piece, 120 grams net weight)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenging peers' ideas/answers by providing a rationale</td>
<td>Sivashakti: Do not touch the gas? &lt;reading a kitchen safety rule a peer has created&gt; அப்புறம் gas மீதிலும் பாலாகைகளும், நூற்றாண்டு குறுகாக gas மீதிலும் பாலாகைகளும் gas கைகைகளுடன் அழகுமா? (If you've run out of gas in your stove and you're fixing a new gas [canister], you have to touch it right?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Example</td>
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<tr>
<td>Explaining how one arrived at an answer/the logic of a solution</td>
<td>Kartik: இதை கண்டு பின்னர், R-ல் என்கிறான (I saw it, I looked for it under R) &lt;explaining how he found the meaning of a word in the dictionary&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking for information from books/texts/other materials</td>
<td>Meena: Gulliverவாதம் nurse டாரார் Glumdalclitch டேரார்? (Is the name of Gulliver’s nurse Glumdalclitch? &lt;referring to their Gulliver’s Travels graphic novel&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking for the rationale/explanation for peers’ actions/answers/suggestions</td>
<td>Kishen: This one forty-two &lt;stating the page number where an answer to a question can be found&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Suren: Forty-two பாதுகாப்பு? (How do you know it's forty-two?)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting ideas/information for the task from local/popular culture</td>
<td>Kamini: Star Trek, you watch the new one ah, they wearing big glasses, want to see anything, can turn and see, you want to do like that?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifying/correcting a mistake in one’s own answer/work</td>
<td>Tanuja: Silap-ல் chapter one இற்றை பாத்திரங்கள் (I mistakenly read from chapter one)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussing cause and effect relationships/pros and cons of an idea/action</td>
<td>Amira: Rule அங்குலங்கள், accident நூற்றாண்டு (If there are no rules, accidents will happen) &lt;discussing the importance of safety rules&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyzing/discussing a topic/issue from multiple perspectives</td>
<td>Kamini: நான் ஜூட்டி-ஏ கேத்தியா, எல்லாதெனையும் பொருட்கள் ஒன்றாக்க முடியும் (If I was the judge, I’d give the same judgement to everyone) &lt;discussing what she would do if she was the judge in a story they're reading&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using objects/materials in the environment creatively as part of the task</td>
<td>Divya: மாஞ்சரெய்ய India (These are mangosteen) &lt;tearing up paper and putting into a basket to use as props in their drama&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Planning-Organizational Affordances (Functions that focus on planning and organizing roles, responsibilities and tasks within the group, and coordinating the collaboration)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Example</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distributing/negotiating roles/responsibilities/tasks in the group</td>
<td>* Tanuja: எல்லாரும் பதிவு செய்யும் பொருட்கள் ஒன்றாக்கம் பலான் விளங்கும் (All of us will read, we'll read one sentence each) &lt;planning the presentation of their work&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning/organizing materials for the activity</td>
<td>Gayatri: Malay Utusan தமிழ் மால்யாட்சனா, மலைஞர் மால்யாட்சனா (If we get the Malay Utusan [a newspaper in the reading corner], that'll be good)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking to borrow/offering to lend/negotiating for books/stationery/other material</td>
<td>Hema: Ravi, மலாய் உடலான் dictionary எடுக்கு (Ravi, give us the dictionary for a while)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role</td>
<td>Activity</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Offering to work on a specific task</td>
<td>Harini: நான் காலை செழுதுவது (I'll write the dialogue) &lt;when the group is preparing a drama based on a story in their textbook&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explaining the procedures/instructions of the task</td>
<td>Poorna: அது தீர்வு கேட்டது ஹரம்குறை, அது தீர்வு கேட்டது உசுருகுறை (If the question [statement] is bad, we must write 'harmful', if the question [statement] is good, we must write 'useful') &lt;activity requiring them to decide whether each statement about the Internet indicates whether it is useful or harmful&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giving peers directions about what to do during the task</td>
<td>Sunny: ஒருவர் மற்றும் கருத்துக்காலம் (Cut one more Maggie [label]) &lt;while pointing to where her peer should paste the label on their poster&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning/rehearsing the group's presentation of their work</td>
