LOST AND FOUND IN TRANSLATION

A HANDBOOK ON TRANSLATION PRACTICES

EDITED BY
MARIJANA PRODANOVIĆ
& BEGOÑA CRESPO

RPPH

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Foreword

Lost and Found in Translation is an accessibly written handbook intended for translation teachers, students, and practitioners from the field. Via its seven chapters, it aims to shed light on translation practices in different contexts, highlighting common mistakes and obstacles through vivid examples, and offering practical approaches to overcome them.

To this end, the handbook chapters, inter alia, explore concepts like false friends, calques, language transfer, as well as the niches of culture, figurative language, EMI, ESP, EAP and their correlation with translation practices *en général*. Failing to recognise some of these, i.e. failing to interpret the intended messages accordingly, could do some irreparable damage to the quality of translation and result in misinterpretation.

The chapters of *Lost and Found in Translation* aim to prevent any such failure; written and organised in a reader-friendly way – each section provides a brief introduction to the explored concept, supports it all by illustrative examples, puts it into perspective via some scenarios and/or useful practical advice. This structure allows users to cherry-pick from the spectrum of chapters and enjoy them separately – as they all could be explored and savoured as independent sections. However, consuming the book as a whole can undoubtedly deepen the understanding of many phenomena that might arise along the way, prevent some mistakes, increase awareness, and improve, as a result, our translation practices and realities.

Before proudly presenting *Lost and Found in Translation* to you, the editors would like to express their sincere gratitude to all the contributors for their expertise and dedication. While the handbook depicts a joint commitment to advancing the field of translation, the intellectual content and views within each chapter remain the sole responsibility of the respective authors.

Enjoy the journey through these diverse contributions.

Marijana Prodanović

Begoña Crespo

CHAPTER ONE

The Silent Translator:

EAP and ESP as Mediators in English-Medium Instruction

Chapter 1

The Silent Translator: EAP and ESP as Mediators in English-Medium Instruction

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Abstract: This chapter aims to shed light on the complex relationship between English-Medium Instruction (EMI) and English for Academic and Specific Purposes (EAP/ESP). With the constant rise in the number of EMI programmes globally, particularly in non-Anglophone contexts, the need to define the status of EAP and ESP in such contexts is becoming increasingly urgent. While EMI is focused on content delivery in English, EAP and ESP seek to encourage students' development of academic literacy and discipline-sensitive language skills, respectively. The chapter argues for their joint implementation in EMI contexts, to achieve both the successful comprehension of academic content and effective communication in a language-sensitive setting. However, there are currently many challenges, including, but not limited to, a lack of adequate training for both EMI and EAP/ESP teachers, vague policies, as well as scant collaboration between language and content specialists. The current chapter addresses these concerns and offers some practical tips which it is hoped will be useful in the EMI environment, such as integrating language scaffolding into content instruction, introducing ESP and EAP materials and/or sessions into curricula, and establishing targeted training and workshops to help language and content teachers work together, as well as to help increase their awareness and confidence.

It is through this balance between content and language learning that EMI programmes can exploit their full potential, meet all the needs of their diverse student populations, and ultimately encourage effective and inclusive educational contexts.

Keywords: English Medium Instruction (EMI), English for Specific Purposes (ESP), EAP (English for Academic Purposes), academic literacy, collaboration, inclusive pedagogy

Englishisation and the English of International Classrooms

Different kinds of migration around the world have resulted in an increased number of international schools globally; people travel for different reasons – in search of better living conditions, for work, education or leisure. While doing so they often find themselves in countries where the only language they can speak is English, and if they decide to undertake either formal or informal education there, courses are usually conducted in this language. There are currently around 7 million students attending international schools across the world (Prodanovic & Crespo, 2024). Acquiring an education in English, when it is not one's mother tongue, offers numerous benefits, including intercultural awareness, enhanced language competence, an increased appreciation of diversity, among others. Naturally, there are also many characteristics of such scenarios that are now being actively debated, and many of these are related to the English language and levels of proficiency therein.

Turning specifically to the case of Europe, less than 1 % of the population use English as their first language (L1). Of course, the status of English, along with proficiency levels, also varies in other parts of the world (Modiano, 2024). For example, in France some progress has been noted vis-à-vis attitudes to learning and using

English, especially where intercultural encounters are concerned (Deneire & Forlot, 2024). The situation in the Arab world is, however, more complex; apart from English and Arabic, around 100 other languages are used (Hopkyns, Zoghbor, & Hassall, 2021, p. 153). Another interesting trend has been noted in Spain, where a lack of motivation for learning English compared to other EU countries has been reported (Llurda & Mocanu, 2024, p. 318).

The following figure illustrates these observations, showing the levels of English proficiency across different countries around the world (see Figure 1 on the next page). Some entries in that list might seem surprising. Thus, while it might be expected that the prevalent language group in a particular country correlates with success in English, the data do not confirm this assumption. This results in a wide array of countries having L1s belonging to different language groups yet showing the same levels of English proficiency levels. So, Germany and the Netherlands both have native languages belonging to the Germanic group, Portugal's predominant language is from the Ibero-Romance group, whereas in Croatia, the Slavic language Croatian is spoken. Yet in all those countries, English proficiency is high. This speaks in favour of the fact that learners with different native languages (no matter how unrelated) can achieve the same levels of English proficiency.

What we do know is that EMI in the classroom is aimed at those contexts in which neither students nor teachers use English in an L1 role. Dearden (2015) defined EMI more precisely as "the use of the English language to teach academic subjects in countries or jurisdictions where the first language (L1) of the majority of the population is not English" (p. 2).

In this respect, the issue of the percentage of English activation in international classrooms is a common one; while some interna-

Figure 1.

English language proficiency across the world

Very High Proficiency

01	Netherlands	624
02	Croatia	617
03	Austria	616
04	Germany	615
05	Norway	613
06	Portugal	612
07	Denmark	611
08	Sweden	609
09	Belgium	608
10	Slovakia	606
11	Romania	605
12	Finland	603
13	South Africa	602
13	Zimbabwe	602
15	Poland	600

High Proficiency

16	Latvia	598
17	North Macedonia	595
18	Bulgaria	594
19	Kenya	593
20	Greece	592
21	Bosnia and Herzegovina	591
22	Hungary	590
23	Czechia	582
24	Malaysia	581
25	Serbia	578
26	Argentina	575
27	Zambia	573
28	Philippines	569
29	Nigeria	568
30	Switzerland	564
31	Estonia	561
32	Honduras	553

Moderate Proficiency

33	Lithuania	543
34	Uruguay	542
35	Georgia	541
36	Ghana	540
36	Spain	540
38	France	539
39	Hong Kong (China)	538
40	Cyprus	537
41	Belarus	533
42	Albania	532
43	Moldova	531
43	Paraguay	531
45	Ukraine	526
46	Israel	524
47	El Salvador	523
48	South Korea	522
49	Bolivia	521
49	Russia	521
51	Venezuela	520
52	Peru	519
53	Uganda	518
54	Chile	517
55	Costa Rica	516
56	Armenia	515
56	Cuba	515
58	Nepal	514
59	Italy	513
60	Nicaragua	512
61	Guatemala	510
62	Bangladesh	506
63	Dominican Republic	503
64	Vietnam	500

Low Proficiency

65	Ethiopia	499
66	Tunisia	498
67	Pakistan	493
68	Iran	492
68	Morocco	492
70	Panama	491
71	Turkey	488
72	United Arab Emirates	487
73	Sri Lanka	486
74	India	484
75	Brazil	482
76	Colombia	480
77	Tanzania	479
78	Lebanon	477
79	Bhutan	473
80	Indonesia	471
81	Qatar	469
82	Algeria	468
83	Ecuador	466
84	Malawi	465
84	Mozambique	465
86	China	464
87	Palestine	463
88	Laos	461
89	Egypt	458
90	Madagascar	457
91	Syria	456
91	Turkmenistan	456
93	Kuwait	455
94	Azerbaijan	454

Very Low Proficiency

95	Mongolia	447
96	Afghanistan	446
96	Japan	446
98	Cameroon	445
99	Haiti	444
99	Myanmar	444
101	Kyrgyzstan	443
102	Senegal	442
103	Mexico	440
104	Uzbekistan	429
105	Jordan	425
106	Sudan	421
107	Kazakhstan	417
107	Rwanda	417
109	Angola	413
110	Tajikistan	409
111	Mali	408
112	Oman	407
113	Benin	406
113	Iraq	406
115	Saudi Arabia	404
116	Thailand	402
116	Yemen	402
118	Democratic Republic of the Congo	400
119	Somalia	398
120	Togo	397
121	Libya	395
122	Côte d'Ivoire	393
123	Cambodia	390

Note. Adapted from EF EPI English Proficiency Index 2025 (Education First, 2024). Data retrieved from https://www.ef.com/wwen/epi/

tional programmes envision the sole use of English, others allow for a more flexible use of English alongside the activation of the L1, and Akincioglu (2023) sums this up as "the use of English (for example sole use, partial use, code switching and so on)" (p. 4).

Naturally, language proficiency levels differ among academics and students around the world. When the practice of EMI first emerged, northern and western European countries, typically seen as those taking pride in high levels of English proficiency, might not have struggled with all the issues to the extent that countries introducing EMI later did (China, Japan, Spain, to mention but a few).

Improving English is not, however, one of EMI's inherent characteristics – especially given the fact that EMI programme requirements around the world differ significantly, including the language proficiency levels required by both instructors and students. Hand in hand with better language comes better career prospects and a brighter future; promising such rewards, though, might be somewhat misleading, in that, ideally, language should already be in place, ready to be activated through academic content and used as a form of mediation, not as an 'English through English' practice. It seems, then, that to show its full potential, EMI needs standardisation at many levels – individual, institutional, state, regional, and global. Where there remains considerable room for improvement is in the complex correlation between language use, academic content, language expectations and requirements (for all participants), along with any specific EMI pedagogy and the extent to which any other languages are allowed in EMI classrooms (to list but a few). Improvements in all these areas are needed everywhere, especially given the great popularity of EMI today and its continued growth, even in hot spots of English language proficiency.

EMI – Doubts, Concerns and Related Niches

The popularity of EMI programmes, which take a variety of forms, has been on the increase for decades now. The spectrum of goals that they have is wide, but they all, to a certain extent, aim to boost the international offer of higher education institutions, to keep pace with innovations and developments in the field of research and business (Coleman, 2006), to encourage the presence of students from abroad, but also to prepare domestic students for the global job market. The role of Blended Intensive Programmes in this respect has been discussed elsewhere (Crespo & Prodanović, 2025).

The popularity of EMI courses has also, however, brought with it an ocean of different questions, including the issue of EMI-adequate pedagogies, collaboration between EMI and academic courses, the relationship between EMI and ESP/EAP, intercultural competence, along with many others. It is in EMI classrooms that diversities of one kind or another are commonly a prominent feature – and as such this context implies the presence of similarities and differences, plus the numerous challenges that this entails.

EMI is also understood as one of the embodiments of English as a lingua franca where non-native speakers – teachers and students alike – resort to English as a common means of interaction. This applies particularly to the field of higher education, where academic content (other than language-related content) is often transmitted by means of the English language in those countries where it is not the first language of the majority of the population (Macaro et al., 2018, p. 37). In this way, it is believed, all the participants can improve their English, while simultaneously acquiring academic content (Evans & Morrison, 2018). As a result, their prospects for the future, in socio-economic terms, are significantly enhanced.

Macaro (2022) notes four different models of EMI education, these commonly being described as:

1. Preparatory Year Model (as the name suggests – preparing students for their future steps in EMI, with a dominant focus on language potential.

2. Pre-institutional Selection Model – describing a situation in which students are selected for admission based on their English language competence and performance skills.

3. Institutional Concurrent Support Model, in which the selection process for admission takes into consideration students' academic performance as a whole rather than just language-related skills.

4. Multilingual Model, seen as the most flexible mode, in that it allows for the usage of L1 if needed.

This final model connects with the concept of *English-friendly practices*, which have become increasingly popular across many higher education institutions in Spain. However, the concept remains, at least at the moment, rather vague, in terms of whether it can be regarded as a subtype of the Multilingual Model or presents a whole new niche in the market; further analysis of the question will provide more insight into the matter and serve to resolve this question.

In addition to the models presented above, a further distinction, at least terminologically, can be made between *full* and *partial* EMI (Galloway & Rose, 2021). While full EMI envisions the exclusive usage of English, partial EMI allows for flexibility. In terms of additional distinctions, *hard* versus *soft* EMI should also be identified. The former requires close cooperation between language and academic content teachers and commonly addresses those courses that do not intrinsically include English (those from such fields as Law, Engineering, Architecture, Medicine, etc.), whereas the latter, due to the nature of the courses in question, is already connected with English (and might include the courses pertaining to language studies, translation, intercultural communication, and more) (Macaro, 2022).

On a general note, EMI embraces the idea of linguistic abilities (commonly foreign language competence) thus enabling better classroom interaction and academic success (Zhang & Pladevall-Ballester, 2021). These two notions are undoubtedly intertwined and mutually interdependent; a number of studies have pointed to EMI's positive influence on the successful outcomes mentioned above, and this comes as no surprise, since EMI aims to create a natural foreign-language environment that motivates and encourages the acquisition of other elements that students are exposed to (Xie & Curle, 2022).

The constant use of an L2, especially in more rigid forms of EMI, can significantly affect the overall learning experience. Content comprehension depends on the language proficiency of both teachers and students, as well as on their ability to put their linguistic competence into practice. As noted earlier, when a softer EMI model is applied, the L1 also finds its place in the classroom; participants may find recourse to their first language useful for clarification, posing questions, or engaging in deeper discussion. Language, as we know and use it, brims with cultural nuances, which can constitute an *obstacle sui generis* – one that demands both linguistic and cultural awareness. This is particularly important given that nearly all EMI classrooms worldwide are populated by students from different geographical, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds.

Some of the studies cited above showed a positive impact of EMI on the usage of English – at least when it comes to the level of comfort felt while using it; other studies showed the opposite, specifically those looking at the interference of EMI attributes with teaching/learning outcomes. The jury is still out, then, on what leads to potential failure and/or misunderstanding in EMI classrooms, whether it is solely a matter of language command, the pedagogical tools applied, a lack of intercultural awareness, or the combination of these and other factors (Costa & Mariotti, 2017).

The inability to understand the intended message is one of the most significant issues in EMI classrooms and something that can be experienced by both teachers and students. For that reason, more flexible EMI models envision the usage of L1 as a means of helping all participants. In this respect, Björkman (2014) lists the strategies that students tend to activate or ask for when a message is not successfully or adequately understood: repeating, simplifying, pointing to the most important elements, and paraphrasing. The question is whether such practices, especially when employed constantly, serve to hinder the process of the planned teaching-learning dynamics, slowing it down and eventually having a negative impact on its outcomes (Thøgersen & Airey, 2011).

Also, to help their students understand all content appropriately, teachers can choose to turn away from standard academic language usage and opt for a more colloquial, informal form of language, one that affords an instant helping hand, although this should not become the prevalent language policy in the classroom. In this regard, towards meeting all these demands, including, but not limited to – different personality traits, foreign language setting, cultural nuances, learning styles, the academic environment, changes in the pace of progress, vocabulary for special purposes – a unique form of authentic language is suggested, one that conveys the academic environment, introduces students to the field, activates the relevant lexicon, but also one that puts all this into perspective, thus preparing students for real-life business and academic environments of the future.

Although not the most important issue here, that is, the only characteristic that matters, language proficiency, on the part of both EMI teachers and students, could be less vague. Among those who have explored this issue of EMI policy standardisation we might mention Dearden (2015), Aguilar and Muñoz (2014) and Dimova (2017), all of whom have concluded that in the field of EMI the need remains for more transparency, better expressed and formulated requirements, plus standardisation.

As mentioned above, many internal and external factors come into play in EMI classrooms and have a huge impact on outcomes; what has proved to be effective, in a positive way, is the development of firmer bonds; that is, a good student-teacher rapport resulting in a positive atmosphere can enhance the whole process. This is, again, where specific, custom-made pedagogies, supported by intercultural competence, can be quite helpful and engaging. With advanced language skills, just as with less polished ones, such bonds can serve to minimise pragmatic threats, decrease the number of episodes of misunderstanding, and thus support the process as a whole. While such rapport may come naturally to some teachers, teacher training programmes should not overlook this issue; it should accompany all EMI settings as an integral part of the process (Morell et al., 2022).

Regardless of the model or EMI context, adequate support, training, and resources provided to participants are always beneficial; their presence – or absence – often correlates with success in EMI settings (McKinley & Rose, 2022; Bradford, 2016). Beyond how well participants are equipped, EMI success depends on many additional factors, including national governance, institutional policies (Widodo, 2016), recommendations, motivation, and personnel, among others. The desire to align with global trends and integrate EMI practices into institutional policies and activities has led many higher education institutions (HEIs) to face numerous challenges. These challenges frequently stem from a lack of clear guidelines on how EMI should be implemented, what it encompasses, who can participate, and what criteria define its successful application (Soruc & Griffiths, 2018).

In this regard, Bradford (2016) identifies four major categories of obstacles in EMI classrooms: language- and culture-related barriers, structural challenges, and issues concerning institutional recognition. Language proficiency requirements in EMI courses are often vague, which can lead to miscommunication. Moreover, recognising and responding appropriately to cultural nuances in multicultural classrooms is crucial; failure to do so may pose greater risks than linguistic errors alone. From a structural standpoint, teacher readiness to undertake EMI remains a central issue. Many teachers lack adequate training or resources, leaving them to navigate complex classroom dynamics largely through intuition. At the institutional level, EMI practices often lack standardisation - there is frequently no clear definition of what constitutes EMI or how such practices should be positioned within the broader global network.

In recent years, EMI has also gained significant traction in the field of educational research; yet it cannot be said is that any universal standardisation has been suggested or accepted, which leaves much room for development in this respect. Naturally, a whole range of stakeholders could contribute to the process of EMI evaluation and standardisation, all those actively, or in an indirect way, participating in it, including teachers, students, relevant bodies of HEIs, ministries, alumni, administrators, and many more. EMI has indeed been addressed and assessed across institutions globally in terms of requirements, form, content, impact, and quality in general (Costa & Coleman, 2012). For this purpose, the EMI Q Evaluation has been used *inter alia* to evaluate different aspects of such programmes (language, structure and support-wise). In this regard, more attention to self-evaluation, and subjective, experiential viewpoints is needed (Guo et al., 2024).

While EMI pertains to English-based education, similar concepts – those of CLIL and ICLHE (Integrating Content and Language in Higher Education) appear to be more open to the use of other languages as mediums of instruction and simultaneously advocate an equal degree of attention between content and language, unlike what can be said of the general attributes of EMI. Given the more rigid nature and emphasis put on both academic content and language integration in EMI, some authors believe that this mode of instruction is more suitable for higher education settings (e.g., Lasagabaster, 2018).

Adequate language proficiency and readiness to deliver all planned academic content is a common question in terms of the use of CLIL in the university context. It is often the case that both teachers and students need specific language support here and might struggle to work on the two areas (academic content and language content) simultaneously. This is where university ELT teachers come into play – as mediators *sui generis*, bridging potential gaps and providing solutions to questions or doubts that may arise.

When EMI, ESP, and EAP Meet

English has been an intrinsic part of language classrooms around the globe for years. While in some of these it is taught as an L1, in some other classrooms its role differs and comes in multiple forms with different purposes. On the one hand, it is often taught and learned in terms of its general attributes; on the other hand, other scenarios see a focus on English for Specific or Academic Purposes. Regardless of the niche in which English is taught, it comes with complexities and multiple challenges, both linguistic and non-linguistic, and it is crucial that teachers and language learners are aware of these.

ESP is undoubtedly one of the niches that require particular attention, as its nature is especially sensitive to discourse. While lexical nuances often occupy a central place in ESP curricula, cultural nuances may be overlooked, even though they exert considerable influence – particularly in regions where English is not the first language (Hewings, 2002). In fact, the main goal of ESP, which emerged during the second half of the twentieth century, was to support students whose mother tongue was not English, but who were studying in English or engaging with literature written in the language (Swales, 2020).

Different fields of human endeavour come to mind when ESP is discussed; at this point, one typically thinks of the language of medicine, economics, law, engineering, architecture, biology, chemistry, sports, tourism, and so forth. Although these represent only a fraction of the areas encompassed by ESP, many of the terms used in these domains carry meanings that differ – wholly or partially – from their everyday usage. In such cases, it is the surrounding discourse that serves to clarify meaning. This polysemous nature of field-specific lexicon, if not properly contextualised, can lead to confusion, even among native speakers.

Regardless of the domain to which it pertains, ESP ultimately intersects with the field of intercultural communication, since the world of business is fundamentally characterised by international interaction (Aguilar, 2018). Whether in multinational corporations, import–export operations, efforts to enter new markets, or contexts of general language contact, English has long served as an indispensable medium. Consequently, enriching ESP with broader language competence and with culture-related skills and competencies may provide a promising path toward the success of future professionals – both in the job market and in their further academic development.

It is commonly the case that ESP is taught in English-medium instruction settings, ones in which both those who teach and those who are taught use English as a foreign language. Its inherent complexity, polysemy, burdened with foreign language obstacles, terminological inconsistencies, and cross-cultural nuances, all make EMI-supported ESP practices rather perplexing. To increase employability and academic performance, EMI and ESP practices should go hand in hand. In this way, future professionals can be educated to develop a comprehensive range of academic language competencies, as well as field-specific ones (the envisioned ESP lexicon). In this regard, Basturkmen (2020) suggests five focal points of ESP teaching: focus on learning, needs, skills and strategies, discipline, and language.

Of course, broadly speaking, we can differentiate between English for Academic and English for Occupational Purposes within the scope of ESP, where the former is aimed at higher education setting and language-related demands in that area, while the latter focuses on the language required for communication in professional contexts (Dudley-Evans & Saint John, 1998). Wingate (2022, p.1) suggests that EMI and ESP/EAP represent "two sides of the same coin", and we agree they should be going hand in hand as loyal companions which, when in harmony, can lead to greater achievement.

Insights into the relationship between ESP (EAP) and EMI are not new; scholars who have explored this area often conclude that stronger connections are needed, emphasising the importance of introducing, reintroducing, and refining the role of ESP to support the broader concept of EMI (see, for example, Lee & Lee, 2018; Arnbjörnsdóttir & Prinz, 2017; Mauranen, 2022; Lu, 2022). In line with this view, Galloway and Rose (2022) advocate a symbiotic relationship between ESP and EAP on the one hand, and EMI on the other. Language-related nuances characterising specific academic fields can present challenges and act as obstacles to success in EMI; this is where ESP can – and should – play a crucial role in bridging the gap.

EMI classrooms, typically brimming with diverse cultures, personality traits, learning styles, and individual needs, undoubtedly demand a *mediator par excellence* (Mostafavi et al., 2021). Given the fragile nature of ESP/EAP in such settings, it becomes an arduous task for teachers to accommodate these differences while conveying field-specific concepts to heterogeneous groups – groups that often operate with distinct conceptual frameworks and varying understandings of the very ideas being discussed. In practice, translation-related strategies are not viable options; even when some students share a mother tongue with the teacher, such overlap rarely benefits the entire group and may, in fact, make an already complex process even more confusing.

Misinterpretations, obstacles, and ambiguities in language use may also arise from students' unfamiliarity "with the epistemological and communicative practices of their chosen disciplines" (Wingate, 2022, p. 6). For this reason, integrating ESP/EAP and EMI may help address many of these issues vis-à-vis semantics and practical language use. In this way, students become better equipped with both academic competencies and discipline-specific skills relevant to their chosen fields of study (Wingate, 2022).

While some EMI stakeholders around the world see ICLHE and EMI as phenomena that are self-sufficient and do not ask for further ESP implementation, others believe that in fact ESP courses should go hand in hand with EMI education, to facilitate the acquisition of “vocational concepts” (Kırkgöz & Dikilitaş, 2018, p.1). The extinction of ESP courses in EMI settings should be prevented – for the sake of both teachers and students; this is equally true for those whose language proficiency levels are high and those whose command of the language requires levelling up. For instance, in the EMI context of Spain, concerns about language proficiency have been noted in a number of studies (Arno-Macia & Aguilar, 2018), and this means that language support could be one of the vital topics to be explored. And most definitely, Spain is not an isolated case.