<td>Amira: Okay first, good morning everyone, my name is Amira, ஓவ்வோர் ஓவ்வோர் (Okay first, good morning everyone, my name is Amira, I'll say that loudly) &lt;rehearsing the group’s presentation of their finished work&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning how to execute/complete a task/solve a problem</td>
<td>Tanuja: நான் வாண்டு பார்க்கிறேன், அது வாண்டு பார்க்கிறேன் நோக்கில் தந்தை அது வாண்டு பார்க்கிறேன் (We need to read the first chapter, then whichever sentence matches that chapter, we'll put that as number one) &lt;during an activity where they have to rearrange sentences according to the sequence of events in Gulliver's Travels&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checking/identifying what has been done/what else needs to be done</td>
<td>Monisha: Okay முதலிலே negative ராப்புராப்பு (Okay we've written three negatives &lt;writing about the pros and cons of social media&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meena: Next, positive things</td>
<td>Checking about the instructions/procedures of the activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keeping track of the allocated time/reminding peers of the remaining time</td>
<td>Saravanan: ஓவ்வோர் வாண்டு வாண்டு வாண்டு தந்தை வாண்டு வாண்டு (Only four minutes left, let's do this fast)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requesting for a turn/role in the task</td>
<td>Thiva: நானும் வாண்டு, நானும் வாண்டு வாண்டு please? (If you're not writing, can I write one, please?)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Example</td>
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<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disagreeing with peers' suggestions/telling peers not to do something</td>
<td>Suren: Who murdered the Prime Minister? &lt;suggesting sentences using interrogative pronouns&gt;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>*Tilly: நீ என்றாவோ! Murder போக்காய்க்க (No! Don't write murder)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asserting own role in the task</td>
<td>Dinesh: நான் நரஸ்-ய் ஆவர்கின்றேன் (I'll be the narrator) &lt;when the group has to plan and present a drama&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moving the task along/getting peers back on track</td>
<td>Divya: இப்பிள்ளை இப்பிள்ளை இப்பிேல்லையேல் இப்பிேல்லையேல் (Not now, we need to discuss what we should choose first) &lt;when her group members each start cutting out different gadgets from their worksheet before deciding which gadget the group wants to select&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussing/deciding on the goals/scope of the task</td>
<td>Risha: மேம்ம ஆ்ம் உங்கள்க்கானம் (Let's write six) &lt;deciding on how many safety rules to write&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reminding peers about the teacher's instructions</td>
<td>Tanuja: (Teacher said to write that sentence first)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessing a situation/making a suggestion to solve a problem</td>
<td>Elango: யாது இருந்தார், பிற்காலத்தை வாங்க! (If you come over here, there won't be a problem) &lt;to a peer who does not have space to work on his side of the table&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reporting on own progress/completion of a task</td>
<td>Lingkam: நான் பேச்சுடன் பேச்சுடன், I finished already (I've finished already)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking peers for instructions/directions on what to do</td>
<td>Hema: என் கோட்டு என் கோட்டு என் கோட்டு என் கோட்டு என் கோட்டு (What do I need to find? Tell me and I'll find it quickly)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directing peers to stop speaking in Tamil/to speak in English</td>
<td>Yashwini: Don't talk in Tamil! Talk in English!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checking on peers' progress/completion of a task</td>
<td>Tilly: காத்தென்றால் பற்றி பற்றி என்றால்? (How many have you written?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offering to ask/suggesting that peers ask the teacher for clarification on the task</td>
<td>Amira: Teacher-து என்று என்று jumlah-அந்த தான் (We can ask teacher what jumlah [amount] is)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assigning roles/asking peers to take over tasks based on their skills/expertise</td>
<td>Lingkes: ஆணை வாழ்வியேல், ஆணை வாழ்வியேல் ஆணை வாழ்வியேல் (Let her draw, her handwriting is nice)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping peers to make a decision/making a decision on behalf of the group</td>
<td>Kartik: Black இளை yellow இளை? (Black or yellow?) &lt;thinking aloud about what colour to use on a poster&gt;</td>