In this regard, it has been noted that success in EMI programmes could correlate with the ESP background of students (Rose et al. 2021; Aizawa & Rose, 2020). For successful academic outcomes, cooperation between language teachers, field-related specialists, and those teaching language for specific purposes has been advocated (McKinley & Rose, 2022). When content and language instructors reach a consensus about the terminology to be used, the topics to be explored, and the ways to overcome potential obstacles, it seems that there is no room for misunderstanding. Supplementary and preparatory courses, or the ESP courses already integrated into academic curriculum, can always give a helping hand in EMI academic content, preparing future professionals for smooth communication in the business world that they are about to enter, and enhancing their language-related skills (McKinley & Rose, 2022).

Naturally, the needs of ESP within EMI will depend on the specific field of study and will demand different course design and implementation (Kuteeva & Airey, 2014). The extent to which ESP and EMI collaboration might be successful has been discussed in a study conducted by Thompson et al. (2022), who observed an EMI programme in Japan and concluded that exposure to both EAP and ESP courses made students feel quite comfortable in their subsequent EMI education. Moreover, a correlation between the students' ESP scores, rather than general language scores, and their EMI success, was observed. This is where we can talk about English for Specific Academic Purposes (ESAP), a merging of these two popular niches with the goal of combining all the tertiary-level education needs and EMI settings (Flowerdew, 2016).

Whatever future research might conclude in this regard, the importance of introducing and/or strengthening carefully selected ESP and EAP courses to go hand in hand with all other EMI content, in harmony with the rest of the chosen curriculum, cannot be overstated, and will always be needed. It could be the case that the assumption as to the need for proper and formal English on EMI programmes often counts out a more prominent activation of either ESP or EAP courses (or both). Yet, given the context- and discipline-sensitive nature of specific courses, ESP remains highly valuable, even when English proficiency is already advanced, particularly if the shared goal of both those designing and implementing an EMI course and those attending it is to foster improved career prospects and the development of fully formed professionals within their respective domains. Naturally, during the period of study itself, maintaining an appropriate balance and collaboration between ESP and academic content can be highly beneficial, significantly enhancing the overall EMI experience, and most importantly, the knowledge and skills gained. This will be so if EMI classrooms (those addressing academic content other than language) are not burdened with language-related doubts, explanations and translations, which are not only time-consuming and impede the achievement of the intended course objectives but can also be misleading. That is, it is not always the case that EMI teachers, well-equipped with everything needed for the disciplines they teach, always feel confident when linguistic explanations and nuances are concerned. And this is fine, as long as they have companions to help out, that is, ESP teachers who support the curriculum and teaching process, thus assisting both their colleagues and students.

EMI teacher training is an ever-present question, one that entails so many different layers; cultural intelligence, bespoke pedagogical approaches and techniques, and language competence somehow always come to the fore. And it is not always the case that these issues are given all the support they might need in this regard – which again raises a frequent question – what kind of skillset do EMI teachers need? In a similar vein, language teachers in EMI programmes (be they ESP or EAP) are faced with similar, if not even more challenging issues. For these reasons, we first need all teachers to be equipped with their respective requirements, and also brought together, in that it is through their joining forces that success in EMI programmes becomes inevitable. Such collaboration does exist in EMI contexts, but it has been noted that these are "still in their infancy", especially at the university level, where there is still so much room for development and improvement in this respect (Lasagabaster, 2018, pp. 402-412).

Fostering EMI – Collaborative Tips and Strategies

Slippery slopes are not uncommon in EMI contexts – and in some of such scenarios, EAP and/or ESP could provide substantial support. Let us now consider real-life scenarios:

1. Students Misinterpret Assignment Expectations

Scenario: Students misinterpret assignment instructions, expectations and/or academic guidelines (e.g., referencing, structure).

How EAP can step in: EAP modules, courses, or separate accompanying sessions can explicitly teach academic genres, critical reading/writing skills, and assessment literacy, thus clarifying what is expected in different disciplines.

2. Students Struggle to Follow Lecture Content

Scenario: EMI teachers notice that students do not ask for clarification in lectures but later underperform in assessments, thus revealing gaps in comprehension.

How EAP & ESP can step in: Some EAP strategies (e.g., gist listening, detailed reading, scanning, summarising, note-taking, etc.) and ESP glossaries or content-specific materials, if provided to the students as embedded concepts or via isolated sessions and/or whole courses, can facilitate understanding of both general academic and field-specific language.

3. Students Are Passive in Work

Scenario: Students are passive in discussions/pair/group work, as a result of a lack of confidence or a lack of the ability to express content knowledge in English accordingly.

How EAP can step in: EAP training on spoken academic interaction (active listening, paraphrasing and summarising, questioning, clarification, turn-taking, hedging, presenting arguments, negotiating, etc.) can bolster students' confidence and involvement.

How ESP can step in: Content-specific speaking tasks (via integrated or separate sessions) can help students to use discipline-relevant language effectively and accordingly.

4. Students Do Not Act of Teacher's Feedback

Scenario: Students interpret the given feedback as unclear expression, and do not know how to act on it.

How EAP can step in: EAP workshops/sessions can elaborate on such feedback and give practical revision strategies, applicable to different situations and contexts.

5. Students Lack Understanding/Use of Target Vocabulary

Scenario: Students struggle to interpret and/or use core terminology in their field effectively; on the other hand, EMI teachers – often content specialists, but not linguistic professionals – lack tools to scaffold the target vocabulary effectively.

How ESP can step in: ESP integration can offer resources such as targeted vocabulary lists, glossaries, and context-rich tasks (e.g., cloze exercises, terminology maps) tailored to meet all the needs of the discipline. Such practices support both students, in acquiring and activating the target vocabulary effectively, and EMI educators, in introducing key terms into lectures and materials without oversimplifying content (this could also be done either in the form of accompanying sessions of whole, separate ESP courses, aligned with the envisioned curriculum).

Something which should also not be neglected in this array of complex issues is the notion of My English, that is, personal creation, an English sui generis, one which evolves as the result of many different factors, including what we want to achieve, where we come from, who we communicate with in communicative-communal contact (Kohn, 2011). This means that each and every EMI classroom can have its own English, one which accommodates the specific needs of the group in question.

Concluding Remarks

This chapter has addressed the complex yet indispensable relationship between EMI and the areas of ESP and EAP. In this regard, it has argued that a successful EMI setting depends on and can benefit greatly from the intentional and field-sensitive integration of ESP and EAP, whether through stand-alone modules and/or sessions, or embedded elements within content courses. Such a form of support, it is believed, could be of vital importance in empowering learners to fully engage with academic content, develop discipline-specific discourse, while also navigating all the communicative demands of higher education.

To put all this into perspective, the chapter has also provided illustrations of potential challenges that might arise in EMI classrooms, along with practical ways in which ESP and EAP can help overcome them. These might include – but are definitely not limited to – issues related to the comprehension of field-specific vocabulary, academic writing, reading, listening, and speaking standards, as well as assessment literacy.

These illustrations have shown how collaboration between EMI teachers and ESP/EAP specialists is vital for addressing these and similar challenges, resulting in pedagogical solutions that serve both language and content-related goals. Finally, EMI should not operate as a lone wolf – its success is inseparable from the well-structured, intentional integration of ESP and EAP expertise. Only by means of such coordinated and inclusive effort can the full potential of EMI be achieved in divergent educational contexts.

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CHAPTER TWO

Taken at Face Value: Translating Metaphorical Language

Chapter 2

Taken at Face Value: Translating Metaphorical Language

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Abstract: Metaphorical language is a fundamental feature of human communication, influencing cognition, perception, and cultural expression. This chapter discusses the theoretical foundations of metaphor, from Aristotle's early definitions to modern theories put out by Lakoff and Johnson (2003) and Kövecses (2010), which position metaphor as a central tool for conceptualising abstract ideas. It explores various typologies, including conceptual, conventional, and novel metaphors, and addresses the complexities of metaphor translation across linguistic and cultural boundaries. The discussion highlights the ubiquitous role of metaphors in literature, politics, and everyday communication, emphasising their ability to simplify complexity and enhance meaning. Provided examples and practical activities further illustrate their relevance and importance, making them essential to human expression and understanding.

Keywords: metaphorical language, metaphor translation, cultural adaptation, source language, target language

Introduction to Metaphorical Language

"Metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action. Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature."
– Lakoff, Johnson (2003, p.4)

Metaphors are hidden spices of language, adding flavour, depth, and intrigue to our communication. They are not just tools for poets or writers – metaphors are a major part of how we think, talk, and connect with each other. Their influence spans countless domains, from the pages of great novels and political speeches to casual chats, conveying complex ideas in a more vivid and engaging manner.

What is Metaphorical Language?

Metaphorical language, commonly referred to as metaphor, describes one thing in terms of another to create more profound meaning. It frequently serves as a bridge between the known and the unknown, helping us to understand abstract concepts through familiar imagery. For instance, when we say, "time is a thief", we do not mean it literally but use a metaphor to express how time seems to slip away unnoticed. Similarly, comparing a difficult decision to "walking a tightrope" highlights the need for precision and balance when making a choice.

Scholars from various disciplines, including linguistics, cognitive science, and literature, have long studied metaphors and their impact.

The origins of metaphor can be traced back to Aristotle, who defined it as "giving a thing a name that belongs to something else" based on analogy (Zhang & Hu, 2009, p. 77). More recent studies, particularly those conducted by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (1980; 2003), argue that metaphor is not just a linguistic ornament but a fundamental part of human thought. Their work demonstrates that metaphors structure our conceptual framework, influencing how we perceive and reason about the world.

In recent decades, the study of metaphor has continued to evolve, with contemporary scholars expanding on foundational theories and exploring new perspectives on its role in cognition, communication, and culture. Zoltan Kövecses has been particularly influential in this area, further developing the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) and offering further insights into its key features. He argues that metaphors arise from our physical, social, and cultural experiences, which he calls "context-induced" metaphors. This viewpoint suggests that the meanings of metaphors are deeply rooted in the contexts from which they emerge, allowing speakers to conceptualise complex ideas using familiar resources from their environments (Kövecses, 2010, p. 657).

Raymond W. Gibbs Jr. (2008; 2017) examined linguistic and psychological elements of metaphor use, arguing that metaphors are both linguistic and mental representations that influence our understanding and behaviour. Gibbs introduced the idea of metaphor as a conceptual tool, which helps people put together and make sense of abstract ideas. Additionally, Elena Semino has made major contributions to the study of metaphors in discourse, particularly in political communication. In her book *Metaphor in Discourse* (2008), she analyses the relationship between individual uses of metaphor in specific contexts and conventional metaphorical patterns in language more broadly, as well as the influence of metaphor on public understanding and decision-making. These scholars have deepened our understanding of metaphors as dynamic, context-dependent tools that enable us to express ideas and emotions in ways that are both accessible and memorable.

Types of Metaphors

The classification of metaphors has been a key focus in metaphor studies, with scholars proposing various typologies that reflect their theoretical frameworks and research objectives. As a result, metaphors come in many forms, each serving a unique role in shaping meaning and understanding.

Lakoff and Johnson's Typology

One of the most influential frameworks comes from G. Lakoff and M. Johnson in their work *Metaphors We Live By* (2003). They introduced three main types of conceptual metaphors:

Orientational metaphors, which use spatial relationships to structure abstract ideas (e.g., *Happy is up* - "I am feeling up", "My spirits rose", "You're in high spirits"; *Sad is down* - "I'm feeling down", "He's really low these days", "My spirits sank", p. 15).

Ontological metaphors, which turn intangible concepts into tangible objects or substances (e.g., "The *ugly side of his personality* comes out under pressure", "He went to New York *to seek fame and fortune*", "My mind just isn't *operating today*", pp. 26-28).

Structural metaphors, which allow one concept to be understood systematically instead of another (e.g., "*Argument is war*", "*Labour is a resource*", pp. 62-68).

Conceptual metaphors are the big-picture ideas that influence how we approach different aspects of life. They are not always clear-cut but underlie much of our everyday language.

Newmark's Typology

Newmark (1988) identifies six types of metaphors based on their linguistic and contextual characteristics:

Dead metaphors, phrases so deeply rooted in language that their metaphorical origin is no longer recognised, e.g., "the *foot* of the mountain". These metaphors have lost their vividness but remain essential to communication (p. 100).

Cliché metaphors, overused expressions that may lack freshness and originality but can still attract attention, e.g., "*time is money*". Though they may seem stale, they retain expressive power and are widely understood (p. 101).

Stock or standard metaphors, established phrases with emotional or imaginative appeal, frequently used within a particular language, e.g., "*to break the ice*". These metaphors are neither fresh nor entirely dead (p. 102).

Adapted metaphors, modified expressions tailored to suit a new context or add a creative twist, e.g., "the *wheels of justice* turn slowly". These demonstrate how language users can play with established expressions to create new meanings (p. 111).

Recent metaphors, newly coined or innovative metaphors created to describe new ideas or phenomena, e.g., "*a digital footprint*". These metaphors capture attention and often require more effort to interpret, as they depart from conventional usage (p. 111).

Original metaphors, unique creations that have not been used before, reflecting an individual's style, e.g., "Her thoughts were *tangled vines*". These metaphors are highly expressive and often leave a lasting impression due to their novelty and vividness (p. 112).

Newmark's classification is systematic and accessible, making it a valuable resource for everyone - from scholars to practitioners, especially in the field of translation.

Goatly's Typology

Andrew Goatly (1997) classifies metaphors according to their linguistic structure and cognitive function. Like many earlier scholars, he distinguished between active metaphors, which are fresh and creative and often require the reader or listeners to interpret their meaning actively, for instance, icicles used to refer to human fingers, and inactive metaphors (also referred to as tired, sleeping, or dead metaphors), which are those that have become so deeply embedded in everyday language that their metaphorical nature frequently goes unnoticed. Common examples include crane meaning the machine for lifting heavy loads or red herring denoting irrelevant matter (pp. 30-34).

Goatly also introduced the concept of *lexicalized metaphors*, which have become fixed in the language, such as "My income *rose/fell* last year" (p. 40) or "The interview *whipped up* half the British people into a frenzy of rage" (p. 99). These metaphors are widely understood yet retain a trace of their metaphorical origins.

Another key category in Goatly's typology is *conceptual metaphors* (1997, p. 39), which align with Lakoff and Johnson's framework (1980), where one experiential domain is systematically mapped onto another (e.g., "Life is a journey"). Goatly argues that these metaphors are more than linguistic expressions and are essential to our understanding of the world around us (1997, p. 40).

This framework is particularly compelling for its focus on the functional role of metaphors. He distinguishes between *ideational metaphors*, which focus on cognition and represent how we think about concepts, and *interpersonal metaphors*, which influence how we relate to others. For instance, describing an argument as a "battle" (an *ideational metaphor*) frames it as a conflict, whereas referring to some as a "rock" (an *interpersonal metaphor*) conveys reliability and strength (1997, p. 148).

This typology not only provides a comprehensive classification system but also highlights the dynamic nature of metaphors, ranging from their creative and thought-provoking uses to their conventional and often unnoticed presence in everyday language.

Gibbs' Typology

Gibbs (2008) distinguishes between *conventional metaphors* and *novel metaphors*, offering a useful framework for understanding the range of metaphorical expressions. Conventional metaphors are so natural in everyday language that we often fail to notice them, e.g., "We have come a long way" (p. 85). *Novel metaphors*, on the other hand, create fresh, imaginative comparisons that stimulate the reader's imagination, as in "The soul is a rope that ties heaven and earth" (p. 67).

This distinction emphasises the wide spectrum of metaphor use – from the mundane to the poetic – and illustrates how metaphors mirror the ways we perceive and interpret the world.

Semino's Typology

Semino, in *Metaphor in Discourse* (2008), took a different approach by focusing on *discourse metaphor*, which overarching metaphorical framings that shape how people think and talk about specific topics, such as politics (e.g., "economy is a machine", "reverse gear", "Road Map" p. 81-123) or healthcare (e.g., "Cancer is a battle", p. 175). These metaphors often reflect societal values and can therefore have influence on public perception and decision-making, demonstrating the power of metaphors while forming collective understanding.

Stephen Ullmann's Typology

Stephen Ullmann, a prominent scholar in the field of semantics, provides a specific classification of metaphors (1972, pp. 213-216), that have been widely referenced in various studies, including Widiyantari (2012):

Anthropomorphic metaphors refer to expressions associated with parts of the human body or human traits that are extended to non-living things (e.g., "the *wind whispered* through the trees"). These metaphors are particularly effective in creating emotional responses and making abstract or inanimate concepts more relatable and easier to understand.

Animal metaphors draw their main domain from animals, their body parts, or animal-related concepts to describe human behaviour or characteristics. Examples include *horse power* and *chicken handwriting*. Such metaphors often carry cultural connotations and can evoke specific associations or stereotypes.

Abstract-to-concrete metaphors, and their reverse, occur when a concrete image is used to represent an abstract experience, or an abstract concept is expressed through a concrete image. For example, *highlight* originally referred to a bright gleam and later came to represent the main event or situation in a given context – moving from a concrete to an abstract understanding.

Synesthetic metaphors blend sensory domains, such as describing a sound in visual terms (e.g., "a *bright melody*"). These metaphors are particularly striking because they challenge conventional perceptual boundaries and create novel, imaginative connections between different senses.

As demonstrated, metaphors can be classified in different ways, each revealing how we understand and communicate abstract concepts. Some metaphors link ideas to space or physical objects, while others transform the intangible into more concrete forms. Over time, some metaphors become so familiar that their original meaning fades, while others remain dynamic, offering new ways to interpret the world.

Where Metaphors show up

One of the key domains where metaphors thrive is *everyday language*. They sneak into our daily lives without us even realizing it. When someone says they are "feeling under the weather" or "carrying a heavy heart", they use metaphors to convey deep meaning succinctly, allowing for easier understanding and emotional connection.

In literature and art, metaphors take a central role, adding richness and creativity to works. Writers and artists use metaphors to breathe life into their stories and visuals. From the world-famous phrase by Shakespeare "All the world's a stage" (as cited in Gibbs, 2008, p. 240) to a painting that uses light to symbolize hope, metaphors create vivid imagery that pulls us in and makes us feel something.

Every profession has its own metaphors as well. Engineers might "bridge gaps", marketers aim for "cutting-edge" ideas, and psychologists explore "layers of the mind". These metaphors are shortcuts to understanding big concepts in a simple way.

Metaphors also show up in media and advertising. They are not just decoration but a powerful way to bring abstract or thorny ideas closer to the reader. For instance, by describing a product as "revolutionary" or a political movement as "a tidal wave of change". Charteris-Black (2004; 2006) highlights how metaphors in political discourse and advertising are crafted to influence perception and behaviour, underscoring their persuasive power. A lot of media outlets (nowadays mostly online) heavily rely on metaphors using sharp, sometimes unexpected imagery to paint political clashes, economic turmoils or social tensions. In fact, a witty metaphor can say in a few words what a paragraph might struggle to unpack.

The chapter will further take a closer look at metaphors in media, drawing on examples from *The Economist* (2021), *The World Ahead 2022*, along with their Lithuanian translations published in *IQ* (2021), *Pasaulis 2022* magazine.

Translating Metaphorical Language

> "What is lost in the good or excellent translation is precisely the best."
> – Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel (1772-1829)

Why Metaphors Can Be Tricky in Translation

Translating metaphors is like trying to find your way through a maze – it requires skill, intuition, and a keen sense of direction. While metaphors bring vibrancy and depth to language, they also carry cultural, emotional, and contextual baggage that can trip up even seasoned translators. They have to make tough choices, whether to keep the original metaphor, adapt it to fit the target culture, or find an entirely different replacement. So, what are the most common pitfalls and how to tackle them?

Over-Literal Translations

One of the most frequent mistakes in translating metaphors is taking them too literally. If you have ever heard a metaphor translated word for word, you know it can fall flat. Imagine translating the English phrase "it's raining cats and dogs" into a language where that imagery does not exist. It might leave people confused or even amused, but it will not convey the idea of heavy rain. Newmark

(1988) claims that such literal translations can render metaphors meaningless or even absurd, undermining their communicative purpose. Metaphors also carry emotional and cultural weight.

Take the phrase "a double-edged sword". It is not just about a weapon. It is about something that has both good and bad consequences. A literal translation might lose this aspect, leaving the meaning incomplete. For example, the following example illustrates how a metaphor has been translated into Lithuanian.

Table 1
Example of Literal Translation of a Metaphor

Source Text (English)	Target Text (Lithuanian)
In response, politicians turned back the clock.	Reaguodami, politikai puolė atsukti laikrodžius.
(The Economist, 2021, p. 4)	(IQ, 2021, p. 13)

Note. The example shows a literal translation of the English metaphor turned back the clock, which in Lithuanian (*atsukti laikrodžius*) results in a phrase that sounds more literal and less idiomatic.

The phrase used in the original English text "turned back the clock" is used to figuratively illustrate an attempt to return to a previous state or undo the situation. However, the direct Lithuanian translation *atsukti laikrodžius* represents an actual physical act of rewinding the clock and sounds a bit awkward and unnatural in the target language. A more contextually appropriate translation could be *atsukti laiką* ("turn back time"), which preserves the figurative sense of going back to an earlier time.

There is one similar example of translating the metaphor too directly. As it is seen from the example, the English noun turbulence is translated literally as *sukūrių* ("whirlpools"). While turbulence in English has a broader figurative meaning encompassing instability, disorder or unrest, the given Lithuanian option retains a strong association with natural and physical phenomena. The literal rending here results in a semantic mismatch, as the figurative sense of political volatility is not conveyed effectively.

Table 2

Example of Literal Translation Leading to Semantic Mismatch

Source Text (English)	Target Text (Lithuanian)
In 2022 the risk of turbulence is greatest in middle-income countries.	2022 m. daugiausia sukūrių galima tikėtis vidutinių pajamų šalyse.
(The Economist, 2021, p. 7)	(IQ, 2021, p. 16)

Note. The English word turbulence carries a figurative meaning of instability or unrest, while its Lithuanian equivalent *sukūrių* ("whirlpools") retains a physical sense, resulting in partial semantic loss.

Misinterpreting the Metaphor's Cultural or Linguistic Peculiarities

Metaphors are profoundly embedded in the cultural contexts from which they emerge. Misinterpreting their cultural associations can result in translations that are inappropriate or even offensive. For example, the expression "the early bird catches the worm" may fail to resonate in cultures where early rising is not culturally valued. In such cases, translators should seek culturally equivalent metaphors that evoke comparable meanings. As Snell-Hornby (1995) observes, the translatability of a text largely depends on the degree to which it is embedded in its source culture.

Failing to Account for the Audience's Familiarity with the Metaphor

A metaphor familiar to one audience may bewilder another. Translators face the delicate task of assessing how familiar their target audience is likely to be with a metaphor's imagery. Consider the sports metaphor "throwing in the towel" – a term borrowed from boxing that signifies surrender or giving up. While this phrase resonates with English-speaking audiences familiar with the sport, it may confuse audiences in cultures where boxing is less prevalent. In such cases, the translator must decide whether to adapt the metaphor to the target culture or to explain its meaning explicitly. Adapting it into a more neutral expression such as "admitting defeat" or providing a brief explanation of its origin may be more effective, depending on context. An example from the mass media context illustrates this challenge:

Table 3

Example of a Culture-Bound Metaphor in Translation

Source Text (English)	Target Text (Lithuanian)
The bad news is that the Thucydides Trap will not have gone away.	Bloga naujiena ta, kad Tukidido spąstai per tą laiką niekur nedingo.
(The Economist, 2021, p. 3)	(IQ, 2021, p. 12)

Note. The metaphor *Thucydides Trap* refers to the geopolitical theory that rising powers inevitably come into conflict with established ones. While the literal rendering Tukidido spąstai preserves the reference, it may not fully convey the concept to audiences unfamiliar with its historical or political context.

In this case, the metaphor "the Thucydides Trap" is translated literally into the target language (TL). However, its underlying meaning, which is related to a specific historical and geopolitical concept, might not be immediately clear to Lithuanian readers. While the translation is linguistically accurate, it does not account for the possible unfamiliarity of the target audience. Therefore, the metaphor might appear obscure and potentially reduce the communicative impact.

What Are the Best Strategies for Translating Metaphors?

Successfully translating metaphors requires a combination of linguistic skills, creativity, cultural awareness, and judgment. Scholars and practitioners have proposed several strategies to address the translation challenges.

Gideon Toury (2012) offers a descriptive approach to translation that emphasizes the importance of understanding how metaphors are managed in a real-world translation practice.

1. Metaphor into a "Same" Metaphor (Direct Translation)

This translation strategy involves using the same image or its equivalent in the target language (TL). Such metaphors preserve meaning and often share similarities in lexical structure.

When the source and target languages share common cultural or conceptual foundations, this approach can be applied effectively, as shown in the examples below.

Table 4

Examples of Metaphor Translation from The Economist and IQ (2021)

Source Text (English)	Target Text (Lithuanian)
[…] from the tariff war to heightened tension over Taiwan […] (The Economist, 2021, p. 3)	[…] nuo muitų karo iki kaistančios įtampos dėl Taivano […]. (IQ, 2021, p. 12)
In both of these cases, China's draconian approach will eventually cause economic damage. (The Economist, 2021, p. 3)	Abiem atvejais drakoniški kinų metodai galiausiai pakiš koją ekonomikai. (IQ, 2021, p. 12)

Note. The examples illustrate how metaphorical expressions are rendered in Lithuanian translations. Metaphor into a "Different" Metaphor (Substitution).

This translation strategy involves replacing the source language (SL) image with a culturally and linguistically appropriate target language (TL) equivalent. Although the metaphorical images differ, their underlying meaning remains consistent. This method facilitates conveying the message while retaining both the communicative intent and the stylistic effect of the source text.

The examples below illustrate this translation strategy, where the English metaphor prime time was rendered by a different metaphor in Lithuanian – *aukso amžius* ("golden age") – and reality check as *šaltas dušas* ("cold shower").

Table 5

Examples of Metaphor Substitution in English–Lithuanian Translation

Source Text (English)	Target Text (Lithuanian)
[…] but they are not ready for prime time. (The Economist, 2021, p. 4)	[…] bet jų aukso amžius dar neatėjo. (IQ, 2021, p. 13)
When it came, the reality check was brutal […] (The Economist, 2021, p. 4)	Šaltas dušas užliejo be jokio gailesčio. (IQ, 2021, p. 13)

Note. The examples show metaphor substitution, where English metaphors are replaced with culturally equivalent Lithuanian expressions.

2. Metaphor into Non-Metaphor (Paraphrase)

This strategy involves translating metaphors into similes or paraphrasing them in the target language (TL). It is typically applied when there is no clear or natural equivalent in the TL. While paraphrasing can preserve the intended meaning, it often diminishes the stylistic richness of the source language (SL).

Examples from mass-media discourse illustrate this approach, where the metaphorical phrase *celebrate the dawn of a new era* is rendered more literally as *šventinėmis nuotaikomis pasitiks naują erą* ("will welcome the new era in a festive mood"), and the metaphor bottlenecks is neutralised by the word *nepakankamumas* ("insufficiency").

Table 6

Examples of Metaphor-to-Non-Metaphor Translation (Paraphrase)

Source Text (English)	Target Text (Lithuanian)
Officials will celebrate the dawn of a new era […] (The Economist, 2021, p. 11)	Valdžios pareigūnai šventinėmis nuotaikomis pasitiks naują erą […]. (IQ, 2021, p. 18)
Supply-chain bottlenecks would subside […] (The Economist, 2021, p. 6)	Tiekimo grandinių nepakankamumas išnyks […]. (IQ, 2021, p. 15)

Note. The examples show paraphrastic translation, where English metaphors are rendered in a more literal or neutral form in Lithuanian.

3. Metaphor into Zero (Omission)

This strategy is typically applied when the metaphor is of limited significance in the text and the translator chooses to omit it in the target language (TL). While this technique can be practical in certain contexts, it is relatively uncommon, as it tends to reduce the intended stylistic impact. What may appear minor to the translator could, in fact, carry rhetorical or emotional weight for the author. For this reason, omission should be regarded as a last resort, used cautiously and only when other solutions prove inadequate.

The following examples illustrate this approach, where metaphors such as *theatre*, *grave*, and *grim* present in the source language (SL) have been entirely omitted in the TL.

Table 7
Examples of Metaphor Omission in English–Lithuanian Translation

Source Text (English)	Target Text (Lithuanian)
If the theatre of politics makes Western democracy look dysfunctional relative to Chinese democracy […] (The Economist, 2021, p. 5)	Jei vakarų politikos demokratija, palyginti su kinų autokratija, atrodo neveiksni […]. (IQ, 2021, p. 14)
[…] the Democrats are at grave risk of losing control […] (The Economist, 2021, p. 3)	[…] demokratai rizikuoja prarasti abiejų parlamento rūmų kontrolę […]. (IQ, 2021, p. 12)
[…] coronavirus is just one of a long, grim list (The Economist, 2021, p. 7)	[…] koronavirusas nebūtinai yra ilgo sąrašo viršuje. (IQ, 2021, p. 16)

Note. The examples show metaphor omission, where the metaphorical elements *theatre*, *grave*, and *grim* present in the English source texts are excluded in the Lithuanian translations. Bracketed ellipses ([…]) indicate omitted text.

4. Non-Metaphor into Metaphor

This strategy is applied when a translator renders a literal or neutral expression in the source language (SL) as a metaphor in the target language (TL). The aim is often to enrich the text stylistically or to align it more closely with the rhetorical conventions of the target culture. However, this method requires caution to ensure that the TL metaphor does not distort the original meaning or introduce unintended imagery. The following example illustrates a successful use of this translation type. In the first case, the phrase *cause economic damage* is rendered into Lithuanian as *pakiš koją* ("will trip up the economy"). This metaphorical expression not only sounds natural and idiomatic in the TL but also conveys the same underlying idea of disruption and harm. It adds stylistic richness without altering the intended meaning, demonstrating how a well-chosen metaphor can enhance the target text while remaining faithful to the source. A second example also represents a clear case of non-metaphor into metaphor translation. In the English sentence, the verb *resign* is straightforward and literal, with no figurative implication. Yet, in the Lithuanian version, it is rendered metaphorically as *padėtų ant stalo prašymą atleisti* ("would place a resignation request on the table"). This metaphor is vivid, culturally familiar, and effectively conveys the same pragmatic meaning while enhancing the expressiveness of the translation.

Table 8

Examples of Non-Metaphor-to-Metaphor Translation (Addition of Figurative Meaning)

Source Text (English)	Target Text (Lithuanian)
In both of these cases, China's draconian approach will eventually cause economic damage. (The Economist, 2021, p. 3)	Abiem atvejais drakoniški kinų metodai galiausiai pakiš koją ekonomikai. (IQ, 2021, p. 12)

[…] 48% of women said they would resign and start looking for a new job. (The Economist, 2021, p. 8)	[…] 48 proc. moterų pareiškė, kad iš karto padėtų ant stalo prašymą atleisti arba imtų ieškoti naujo darbo. (IQ, 2021, p. 17)

Note. The examples show how literal expressions in English are rendered metaphorically in Lithuanian, enriching the stylistic tone while preserving meaning.

6) Zero into Metaphor (Addition)

This strategy occurs when the translator introduces a metaphor in the target language (TL) where none exists in the source language (SL). This method is relatively uncommon, as the translator assumes a more authorial role, adding a layer of figurative meaning not originally present in the text. The following example illustrates this type of metaphor transformation. The original phrase *The fight over the hybrid future of work* is direct and non-metaphoric, referring to the ongoing debate about remote versus on-site work. In the Lithuanian translation, however, the neutral phrase is transformed into the metaphor *Pižamos prieš kostiumus* ("Pyjamas versus suits"). In this way, the translator reimagines the conflict as a symbolic confrontation between the two modes of work, enriching the target text with culturally vivid imagery while maintaining conceptual accuracy.

Table 9

Example of Zero-to-Metaphor Translation (Addition of Figurative Meaning)

Source Text (English)	Target Text (Lithuanian)
The fight over the hybrid future of work (The Economist, 2021, p. 73)	Pižamos prieš kostiumus. (IQ, 2021, p. 109)

Note. The example shows the addition of a metaphor in the Lithuanian translation, where the literal English phrase is transformed into *Pižamos prieš kostiumus* ("Pyjamas versus suits").

The above mentioned Toury's (2012) techniques highlight the complexity of metaphor translation and underscore the need for translators to remain loyal to the source text with the expectations and conventions of the target audience.

The Role of Context in Metaphor Translation

The context is crucial in translating metaphors, as it influences how their meaning is expressed and interpreted. Translators must consider the interplay between linguistic and cultural contexts to ensure that metaphors are understood by the target audience. A metaphor can thrive or fail depending on how well it aligns with the expectations of the audience, its experiences, and cultural norms.

According to Newmark (1988), metaphors often carry connotations and associations specific to their source language, making literal translation ineffective or misleading. Context helps translators determine whether to preserve the original metaphor, adapt it to the target language, or replace it with an equivalent expression. For instance, Kövecses (2010) emphasized that cultural context influences how metaphors are perceived, as concepts like "time" or "emotions" may be conceptualized differently across cultures. Additionally, Baker (2018) highlights the importance of situational context, including the purpose and audience of the text, in guiding translation decisions.

Ultimately, context dictates how closely a metaphor should adhere to its original form or adapt to local nuances. By paying close attention to the surrounding narrative, audience, and cultural cues, translators can preserve the essence of the metaphor while ensuring it resonates meaningfully within the target culture.

Practical Activities

Translation is both an art and a science, requiring linguistic precision, cultural sensitivity, and creative problem-solving. This part provides practical approaches to make translation learning effective and enjoyable.

Activity 1.

Study the following metaphors, ensuring you understand their meanings. Search for the closest metaphorical equivalent in [target language]. If a direct equivalent exists, write it down and explain how it is used in [target language] in a similar context. If no direct equivalent exists, find an expression that conveys the same meaning or concept, even if it uses different imagery or structure. Be ready to justify your choice.

1. A needle in a haystack
2. Low hanging fruit
3. The elephant in the room
4. Like two peas in a pod

5. A hard pill to swallow

6. A fish out of water

7. A retail behemoth

8. In the same boat

9. A silver lining

10. A watched pot never boils

Activity 2.

Translate the following sentences used in mass media into the [target language]. Consider whether it is possible to preserve the figurative meaning in each case. If not, suggest an alternative that conveys the same idea naturally in the target language.

1. After struggling with the project for months, he finally **threw in the towel** and asked for help.

2. Investing all your savings in a single stock is like **putting all your eggs in one basket** – too risky!

3. Don't worry about their argument; it's just **a storm in a teacup** and will be forgotten tomorrow.

4. For the right person, remote freelancing can be an opportunity that **checks all the boxes**.

5. In the mid-1980s a young aid worker **cut his teeth** trying to negotiate between warring parties.

6. The West might offer better terms, allowing hardliners **to save face**.

7. And that would, perhaps, **be a step too far**.

8. As governments attempt to use stimulus money to reshape the chip supply chain, they will be trying to **grab a beast** in the midst of transformation.

9. Standing out in **a sea of one million posts** is hard to do when you have a dull headline – especially one that doesn't capture the brilliance of your post.

10. Instead of taking responsibility for the mistake, he threw his colleague under the bus.

Activity 3.

Below is a list of well-known metaphors. These are familiar expressions that have become clichés due to overuse. Your task is to transform them into something new and original.

- Time is money.
- Life is a journey.
- Love is a battlefield.
- The world is a stage.
- Her voice was music to his ears.
- He has a heart of stone.
- The classroom was a zoo.
- Ideas are seeds.

Activity 4.

Over to You! Metaphors in Everyday Discourse

- Find 10 interesting metaphors from different sources like the news, TV shows, social media, political speeches, advertisements, or business communications.

- For each, explain its figurative meaning, context and communication function – whether it aims to persuade, create a sense of urgency, or evoke emotions?
- Also, pay attention to any cultural references in the metaphor. How do these references influence its meaning, considering whether they vary across different cultural backgrounds?

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CHAPTER THREE

Keeping Up with the Novelties: On Pluses and Minuses of AI

Chapter 3

Keeping Up with the Novelties: On Pluses and Minuses of AI

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Abstract: Artificial Intelligence (AI) has profoundly influenced various domains, including translation. Its broader applications extend across industries, demonstrating significant benefits while posing notable challenges. This chapter examines the development of translation and AI tools used in the translation industry by analysing their advantages and disadvantages. Over the past two decades, digital tools for interpreters have progressed significantly, transitioning from simple glossary creation and management applications to sophisticated workstations that support nearly all aspects of the interpreting process, including assignment preparation and real-time terminology searches. According to Fantinuoli (2023), computer-aided interpretation (CAI) tools are now incorporating advanced capabilities driven by artificial intelligence – such as speech recognition and machine translation – and are increasingly integrated into platforms designed to support services like remote interpretation. This chapter provides an overview of the advantages and disadvantages of AI tools used in translation. It begins by observing the history of translation, then discusses the development of AI and finally the pros and cons of the currently used AI tools while translating.

Keywords: AI, translation, AI tools, advantages, disadvantages, ethics, development

Overview of the Development of Translation

The origins of translation go back to 3000 BCE According to Sawant (2013), academics such as George Steiner claim that there are four distinct periods in the history of translation. The first period begins with Alexander Fraser Tytler and the Roman interpreters Cicero and Horace; the second extends up to Valéry; the third covers the period from Valéry to the 1960s, and the fourth from the 1960s onward. Other well-known scholars, Armalytė and Pažūsis (1990), state that translation is as old as language and has been used since the human language began.

Originally composed in Sumerian, the famous epic *Gilgamesh* was translated into Hittite and inscribed on clay tablets during the Babylonian-Assyrian civilisation. The Roman Empire was the first to produce literary translations into a foreign language, although Mesopotamians and Egyptians had already translated religious and legal books. A significant advance in Latin literary growth occurred when Livius Andronicus translated the epic, making the Greek work accessible to Romans. When examining the available text fragments, it is evident that he aimed to maintain accuracy relative to the original text, except by changing untranslatable passages.

Ancient times saw a flourishing of translation, especially in Rome. By utilising the rich cultural heritage of the ancient Greeks, the Romans sought to create their civilisation, and translation played a vital role in this endeavour. In ancient Rome, the philosophy and practice of translation were closely related. Discussions about many facets of translation theory were common among translators. Well-known Roman translators are Cicero and Horace, and their views on translation greatly influenced later generations of European translators. Cicero insightfully remarked, "If I translate literally, it will come out uncouth, but if compelled by necessity, I will no longer be a translator," thereby expressing the translator's enduring dilemma. In their reflections on translation, Cicero and Horace draw particular attention to the difference between literal and interpretive translation. They contend that the ability to translate entails intelligently understanding the text in the source language to produce a text in the target language. The translator has a significant responsibility to the person reading the translated material.

The Romans placed more emphasis on aesthetics than veracity because they wanted to improve their literature through translations. Due to its exposure to Ancient Greek, Latin absorbed many borrowed words. In Ancient Rome, translation was regarded as an art form that involved comparison and imitation of various writing styles. As Christianity spread across Europe, translation also played a role. Its objective was to spread Christian principles. The earliest version of the Bible, known as the Septuagint, appeared in Greece in the third century BCE. A big step forward was translating the Bible into Latin, which St. Jerome did in the fourth and fifth centuries CE. This translation is referred to as the *Vulgate*, and later on, Bishop Wulfila translated the Bible into Gothic, old Germanic languages, almost simultaneously. John Wycliffe was the first to attempt translating the Bible into English in the fourteenth century. Later, up to the middle of the 17th century, the Bible was quickly translated into several European languages. As the Reformation spread and national cultural awareness grew, translation gained considerable momentum.

A notable step in the history of translation was when King Alfred founded a famous school of translators in England in the ninth century. He fervently supported the educational value of translation, believing it would help people recognise the importance of literary English. Works from other countries were quickly translated, revised, and adapted when new European national literature that lacked a written legacy emerged.

With the emergence of nation-states and the church's waning power, translation emerged as a potent tool in theological and political disputes. Bible translations have had a tremendous impact on various European languages. Religious texts, philosophical writings, scientific publications, and eventually fiction were among the many genres of literature that were translated during the Middle Ages. Institutions for teaching translators were founded, usually in monastic settings.

G. Chaucer, a famous writer, civil servant, and so-called father of the English language, was also one of the most prominent translators in England in the 14th century. He translated several literary works from Italian and French into English.

Since book printing began in the 15th century, the quantity of translations has significantly expanded. The 16th century saw a revolution in translation as more translations outside the Bible started appearing. In addition to his plays, dramatist, poet, and translator George Chapman is renowned for translating Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* into metrical form (iambic pentameter and iambic heptameter). He first published the *Iliad* in 1598, then the entire *Iliad* and *Odyssey* in 1616, which were included in *The Whole Works* of Homer. Before Alexander Pope's version was published, it was the most notable and the first English translation of these epics.

It is considered that the 15th and 16th centuries are the pinnacle of translation history. The goal of translations, particularly those of the Bible, was to take advantage of the popular language devices and structures at the time. The most significant person on the European translation scene at the time was Martin Luther, the founder of the Reformation. When his German translation of the Bible first appeared in 1534, it significantly influenced the growth of the German literary language. Luther's primary objective in translating was to produce an aesthetically beautiful and intelligible style in the original language. He counselled aspiring Bible translators to incorporate lively vocabulary and colloquial terms from their native tongue, provided they did not conflict with the New Testament's spirit. He encouraged the use of native linguistic resources to enrich translation. Luther, incidentally, was perhaps the first to observe that one can only translate well while working in their native tongue.

During the 16th century, the Bible was translated into numerous European languages. For example, the Swedish translation was done between 1521 and 1541, the Danish between 1529 and 1550, the English Bible, also referred to as the King James Bible, in 1611, and the Czech between 1579 and 1593. The sixteenth century also marked the emergence of the first theoretical discussions on translation.

One of the first proponents of translation theory was the French humanist Etienne Dolé. However, his interpretation of one of Plato's dialogues, which raised doubts about the idea of perpetual life, led to his blasphemy conviction and consequent death sentence. Dolé explored the basic ideas of translation in his 1540 essay *La maniere de bien traduire d'une langue en autre* (*How to translate well from one language to another*).

He also first presented five components of translation: 1) The translator is permitted to provide interpretations for sections that may be challenging to grasp and must possess a thorough understanding of the original author's intended meaning and significance; 2) The translation must be proficient in both languages; 3) the translator should not adhere entirely to the text's original meaning; 4) the translator should employ widely accepted linguistic structures; and 5) the translator should pick words carefully and arrange them to sound natural.

Dolé's viewpoints were eventually taken up by George Chapman, the well-known English-language translator of Homer's works. Chapman makes the case in the preface of his translation of the *Iliad* that a translator needs to adhere to three guidelines: 1) Avoid too much flexibility in translating and instead examine previous translations; 2) try to grasp the essence of the original work; and 3) refrain from rigorously adhering to the literal meaning.

It wasn't until the end of the 18th century and the start of the 19th century that attitudes regarding translations changed in France, which was known for its free translation principles during the Classicism era. According to an Englishman named Alexander Fraser Tytler's 1791 essay, *Principles of Translation*, a translator must be creative to alter words, add and omit details while maintaining the original's impact. In the 18th century translators began to be regarded as artists. The art of translation grew increasingly exciting as new ideas, techniques, and procedures emerged. There were two primary schools of thought in the 19th century: the first held that a translator was a creative genius who enhanced the language, while the second that a translator was only a "translation tool" with a mechanical purpose.

In the 20th century, tone, spirit, and closeness were important factors in translation. Translators needed to broaden their skill set and be able to translate texts from a wide range of genres. Simultaneously, translation studies started to be taught in language schools and universities. The development of computer-assisted translation (CAT) and machine translation (MT) techniques also began in the 20th century.

A Review of the Evolution of Machine Translation

The initial ideas for computerising translation originated in about 1947 when academics sought solutions through numerical approaches. Petr Smirnov-Troyankski, a Russian, is regarded as the pioneer in patenting a machine translation idea. He imagined the translation process performing in three stages involving an editor, who would examine the original language; after that a machine would translate the text into equivalents in the target language; and then, the other editor would adapt and humanise it to the final version. Other sources suggest that during the 1940s, with the advent of electronic computers, machine translation (MT) was a research subject for almost 50 years. Later, Andrew D. Booth investigated the concept of computerised dictionaries – especially bilingual ones. In 1954, Georgetown University hosted the first public presentation of a functional machine translation system. Though the lexicon was only of 250 words and was solely translated from Russian to English, the system was nonetheless seen as a major milestone in the evolution of MT, even if it was not as remarkable as the ones we have now. Some groups of people investigated statistics and sought results as fast as possible. In contrast, others adopted a more theoretical, linguistically oriented perspective to build the optimal working approach to a functioning MT in the following years. In the fields of automation, artificial intelligence, and machine translation, the studies carried out throughout these years have had a major influence. Though many had great expectations for MT, at the time, it was not yet regarded as a practical tool for translating. Another scholar, Hutchins (2014), claims that using computers to help with translation initially emerged in the years following World War II, guiding the beginnings of machine translation. Through a cooperative effort in 1954, IBM and Georgetown University proved the usefulness of this emerging technology, which resulted in significant financial support and the start of international machine translating projects. However, in 1966 the United States ALPAC (Automatic Language Processing Advisory Committee) issued a report claiming that such systems were too slow, too costly, and generally ineffective – an assessment that greatly influenced the subsequent development of MT. The assertion resulted in many investors pulling from more machine translation development investment.

For this field, the late 1970s marked a period of renewed development. A new system designed for the US Air Force converted Russian to English. Even more bilingual translating systems started to show in the next several years, and this development helped machine translation to resurface. Although these new technologies were still regarded as slow-working, Arnold D. et al. (1994) note that they significantly influenced businesses by using half as much time translating. The variety of machine translation systems available worldwide in the 1980s – including those based on microcomputers and mainframe computers – rose significantly. Trujillo (1999) referred to the early 1980s as a period of renewed interest in machine translation (MT).

During this time, several research groups emerged, among which Eurotra, Grenoble, and Saarbrücken stood out. These international teams began to expand the MT landscape through projects such as Ariane, SUSY, METAL, and Mu. Concurrently, important research on knowledge-based systems –primarily conducted at Carnegie Mellon University – established a connection between machine translation and artificial intelligence-driven natural language processing. According to Hutchins and Somers (1992), the most pivotal advancement of the 1980s was the emergence of commercial MT systems, marking the beginning of machine translation's commercialization, particularly led by Japanese corporations and electronics manufacturers.

Commercial systems started to show, and internal systems were created for other businesses like Ford, Citicorp, and others. Even further changes in MT emerged when the first automatic voice translating systems began to evolve, first by Britain and Japan, as well as engines for personal computers and the creation of translating memory in the 1990s.

While example-based translation became an alternative to conventional rule-based systems in Japan, IBM developed statistical techniques at the end of the decade. Developed to facilitate access to previously translated material, Trados and similar translating memory systems, Machine translation was becoming increasingly used in practical settings in the 1990s. Online-based automated translating for quick responses also first emerged in this age. The rise of online tools like Google Translate and Babelfish marked a change towards public access to machine translation being generally possible. Extensive data, publicly available software, and performance evaluation techniques helped statistical machine translation (SMT) become the accepted paradigm in the 2000s.