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<td>*Sugita: Black இளை yellow இளை (Put both black and yellow)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Affective-Social Affordances (Functions that focus on building rapport, engaging peers in social interactions, providing socio-emotional support, and assisting each other)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affirming/agreeing with peers' suggestions/answers</th>
<th>Silvia: Suraj கூறிய idea nice (Suraj's idea is nice)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Offering peers a turn/encouraging peers to contribute their ideas or take on a task</td>
<td>Kishen: நான் ஒரு ஆதாரமிட்டேன், என்று பார்வைத்து விளக்கலுக்கு (I've said one [idea], someone else say their idea)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking peers for their opinion on a topic or task</td>
<td>Pravin: நீ judge அதற்கு வேண்டும் என்று சொல்லு? (If you were the judge, what would you do?) &lt;in response to a story in their textbook about a judge who has to make a difficult decision&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talking about one's personal life/interests/events not related to the task</td>
<td>Lingkam: பல்துளைவுகள் மாறும் India இணையத்தில் (I'm going to India in December)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joking with peers/expressing amusement at peers' ideas</td>
<td>Suren: I know, அனைத்து கூறும் பயணம் watch செய்யலாம் (I know, we can make a watch for people who don't know anything)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inviting peers to join in the collaboration/to work together on a task</td>
<td>Hema: இரண்டு பேரும் share பல்துளைவு செய்யலாம் (The two of us can share this and do it together) &lt;brings her paper closer to her peer so they can both work together&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouraging group effort/collaboration among group members</td>
<td>Tanuja: இந்த group என்று சொல்கிறேன் (We should do it together as a group)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping peers to identify/correct mistakes in their answers/work</td>
<td>Amira: Durian கூறும் பயணத்தில், betik (You shouldn't write durian, it's betik [papaya]) &lt;correcting a mistake in her peer’s work&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking peers about their actions/work/plans</td>
<td>Danusha: என்று colour-கூறும்? (What colour are you going to use?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeking affirmation from peers about one's own answer/idea/work</td>
<td>Ashvin: அதாவது என்றுக்கொண்டு? (Is this nice?) &lt;showing peers his work&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparing own work to peers' work/learning from what peers are doing</td>
<td>Amira: என்று கூறும் words கூறுபட்டு (For each type [of animal], they're using five words) &lt;making an observation about what another group is doing, during an activity where they have to describe animals&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking for peers' help/offering to help peers</td>
<td>Nareesh: என் கொரியா வர்த்தா ஹொப் பார்வைத்து? (Shall I help you?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checkpeers' answers or work/providing feedback on how it can be improved</td>
<td>Divya: இங்கு four கையா அறிக்கையும், இங்கு five five அறிக்கையும். அப்படி ரஹ்மான் ரமேஹ்ஸ் கணவுறும் (There are four [syllables] here, but here there are five, five, if so, it won't rhyme at the end) &lt;counting the number of syllables in each line of a poem her peer wrote&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Describing own actions/work/plans to peers</td>
<td>Gayatri: காய் வாக்கு arrow மர்பணம் manufactured date பிற்பால் மூலமிருந்து (I'm going to put an arrow and write the manufactured date and all here)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking peers about their family/personal life</td>
<td>Tarun: என் ப்பா பூம் காண்பா? (What's your dad's name?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complimenting peers for their work/drawing peers' attention to it</td>
<td>Thiva: Tanuja ஆனாள் மற்றையிருக்கிறார் (Tanjua is writing beautifully)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correcting peers' actions/resolving conflict</td>
<td>Tanuja: பதினை விளக்க பாடல், okay? (No fighting, okay?) &lt;when two group members begin to argue&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping peers to find the answer to a question/solve a problem</td>
<td>Divya: அந்த தகு பனவேய இன்றுக்கும் (It'll be on this page) &lt;helping her peer to find the answer to a question in the textbook&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offering peers a suggestion about how to do something</td>
<td>Tanuja: காண்க உயர் குழியூம், old man போர்ப்பிட்டு காலசூரோவும் (Use a stick, and act and talk like an old man) &lt;giving her peer ideas about how to act in their drama&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asserting own ability or showing self-confidence</td>