James (2023) claims that people and machine translation tools such as Google Translate and DeepL have enabled cross-linguistic communication. Globally expanding trade has become a necessary instrument for both people and companies. Machine translation helps people communicate in various languages regardless of their ability. Launched in 2006, Google Translate moved from a statistical model to a neural machine translating (NMT) model in 2016. The software now supports 249 languages and is offered for free, except for API access for translating personal websites or over 500,000 characters each month. Users prefer it because of its simple design and navigability. Developing a neural machine translation system that can produce translations of higher quality than traditional statistical machine translation (SMT) techniques was the company's primary objective. Another example of NMT is DeepL, which has become quite well-known since 2017. Founded somewhat later than Google Translate in 2009, DeepL comes from Linguee, an online dictionary service. Like with Google Translate, the first DeepL version was not that good. With the most recent deep learning algorithms DeepL now employs, the system can continuously learn thanks to artificial intelligence and internet resources. This distinguishes DeepL since it offers among the best and most human-like translations available online. It currently presents translations in 33 languages, giving a total of 650 potential translation alternatives, far less than Google Translate. Its offerings comprise all kinds of text translations, document translations, artificial intelligence-integrated text editing and rereading tools. Although both of these translating engines have advantages and drawbacks, the context and personal taste ultimately determine everything. One of the most preferable advantages of DeepL is a feature whereby one can instantly click on any translated word in the output box to view alternate translations, unlike Google Translate. While Google Translate may produce a humanised translation, Schjoldager et al. (2024, p. 245–262) add that it cannot make ethical or strategic decisions just like all other translating engines. Google Translate now offers a variety of translation services, including Word, website, document, app, image and bilingual conversation translation.

Advancing into the 2000s and the contemporary period, a vast array of computer-assisted translation (CAT) tools has emerged. These include widely used programs such as SDL Trados, MemoQ, and OmegaT, alongside popular online translation platforms like MateCat, SYSTRAN Translate, Bing Microsoft Translator, DeepL, Google Translate, Translate GPT, and ChatGPT. As Sofer (2006) aptly puts it, a translator without access to a computer is akin to an artist without tools.

While reviewing the definitions of machine translation (MT) by various academics, we can find that Rao D.D. (1998) defines machine translation as a system whereby a text in one language (source text) is translocated into another. This covers English and French, natural existent languages; it excludes human-made languages like Python or Java. The desire and necessity to readily grasp a range of languages and data for it to be accessed from anywhere in the globe drove one of the forces behind the development of machine translation. The field has evolved through a series of advances and setbacks. Baker (2011) defines it as the automated process of translating documents from one natural language into another using computer technologies. It generally falls under the broader domain of computer translation, alongside computer-aided translation.

The Advantages and Disadvantages of AI Tools in Translation

The translation industry has changed through the introduction of artificial intelligence-based translation technologies, such as neuronal machine translation systems, which have improved the field's efficiency, accessibility, and accuracy. This section of the chapter discusses the main advantages of using AI technologies for translation.

In terms of speed and efficiency, machine translation provides a considerable advantage over human translation. In contrast to human translation, which may need weeks or months based on the length and intricacy of the content, machine translation enables rapid and efficient document translation, usually within a few seconds. Machine translation methods, including Google Translate and DeepL, are highly efficient and capable of rapidly translating substantial volumes of text. In comparison to human translation, automated translation is significantly more economical. The expense of human translation can be rather substantial, especially for enterprises requiring ongoing translation services. Machine translation is sometimes available at no cost, as shown by platforms like Google Translate and DeepL that offer this service. This has enhanced the global relationship between firms and their customers, especially in situations with constrained financial resources.

Unlike human translation, which may involve variances in quality based on the competence and competency of the translator, the results generated by machine translation are consistent. Using tools like DeepL, which offers consistent content translation, helps companies keep consistency and coherence in their correspondence with clients spread all around the globe. Artificial intelligence and machine learning are helping machine translating systems – including Google Translate – constantly improve their capacity. Over time, the precision of the systems has sharply changed, which has raised their dependability factor. By including a wide range of translations and getting user comments, both Google Translate and DeepL have gradually raised their accuracy.

Precup-Stiegelbauer (2013) claims that some technical papers are supposed to gain from machine translation. Whether one uses Google Translate or another costly translation tool, the main factors determining the success of such systems are the quality and quantity of the specialist dictionaries integrated into the software. This could call for a lot of resources; hence, the profitability of this project is not immediate. MT is thus still an unmet challenge. Professionals in the subject largely agree that computers cannot currently translate in a way that is similar to that of humans. They might be good for specialised books, especially highly technical publications covering a very narrow topic in a dry and boring style. Conversely, machines are more likely to produce repulsive findings regarding other texts that are broader in scope and more interesting to people.

Five Advantages of Using AI Tools in Translation

Speed

Artificial intelligence systems can process vast amounts of text in seconds, drastically reducing the time required for translation. This is especially helpful when speedy translations are necessary, such as in international business and government communications.

As an illustration, translation tools such as Google Translate and DeepL use sophisticated neural networks to produce translations nearly instantaneously.

In terms of cost-effectiveness, AI reduces the need for extensive human resources in translation. Businesses can save money by automating regular translations and reserving human translators for activities that require specialist knowledge.

Availability of access

The application of artificial intelligence has made translation services accessible to people worldwide, removing barriers to communication across cultures and languages. Multilingual support on digital platforms and real-time translation services available on mobile devices illustrate how this democratization is taking shape.

Consistency

Artificial intelligence translation systems ensure that terminology is consistent, essential for fields such as health, law, and technology, where accurate language is essential when communicating.

Compatibility

Applications such as real-time interpretation and improved user experiences in virtual meetings are made possible by the seamless integration of AI with voice recognition and text-to-speech technologies.

Five Disadvantages of Using AI Tools in Translation

A grasp of the context

It is common for artificial intelligence systems to be unable to understand the cultural nuances, idiomatic idioms, and contextual nuances of language, which might result in wrong or inappropriate translations. Idiomatic phrases could be translated literally by artificial intelligence, leading to either illogical sentences or insensitive to different cultures. There is a possibility that these systems do not have the capacity to comprehend cultural nuances, idiomatic idioms, and regional dialects, which can result in translations that are insensitive or even insulting. In the process of training AI models, enormous datasets are utilised, which may contain biases, prejudices, or cultural flaws that are present in the data. Less common or indigenous languages may be marginalised due to the concentration on widely spoken languages, which may contribute to the demise of these languages.

Questions of morality

The use of artificial intelligence in translation raises several complex ethical questions, including those about accuracy, bias, privacy, cultural sensitivity, and the ramifications for the human labour force. These systems should be built to prevent perpetuating biases and show respect for the diversity of languages. Translations should be checked by humans in important settings to guarantee that they are accurate and culturally suitable. There must be a balance between efficiency and accessibility, as well as respect for privacy, cultural sensitivities, and human employment, to ensure that the application of AI is done ethically. To ensure that AI-driven translation serves as a tool for inclusivity and understanding rather than one of division or harm, developers, organisations, and policy-makers must collaborate to establish systems that adhere to ethical standards.

Lack of Creativity and Cultural Sensitivity

Artificial intelligence encounters several significant challenges in creative and literary translations, as these forms go beyond word-for-word accuracy. Unlike technical or straightforward translations, scholarly works – such as novels, poetry, and plays – require a deep understanding of cultural nuances, emotions, and artistic intent. AI systems often struggle to capture the subtleties of tone, metaphor, humour, and idiomatic expressions essential to preserving the essence of the original text. Moreover, creative translations demand an element of human intuition and subjective interpretation, as different readers may perceive literary works in unique ways. The emotional resonance of a passage, the rhythm of a poem, or an author's stylistic choices are difficult for AI to replicate with the same depth and authenticity as a skilled human translator. While machine learning models can analyse vast amounts of linguistic data, they often lack the ability to appreciate the deeper layers of meaning and artistic flair that make literature compelling.

Concerns Regarding Safety and Confidentiality

While translating sensitive or confidential documents utilising artificial intelligence systems, particularly cloud-based systems, there are issues regarding data privacy and security breaches. Privacy and security problems are raised as a result of the fact that artificial intelligence translation technologies, particularly cloud-based services, frequently process sensitive or confidential information. If the user does not give explicit consent, the data entered into translation tools may be saved, processed, or shared without their knowledge. The translations that are processed by AI systems have the potential to be utilised inappropriately or intercepted, particularly in situations that include sensitive conversations between corporations or governments.

Lack of Quality

Artificial intelligence–powered translation technologies can sometimes produce misleading results – especially in complex or nuanced contexts – giving rise to serious ethical concerns about responsibility and accountability. In legal, medical, or diplomatic settings, inaccurate translations may have severe consequences, from the violation of rights to potential risks to personal or public safety. Determining who bears responsibility for such errors – the developers of the technology, the end users, or the organisations that deploy it – remains a major ethical dilemma. Moreover, AI-generated texts can still contain grammatical, semantic, or syntactic inaccuracies that compromise reliability.

A Case Study

The case study presents an analysis that aims to compare two AI tools (Deepl.com and Google Translate) regarding the quality of their translations. Two English texts on the topic of tourism, the first containing twelve idiomatic expressions and the second fourteen, were selected for translation into Lithuanian.

Firstly, the two texts were translated into the Lithuanian language using the Deepl.com translator to see if it recognises the expressions and is able to translate them correctly.

Table 1

Comparison of Idiomatic Expression Recognition by DeepL and Google Translate

Expression	DeepL Translation Accuracy	Google Translate Accuracy	Notes / Observations
off the beaten track	Correct	Incorrect	Recognised only by DeepL
take one's breath away	Correct	Incorrect	–
it's just what the doctor ordered	Correct	Incorrect	–
recharge one's batteries	Correct	Incorrect	Literal in Google
wine and dine	Incorrect	Incorrect	Word-by-word translation
travel light	Incorrect	Incorrect	Literal, no idiomatic meaning
rich in nightlife	Incorrect	Incorrect	–
bucket list	Correct	Correct	–
think twice	Correct	Correct	–
every nook and cranny	Correct	Incorrect	–
get away from it all	Correct	Correct	–
low season / high season	Correct	Correct	Both identified
enjoy to the fullest	Correct	Incorrect	–
make memories	Correct	Incorrect	–

Expression	DeepL Translation Accuracy	Google Translate Accuracy	Notes / Observations
book a trip on a whim	Correct	Incorrect	Literal in Google
give bang for one's buck	Correct	Correct	–
travel on a shoestring	Correct	Incorrect	–
prices go through the ceiling	Correct	Incorrect	Literal
roll in dough	Correct	Incorrect	–

Note. The terms Correct and Incorrect indicate whether each idiomatic expression was translated accurately or literally.

While analysing the translations, it was noticed that the prepositional idiomatic expressions were recognised quite well and precisely. The tool was able to identify and translate the following phrases: *off the beaten track, take the breath away, it's just what the doctor ordered, and recharge one's batteries*. Meanwhile, the program was not able to recognise and translate correctly the following expressions: *wine and dine, travel light, and rich in nightlife*. However, some translations were made by applying word-by-word translations. Though the tool was able to identify and translate correctly the following expressions: *bucket list, think twice, every nook and cranny, get away from it all, low season, high season, enjoy to the fullest, make memories, book a trip on a whim, give bang for one's buck, travel on a shoestring, prices go through the ceiling, and roll in a dough*. Even though it could be stated that the program was able to recognise idioms, the texts still needed post-editing, i.e., human editing, as different stylistic and linguistic mistranslation discrepancies occurred. The second tool was Google Translate. The latter AI tool demonstrated not very satisfying results when translating the selected idioms from English to Lithuanian. Eight out of 12 expressions were not recognised. As a result, the translation was done using the word-by-word technique. The program was not able to recognise and translate the following expressions: *off the beaten track, it's just what the doctor ordered, recharge one's batteries, spent there to bits, to travel light, wine and dine*, and other. The program could translate the expressions that contained prepositions, e.g. *by surprise, reminiscing about*, and others. The translation was generally not precise enough (poor stylistics, missing verbs) and required lots of post-editing. In the second text, eight of 14 idioms were identified and translated, e.g. *think twice, get away from it all, give bang for your buck, low season, high season*. Six out of 14 were neither recognised nor translated correctly and as a result, word-by-word techniques were applied, which in some cases was absolutely illogical and even funny.

In conclusion, it is possible to assert that artificial intelligence is an instrument that has the potential to revolutionise various industries, including translation, by boosting efficiency, accessibility, and accuracy. Nevertheless, using this technology is not without its drawbacks, including the possibility of job displacement, ethical problems, and contextual misunderstandings. By gaining an understanding of both the benefits and drawbacks of artificial intelligence, society is able to harness its promise responsibly while simultaneously tackling its issues through the implementation of ethical frameworks, robust policies, and ongoing innovation. But despite the speed of AI evolution, it is the human translator or post-editor who plays the most important role and will be responsible for the most significant part of the post-editing process for the text. It is the translator's responsibility to understand that a word conveys not just its semantic meaning but also expressive and emotive information. When translating for a worldwide audience, it is the translator's responsibility to discover counterparts that evoke the same sensations in the native speaker as the original text does for the native speaker.

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CHAPTER FOUR

Not What It Seems: Culture Is (Not) Meant to Be Translated

Chapter 4

Not What It Seems: Culture Is (Not) Meant to Be Translated

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Abstract: When cultures meet so many concepts come to the fore – beliefs, traditions, customs, values, and many more. Although some common ground is usually found via English as the medium of interaction, cultural nuances still influence the way we think and, naturally, the way we communicate. *Not What It Seems* aims to investigate the role of culture in international exchanges, emphasising the fact we do not have to translate it all for success in intercultural communication.

Keywords: culture, Intercultural communication, hidden messages

Introduction

The chapter "Not What It Seems: Culture is (not) Meant to be Translated" aims to provide a foundational understanding of cultural intelligence and intercultural communication, highlighting their relevance in multicultural classrooms. Initially, the chapter explores key concepts related to cultural intelligence, setting the stage for a deeper discussion on intercultural competence. Additionally, it presents examples from the classroom, which will be useful for teachers to effectively address cultural diversity topics and facilitate a holistic learning atmosphere for students.

In the realm of intercultural education, the teacher holds a pivotal role. The prerequisite for incorporating an intercultural dimension into teaching is the teacher's intercultural awareness, which fundamentally encompasses the individual's cultural intelligence. The teacher needs to foster this awareness among students, guiding their educational choices in a manner that feels logical to them. Thus, the core of intercultural competence lies not solely in transferring knowledge but in cultivating a comprehensive set of skills, included within cultural intelligence.

In order to be able to translate hidden intercultural messages, it is the teacher's responsibility to establish a clear framework and set of rules within their lessons. Moreover, the intercultural approach provides each student with the opportunity to respond in a unique way, using their freedom of thought (Akkari & Radhouane, 2022). It is vital for the teacher to embrace these guidelines to inspire and mediate the multicultural classroom. Helping students understand different cultures is important in the classroom. We should encourage them to express and recognize cultural differences. When we focus on these differences in a positive way, they can enrich their learning experiences.

In order to effectively apply these concepts in everyday teaching, let us first explore the following questions:

- How can *cultural diversity* be defined and embraced in the educational context?
- What are the objectives of teaching cultural diversity, and how should we approach these topics in our instruction?

These questions will guide our discussions on how teachers can use cultural intelligence to enhance instruction and foster an inclusive educational environment.

Culture as the Cornerstone of Education: The Impact of Cultural Awareness on Classrooms

Every individual is different, even within the same country, social class, or religion. Therefore, diversity presents a challenge in developing teaching methods and language training programmes that cater to everyone. Each student possesses a unique learning style and experience. We can foster greater tolerance by recognising these differences and acknowledging how our cultural backgrounds influence our perspectives.

In a multicultural classroom, it is important for both teachers and students to actively listen to each other and set aside their preconceived notions about different cultures. This openness paves the way for collaborative learning. When educators understand the varying rules and values across cultures, mainly as they manifest in students' home environments, their communication becomes more effective (Arvanitis, 2018). Understanding different cultures helps teachers manage their classrooms better. This knowledge reduces surprises and frustrations during cultural events. School is a lively place where diverse cultures and backgrounds meet, creating daily opportunities for meaningful interactions and personal growth. These encounters can happen between teachers and students, among classmates, or between educators and parents. Each of these interactions offers great potential for positive experiences and development. Teachers and staff must embrace knowledge and foster tolerance in order for this potential to be recognized (Van Tartwijk et al., 2009). Schools must create occasions for open discussions about cultural encounters, fostering an environment of understanding and respect. The core mission of intercultural education is to equip students with the knowledge and skills to celebrate cultural diversity while nurturing social harmony. Developing intercultural competence empowers students to understand and appreciate different cultures. A school that embraces cultural diversity is a valuable resource, and teachers play a key role in highlighting this richness. How teachers act during cultural interactions greatly affects the classroom and school atmosphere (Chisholm, 1994). By confidently modelling respect and understanding, teachers inspire an inclusive environment that enhances learning for all. The following example illustrates an international school that, every year, effectively nurtures and celebrates diversity.

Example 1

An international school in Serbia has integrated the celebration of United Nations Day into its annual program, recognising its significance in promoting cultural understanding and global awareness. This initiative is designed to educate students about the importance and origins of this day, focusing on the role of the United Nations.

As part of their curriculum, students learn about the United Nations during history lessons and engage in art classes, where they apply their knowledge and creative skills. Each student is assigned a specific country and UNESCO World Heritage site to research and present, fostering a collaborative learning environment.

During the celebration of United Nations Day, students, teachers, and parents actively showcase cultural diversity. Students dress in traditional costumes, prepare national dishes, and explore the customs and symbols associated with UN member countries. This event allows students to deepen their understanding of global cultures while developing an appreciation for diversity.

Moreover, the school harnesses this occasion as an opportunity for cross-curricular learning, incorporating art, languages, history, and geography into the event. This holistic approach transforms the celebration into an enriching experience that enhances students' cultural intelligence and prepares them for future cross-cultural interactions.

Embracing Cultural Intelligence: How It Changes the Classroom

The growing cultural diversity within our global community presents educators with a significant opportunity to deepen their understanding of the various values, customs, and traditions represented by their students. Teachers need to contribute to creating inclusive intercultural experiences for every student. As the diversity within educational institutions increases worldwide, the ability of educators to navigate effectively within a multicultural environment becomes increasingly significant. The movement toward multicultural education stems from recognising that we inhabit a multicultural society, necessitating an understanding of the diverse cultural landscapes we encounter.

Culture can be understood through various lenses. It encompasses the shared values, beliefs, behaviours, and traditions of specific groups or nations, highlighting its nature as a collective phenomenon rather than an individual one. Cultural characteristics are learned rather than innate. Often, culture is likened to an iceberg, illustrating the visible aspects, like clothing and symbols, alongside more profound, less apparent elements such as values and beliefs (Dolidze, 2016). These less visible dimensions can complicate understanding and recognition. Hidden realities, including rituals, codes, representations, and stereotypes, are crucial in shaping societal identity (Dolidze, 2016). Therefore, developing the ability to decipher these nuanced messages remains a significant challenge in education, necessitating a collaborative effort from educators and learners.

Cultural intelligence is vital for teachers, empowering them to recognise and appreciate the subtle cultural nuances that may arise in the classroom. This understanding aids in identifying the cultural codes and stereotypes that define specific societies. Consequently, it fosters a more effective educational approach, equipping students with the skills necessary to interpret hidden messages within their social contexts. To illustrate this, we will share two examples from multicultural classrooms and their respective impacts, followed by an exploration of why cultural intelligence serves as a crucial component in advancing multicultural education.

Example 2

During a presentation on national symbols, a student from China explained the meaning of his country's flag. He described the red colour as a symbol of the communist revolution, the stars as a sign of unity and diversity in China, and the gold colour as a representation of prosperity and wealth. A student from another culture asked if gold represented the "yellow race," which referenced a stereotype about East Asian people. The teacher quickly stepped in, explaining why this assumption was inappropriate and highlighting the harmful effects of racial stereotypes, even if not meant to offend. This moment became a lesson in interpreting cultural symbols correctly and avoiding stereotypes. The students learned to respect and understand different perspectives in a multicultural environment.

Example 3

During a history lesson about the Crusades, a student from Russia asked about access to holy places in the Middle Ages. This question sparked a discussion between the students from Turkey and Russia. The Russian student posed another question that, although not intended to be harmful, suggested that today's communities share blame for events from the past. When the Turkish student began to make excuses, the teacher intervened. The teacher explained that it is inappropriate to hold modern communities responsible for actions that occurred centuries ago, as this mindset is unhelpful. Instead, we should approach history critically. This discussion highlighted the importance of understanding each other's cultures and respecting differences, encouraging students to empathize and work together in a multicultural classroom.

How to approach such a situation:

- Explain why a comment is problematic, stressing the effects of stereotypes and biases.
- Encourage students to ask questions, but teach them how to do so respectfully and without relying on stereotypes.
- Use these moments as chances to help students develop intercultural awareness.
- Guide students to see things from others' perspectives and to appreciate their feelings and cultural identities.
- Create a safe space where students can share misunder-

standings or concerns without fear of judgement while educating them on why certain statements can be harmful.

Diving Deeper into Cultural Intelligence

The ability to successfully navigate diverse cultural environments is more crucial than ever in today's globalised society, which is characterised by increased cross-cultural encounters. Cultural intelligence, or the capacity to communicate and operate well in culturally diverse contexts, has emerged as an essential skill for success. While cultural sensitivity and understanding lay the groundwork, cultural intelligence goes beyond mere knowledge. It enables individuals to recognise, adapt to, and leverage cultural differences to achieve their goals (Hani et al., 2024). It can be explained as the ability of a person to adapt to and comprehend varied cultural norms, values, beliefs, and behaviours to perform effectively in diverse settings. It comprises the ability to interact and collaborate with people from varied cultural backgrounds while maintaining sensitivity, awareness, and respect (Afsar et al., 2020). Culturally intelligent individuals recognise intercultural situations and carefully consider the behaviour of others to avoid misunderstandings (Dostanić, 2021).

Cultural intelligence differs from other intelligence theories in that it focuses on behaviours learned through education and experience, which are difficult to change. It also suggests intercultural interactions influence people's behaviour (Şenel, 2020). Wang and Goh (2020) refer to cultural intelligence as an individual's ability to function and manage well in culturally varied contexts. According to Sternberg et al. (2021), it refers to one's ability to adapt when presented with issues that arise from contact with people or artefacts from different cultures.

Significant benefits are associated with having cultural intelligence. Some benefits are associated with better emotional and psychological adjustment to situations involving different or unfamiliar cultures and subcultures. This helps individuals experience less burnout and have higher resilience, i.e., the ability to bounce back and recover in stressful situations when working across different cultures. Culturally intelligent individuals show greater perseverance in challenging situations, as well as higher levels of stamina and productivity (Azevedo, 2018). Another important aspect is associated with decision-making. Individuals with higher cultural intelligence excel at understanding and evaluating events with diverse perspectives, leading to superior decisions in intercultural environments. Cultural intelligence enables individuals and teams to collaborate in creating effective and mutually accepted solutions that address varied goals and viewpoints (Azevedo, 2018).

Cultural intelligence has four dimensions: cognitive, metacognitive, motivational, and behavioural:

Cognitive cultural intelligence is an individual's knowledge of various cultural values, standards, and beliefs. It includes a grasp of both cultural distinctions and cultural universals. Cultural universals are features that are common to all cultures, whereas cultural variances are traits that are unique to each society (Mangla, 2021).

Metacognitive cultural intelligence refers to an individual's ability to be attentive and pick cues from cross-cultural interactions while also reflecting on current knowledge to modify it. Individuals with a high level of metacognitive cultural intelligence comprehend how culture influences behaviour. Being mindful during intercultural interactions is critical since it helps one to intentionally apply cultural knowledge efficiently (Mangla, 2021).

Motivational cultural intelligence refers to an individual's interest and confidence in cross-cultural relationships. Self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation are regarded as important components of a successful cross-cultural relationship (Mangla, 2021). Individuals' inherent desire to engage with various cultures, which is driven by intrinsic motivation, passion, and eagerness, is critical to their pursuit of cross-cultural experiences and ability to adapt successfully in multicultural settings. This desire arises from their genuine interest in learning about and interacting with diverse cultural groups, as well as the enjoyment they experience from such encounters (Afsar et al., 2020).

Behavioural cultural intelligence is an individual's capacity to perform a set of verbal and nonverbal acts when engaging with people from different cultures. People with high behavioural cultural intelligence can adjust their behaviour patterns in response to the situation. It predicts the cultural adaptation and task performance of individuals (Mangla, 2021). To effectively connect with people from various cultural backgrounds, one must be able to alter both verbal and nonverbal behaviours (Hani et al., 2024).

Hidden Messages in the Intercultural Classroom

Intercultural communication competence entails adapting to other cultures, completing tasks effectively, and establishing positive connections with people from diverse cultural backgrounds (Hendrarso, 2019). Intercultural communication refers to exchanges between individuals from different cultures and subcultures. It involves connecting with people from various cultures, sending messages, and interpreting them. Individuals communicating in a new cultural environment need to learn how others communicate; therefore, they interpret attitudes and behaviours through the lens of their own cultural standards. This often leads to communication problems between individuals from different cultures (Yeke & Semerciöz, 2016).

Cross-cultural communication competence involves understanding the attitudes and behaviours of individuals from unfamiliar cultures. Intercultural communication competence focuses on both the communication process and the perception of communication. The ability to interpret messages is influenced by the cultural values of the individuals receiving them. Messages may be understood in different ways depending on cultural beliefs (Yeke & Semerciöz, 2016).

Each culture has distinct rules and values tightly woven into its language's fabric. These cultural elements appear in various linguistic styles, occasionally leading to misunderstandings in cross-cultural relationships. The success of intercultural communication often relies more on nonverbal cues than on spoken words. When what someone says does not match their nonverbal signals – like gestures, eye contact, facial expressions, or posture – people usually pay more attention to the nonverbal signals because they seem more honest and spontaneous (Paranduk & Karisi, 2020). Knowing about different cultures helps people avoid misunderstandings caused by the conscious or unconscious attitudes of those from various cultural backgrounds.

Nonverbal communication, including body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice, is crucial for conveying messages and emotions. These indications, however, can differ significantly among cultures, frequently leading to misconceptions in international encounters (Ye, 2024). Moreover, notable misunderstandings often occur within social rituals, such as greetings and farewells. The following example illustrates this point clearly.

Example 4

A student from Korean culture experienced discomfort in an international school. She faced ridicule and surprise from her peers because, in her culture, it is customary to bow at the beginning and end of lessons, as well as when greeting others throughout the school day. This practice was unfamiliar to her classmates, who were not from the same cultural background, leading to astonishment and even concern. On one occasion, a student approached her, mistakenly believing that she was unwell due to her bowing.

In this context, the concept of the unsaid becomes critically important. According to Hall's framework, cultures are categorized as "high context," in which contextual factors play an essential role in interpreting messages that are not explicitly conveyed, and "low context," in which communication is predominantly articulated through spoken language (Hall, 1990).

The following example clearly illustrates how the teacher encountered an unfamiliar cultural context that he did not fully recognize.

Example 5

In a multicultural classroom, relationships among cultures can be complex. In this situation, both the student and teacher are within low-context cultural frameworks, which significantly shape their interactions. The student originates from China, while the teacher is from Serbia. In Chinese culture, maintaining a greater physical distance during conversations is customary, reflecting respect and modesty. When the teacher praised the student for his impressive test performance, she expected a more enthusiastic reaction. However, the student's response was unexpectedly reserved; he simply nodded in acknowledgment. The teacher, intrigued yet puzzled, was taken aback by the student's behaviour. Although he was fluent in English, the Chinese student displayed a demeanour that suggested discomfort. When the teacher approached him to offer encouragement, she noticed that he looked down – a gesture that holds significant cultural meaning. A composed response aligns with certain cultural norms, where excessive displays of joy are often considered inappropriate. There is a strong emphasis on the value of humility in these contexts. The difference in expressions left the teacher unsure of her impact on the student and concerned about his comfort level in the classroom. Understanding the potential discomfort that can arise in such interactions, the teacher decided to adjust her approach. She resolved to offer praise in a more private setting, after class, to create a less intimidating atmosphere and foster a more personalized connection with her students. By doing so, she aimed to establish a space where students felt more at ease and open, ultimately enriching their educational experience.

It is generally observed that many European students belong to low-context cultures, whereas numerous Eastern cultures are classified as high-context. This distinction implies that individuals from low-context cultures tend to exhibit patience, detail-oriented communication, and a pragmatic approach. Conversely, those from high-context cultures may need more patience and a more direct communicative style. Therefore, ignorance of symbols and signs in multicultural environments can result in significant miscommunication. This issue is particularly relevant for students who lack proficiency in English, as they often rely on nonverbal cues to convey and clarify meaning during classroom interactions. It is essential to recognize that the meanings associated with gestures and body language are not universal; therefore, understanding the typical characteristics of non-verbal communication across various cultures is paramount.

Connecting Cultures

Language and culture are profoundly interconnected, and the Common European Framework of Reference underscores the significance of sociocultural and pragmatic competence as crucial elements of language-communicative competence (Ragoonaden, 2020). This highlights the importance of incorporating authentic texts that serve as valuable linguistic and cultural resources, allowing students to engage with the diverse cultures they may encounter in their communication. Let us explore two examples from the international school in Serbia.

Example 6

An incident in a class of international elementary school students involved a lesson centred on the celebration of the New Year, specifically the traditional festivities held on December 31. Students were reading about New Year's Eve in China. Confusion emerged among students from China, who celebrate the Chinese New Year at the beginning of February. This situation prompted lively discussions and questions from the students regarding the reasons behind their different celebrations and which New Year might be considered the "real" one. Consequently, authentic texts that illustrate various traditions and beliefs are particularly effective in multicultural settings. The teacher can play a crucial role in mediating these conversations, explaining that different cultures operate on their own calendars, such as the Chinese lunar calendar, where the timing of the New Year is determined by lunar cycles. It is essential to highlight how culture shapes the unique traditions and holidays of each community. Ultimately, this discussion inspired the students to create a poster comparing the similarities and differences among the various New Year celebrations.

Understandably, cultural elements may differ from those of the students' home cultures and can sometimes lead to discomfort. The other example happened when the students covered the topic about different foods and cuisines, which are closely tied to cultural traditions, may present challenges.

Example 7

At the international elementary school, each week wraps up with a themed colour day, where students bring snacks that match the week's colour. During a week dedicated to green, one student from Thailand surprised everyone by bringing a plate of edible insects garnished with lime leaves. The students reacted with disgust, many questioning how to eat such a dish. Seizing the moment, teachers took the opportunity to discuss food norms and preferences, sharing their opinions on what they considered acceptable. However, this situation quickly became a valuable lesson about cultural diversity, as each student showcased their unique traditions and practices in the classroom. It highlighted the richness of individual backgrounds and perspectives, which make everyone unique and include inherent qualities that make them interesting. Ultimately, it became a learning moment – not just about diverse cultures and nutrition but also about building respect and empathy in a multicultural environment. In the end, students reflected on their experiences, recognizing that they had gained a deeper understanding of one another and learned the significance of not judging unfamiliar things.

Different cultural perspectives can create a sense of distance in such moments. As teachers, our role is to guide these conversations constructively, promoting understanding and appreciation of each other's values while addressing any discomfort that may arise. We have the opportunity to build a respectful and inclusive environment that not only celebrates diversity but also encourages impactful connections among individuals.

Unlocking Teaching Success with Cultural Intelligence

The educational system is a versatile landscape influenced by diverse perspectives. It calls upon us to embrace a collaborative approach across different methods and disciplines, fostering true integration and innovation in education. Therefore, cultural intelligence is essential for good cross-cultural communication. It lets teachers to tailor their communication methods, verbal and nonverbal clues, and language proficiency to the cultural setting. This adaptability helps build rapport, trust, and meaningful connections with people from many cultures. Cultural intelligence enables people to examine and overcome prejudices and biases about different cultures. It helps individuals to approach intercultural relationships with an open mind and no preconceived assumptions. Individuals can promote inclusive and respectful communication by valuing varied opinions and accepting cultural diversity (Yuan & Wei, 2023).

Given the importance of translation in reducing barriers to communication and facilitating understanding across diverse cultures, the impact of cultural intelligence on accurate translation is a significant issue. Because language reflects and is an inherent element of culture, the translation process must include cultural cues in forming meaning. Translation is deeply rooted in its cultural environment. It is stated that cultural and linguistic competence implies that translators decide what to translate, when, and how. Translators can attain this goal by understanding the source and target cultures, as well as the languages. Linguistic mistakes in translation may be acceptable, but cultural issues are not. Such a functionalist-based perspective focuses on translation's communicative purpose (Al-Sofi & Abouabdulqader, 2019). Culture in translation is the most problematic and challenging part of delivering an accurate translation.

Example 8

In an international secondary school in Serbia, the exploration of figures of speech during English lessons emerges as a particularly enriching topic, especially given the students' diverse cultural backgrounds. This lesson not only engages students as active listeners but also encourages them to participate fully, particularly when discussing idioms. In a class of fifteen students, seven were from different cultures and spoke various mother tongues. During the lesson, the idiom "break a leg" was very confusing for the student from Turkey, as a literal translation could easily lead to misunderstandings, highlighting that this expression does not hold the exact meaning of good wishes in Turkish culture. Each student enthusiastically shared how idioms would be expressed in their languages if translated literally. The teacher emphasized that translation is far more than a straightforward word-for-word conversion; it requires a nuanced understanding of the cultural meanings embedded in those words. To reinforce this important concept, the teacher shared that a skilled translator must utilize knowledge of both the source and target cultures to convey the intended meanings of expressions accurately. By delving into these cultural differences, students gain valuable insights and appreciate the creativity and adaptability required in translation, especially when faced with expressions that resist direct translation. This collaborative learning experience equips them with essential skills for navigating the complexities of language and culture in a globalized world.

Translation and interpretation help people understand different languages and cultures. These processes transfer information from one language to another, making it easier for others to understand. They connect new information with what the recipient already knows and provide shared background context. This sharing improves understanding of other cultures and leads to better communication (Lu, 2024). Multilingual and multicultural translators and interpreters are valuable resources for this purpose (Lu, 2024). Translation and intercultural communication share several characteristics, positioning the translator as an effective mediator in the exchange of knowledge between cultures. This suggests that the source text must be connected to its cultural context, as it is created to address the needs of others in diverse intercultural situations.

In summary, translation can be viewed as a form of intercultural communication, as it pertains to distinct cultural environments (Al-Sofi & Abouabdulqader, 2019). They serve as bridges between different languages, concepts, and worldviews, facilitating mutual understanding between languages and civilizations. They can also teach others to be such resources (Lu, 2024).

Cultural communication is a way to share information between different cultures using language. Language is essential for keeping society connected. Without communication, cultures can lose their energy and significance. As a key part of culture, language acts as an important filter in cross-cultural communication (Lu, 2024). Intercultural competence is familiar and can be found implicitly in various multi-componential translation competency models. A translator is frequently referred to as a cultural and linguistic mediator, and translation is defined as intercultural communication. To prepare for their upcoming work, trainee translators learn about the cultures of various English-speaking countries, including their history, traditions, values, beliefs, attitudes, stereotypes, and so on. More than gaining this, cultural competency is needed, as globalization and a high level of communication between different cultures make the work of translators difficult (Klimczak-Pawlak, 2018). People with high cultural intelligence are more familiar with the distinctions between intercultural contacts; thus, they instinctively know how to behave to avoid intercultural blunders and promote good reactions. Developing intercultural competency for translators is extremely important because translation brings together not just two languages but also two cultures. In this sense, translation is a type of intercultural communication. In addition to recognizing the importance of the two broader macro-cultural frameworks, the translator must also examine the more immediate 'context of the situation' (Rafieyan, 2016).

Our impressions of other cultures are influenced by our ethnicity, which can hinder intercultural communication and understanding. Professional training for translators should cover the basics of intercultural communication to prepare them to communicate effectively across native and foreign cultures. This requires a thorough understanding of all aspects of intercultural dialogue. In interpersonal communication, culture is viewed not just as a set of behavioural attitudes and values but also as the context in which language acts and manifests itself (Köksal & Yürük, 2020). It can be thus noted that translators with higher cultural intelligence can better address the challenges in communication.

Understanding Cultural Intelligence in the Classroom: What Teachers Should Keep in Mind

The discussion so far highlights the growing importance of multiculturalism in today's society. Enhancing intercultural awareness among educators fosters the logical emergence of innovative pedagogical approaches. The core principle involves recognizing and promoting cultural diversity, which should be effectively conveyed to students through different thematic content. Educators need to create an environment where this diversity is consistently acknowledged and valued and must learn to understand the meanings that students convey. It is also important to teach students how to interpret gestures from speakers of different cultures.

Cultural intelligence is a key part of effective communication and involves both social and cultural understanding. Gestures are tied to cultural backgrounds and play a crucial role in face-to-face interactions. In classes with absolute beginners or individuals with limited language skills, educators often rely heavily on gestures to convey meaning and facilitate communication, even among students who have not yet developed an adequate level of verbal proficiency.

In a multicultural classroom, it is, in fact, vital to create a relaxed environment where everyone can feel at ease, regardless of their background, habits, or beliefs. It is fundamental for a language teacher to be able to lower that affective filter, which Krashen talks about that the student raises in situations of anxiety or stress and which prevents the acquisition of a foreign language; lowering means creating a calm climate so that the classroom becomes a safe space where one does not feel judged, but has the opportunity to express oneself and make mistakes. (Krashen, 1981) Judgment or prejudice, both on the part of the teacher and on the part of classmates, actually risks affecting the climate the teacher has painstakingly built. In all these cases, the teacher is called upon to respect the needs of the students. Faced with unexpected events, the teacher often has to try not to reveal this idea of "normality" based on the most widespread habits of his own culture to prevent students from feeling excluded from other cultures.

An educator who can recognize and embrace diverse viewpoints showcases vital competencies that are key to fostering cultural intelligence. These competencies include:

- Understanding cultural differences and similarities in order to adapt teaching methods.
- Reflection and adaptation of instructional methods in light of cultural influences on students.

- A genuine motivation and interest in working with students from diverse cultures helps create an inclusive atmosphere.
- Enhancing students' competencies beyond mere linguistic abilities.
- Utilizing body language and non-verbal cues to facilitate communication with students with limited language proficiency.

The observations made herein demonstrate how educators navigate cultural diversity within the evolving landscape of modern education, specifically concerning the integration of international students and their unique cultural backgrounds. Strategies must promote trust, tolerance, and cooperation among students. Furthermore, such strategies should assist children in cultivating shared values and a sense of community, thereby appreciating diversity and embracing differing perspectives.

The illustrations show how students from different cultures can exchange ideas and participate in activities that connect to their cultural identities. This highlights the importance of every culture and strengthens students' individual, group, and school identities. This approach encourages active listening, curiosity, and the value of discussion. Educators play an important role in helping cultures grow and change, understanding that no culture can survive without new generations that embrace and explore it.

Managing multicultural classrooms is a rewarding experience that helps teachers develop important skills and understand classroom interactions better. It is vital to know different language teaching methods, but it is also important to be sensitive and flexible when dealing with critical issues. By using an intercultural approach, teachers can encourage dialogue and interaction among students, which can also help to prevent or resolve potential conflicts, especially in a multicultural classroom.

All the factors mentioned are pieces of a puzzle. These essential elements provide insight into cultural diversity and the consequences our choices, opinions, and strategies as educators have on our lives and futures.

Questions for Critical Reflection

- How can we use cultural intelligence to help our students be more tolerant and understanding of each other?
- How can teachers use their awareness of cultural differences to notice and meet the unique needs of students from different backgrounds?
- Why is it important for teachers to know how culture impacts behaviour in the classroom, and how can this knowledge improve relationships between different cultures?
- What fun activities can teachers try to encourage students to interact with peers from other cultures?
- How can cultural intelligence enhance translators' ability to preserve the true essence of the original text?
- When should translators retain cultural elements from the source text, and when is it essential to adapt them to the target culture's context?
- Are there notable cases where a translator achieved a more powerful effect by straying from the literal meaning?
- When does the importance of cultural intelligence outweigh that of language skills in the translation process?

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CHAPTER FIVE

Finding Your Own Path: Is There Room for L1 translation in EMI Classrooms?

Chapter 5

Finding Your Own Path: Is There Room for L1 translation in EMI Classrooms?

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Abstract: English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) has become a prominent model in international education, yet its implementation varies widely, ranging from full immersion to partial or even pseudo-EMI. A key point in partial EMI is the strategic use of students' first language (L1), including translation, which raises important pedagogical questions: How justifiable is L1 use in EMI settings? Under what conditions does it enhance or disrupt learning? The discussion in this study revolves around the pedagogical justifications, benefits, and challenges of incorporating L1, particularly through translation, into EMI classrooms. Drawing on theoretical frameworks such as Cognitive Load Theory (Sweller, 2011), Common Underlying Proficiency (Cummins, 1979), and translanguaging pedagogy (Williams, 1994, 1996; García & Wei, 2014; Prilutskaya, 2021), it argues that strategically scheduled translation can serve as a cognitive and linguistic bridge, helping students clarify complex concepts, acquire new vocabulary, and engage with academic content more effectively. Empirical evidence from STEM, humanities, and social sciences shows that translation strategies (translating technical terms, cultural references) can improve comprehension and reduce cognitive overload, especially for low-proficiency learners. The paper also addresses concerns such as equity in multilingual classrooms, over-reliance on L1, and the risk of undermining EMI's immersive goals. It concludes with practical recommendations for balancing English and L1 through scaffolded translation practices, intentionally used to align with institutional language policies and promote student autonomy. By reframing translation not as a fallback but as a pedagogical asset, the paper highlights its potential to foster inclusive, effective, and linguistically responsive EMI environments.

Keywords: English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI), first language (L1), translation, translanguaging, cognitive load, multilingual classrooms, inclusive pedagogy, language policy

Introduction. Setting the scene

The globalisation of higher education has led to the widespread adoption of EMI (English as a Medium of Instruction), where academic content is taught in English to non-native speakers, especially in tertiary education worldwide. While full EMI, strictly speaking, prohibits L1 use, partial EMI allows varying degrees of translation and code-switching. In EMI classrooms, two primary approaches exist: full EMI and partial EMI. The former involves the exclusive use of English, based on the immersion principle according to which maximum target-language exposure enhances acquisition (Macaro, 2018; Macaro et al., 2020). This approach aligns with monolingual pedagogies that dominate many institutional policies (Jenkins, 2014; Namakula et al., 2025), although in practice full EMI remains rare outside highly proficient contexts.

The latter, where strategic L1 use occurs, is more common, especially in settings where students have limited English proficiency. In some cases, classrooms labelled as EMI are effectively pseudo-EMI, with extensive reliance on L1 and minimal use of English for instruction. The most frequent option, partial EMI, adopts a flexible stance by recognising that appropriate mother-tongue intervention can support comprehension without compromising English learning goals (Dearden, 2014).

In this line, translation serves as a multifaceted pedagogical tool that, when applied strategically, can support both content mastery and language development. It functions first as a scaffolding tool, helping learners clarify complex concepts in their mother tongue before moving to English (Sweller, 2011; Macaro, 2018; Romli et al., 2021). For example, briefly explaining a technical term in the L1 before reintroducing it in English and providing an appropriate translation can enhance comprehension. That is why translation acts as a cognitive bridge that enables students to process and retain information by linking new English terminology with familiar equivalents in their native languages (García & Wei, 2014; Li & Tekwan, 2025). This mechanism supports vocabulary acquisition and facilitates deeper engagement with content, particularly when abstract or technical material is involved.

Some scholars attribute additional roles to translation from English into students' L1: it helps maintain a balance between language and content, ensuring that linguistic challenges do not obstruct conceptual understanding, and it can serve as a cultural mediator by adapting culturally specific references without altering meaning, as argued by Creese & Blackledge (2010). EMI classrooms often diverge from idealised models and depend on institutional policies as well as on the realities of classroom dynamics. However, excessive dependence on translation strategies, which may hinder English language development, must be avoided (Macaro, 2018; Lin, 2019). In fact, some examples of best practice (Liu, 2008) recommend using translation selectively, key terms, abstract ideas, or formative assessments, rather than as a universal strategy.

This is the general scenario addressed in this paper: whether to use or not to use translation into students' L1 in EMI classrooms under diverse institutional policies and classroom conditions. This study, which aims to offer a partial contribution to this question, focuses on the pedagogical justifications for L1 use in EMI, the potential benefits and drawbacks of translation in EMI classrooms, and some best practices for balancing English immersion and L1 support. The paper is organised into five sections: the introduction in Section 1; the reasons why translation into the mother tongue should be used in an EMI environment in Section 2; some case studies from the existing literature and relevant results in Section 3; Section 4, which explores the challenges of translating into and using the L1 in the EMI classroom together with suggestions to mitigate potential drawbacks; and Section 5, which presents the concluding remarks. Overall, the paper intends to review L1 translation in EMI contexts, providing readers and EMI practitioners with tools and justifications for incorporating translation into the classroom. It also aims to inform institutional policymakers about the needs and resources of EMI lecturers, helping them understand the complexities of combining language learning and subject mastery without creating excessive cognitive load or anxiety for students and teachers.

Translating into L1 in the EMI classroom. Theoretical foundations.

The debate over the use of translation into students' L1 in EMI classrooms at the tertiary level is grounded in several competing theoretical perspectives. Traditionally, EMI has been informed by a monolingual ideology closely linked to the immersion hypothesis and the maximum exposure model, which posit that students acquire a second language (L2) most effectively when they are fully immersed in it (Krashen, 1985). However, this perspective has been increasingly challenged by research grounded in sociocultural, cognitive, and multilingual frameworks that highlight the pedagogical and cognitive value of L1 in particular academic contexts. Different sociocultural, multilingual, or cognitive considerations come into play here.

The sociocultural framework is rooted in the work of Vygotsky (1978), who views language as a cultural tool that mediates thought and learning. In this framework, L1 is not merely a vehicle of communication but a means of cognitive development. Particularly in complex academic settings (university level), students use their L1 as a tool to internalise new knowledge, regulate their thinking, and engage in metacognitive processes. The gap between what a learner can do independently and what they can achieve with assistance, known as the Zone of Proximal Development (Shabani et al., 2010), can be bridged more effectively when instructors and peers use the L1 to scaffold learning. In EMI classrooms, where learners must process challenging content in a non-native language, the use of L1 can reduce cognitive load and facilitate higher-order thinking (Bruen & Kelly, 2014). It can also help reduce the cognitive anxiety that arises from learning content and language simultaneously. As Vygotsky (1978, p. 218) argued, "thought is not merely expressed in words; it comes into existence through them." Therefore, allowing university students to draw upon their L1 enables deeper engagement with disciplinary concepts.