<td>Kishen: நான் உடனமையத்தையிருக்கிறது நூற்றாண்டு இன்றுக்கும் (My idea will be good)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivating peers to work harder/do something well</td>
<td>Lingkam: ஆரம்ப தோட்டையே (We have to write it nicely)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saravanan: பார்வை சிறுக்குறுத்து அரசன் செல்தும் (If we want to get the prize we have to write nicely)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking about peers' preferences or interests</td>
<td>Sivashakti: Clinic போர்ப்பிட்டு பாடல் park கூறு போர்ப்பிட்டு பாடல்? (Do you want to go to the clinic or park?) &lt;when they have to choose a location on the map and come up with directions to that location&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressing one's emotions/empathising with peers</td>
<td>*Tanjua: நான் கரித்து உரித்துக்கொள் இறக்கும் (I feel frustrated)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Divya: என் கரித்து உரித்துக்கொள் இறக்கும்? (Why do you feel frustrated?)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language-Linguistic Affordances (Functions that focus on learning and using the linguistic structures and discourse required to complete the task, and supporting peers’ linguistic and discursive knowledge)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inviting peers to check/provide feedback on one's answer/work</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asking questions to help peers identify mistakes in their work</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suggesting a complete answer/idea using the target linguistic structure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suggesting an incomplete answer/idea using the target linguistic structure/inviting peers to complete one's answer/idea</td>
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<tr>
<td>Helping peers to spell a word/correcting their spelling</td>
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<tr>
<td>Correcting peers' grammar/syntax/vocabulary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Providing the translation of a word/phrase/sentence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paraphrasing own or peer's answer/suggesting another way to say something</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<p>| Tanuja: தைட்டக்கல் (I haven't gotten it [the answer]) |
| Harini: Discuss பக்கயன் (Let's discuss it) |
| Sugita: தான் பாதிப்பு மற்றும் கிளிப்பு பாதிக்கின்றா (You can check if what I'm writing is correct) |
| Meena: Suddenly, Gulliver was shocked…&lt;narrating Gulliver's Travels from Gulliver's perspective/writing in first person&gt; |
| *Silvia: அவர் காள்வர் தோற்றாட்டங்கள், அவர் பாதிப்பு போன்ற Gulliver விளக்க வாய்ப்புள்ள நீதியறிவை? (He's the one who's writing, would he use his own name, Gulliver, when writing?) |
| Riya: தான் என் இயற்கைக்காலம், please throw the rubbish in the bin (I thought of one, please throw the rubbish in the bin) &lt;creating park rules and regulations using imperatives&gt; |
| *Varma: Make sure that you...ahh, make sure you do not touch any electrical…electrical? &lt;creating kitchen safety rules&gt; |
| Silvia: Electrical things with your wet hands எளியது (Write 'electrical things with your wet hands') |
| Silvia: Weight எப்படி spell பொருளை? (How do you spell weight?) |
| *Meena: W, e, i, g, h, t |
| Sarala: To whom you give the necklace &lt;suggeting a question using an interrogative pronoun&gt; |
| *Monisha: To whom DID you give மூடியை? (It should be to whom DID you give) |
| Bavani: The Malay is maklumat pemakanan, in English is the nutritional information (In Malay it's maklumat pemakanan [nutritional information], in English it's nutritional information) |
| Divya: I like it very much |
| *Harini: I enjoy it very much |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asking for/checking the spelling of a word</td>
<td>Vettri: Fever செய்யும் பொருள் என்ன? (How do you spell 'fever')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explaining grammar rules/syntax/vocabulary usage</td>
<td>Tanuja: My friends is like…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Divya: Friends le -s மண்டலம், களை ஆண்டு நோய்வர்கள்? (There's no -s in 'friends' because it's just one person)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explaining the meaning of a word/phrase/sentence</td>
<td>Tarun: Tropical தெரு காலாணம் ('Tropical' means a hot place)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking for/checking the meaning/usage of a word/phrase</td>
<td>Kartik: Interact இணைய காண்பது? (What does 'interact' mean?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking about grammar/syntax/vocabulary</td>
<td>Amira: Glass plural வல்லட்டை? (What's the plural form of 'glass')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking for/checking the translation of a word/phrase/sentence</td>