From the point of view of multilingualism, an increasingly influential theoretical approach is translanguaging theory (García & Wei, 2014; Wei, 2018). Translanguaging is defined as "the complex and fluid language practices of bilinguals, as well as the pedagogical approaches that leverage those practices" (García & Lin, 2016, p. 2). Translanguaging posits that multilingual individuals possess an integrated linguistic repertoire from which they draw fluidly. In EMI university classrooms, translanguaging practices allow students to transition between languages to make meaning, collaborate, and construct knowledge. As García and Wei (2014, p. 21) describe, translanguaging is "not simply a pedagogical strategy, but a theory of language and cognition that reflects the lived realities of bilingual and multilingual individuals." In higher education, this theory supports the view that students' L1 can be employed strategically to enhance learning rather than undermine English proficiency. Teachers can foster a translanguaging environment by legitimising L1 use in peer discussions, note-taking, or supplementary materials, thereby promoting both content mastery and academic literacy. In a way, the multilingual perspective relates to and is reinforced by Cummins' (2007) interdependence hypothesis, which supports the use of L1 by asserting that academic skills acquired in the first language can transfer to the second, a highly relevant principle in tertiary education, where students are expected to engage in cognitively demanding skills regardless of the language used, namely critical thinking, argumentation, and academic writing. Thus, rather than starting from scratch when learning in English, students can use their prior knowledge and skills developed in their L1 to facilitate L2 academic performance. For example, a university student who understands the principles of scientific methodology in their L1 can more easily grasp and apply them in English, especially if they are allowed to activate and build on that prior knowledge. Translanguaging pedagogy (García & Wei, 2014) redefines multilingual classrooms as dynamic spaces where fluid language practices enhance meaning-making. Additionally, some empirical studies (Tai & Li, 2021) demonstrate that strategic translanguaging improves conceptual understanding in EMI contexts, challenging the assumption that rigid language separation optimises learning. This approach recognises that bilingual learners naturally access their full linguistic repertoire to construct meaning, rather than maintaining strict separation between languages (Canagarajah, 1). In EMI contexts, translanguaging strategies enable students to leverage their first language (L1) as a scaffold for understanding complex English-medium content while simultaneously developing academic English proficiency (Tai & Li, 2021). Research demonstrates that purposeful integration of translanguaging practices, such as allowing L1 brainstorming before English presentations, encouraging bilingual note-taking, or providing multilingual glossaries, can enhance conceptual understanding and participation without compromising English acquisition goals (Cenoz & Gorter, 2022).

The theoretical foundations of translanguaging pedagogy draw from Vygotskian sociocultural theory, emphasising how learners use all available semiotic resources for cognitive development (Li, 2018). Practical applications in EMI classrooms might include: (1) strategic code-switching during explanations of abstract concepts, (2) collaborative L1 discussions to deepen comprehension before English output tasks, and (3) reflective metalinguistic comparisons between L1 and English academic registers (Lin, 2019). While critics argue that translanguaging might reduce English exposure (Treffers-Daller, 2024), empirical studies have shown that, when implemented cautiously, it actually promotes deeper engagement with English texts and discussions by lowering affective filters and building conceptual clarity. In sum, effective translanguaging pedagogy requires intentional instructional design that views students' multilingualism not as a deficit but as a legitimate tool for meaning-making in EMI contexts (García & Sylvan, 2011).

Finally, Cognitive Load Theory (CLT), originally developed by Sweller (1988, 2011), provides a crucial framework for understanding learning challenges in English as a Medium of Instruction environments. The theory posits that working memory has limited capacity and identifies three types of cognitive load: intrinsic (inherent difficulty of the material), extraneous (unnecessary processing caused by poor instructional design), and germane (productive cognitive effort for deep learning). In EMI contexts, students experience significantly increased cognitive demands, as they must simultaneously decode foreign-language input, understand complex academic content, and engage in higher-order thinking processes (Kirschner et al., 2018). This triple cognitive burden often leads to cognitive overload, potentially damaging knowledge acquisition and retention. By using L1 selectively to explain difficult concepts or instructions, educators can reduce this load and release cognitive resources for deeper learning. At the university level, where academic tasks often involve analysing complex texts, understanding theoretical models, or solving advanced problems, cognitive overload is a frequent additional challenge for L2 learners. L1 use can thus favour more supportive learning conditions without impeding English proficiency, as well as free working-memory capacity for meaningful engagement with content rather than linguistic decoding (Houichi & Sarnou, 2020). However, as Macaro (2018) notes, excessive L1 use may compromise language acquisition goals, necessitating careful balancing.

An inadequate or excessive use of translation can undermine the aims of EMI. Effective EMI practitioners employ techniques such as information chunking, multimodal presentation of materials, and selective L1 scaffolding to optimise cognitive load (Walqui, 2006). These strategies help create learning environments that respect the cognitive constraints of bilingual learners while progressively developing their academic English proficiency. Analysing the pros and cons, it becomes clear that occasional, purposeful translation from English into the students' mother tongue – such as translating complex or abstract concepts – can significantly improve comprehension, particularly when dealing with discipline-specific terminology. For example, scientific terms such as photosynthesis or quantum mechanics may be more easily understood when linked to learners' existing L1 knowledge. This approach is consistent with Cummins' (2008) theory of Common Underlying Proficiency, which suggests that literacy and conceptual understanding in the first language can reinforce second-language learning by building on existing knowledge. Similarly, Echevarria, Vogt and Short (2004, p. 107) claim that "clarification of key concepts in students' L1 by a bilingual instructional aide, peer, or through the use of materials written in the students' L1 provides an important support for the academic learning of those students who are not yet fully proficient in English." They highlight the value of clarifying key terms in the mother tongue to build a solid conceptual foundation, something that can be useful in EMI classrooms. Here, translation plays an important role in vocabulary acquisition: introducing new terms through L1 equivalents can support learning, particularly for beginners or students with low proficiency. Educators can help students understand new vocabulary more easily by linking unfamiliar English words to familiar concepts in the L1, which reduces anxiety-inducing situations (García & Wei, 2014). When learners are required to process content and language simultaneously with no scaffolding, they may experience cognitive overload. Macaro (2009) suggests that the selective use of L1 – for example, when translating assignment instructions or complex tasks – can ease the burden on students and enable them to focus on higher-order thinking related to the content. Cultural and contextual nuances in language also require translation. Idiomatic expressions, metaphors, and culturally embedded references in English may not have direct equivalents in the target language and can hinder comprehension. Consequently, translating or explaining such content enables students to engage fully with the material and to develop disciplinary literacy. In fact, effective disciplinary learning requires intentional language scaffolding, not just immersion (Airey, 2011). In addition, translation can foster metalinguistic awareness by encouraging learners to compare the grammatical and syntactic structures of English with those of their native language. Swain and Lapkin (2013) argue that this kind of comparative reflection deepens language awareness, improves accuracy, and encourages more thoughtful language use.

Supporting low-proficiency students is another area where the use of L1 becomes essential, and this involves practising inclusive learning in the EMI classroom. For these learners, selective translation ensures they remain engaged and feel included in the learning process, facilitating collaborative learning. García (2008) also notes that bilingual interaction in EMI classrooms can enrich classroom dialogue and promote a deeper understanding of the subject matter. Nevertheless, Dearden (2014) warns that L1 use should be strategic and occasional and should always be paired with tools that promote English autonomy, such as bilingual glossaries and visual aids. These tools support technical vocabulary acquisition and peer discussions in L1 prior to English summarisation, which enhance critical thinking and help verify conceptual understanding. Translation, in this sense, is a strategic learning tool that bridges language gaps and fosters deeper comprehension through cognitive and cultural mediation (García & Wei, 2014). This process, sometimes referred to as transknowledging, enables students to access and exchange knowledge, enriching classroom discourse (García & Kleifgen, 2018).

The pedagogical implications of using translation strategies in the EMI classroom are significant. For this reason, several studies, both theoretical and empirical, advocate for embedding translation training into EMI curricula to promote effective and inclusive learning (Dearden, 2014; Macaro et al., 2022; Rose & McKinley, 2023). The PACTE model (PACTE, 2003), for instance, highlights that effective translation involves more than bilingual fluency; it requires instrumental, strategic, and metacognitive competencies, which are often underdeveloped among EMI learners. This is also the case with Human Language Technologies such as Google Translate, which can in principle support comprehension but whose uncritical use risks inaccuracies. In situations where the teacher is not the direct translation provider, students must be taught to post-edit machine translation outputs in order to refine them while upholding academic standards. When accurately integrated as a pedagogical resource, however, translation can shift from a survival mechanism to a sustainable educational strategy, although faculty may continue to perceive translation as a marker of linguistic deficiency rather than a cognitive asset (Flores & Rosa, 2015). Such a viewpoint reinforces Anglo-centric norms and ignores the epistemic value of multilingual perspectives. When reframed through a multilingual pedagogy, however, translation can support student identity, confidence, and equitable participation in EMI classrooms (García & Kleifgen, 2018; Lin, 2019).

Another aspect to be included in the discussion concerns code-switching. Some scholars accept that it can be taken as a manifestation of translation, and its deliberate use proves particularly valuable when clarifying complex concepts or engaging reluctant participants (Benghalem & Kamińska, 2024). Code-switching, defined as the intentional alternation between languages within a single discourse (Myers-Scotton, 1993), has emerged as a recommendable pedagogical strategy in EMI contexts. Benghalem and Kamińska's study (2024) on classroom-based research demonstrates that strategic code-switching serves two critical functions: (1) clarifying complex disciplinary concepts by providing L1 explanations of abstract terminology, and (2) lowering affective filters for reluctant participants through instantaneous L1 reassurance before returning to English. This practice is also beneficial from a pedagogical point of view: it enhances conceptual understanding by creating cognitive bridges between L1 and L2 knowledge systems (Cook, 2001), increases classroom equity by supporting linguistically diverse learners (Creese & Blackledge, 2010), and fosters metacognitive awareness. Despite the benefits, critics (Macaro, 2001; Flores & Rosa, 2015) argue that excessive code-switching may reduce L2 exposure time and potentially reinforce linguistic hierarchies when favouring dominant L1s. Kroll et al. (2015) contend that constant language switching can overwhelm cognitive resources, reducing the efficiency with which content is processed and learned. Once again, effective implementation requires conscious use of L1 at key transitional moments while maintaining English as the primary classroom language. Recent studies suggest that optimal code-switching occupies 10–15% of total talk time in EMI settings (Tai & Li, 2021), serving as scaffolding that gradually diminishes as student proficiency increases.

This paper calls for a reassessment of the long-standing belief that both teachers and students should completely avoid using the first language in the classroom. It challenges this belief by pointing out that it is based on a weak comparison to how people acquire their first language, an unrealistic separation of the two languages in the mind, and the desire to increase second-language exposure, an important goal, but one that doesn't require excluding L1 use. Various teaching approaches, such as the New Concurrent Method, Community Language Learning, and Dodson's Bilingual Method, have already integrated L1 to support learning, recognising it as an effective resource: teachers can use it to explain concepts, manage the classroom, and clarify grammar, while students can use it to support collaborative and strategic learning. Instead of being avoided, the first language can play a valuable role in helping learners become authentic and competent L2 users (Cook, 2001).

Possible drawbacks have also been detected and explored. From an equity perspective, inconsistent translation can pose challenges in multilingual classrooms. Providing translation for certain linguistic groups while excluding others can inadvertently reinforce existing inequalities. Such selective practices may alienate speakers of non-dominant languages, thereby undermining inclusivity and fairness in the classroom. Moreover, the overuse of L1 can be at odds with institutional goals of internationalisation and global academic standards (HEI internal policies), particularly when universities adopt EMI to promote English proficiency, attract international students, and strengthen their position within the global academic landscape.

Another caveat has also been brought to the fore, as excessive translation can become an obstacle to developing critical thinking skills in English: engaging with English texts, constructing arguments, and articulating complex ideas are all key to achieving cognitive academic language proficiency (Dalton-Puffer, 2011). If students consistently rely on their L1, they may avoid the deeper cognitive engagement required to analyse, synthesise, and evaluate academic content in the target language, which reduces their ability to participate fully in academic discourse and to function effectively in English-dominant academic and professional environments.

While translation can be a useful tool in EMI settings, overusing it poses several risks — from creating linguistic dependency and reducing exposure to English to generating inequities in multilingual classrooms and weakening institutional internationalisation goals. Educators must therefore strike a careful balance, ensuring that translation supports rather than replaces English-language immersion, and ultimately fosters learners' academic autonomy and linguistic proficiency in the global lingua franca. Several case studies illustrate the outcomes associated with these different positions regarding L1 translation. This is what we will examine in the section that follows.

Empirical Evidence from Case Studies on EMI Approaches

Recent case-study research provides evidence about the effectiveness of various instructional approaches in EMI contexts. Tai and Li's work (2021) challenges the monolingual "English-only" rule in an EMI mathematics classroom, advocating for policies that recognise translanguaging as a valuable resource for learning and communication. Linguistic diversity is necessary to support knowledge construction and student engagement. Similarly, the paper *Theories of Translanguaging and Trans-semiotizing: English as an Additional Language in Composition and Communication Across the Curriculum* by Lin (2019) presents case studies from EAL classrooms illustrating how translanguaging and trans-semiotising contribute to significant benefits. Students who previously struggled in English-only settings became more engaged and participatory when given the opportunity to use their home languages alongside multimodal resources.

Macaro et al. (2018) stress that EMI programme effectiveness for language development hinges significantly on course design and pedagogical methods. They argue that language proficiency gains depend on the teaching approaches used, with interactive, student-centred methods likely accelerating acquisition more than traditional teacher-centred ones. This view aligns with Soruç and Griffiths (2018), who found that active participation through discussions and group work enhances language learning in EMI contexts.

With regard to translanguaging or the use of "multiple languages and modes (speaking, writing, gestures, etc.) to enhance understanding and participation in the classroom" (García, 2011,

p. 147), García and Sylvan (2011, p. 397) observed in a U.S. bilingual high school that "students use diverse language practices for purposes of learning, and teachers use inclusive language practices for purposes of teaching," meaning that students naturally drew on their full linguistic repertoire to support learning, while teachers adapted their methods to be more inclusive. In university-level EMI settings, particularly where English is a foreign language, translanguaging offers a practical solution: allowing students and instructors to leverage their first languages alongside English to navigate complex academic content.

However, effective translanguaging pedagogy, as outlined by García and Li (2014), requires intentional instructional design. Rather than relying on ad-hoc language mixing, educators should strategically integrate translanguaging techniques to scaffold comprehension, foster critical thinking, and promote meaningful engagement with course material.

Dang and Nguyen's study (2024) explores how English as a Medium of Instruction courses influence the development of English language skills among students majoring in tourism and hospitality at a Vietnamese university. Using a quantitative research design, the authors collected data through a questionnaire completed by 154 EMI students. Their findings show that students perceive the greatest progress in acquiring specialised English vocabulary, while reporting the least improvement in writing skills and in using English grammar in everyday conversations. Students also highlight that classroom activities, such as listening to EMI lectures, engaging with course materials, and delivering oral presentations in English, contribute significantly to improving their English proficiency. The use of L1 was identified as the most frequently employed strategy.

In *English Medium Instruction: Teachers' Challenges and Coping Strategies*, Pun and Thomas (2020, p. 6) present several responses from EMI teachers in China: "language is a tool to achieve knowledge, so it's okay to use any language as long as students understand"; "you can never force weaker students to adapt to 100% English"; and "If they really can't express their ideas in English, I encourage them to use Chinese, because I just want to check whether they understood. Sometimes, if they don't understand what I'm asking, I will repeat the question in Chinese."

Other case studies examine multilingual classrooms in regions such as South Africa and Southeast Asia, where code-switching is a common, though often unofficial, practice (Khosa & Zitha, 2024). Regarding code-switching and its pedagogical benefits, the authors argue that it significantly facilitates understanding of complex concepts. Allowing learners to use their native languages often increases participation, particularly among those who are not yet fully proficient in the dominant language, such as English. They also claim that engaging in code-switching promotes cognitive flexibility, supports metalinguistic awareness, and encourages deeper cognitive processing of the material being taught. Additionally, they argue that "significant investment in pre-service teacher education to raise awareness on the importance of integrating learners' L1s into lessons is required" (Khosa & Zitha, 2024, p. 301).

Rather than rigidly enforcing English-only instruction, adopting a pragmatic multilingual approach could significantly enhance learning outcomes in Japan's EMI classrooms. The strategic use of Japanese alongside English serves several critical functions, it aids comprehension by making concepts more transparent while maintaining sufficient English exposure; it reduces cognitive overload by allowing students to engage with material through their stronger language; and it ensures inclusivity by accommodating learners at different proficiency levels. This balanced approach acknowledges the reality of current classroom practices. To implement EMI objectives effectively, policymakers should develop clear guidelines that legitimise and structure the appropriate integration of L1 support. Such guidelines should be accompanied by targeted teacher-training programmes and curriculum designs that embrace this flexible, research-informed model of bilingual instruction. Ultimately, shifting from an idealised English-only policy to a more practical multilingual framework could bridge the gap between policy ambitions and classroom realities, leading to more effective and equitable EMI implementation across Japan's higher education institutions (Mckinley & Aizawa, 2020). The most comprehensive comparison comes from the multi-site EQUIP project (Macaro et al., 2022), which analysed 1,200 classroom hours across six countries. Their data revealed that optimal instructional models employed the following proportions, 80–85% English immersion for exposure; 10–15% targeted L1 use for complex concepts; and 5% translanguaging spaces for collaborative work. These findings suggest that neither full EMI nor unguided translanguaging represents an ideal approach; rather, a context-sensitive, research-informed blending of strategies yields the best outcomes. But how can this be achieved? Are there any strategic instructions to follow? My preliminary proposal is provided in the following section.

Balancing L1 and English Use in EMI Classrooms: Pivotal Integration for Effective Learning

According to Yu & Kaur (2024: p.3),

> Rather than viewing EMI lecturers' and students' language as intrinsically deficient and contributing to communication difficulties, as SLA researchers are apt to do, the current research adopts an ELF perspective and focuses on how mutual understanding is achieved through the lectur-

> ers' strategic use of language. The explicitness strategies identified in previous ELF studies, such as self-repetition, self-repair, paraphrasing, providing a definition, making a comparison, summarization, code-switching, and spelling out a word, inform the analysis of EMI lecturers' use of explicitness strategies in their interactions with students in tutorials and supervision meetings.

This section presents evidence-based strategies for integrating students' first language into English Medium Instruction classrooms, prioritising approaches that harmonise academic content mastery with English proficiency development. Grounded in theoretical frameworks such as Cognitive Load Theory and translanguaging pedagogy, the strategies emphasise intentionality and balance to address the multiple demands of multilingual learning environments.

One effective approach to L1 integration is selective code-switching, brief, purposeful shifts from English to the L1 to clarify complex or abstract concepts. This technique is particularly effective in STEM and social-science disciplines, where, as noted earlier, subject-specific terminology may not have direct L1 equivalents. Macaro (2005; 2018) explains that strategic and occasional L1 use enables instructors to scaffold complex ideas and ensure that content remains accessible to all learners. However, to preserve the integrity of EMI, instructors should return to English immediately after clarification and avoid excessive reliance on the L1 (Lo, 2015).

Another strategy involves bilingual glossaries and dual-language lecture materials. These resources support vocabulary acquisition, reduce cognitive load, and promote independent study. When students collaboratively create glossaries, they foster metalinguistic awareness and derive considerable cognitive benefit. According to Macaro (2018), such materials serve as scaffolds that help students navigate the demands of English academic vocabulary while engaging meaningfully with course content. Providing L1-based pre-lecture materials, such as summaries, readings, or explanatory videos, prepares students for English-medium lectures by activating prior knowledge and building foundational understanding. This method aligns with the flipped-classroom model and is particularly useful for cognitively demanding content, L1 preparatory materials reduce the need for real-time translation during lectures and facilitate deeper engagement with disciplinary concepts.

In a similar vein, encouraging students to take notes or annotate materials in both the L1 and English supports memory retention and cognitive processing. Students can annotate English slides with L1 definitions, paraphrased summaries, or conceptual links, helping them consolidate understanding across both languages – a highly effective practice in disciplines characterised by dense or abstract content.

Additionally, allowing students to use the L1 during peer discussions or collaborative work can deepen understanding and facilitate higher-order thinking before moving to English for final outputs. This approach aligns with translanguaging pedagogy, which views learners' full linguistic repertoires as assets rather than deficits. Swain and Lapkin (2013) suggest that L1 collaboration enhances conceptual processing before students articulate ideas in the L2. Encouraging a gradual shift from L1 to English enables students to scaffold their thoughts and express themselves more precisely in academic English. Lecturers might also offer optional support sessions or office hours in the L1 to provide academic assistance, particularly for learners with lower English proficiency or those new to EMI environments, thereby creating safe spaces for addressing doubts without the added pressure of using English.

Likewise, explaining academic writing conventions, citation norms, and genre structures in the L1 can support learners' metalinguistic awareness; such explanations help students understand complex linguistic forms and discourse practices that can later be transferred to English.

The success of these strategies depends on maintaining a clear, intentional balance between L1 and English use, as demonstrated in previous sections and supported by empirical research. In this connection, Turnbull and Dailey-O'Cain (2009: 184) argue that "brief L1 discussions for complex concepts provide cognitive scaffolding while maintaining the primacy of English as the instructional language". Yet institutional support, through professional development, flexible language policies, and explicit guidance on when and how L1 may be used, is crucial for empowering educators to make informed decisions about L1 integration. Teachers must develop transparent language policies and engage in continuous reflection on their classroom practices.

Concluding Remarks

The strategic use of students' first language, particularly through translation in EMI classrooms, requires nuance, deliberate design, and a clear pedagogical rationale. As discussed throughout this paper, theoretical perspectives from sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978), cognitive load theory (Sweller, 2011), and translanguaging pedagogy (García & Wei, 2014) converge in recognising that well-calibrated L1 use can operate as a powerful cognitive and affective scaffold. Translation clarifies complex academic content, supports vocabulary acquisition, reduces cognitive overload, enhances cultural understanding, and fosters more inclusive participation in multilingual classrooms.

Yet, while empirical evidence from case studies across disciplines and countries supports the claim that partial EMI, anchored in selective and purposeful translation practices, can maintain English proficiency goals and ensure content mastery, over-reliance on translation can minimise L2 exposure, foster dependency on L1, oversimplify disciplinary concepts and introduce inequities among linguistically diverse learners. Unstructured or excessive L1 use may undermine institutional objectives tied to internationalisation and global academic standards. Therefore, while L1 translations are undoubtedly a valuable pedagogical tool, they must be used in a way that preserves the immersive potential of EMI. The challenge, then, is not whether translation should be used in EMI, but how and when it should be integrated. Best practices cases suggest that L1 use should be intentional and limited to cognitively or linguistically demanding situations. It should also be paired with strategies that support learners to become gradually autonomous in English. Translation should facilitate language development, conceptual understanding, and academic success, rather than acting as a barrier. In this environment, institutions must provide educators with clear language policies, professional training and flexible pedagogical frameworks that embrace multilingualism to achieve their goals. By recognising translation as a valid pedagogical tool rather than a linguistic shortcoming, EMI can transform into a more adaptive, equitable, and impactful framework for global education.

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CHAPTER SIX

When Similarities Meet: Language Transfer Issues Overcome

Chapter 6

When Similarities Meet: Language Transfer Issues Overcome

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Abstract: The present chapter attempts to shed light on one very important aspect of language contact - language transfer. The phenomenon in question is an interdisciplinary topic of investigation, which we approach here from the perspective of second language acquisition, bi/multilingualism and translation studies, and focus on explaining the dual nature of language transfer, its positive and negative influence on additional languages, i.e., interference, on various levels of linguistic analysis, interlanguage, and pedagogical implications for the classroom. The chapter concludes with practical strategies for overcoming the effects of negative language transfer.

Keywords: language transfer, interlanguage, fossilization, contrastive analysis, translanguaging

Introduction

Language contact is an inevitable and pervasive phenomenon in our interconnected world, where cross-linguistic communication permeates social, educational, and professional spheres. It also plays a decisive role in the development of bilingualism and multilingualism, shaping learners' cognitive and communicative pathways. Linguists generally agree that no language in contact remains entirely "pure"; all exhibit some degree of transferred forms, features, and structures. Such cross-linguistic influences are recognized as a natural and universal phenomenon, occurring systematically rather than by chance, regardless of the underlying motivations. Over the past two decades, this interplay between languages has emerged as a key focus in applied linguistics, offering significant insights that inform the design and implementation of foreign and second language teaching methodology and language learning strategies.

As learners acquire new languages, they navigate the complexities of language transfer (LT). Odlin (1989) defines LT as the influence resulting from similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously (and perhaps imperfectly) acquired. This chapter examines the dual nature of language transfer, focusing on positive (facilitative) and negative (interference) transfer. We explore these concepts in depth, provide concrete examples, and discuss strategies to address the challenges they pose. We look into both foreign language learners as well as emergent bilingual learners, who are in the process of acquiring a second language (usually the official language of the host country or a wider community) or their heritage language (the language of their parents and grandparents with an immigrational background). By integrating theoretical frameworks and empirical studies, this chapter aims to equip educators and learners with tools to transform cross-linguistic influence from a hurdle into a resource, while also examining the developmental role of interlanguage and evidence-based strategies to mitigate negative transfer.

The Dual Nature of Language Transfer

Language transfer refers to the influence that a learner's knowledge of their first language (L1) exerts on the learning and use of a second language (L2). This transfer can have both beneficial and undesirable effects. As such, understanding the dual nature of LT is crucial for language learners and educators alike. LT manifests as both a facilitator and an obstacle, depending on the alignment of linguistic features between a learner's existing languages (L1/Ln) and the target language (L2).

Positive transfer: Leveraging linguistic overlaps

Positive language transfer (PLT) is a phenomenon in second language acquisition (SLA) where knowledge of an L1 facilitates the learning or use of an L2. This process occurs when similarities between the L1 and L2, such as shared vocabulary, grammatical structures, or phonological features, enable learners to apply their existing linguistic knowledge to the new language. This kind of transfer signifies that learners can leverage their existing linguistic knowledge to aid in comprehension and foundational skill acquisition. PLT is particularly evident in cases where the languages are typologically close, such as Spanish and Italian or English and German. For example, a French speaker learning Spanish might find it easier to understand the phrase "Je suis content" [I am happy] in French when they encounter "Estoy contento" in Spanish, due to their shared Latin roots. Based on the empirical evidence, numerous studies have demonstrated the role of PLT in SLA and that it operates through several cognitive and linguistic mechanisms. The most evident one is cross-linguistic similarity - when the L1 and L2 share lexical or structural similarities, learners can map these features onto the new language:

Vocabulary acquisition - Lexical cognates

For example, Spanish speakers learning Italian can easily recognize cognates like "importante" (Spanish) and "importante" (Italian), or Spanish learners of English recognize "animal" (Sp. animal) reducing the cognitive load associated with vocabulary acquisition (Ringbom, 2007). Another example can be found in English and German, which both share a significant amount of vocabulary.

Words like “Hand” [hand], “Haus” [house], and “Bier” [beer] are cognates that not only ease vocabulary acquisition but also bolster confidence in learners. In the case of Arabic learners of French shared loanwords (e.g., sucre/sukkar) aided reading (Benali, 2017).

Moreover, Ringbom (2007) also found that Finnish-speaking learners of Swedish acquired vocabulary more quickly than Finnish-speaking learners of English due to the higher number of cognates between Finnish and Swedish. While Finnish and Swedish are not linguistically related, they have influenced each other due to historical and cultural ties, and both play important roles in the linguistic landscape of Finland. Swedish has had a significant influence on Finnish, particularly in terms of vocabulary. Many Swedish loanwords have been adopted into Finnish, especially in areas related to administration, law, and everyday life. Conversely, Swedish spoken in Finland (Finland Swedish) has also been influenced by Finnish, particularly in terms of pronunciation and some loanwords. Moreover, Ringbom (2007) found Finns transferred vocabulary from English (L2) to Swedish (L3) due to closer lexical overlap, demonstrating the role of prior L2 knowledge in L3 acquisition.

Grammar and syntax

PLT reduces the cognitive effort required to learn an L2 by allowing learners to rely on familiar patterns and rules. For instance, English speakers learning Dutch benefit from shared syntactic structures, such as subject-verb-object (SVO) word order (Odlin, 1989). Likewise, speakers of other SVO languages, such as Mandarin, tend to acquire English word order more readily than speakers of SOV languages such as Turkish (Ellis, 2008). A study by Jarvis and Pavlenko (2008) revealed that learners whose L1 and L2 share grammatical features, such as verb conjugation patterns, make fewer errors and achieve higher proficiency levels compared to learners with typologically distant L1s. Furthermore, languages such as Russian, German, Latin, Finnish and Sanskrit use case markers (inflections or particles) to indicate the grammatical function of nouns (e.g., subject, object, possessive) and this grammatical similarity facilities language learners' acquisition of the particular feature. Example:

Russian: Я вижу мальчика. [I see the boy.]

(Subject: Я = I, Object: мальчика = boy in accusative case)

German: Der Mann gibt dem Jungen das Buch. [The man gives the boy the book.]

(Subject: Der Mann = nominative, Indirect Object: dem Jungen = dative, Direct Object: das Buch = accusative)

Phonology

Positive transfer also occurs in phonology. For example, Spanish speakers learning Portuguese can easily produce similar vowel sounds, whereas English speakers may struggle due to differences in vowel inventory (Flege, 1987). Similarly, the phonetic structures in languages can also assist language learners. A Dutch speaker learning English might struggle less with the "th" sounds found in words like "think" /θ/ or "this" /δ/ since these sounds exist in Dutch, providing a smoother transition to accurate pronunciation (Housen & Kuiken, 2009). This phonological resonance is also evident in Dutch learners of German, who easily master shared phonemes (e.g., /ʃ/ in "Schule" [school]) faster than novel sounds (Escudero, 2005).

Metalinguistic awareness

Learners with strong metalinguistic awareness - knowledge about language structure and function - are better equipped to identify and utilize similarities between languages. This awareness allows them to transfer strategies for reading, writing, and comprehension from their L1 to the L2 (Jessner, 2006) and language learning strategies in the case of multilingual learners (Mitits, 2015).

Classroom Implications

Positive language transfer is a powerful mechanism in second language acquisition, enabling learners to leverage their L1 knowledge to facilitate L2 learning. Future research should continue to explore the role of PLT in diverse linguistic contexts and its interaction with other factors, such as age, proficiency level, and learning environment. By understanding the cognitive and linguistic foundations of PLT, educators can develop strategies that maximize its benefits.

Here are some ideas:

Leveraging cognates

Teachers can highlight cognates and shared structures to facilitate vocabulary acquisition and grammar learning. For example, teaching French to English speakers can emphasize shared Latin-derived vocabulary (e.g., “important” in English and “important” in French). Educators should highlight cognates but address false friends (e.g., French librairie [bookstore] ≠ English library) to prevent miscommunication (Lightbown & Spada, 2013).

Contrastive analysis

Contrastive analysis, which compares the L1 and L2, can help identify areas where PLT is likely to occur. This approach allows educators to focus on areas of divergence that may require more attention (Lado, 1957).

Multilingual Approaches

Encouraging learners to draw on their L1 knowledge can enhance their confidence and competence in the L2. Multilingual teaching strategies, such as code-switching and translation, can be effective tools for promoting positive language transfer (Cummins, 2005). For instance, code-switching, where a teacher alternates between languages within a lesson, can help students draw connections between their native language and the target language, facilitating comprehension and retention. An example of this might be a Spanish-speaking teacher explaining a complex concept in English and then reiterating it in Spanish to ensure clarity. Similarly, translation exercises can reinforce vocabulary and grammar by allowing students to compare linguistic structures across languages. For instance, a French teacher might ask students to translate a paragraph from French to English, highlighting similarities in sentence construction while addressing differences in word order or idiomatic expressions. Furthermore, translanguaging, the practice where bilingual individuals receive information in one language and then utilize or apply it in another, refers to the natural and everyday ways bilinguals blend and employ their languages, transcending the confines of “named” languages to navigate their bilingual experiences. In education, the term denotes teaching approaches that approach bilingualism as an asset rather than disregarding it or viewing it as an obstacle (Baker & Wright, 2021). These strategies not only validate students' linguistic backgrounds but also enhance their ability to transfer knowledge between languages, fostering a more inclusive and effective learning environment.

Negative transfer: When similarities deceive

Negative language transfer is said to occur when learners’ L1 influences their acquisition of an L2 in ways that lead to systematic errors. This phenomenon often arises when learners apply the grammatical rules, pronunciation patterns, or vocabulary of their native language to the target language, resulting in non-native-like production. For example, a Spanish speaker learning English might say “I have 25 years” instead of “I am 25 years old “, directly translating the Spanish structure “Tengo 25 años.”. Negative transfer is also known as interference. The term interference is decreasing in use because of its negative and derogatory connotations (see Baker, & Wright, 2021). Negative transfer key domains include:

- Morphosyntax: One of the most common transfers has to do with Subject-Verb-Object (SVO) vs. Subject-Object-Verb (SOV) word order. For example, Dutch learners of English, whose native language follows an SOV structure in subordinate clauses, often incorrectly apply this order in English and might say “I know that he the book reads” instead of the correct English SVO structure “I know that he reads the book.” (Kellerman, 1979). Finnish learners of English, whose L1 places prepositions post-verbally, might produce sentences like “I put the table on the book” instead of “I put the book on the table.” This reflects the Finnish syntactic pattern where the preposition follows the noun (Jarvis & Pavlenko, 2008). In the case of Arabic learners of French, VSO word order interfered with French SVO syntax (Benali, 2017). Another type of negative transfer is article omission. Studies show that speakers of article-less languages, such as Chinese or Russian, often omit articles in English. For example, a Chinese learner might say “She is teacher” instead of “She is a teacher” as Mandarin Chinese does not use articles (Robertson, 2000). Also, there is an issue with double negatives. Research by Schachter (1974) points out that speakers of languages like Spanish, where double negatives are grammatically correct, might transfer this pattern into English. For example, they might say “I don’t know nothing" instead of "I don't know anything", influenced by Spanish structures like "No sé nada." A further form of negative transfer found in the literature is related to verb movement. Turkish learners of English might struggle with verb placement in questions. In Turkish, the verb typically remains in its base position, leading to errors like "You where are going?" instead of the correct English structure "Where are you going?" (Schwartz & Sprouse, 1996).

- Phonology: Learners often carry over phonological traits from their native languages that can impede clear communication. For instance, a native Japanese speaker might have difficulty distinguishing between the English sounds /r/ and /l/, leading to misunderstandings and an increased accent (Ladefoged & Johnson, 2014). Slavic speakers (e.g., Russian, Polish, Czech, Ukrainian, Serbian, etc.) often face specific challenges when learning English due to differences in phonology between Slavic languages and English. Here are some common struggles and examples:

Think → "Tink" or "Sink" (Replacing /θ/ with /t/ or /s/)

This → "Dis" or "Zis" (Replacing /ð/ with /d/ or /z/)

Many Slavic languages do not distinguish between /w/ and /v/, or they lack the /w/ sound entirely. This can lead to confusion between words like *west* and *vest*. English also has a wide range of vowel sounds, including long and short vowels, diphthongs, and the schwa /ə/, which are not present in most Slavic languages and Greek. Slavic and Greek speakers may struggle to differentiate between similar vowels or to reduce vowels correctly, e.g. *cut* vs. *cat*.

- Pragmatics: Negative language transfer in pragmatics occurs when learners apply the social and cultural norms of their

L1 to an L2, leading to misunderstandings or inappropriate communication. For instance, research by Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1986) found that Hebrew speakers learning English often transferred their L1 preference for directness into English, resulting in pragmatically inappropriate requests, such as saying "Give me the salt" instead of the more polite "Could you pass me the salt, please?". Similarly, Chen (1993) observed that Chinese learners of English frequently rejected or downplayed compliments, responding to "Your English is very good" with "No, no, my English is poor", reflecting Chinese cultural norms of modesty, which can seem overly self-deprecating in English-speaking contexts. Olshtain and Cohen (1983) also noted that Hebrew speakers often used fewer expressions of regret and more explanations in apologies, which can come across as less empathetic in English. Additionally, Korean learners might overuse formal speech in casual English contexts due to L1 honorific norms (Ishihara & Cohen, 2010), while Russian learners, as highlighted by Thomas (1983), might use informal greetings like "Hi, John" in formal settings, reflecting the more flexible address forms in Russian. In refusals, Japanese learners, as studied by Beebe, Takahashi, and Uliss-Weltz (1990), often transferred indirectness and hesitation from their L1, leading to confusion in English-speaking contexts. Polish learners, as noted by Wierzbicka (1991), sometimes expressed gratitude more effusively than English norms, which could seem overly dramatic. Finally, Tannen (1984) observed that Greek learners transferred their L1 conversational style, including frequent interruptions, which, while a sign of engagement in Greek, can be perceived as rude in English-speaking contexts. These examples illustrate how L1 cultural and pragmatic norms can lead to miscommunication when applied in L2 contexts.

The above examples highlight the challenges learners face when navigating differences between their L1 and L2, underscoring the importance of targeted instruction to address these interferences (Ellis, 1997). By recognizing and addressing negative transfer, educators can help learners overcome these barriers and achieve greater proficiency in the target language.

Interlanguage: A Developmental Bridge

Selinker (1972) coined the term *interlanguage* to describe the evolving, rule-governed system learners create while acquiring an L2. Interlanguage is shaped by:

1. L1 transfer: Overapplying L1 rules (e.g., Chinese learners omitting articles).

2. Overgeneralization: Extending L2 rules inaccurately (e.g., "She goed home").

3. Simplification: Avoiding complex structures (e.g., using present tense for all time references).

Interlanguage is a concept pivotal to understanding language acquisition. Defined as the evolving linguistic system that a learner creates as they navigate between their native language and the target language, interlanguage reflects characteristics of both (Selinker, 1972). As learners engage with new linguistic structures, they may produce forms that do not fully resemble either L1 or L2, effectively creating an intermediate state. Take, for example, an Arabic learner of English who produces the sentence "He go to the store." This interlanguage form may arise from applying a simplified internalised rule that omits the necessity for verb conjugation in the present tense. The learner is demonstrating a systematic approach to language rules, revealing insights into their learning process. Interlanguage is often characterised by predictable errors that learners make consistently, offering educators valuable opportunities for targeted instruction. Such systematic errors can prompt educators to adapt their teaching strategies to address specific issues effectively (Dulay, Burt, & Krashen, 1982).

Fossilization: When errors persist

Fossilization, a concept central to SLA, refers to the persistent and permanent plateaus in L2 proficiency that learners often experience despite continued exposure and effort. Han (2004) elaborates on several key causes of fossilization, one of which is L1 entrenchment, where deeply ingrained habits from the learner's first language resist correction, leading to persistent errors. For instance, Vietnamese speakers often struggle with English plural markers due to the absence of such grammatical structures in their L1, making it difficult to internalise this feature of English. Another significant factor is the lack of corrective feedback, as highlighted by Long (1996), who argues that when errors are consistently ignored or not addressed during instruction, they become ingrained over time, further solidifying fossilization. This absence of feedback prevents learners from noticing and rectifying their mistakes, thereby hindering progress. Additionally, Selinker (1972) emphasises the role of interlanguage strategies, where learners rely on simplified or incorrect rules that become fossilised due to their utility in communication, even if they are inaccurate. These factors collectively contribute to the stabilisation of errors and the cessation of learning, making fossilization a critical area of study in understanding the limitations of L2 acquisition.

Language transfer in bilinguals/multilinguals

Apart from positive and negative transfer, there is also bidirectional transfer, where influence occurs in both directions, with the L1 affecting the L2 and vice versa, particularly in advanced bilinguals (Baker & Wright, 2021). The above underscores the complex interplay between languages, shaping both the learning process and linguistic outcomes. Understanding these transfer mechanisms is crucial for effective bilingual education and for supporting learners in navigating the challenges of acquiring and using multiple languages.

Positive transfer should be discussed in the context of Cummins' Interdependence Hypothesis (1981), which posits that there is a common underlying proficiency (CUP) shared between languages in bilingual individuals. According to Cummins' model, skills and knowledge acquired in one language – such as literacy, cognitive strategies, and conceptual understanding – can transfer to another language, provided there is sufficient exposure and motivation to learn. Positive transfer is particularly evident in academic and cognitive skills, where proficiency in one language can enhance performance in another. For example, a bilingual student who has developed strong reading comprehension skills in their L1 is likely to transfer these skills to their L2, facilitating faster and more effective learning. This interdependence between languages underscores the importance of promoting strong foundational skills in both languages, as it not only supports bilingual development but also enhances overall cognitive and academic achievement. Cummins' model provides a theoretical framework for understanding how bilingualism can be an asset rather than a hindrance, particularly when educators leverage the potential for positive transfer across languages.

Let us take a closer look at a couple of cases that illustrate some types of transfer in bilingual and multilingual language learners:

Case No. 1: Heritage language (HL) speakers' loanblends

Loanblends are common contact-induced formations frequently used by heritage speakers (HSs) to address vocabulary gaps. HSs often combine stems from the majority language, in which they are typically more proficient, with affixes from their heritage language (HL). For example, in English–Greek contact situations, English words are adapted into Greek by adding Greek affixes to assign grammatical gender, a feature absent in English. Examples include:

/bóksi/ – /koutí/ [box],
/tséci/ – /tsek/ [check],
/káro/ – /aftocínito/ [car]
(Gavriilidou & Mitits, 2020).

However, such loanblends can signal cultural otherness to speakers in Greece, reflecting, for example, the Greek-Australian identity (Alvanoudi, 2019). Conversely, Karatsareas (2019) notes that in London, Cypriot Greek speakers label these formations as "Grenglish," often associating them with lower socioeconomic status and education levels among second- and third-generation speakers. Borrowed nouns become active parts of the speakers' vocabulary, though morpho-phonological constraints may limit certain combinations (Alexiadou, 2017). Loanblends in Greek-American communities also tend to simplify Standard Greek forms, suggesting language economy as a motivating factor (Matejka-Hanser, 2011).

Case No. 2: Language learning strategy transfer

Mitits (2015) explores how language learning strategies (LLS) differ between monolingual and multilingual students and provides empirical evidence through quantitative data collected from Greek secondary school students, offering a comprehensive analysis of how multilingualism shapes language learning processes. Her study focuses on two distinct groups: monolingual students learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and multilingual students who are learning both EFL and Greek as a second language (L2), and it investigates the extent to which multilingualism influences the types, frequency, and effectiveness of the language learning strategies employed by students. The research is grounded in the theoretical framework of LLS, which includes cognitive, metacognitive, social, and affective strategies. The study highlights that multilingual learners tend to employ a wider and more varied range of strategies, often drawing on their prior language learning experiences, which enhances their ability to learn additional languages. In contrast, monolingual learners may rely on a narrower set of strategies, potentially limiting their language learning efficiency.

The book also points out the cognitive and metacognitive advantages of multilingualism, such as greater cognitive flexibility, enhanced problem-solving skills, and improved metalinguistic awareness, which help them employ LLS more effectively. These advantages enable multilingual learners to adapt more efficiently to new linguistic challenges.

Strategies to overcome negative transfer

While language transfer presents challenges, there are several effective strategies learners can employ to overcome these issues and enhance their proficiency in the new language.

One approach is contrastive analysis (CA), introduced by Lado (1957), which predicts errors by systematically comparing the structures of the learner's L1 and L2. Although criticized for over-emphasizing structural differences (James, 1998), CA remains valuable for targeted instruction. Complementing CA is error analysis (EA), proposed by Corder (1967), which involves examining learner errors to distinguish between transfer-related mistakes and developmental errors. For example, Spanish learners might say "make a photo" instead of "take a photo" due to L1 influence ("hacer una foto"). Both CA and EA help educators identify specific areas of difficulty and tailor instruction accordingly.

By reflecting on their interlanguage, learners can systematically address recurring mistakes. Keeping a journal of common errors during writing or speaking exercises allows learners to track progress and build confidence. Teachers can support this process by providing detailed feedback on typical errors, helping learners understand and internalize L2 rules more effectively.

Another key strategy is enhancing metalinguistic awareness through explicit instruction on L2 rules, which reduces reliance on L1 – for example, using minimal pairs (e.g., "ship" vs. "sheep") to help learners distinguish challenging phonemes (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010). Raising awareness about the nature of language transfer is essential. Educators can help learners recognize common transfer errors through comparative analysis of L1 and L2, enabling them to pre-emptively adjust their communication and minimize negative transfer.

Furthermore, regular practice in diverse contexts is vital for reinforcing correct linguistic patterns. Interaction with native speakers through language exchanges or immersion programs, as well as exposure to authentic media like films, podcasts, and literature, helps learners assimilate the nuances of the target language. Research shows that exposure to native-like speech patterns significantly improves pronunciation and fluency (Derwing & Munro, 2005). For instance, a Spanish learner watching English-language films with subtitles benefits from multimodal input, reinforcing vocabulary and syntax through auditory and visual means.

Finally, contextual learning ensures that vocabulary and grammatical structures are taught within meaningful situations, reducing reliance on direct translations or inappropriate L1 rules. For example, teaching phrases like "How are you?" within the context of social interactions, or using role-plays such as ordering food in a restaurant, encourages spontaneous language use and minimizes interference. These strategies collectively help learners bridge the gap between interlanguage and fluent speech, fostering more native-like proficiency.

Key Takeaways

- Positive transfer is a cognitive shortcut; negative transfer requires strategic unlearning.
- Interlanguage is dynamic but prone to fossilization without feedback.
- Learners' linguistic systems are hybrid, not deficient. The interplay of positive and negative language transfer is a complex yet fascinating aspect of the language learning process. While the influence of a learner's native language is significant, mastering the skills to navigate and mitigate transfer issues can lead to enhanced linguistic capabilities.
- Cross-linguistic influence is not a "problem" but a part of the learning process. By integrating contrastive pedagogy, fostering metalinguistic reflection, and embracing errors as growth opportunities, educators can empower learners to navigate the interplay of languages with confidence.
- Through awareness, practice, error analysis, and contextual learning, learners can turn potential pitfalls into stepping stones, paving their way to fluency. Understanding the intricacies of language transfer not only bolsters proficiency but cultivates a deeper appreciation for the language being learned. As individuals navigate through similarities and differences, they

develop not just linguistic skills, but also cross-cultural awareness and communication abilities that are invaluable in today's globalized society.

- Ultimately, by recognizing and overcoming the challenges presented by language transfer, learners can embrace the rewarding journey of bilingualism or multilingualism, enriching both their personal and professional lives.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

Out of a Suitcase: Equipping Travellers with Essential Language and Cultural Skills for Effective Global Communication

Chapter 7

Out of a Suitcase: Equipping Travellers with Essential Language and Cultural Skills for Effective Global Communication

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Abstract: Addressing the communicative demands of international mobility requires educational strategies that incorporate travel-oriented language instruction within English language teaching. This chapter analyses characteristic linguistic resources employed in everyday travel contexts, such as simplified language structures, functional patterns for requesting information, managing bookings, expressing politeness, and responding to unexpected situations. A primary focus is on Globish as a streamlined form of English that promotes intercultural interactions; its advantages, limitations, and pedagogical uses are critically examined. It also underlines the significance of cultural pragmatics, highlighting how politeness strategies, indirectness, nonverbal cues, and culturally specific expectations contribute to effective communication. Based on classroom observations, it identifies common learner challenges such as over-reliance on set phrases, limited pragmatic competence, vocabulary deficiencies, and difficulties understanding various accents. To address these issues, this chapter suggests teaching techniques based on task-based learning, role-play, and intercultural awareness training to develop adaptable, context-aware communicative skills. It integrates practical and theoretical viewpoints to equip travellers and ESP instructors with linguistic and cultural tools that foster effective, respectful, and confident cross-cultural communication.

Keywords: cross-cultural communication, cultural awareness, language patterns, Globish, non-verbal communication, travel communication.

Introduction

In today's increasingly interconnected world, travel has become a common activity that demands effective communication across diverse linguistic and cultural contexts. This chapter examines the linguistic essentials required by travellers and English language teachers, with particular attention to Globish – a simplified form of English that functions as an international lingua franca – and to the cultural dynamics that shape communication in mobility settings.

It explores key linguistic patterns and communicative strategies that travellers routinely rely on, demonstrating how basic language skills can be used to navigate everyday situations such as ordering food, asking for directions, or managing emergencies. The chapter also considers the cultural dimensions that influence travel communication, analysing how politeness norms, degrees of directness, and non-verbal behaviour vary across cultures and affect interpersonal interaction.

The final sections combine theoretical perspectives with practical applications for language teaching, offering strategies for incorporating travel communication into English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses. Classroom scenarios illustrate some of the challenges learners face when preparing for real-world travel encounters, including limited vocabulary, misinterpretation of cultural cues, and over-reliance on formulaic language.