<td>Malini: Isi bersih என்ன என்ன, neight weight ah? (What's isi bersih, is it net weight?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working out the meaning/usage of vocabulary using contextual cues</td>
<td>Harini: Bow இணைய காண்பது? Oh, அம்மாண்டாக்க முறையொன்று! (What is bow? Oh, there's a bow in their arrows) &lt;working out what 'bow' means based on the words and pictures on a page in Gulliver's Travels&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing verbal prompts/asking questions to help peers formulate their ideas</td>
<td>Larishan: போரம், Gulliver sees…Gulliver sees வகையான? (Say this, Gulliver sees… What does Gulliver see?) &lt;prompting his peer to come up with a sentence to describe what Gulliver sees on the island&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking about/explaining punctuation rules/writing conventions</td>
<td>Danusha: அன்பரம், comma இப்போன்ற (Next, write a comma)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requesting to use translanguaging/encouraging peers to use translanguaging</td>
<td>Harini: Internet இணைய காண்பது என்ன என்ன என்ன என்ன என்ன என்ன என்ன? (What shouldn't we do on the Internet?)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>*Riya: கொள்வது என்ன என்ன என்ன என்ன என்ன என்ன என்ன? (Can I say it in Tamil?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessing own linguistic knowledge</td>
<td>Monisha: Gold இணைய காண்பது…தெரு காலாணம் வகையான என்ன என்ன என்ன என்ன என்ன என்ன (Let's write 'gold'…. I don't know the word for it in Tamil yet)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using newly learned vocabulary/linguistic structure in spoken/written language</td>
<td>Thiva: Don't jump into the water… &lt;coming up with safety rules for the swimming pool&gt;</td>
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<td>Kishen: Dive இணைய காண்பது என்ன என்ன என்ன என்ன என்ன என்ன என்ன (Dive means going in face first)</td>
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<td>*Thiva: சரி, please don’t dive into the water (Okay, please don't dive into the water)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Example</td>
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<tr>
<td>Providing information/examples to help peer understand new vocabulary</td>
<td>Monisha: Bracelet மற்றும் பயிற்சியும்? (What do you do with a bracelet)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kesha: அப்பா முன்னே அது ஒன்று கேட்டுண்டு விளக்குமேற்று (I was just thinking of asking you the same thing)</td>
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<td>*Monisha: மனுஷ ஏற்ற பாருளும் பொருளொலை. அதற்கு கல்வி (When we put it like this, that's what it is)</td>
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<td>&lt;demonstrating the action of putting something around her wrist&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modelling to peers what to say/how to speak during a presentation</td>
<td>Tarun: வணக்கம் வரவுகூறு, welcome, my name is Bavani. வணக்கங்கால் வரவுகூறு (This is how to say it, &quot;Welcome, my name is Bavani,&quot; then say everyone's names)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Showing peers examples of target language use in books/other materials</td>
<td>Manickam: Kepada siapakah, எப்படி. எந்தும் பகுதியுடன், to whom did you give (Like this, kepada siapakah [to whom]. Look here, to whom did you give) &lt;showing his peer examples of interrogative pronouns in their Malay and English textbooks&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correcting peers' pronunciation of vocabulary</td>
<td>Nisha: Escolator எஸ்டமி ஈபம் முதல் கேட்டுண்டு... (In the escalator, my father usually tells me...) &lt;pronouncing 'escalator' as 'escolator'&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Suren: Escolator இல், escalator (It's not escalator, it's escalator)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explaining the format/genre of a text</td>
<td>Tarun: Letter எல்லை எல்லை, message (This is not a letter, it's a message)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correcting one's language use based on peers' feedback</td>
<td>Naveen: iPhone is importable...</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Guna: Importable இல், PORTABLE (Not importable, PORTABLE)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Naveen: Ah, PORTABLE, iPhone is portable...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checking the pronunciation of vocabulary</td>
<td>*Nareesh: Hon [own] business ah, அல்லை own business ah? (Is it hon [own] business or own business?) &lt;pronouncing 'own' as 'hon'&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vettri: Own business</td>
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</tbody>
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