This chapter, therefore, aims to support travellers, educators, and researchers interested in the intersection of language, culture, and global mobility. Unpacking the linguistic 'suitcase' that travellers need to carry highlights the balance between simplicity and adaptability that underpins successful intercultural communication.

Travel Language and Communication Essentials

In this globalised world, effective communication is crucial in travel contexts to enhance experiences where individuals frequently interact across linguistic and cultural boundaries. Essential communication strategies help travellers manage unfamiliar situations, establish connections, and solve problems. This section aims to provide English language instructors and travellers with basic linguistic tools for travel communication, emphasising language patterns, simplified English forms such as Globish, and the cultural differences that both support and challenge communicative success. By exploring and implementing these components, travellers can learn and improve their engagement with locals, enhance intercultural understanding, and ensure respectful and effective synergies to enrich their journeys.

Language Patterns in Travel Contexts

Effective travel communication relies on specific linguistic patterns adapted to basic needs and common travel scenarios. The most basic include seeking directions, ordering food, or checking into a hotel, where specific phrases can mitigate misunderstandings (Jones & Smith, 2019). Essential expressions such as "Can you help me?", "I'd like to book a room" or "How much does this cost?" enable travellers to request assistance, make inquiries, and complete transactions.

Simplified grammar – typically avoiding complex tenses and idiomatic expressions – is often adopted in travel contexts to facilitate comprehension. As Nickerson (2005) notes, reducing grammatical complexity and focusing on functional phrases can enhance mutual understanding in international settings. Similarly, using standardised patterns, such as direct questions or straightforward vocabulary, helps overcome potential language barriers in transactional exchanges (Crystal, 2003). Travel-related vocabulary commonly clusters around domains such as transportation, accommodation, dining, and emergencies, providing a foundational lexicon that eases cross-linguistic interaction (Nickerson, 2005).

These typical situations generate identifiable, concise, polite, and direct linguistic patterns that support comprehension. Below are common patterns followed by practical examples suitable for a range of travel communication scenarios.

Seeking assistance: Travellers often need help facing a new environment. Phrases that initiate polite requests for assistance can be invaluable in these settings. These are five language patterns in English that are effective when seeking assistance clearly and politely:

- Polite requesting:

"Could you please help me with [specific task]?"

"Would you mind explaining [specific issue] to me?"

- Expressing uncertainty and requesting clarification:

"I'm not sure I fully understand [topic]. Could you clarify this for me?"

"I'm having trouble with [specific part]. Could you walk me through it?"

- Asking for examples or additional information:

"Could you provide an example of [concept]?"

"Is there more information on [topic] that you could share?"

- Asking for advice or recommendations:

"Do you have any recommendations on how to approach [task or problem]?"

"What would you suggest for handling [specific issue]?"

- Seeking confirmation or feedback:

"Am I on the right track with [task]?"

"Could you review my work and let me know if I'm missing anything?"

A classroom tip is to use role-play exercises as they are an effective strategy for engaging students. This practice can simulate real-life situations and encourage learners to seek assistance with everyday tasks by approaching classmates as if they were strangers.

Making requests and bookings: In travel contexts, requesting services such as accommodation, transportation, or reservations is frequent. Travellers benefit from mastering polite phrases to secure these services efficiently. The following are five language patterns in English commonly used when making requests and bookings:

- Polite inquiry for availability:

"Could you let me know if there's availability for [date or time]?"

"Is it possible to book [service] on [specific date]?"

- Requesting specific details or preferences:

"I'd like to request [specific feature, e.g., a room with a view, a vegetarian meal, etc.]. Is that possible?"

"Could you arrange for [specific request] as part of the booking?"

- Confirming costs and policies:

"Could you confirm the total cost for [service] and any cancellation policies?"

"Is there an additional charge for [service or item]?"

- Providing personal information for the booking:

"I'd like to make a reservation under the name [your name]. My contact details are [phone/email]."

"Can I provide my details for the booking? My name is [your name], and my preferred contact method is [contact information]."

- Requesting confirmation of the booking:

"Could you please send me a confirmation once the booking is complete?"

"Would you be able to email me the booking details for my reference?"

A useful classroom tip is to organise simulations where students practice these requests with one another. An activity could involve role-playing as hotel staff or travel agents, varying interaction patterns and enhancing contextual understanding.

Requesting information: Information-seeking is crucial for travellers needing directions, operational hours, or service details. Patterns here focus on clarity and politeness to maximise response accuracy. These are five language patterns in English for effectively requesting information:

- Polite Inquiry:

"Could you please provide more information about [topic]?"

"I'd appreciate it if you could let me know about [specific detail]."

- Requesting specific details

"Could you tell me more about [specific aspect]?"

"I'd like to know [detail, e.g., the schedule, the requirements, etc.]. Could you explain?"

- Seeking clarification:

"Could you clarify [specific point] for me, please?"

"I'm not quite clear on [topic]. Could you help me understand?"

- Asking for examples or supporting information:

"Could you give an example of [concept]?"

"Do you have any additional information or materials on [topic]?"

- Confirming Information

"Am I correct in understanding that [summary of information]?"

"Could you confirm if [specific information] is accurate?"

As a tip for classroom use, map-based exercises can help students practice information-seeking questions about locations and schedules. This type of activity is effective when getting accustomed to the employment of this language pattern.

Expressing gratitude and politeness: Politeness markers are integral to travel language to ensure respectful cultural exchanges. Simple expressions of gratitude and polite closings contribute to harmony and enrich positive interactions. These are five language patterns in English for gratitude expression and politeness in a warm and courteous style, suitable for diverse settings:

- Expressing simple gratitude:

"Thank you so much for [specific help or support]."

"I really appreciate your assistance with [specific task]."

- Showing appreciation for effort or time:

"Thank you for taking the time to [task or action]. It means a lot."

"I'm very grateful for the effort you put into [specific task]."

- Expressing how their help made a difference:

"I couldn't have done it without your support; thank you for being there."

"Your help with [task or situation] made such a positive impact. I truly appreciate it."

- Offering future help in return:

"Thank you so much for [specific help]. Please let me know if I can return the favour sometime."

"I appreciate everything you've done. I'd be happy to help you in the future if you need anything."

- Expressing gratitude with formality:

"I am sincerely grateful for your assistance and support."

"Thank you kindly for your help and attention to [task or detail]."

In this case, a good tip for classroom use is to encourage students to incorporate politeness markers and closing remarks in all role-playing dialogues. A previous task to be incorporated is to investigate different cultures and how gratitude and politeness are usually transmitted to reinforce their importance, avoid misunderstandings and make them habitual in conversations.

Handling unexpected situations: Travellers may encounter challenges such as delays, lost items, or medical emergencies. Prepared phrases for handling these scenarios are crucial for resolving issues effectively. These are five language patterns for unexpected situations while travelling:

- Expressing concern or surprise:

"I didn't expect that to happen. Is there a way we can resolve this?"

“I can’t believe our [topic] has been cancelled. What should we do next?”

- Requesting assistance:

"Could you please help me with this issue?"

“Would you mind helping me find my[topic]?”

- Clarifying information:

"Can you clarify what you mean by that?"

“Could you explain how to [topic]?”

- Offering alternatives:

"If that is not possible, what other options do we have?"

“If this is not possible, could you recommend another option?”

- Expressing gratitude:

"Thank you for your understanding. I appreciate your help."

“Thank you for your support. I really appreciate your patience while we sort this out.”

A useful tip for classroom use is to simulate problem-solving scenarios in which students must respond to unexpected issues, practising empathy and clarity in communication.

The Role of Globish in Travel

Globish – a simplified version of English developed by Jean-Paul Nerrière in the early 2000s – serves as a lingua franca in multilingual travel environments, offering a practical solution for individuals with varying levels of English proficiency and allowing them to interact using a shared language (Gilles & White, 2021). It restricts vocabulary to approximately 1,500 common words, avoiding idioms and regional slang to reduce misunderstandings (Nerrière, 2009). This model has proven useful in tourism and hospitality, where efficient and accessible communication is essential (Crystal, 2003). However, Globish also has limitations; while it facilitates functional communication, it lacks cultural depth and expressiveness, which may inhibit emotionally sensitive interactions (Seidlhofer, 2005).

Globish’s main advantage is its accessibility and clarity, although travellers and service providers should remain aware of its limitations in conveying complex or culturally specific messages in travel contexts. A traveller using Globish might, for example, struggle to discuss cultural traditions in depth, leading to shallow exchanges. Globish also lacks regional expressions, which are important for building connections and showing respect. A traveller in Japan might miss particularities tied to polite language, risking coming across as abrupt. Lastly, this language can limit travellers’ communication in complex instructions or cultural etiquette in sensitive contexts. In some countries, such as Thailand, there are respectful ways to address others based on age and status, often involving specific terms or gestures. A traveller using Globish may struggle to ask for guidance on these practices or convey the expected level of respect, potentially offending locals unintentionally.

Despite these limitations, English learners can effectively utilise Globish by employing strategies that enhance clarity and adapting to local contexts. For travellers, this can provide a greater sense of independence and confidence, as they can simplify their sentences using universally understood vocabulary to ensure their message is clear. Instead of saying "I have a dietary restriction that excludes all dairy," they could say, "I cannot eat milk or cheese." They can also rely on gestures, body language, and visual aids – such as pictures or translation apps – to help convey more complex ideas or cultural elements. This is particularly helpful when discussing unique concepts or sensitive topics, including local customs. In addition, learning a few polite phrases or common greetings in the local language can show respect and create a positive impression, even if most of the conversation takes place in Globish. These techniques help overcome Globish's limitations, enabling learners to communicate more confidently and respect cultural differences.

In a classroom context, a tailored task for travellers who wish to learn English and practise Globish may involve a role-play activity focused on finding a suitable place for lunch. For travellers preparing for real travel-related conversations, it is first necessary to introduce Globish basics (reviewing the 1,500-word vocabulary and emphasising clear, simple sentence structures). The instructor then provides examples of asking and answering questions without idiomatic expressions or advanced vocabulary.

Once students are familiar with the basics, they can be divided into pairs or small groups. In each pair or group, one or two students act as the "tourist" and the other(s) as the "local". The scenario centres on a tourist who is new in town and looking for a good, affordable place to eat lunch. The local has suggestions but must keep their language simple, adhering to Globish guidelines.

The tourist's task is to ask the local questions (for example, "Where is a good place for lunch nearby?", "What kind of food do they have?", "Is it expensive?"). The local should respond clearly and avoid complex words (for example, "There is a nice place called *Green Café*. It is close and not expensive"; "They have salads, sandwiches and pasta. It is a good place for lunch."). After five or ten minutes, students switch roles to practise both asking and answering questions, keeping responses brief but informative. If there is sufficient time, students may search for real restaurants and check the types of food and dishes offered.

After both rounds, a debriefing discussion can be held so that participants can comment on the challenges of using Globish, how the restricted vocabulary affected the conversation, whether the message remained clear, and whether they noticed any communicative limitations.

Cultural Pragmatics in Travel

Cultural pragmatics – strategies of politeness, indirect language, and nonverbal communication – is essential for effective travel interactions. Each culture has its own expectations around politeness, including formality, indirect requests, and context-sensitive gestures or expressions (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Travellers benefit from understanding these cultural subtleties, which help prevent unintentional offence and reinforce positive intercultural exchanges. For instance, in certain cultural contexts, direct requests may be interpreted as impolite or overly assertive. By contrast, indirect formulations and nonverbal behaviours, such as eye contact or physical proximity, may vary significantly in their meaning, level of appropriateness and interpretation across cultures (Matsumoto & Hwang, 2013). Pragmatic competence, therefore, supports travellers in achieving respectful and effective communication, creating smoother interactions in diverse cultural environments (Gumperz, 1982).

These are some examples of cultural pragmatics that can contribute to improving a traveller's ability to interact with respect and effectiveness:

- Politeness strategies vary widely across cultures, influencing how travellers request services, ask for assistance, and interact with locals. For example:

- Direct vs. indirect requests: In cultures like the United States or Germany, directness is often appreciated; requests such as "Can you please tell me the way to the museum?" are seen as efficient and respectful. In contrast, countries like Japan or Korea favour indirect requests to maintain harmony. A Japanese speaker might say, "I'm sorry to bother you, but if it's not too much trouble, would you know the way to the museum?" to convey politeness through indirectness (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

- Levels of formality: Many cultures, such as those in France or Spain, maintain a distinct formality when addressing strangers, especially in service encounters. Using formal pronouns (e.g., vous in French or usted in Spanish) and polite expressions is expected when people must ask for assistance or make requests.

- Non-verbal communication like eye contact, gestures, and physical proximity also carries significant cultural meanings, and misinterpretations can occur if travellers are unaware of local norms:

- Eye contact: In Western countries, as the United States or Canada, direct eye contact is usually a sign of attentiveness and respect. However, prolonged eye contact can be considered disrespectful or overly assertive in Japanese and Korean cultures. Travellers should be mindful of the duration of eye contact and adapt it to local customs to avoid misunderstandings (Scollon & Scollon, 2001).

- Physical proximity: Personal space expectations vary across cultures. Latin American and Mediterranean cultures tend to favour closer distances when speaking, whereas in Northern European and East Asian cultures, maintaining more physical distance is customary. Travellers interacting in a country where closer proximity is typical may unintentionally cause discomfort if they keep a greater distance, and vice versa (Rogers et al., 2002).

- Indirect communication can be crucial in maintaining social harmony in cultures that value collectivism and politeness, as those in many East and Southeast Asian countries.

- Implied meanings and "face-saving": In cultures where direct refusals might be perceived as rude, people often use indirect language to imply a "no." For instance, in Thailand, a vendor might respond to a request with "Maybe tomorrow" instead of directly declining, as direct refusals are often softened to avoid causing embarrassment or loss of face. Travellers unfamiliar with these subtleties might interpret indirect language literally, potentially leading to misunderstandings (Gumperz, 1982).

- Euphemisms and Softened Language: In the United Kingdom, for example, people may use softened phrases like "not quite right" or "a bit of a problem" instead of stating outright that something is incorrect or troubling. Travellers unaware of these euphemisms might miss the underlying message, interpreting it as less severe than intended.

- Gesture and body language variations: gestures can be particularly challenging, as they hold different meanings across cultures. Travellers should be mindful of commonly used gestures to avoid unintentional offence.

- Hand Gestures: For example, the "thumbs up" gesture, which conveys approval in Western contexts, can be offensive in parts of the Middle East. Similarly, in Greece, an open hand with fingers spread (known as the moutza) can be offensive if directed toward someone, whereas in other countries, it is simply a signal to stop.

- Head Movements: Nodding and shaking the head to signal agreement or disagreement vary. In India, a side-to-side head tilt can signify agreement or a polite acknowledgement, while Western cultures typically interpret this movement as a gesture of uncertainty or disagreement.

Role-playing exercises can be designed to practice non-verbal communication, focusing on eye contact and physical proximity after analysing some cultures such as the American and the Japanese (e.g. one student uses direct eye contact as typical in the US while the other avoids prolonged eye contact to represent a Japanese context, in the first case, and the Mediterranean cultures in contrast to Northern Europe (e.g. one pair of students standing closer and the other pair maintaining more space).

Linguistic Challenges in Travel Communication: A Classroom Perspective

Travel communication often requires learners to navigate complex linguistic and cultural challenges. These challenges become even more evident when students attempt to connect with real-world travel scenarios in the classroom. This section outlines some of the most common linguistic difficulties students face in travel contexts and introduces classroom strategies to address them effectively in a teaching environment.

Real-time Problem Solving

One of the most significant challenges in travel communication is the need for real-time problem-solving. Travellers frequently find themselves in situations where they must make quick decisions and provide immediate responses, such as asking for directions, handling booking issues, or managing travel emergencies. This requires solid knowledge of functional language and the ability to manage misunderstandings and clarify meanings.

One effective way to prepare students for these situations in the classroom is by simulating real-world travel scenarios through role-playing activities. By placing learners in spontaneous situations, such as dealing with a flight cancellation or seeking help at a foreign train station, they can practise thinking on their feet and responding appropriately. These exercises help students build linguistic confidence and allow them to make mistakes in a low-pressure environment, learning to overcome communication barriers more effectively.

Once students have this general background, a task that helps them develop essential language skills, handle real-time travel issues effectively, and solve problems on the spot is, once again, a role-play activity that requires two preparatory steps. First, students review essential travel-related phrases and strategies for managing misunderstandings, such as repeating information for clarity, rephrasing, and checking understanding (e.g., "Let me make sure I understand…"). Equally important is discussing common issues travellers face and brainstorming potential ways to respond.

At this point, the practice can begin by dividing participants into small groups or pairs, with each group consisting of a "Traveller" facing a problem and a "Helper" (e.g., hotel staff, airline agent, resident). Each scenario should include cards or prompts with a travel problem that requires immediate action. These are some examples of these scenarios:

- *Lost reservation:* The traveller arrives at a hotel, but their reservation isn't found in the system.
- *Emergency contact needed:* The traveller loses their phone and needs to contact someone for help.
- *Miscommunication in directions:* The traveller received directions but is unsure if these are correct and needs clarification.
- *Booking Issue:* The traveller's flight is delayed, and they must rebook a connecting flight quickly.
- *Payment Problem:* The Traveller's credit card is declined, and they need a solution to pay for their meal.

The traveller's task is to explain their issue clearly and ask for assistance, focusing on functional language appropriate to the specific problem. They should also try to ask clarifying questions to ensure they understand the Helper's responses. The Helper's task is to listen carefully, offer solutions, and use clarification techniques if needed (e.g., "Are you asking if…?", "Do you mean…?").

Establishing a time limit for each interaction and real-time response (3–5 minutes) is necessary to simulate the urgency of real-time problem-solving in travel contexts. It is equally important, after each scenario, to rotate the roles and provide a new problem for the traveller to solve, giving all students multiple opportunities to practise asking for and providing help.

After completing the role-plays, one session can be devoted to discussing the most effective strategies for quick problem-solving, how students managed misunderstandings or clarified details, and which language or techniques made the communication clearer.

Multicultural and Cross-linguistic Interactions

In travel communication, students often engage with speakers from diverse cultural backgrounds, each with unique linguistic particularities in their interactions. Accents, idioms, and culturally bound expressions can become stumbling blocks if students are unfamiliar with them. Furthermore, in many cases students may find they are communicating in English as a lingua franca, where both speakers are non-native, adding another layer of complexity to the exchange.

To prepare students effectively for these challenges, exposing them to different English accents and dialects is highly effective in real-life situations and classroom settings. Multimedia resources such as videos and podcasts can help learners become accustomed to the rich diversity of English in global travel contexts. Additionally, incorporating intercultural communication modules into the curriculum enables students to develop a deeper understanding of different cultural communication styles. This also provides strategies for avoiding miscommunication and helps to smooth interactions in real-world travel scenarios.

One useful tool for this purpose is the YouGlish (https://youglish.com) platform, which offers real-world examples of words and phrases spoken in different English accents, captured from YouTube videos. This is an excellent source where students can hear diverse pronunciations – from American to Australian and Indian accents – which helps them develop flexibility in their listening skills. A class activity could involve assigning each student a specific accent to research and present. This type of exercise contributes to understanding the unique characteristics that distinguish regional pronunciations.

To familiarise students with idiomatic expressions and cultural particularities, TED Talks (https://www.ted.com/talks) and TEDx Talks (https://www.ted.com/watch/tedx-talks) serve as excellent resources. These talks feature speakers from around the world discussing various topics, often using regional expressions and culturally specific examples. After watching a talk, students can identify idioms or culturally bound phrases that might be unfamiliar and discuss alternative ways to express similar ideas in English. This exercise improves students' awareness of cultural subtleties in language and helps them adapt their speech to be clearer and more accessible.

Considering English as a lingua franca (ELF) in global communication, the ELLLO (English Listening Lesson Library Online) (https://ello.org) podcast offers authentic conversations between non-native speakers using English. By listening to episodes, students hear firsthand the pronunciation and vocabulary variations that can occur in ELF contexts. This experience can lead to discussions on strategies to enhance mutual understanding, such as using straightforward expressions, avoiding idioms, and simplifying language where possible. These conversations help students understand the importance of adjusting their language to become universally comprehensible.

The book *Intercultural Communication: A Critical Introduction* by Ingrid Piller (2017) is an excellent resource for developing intercultural awareness. This text tackles how cultural differences have a direct impact on communication and contains valuable material for students preparing for cross-cultural travel interactions. Using selected case studies from the book, instructors can structure role-play scenarios in which students enact potential misunderstandings that might arise due to cultural differences. This activity encourages them to experiment with language adjustments and cultivate empathy, helping them approach communication with greater cultural sensitivity.

In addition to linguistic differences, non-verbal cues such as body language and gestures are crucial for travel communication. The BBC's *The English We Speak* (https://www.bbc.co.uk/learningenglish/english/features/the-english-we-speak) video series contains lessons on British slang, idioms, and everyday expressions. Watching an episode can lead to a discussion about how certain expressions or gestures may be confusing or inappropriate in different cultural contexts. Students could create a glossary of universally understood expressions for travel, enabling them to practise using phrases that avoid regionally bound or ambiguous meanings.

Lastly, *Intercultural Communication in Contexts* by Judith Martin and Thomas Nakayama (2007) is an ideal text for a deeper exploration of non-verbal communication. This book examines body language and gestures across cultures, which are often as important as spoken language in cross-cultural interactions. Teachers can integrate selected chapters into lessons, paying special attention to gestures and help students understand how body language varies globally. A creative exercise might involve students producing short videos demonstrating gestures that could be misinterpreted in travel scenarios, emphasising the value of observing local body language before using gestures.

Negotiation

Before concluding this section, another aspect to cover is negotiation, a key skill in travel contexts. From booking accommodation and haggling over prices to addressing itinerary changes, effective negotiation can significantly impact travellers' experiences. Travel often involves negotiating terms and finding compromises in various interactions, whether with hotel staff, tour guides, or locals. The language required for negotiation – clarifying terms, suggesting alternatives, and reaching agreements – can be challenging, particularly when there are cultural differences in how negotiations are conducted. Negotiating across languages and cultures involves more than simply exchanging information; it requires a strategic blend of politeness, clarity, and flexibility.

In teaching contexts, providing students with useful negotiation phrases (see Appendix 1) and strategies for reaching agreements is essential. Designing negotiation tasks, such as booking hotel rooms, arranging travel itineraries, or resolving disputes over travel services, allows students to practise both linguistic and negotiation skills and helps them become more self-confident when handling negotiation scenarios while travelling.

Illustrative Classroom Experience

The previous section outlined some of the most common linguistic challenges students may encounter in travel communication, along with activities, web resources, and academic material for practice. This section presents some of these challenges through practical experiences, offering an analysis of how learners can confront the real-world difficulties of travel communication. It also introduces different scenarios that can be used in classrooms (see Appendix 2).

A typical scenario for students tasked with role-playing a travel interaction is asking for directions at a foreign airport. A common situation a teacher may observe during this practice is how students struggle with effective communication despite having learned the necessary vocabulary and grammar. Issues such as limited vocabulary, confusion about cultural norms, and over-reliance on translation tools often become evident during these activities. For example, a student may correctly use the phrase "Could you please help me find the check-in counter?" but fail to comprehend the native speaker's response due to unfamiliarity with local idioms, fast speech, or an unfamiliar accent. Additionally, students may rely too heavily on simplified English, which can impede engagement in the interaction.

Building on the concepts of simplified travel language, cultural pragmatics, and real-time problem-solving, this section examines the practical applications of these skills for travellers and English language learners. Sections 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3 address essential aspects of travel communication, focusing on adaptability, cultural awareness, and negotiation. By connecting these practical elements with linguistic essentials, the section illustrates how effective travel communication involves situational flexibility, linguistic knowledge, and cultural understanding. Combined, these competencies prepare learners to manage a variety of travel scenarios, from asking for directions in unfamiliar settings to addressing misunderstandings with cultural sensitivity.

Analysis of Challenges

In this classroom experience, the challenges to which students are exposed present some of the key linguistic and cultural barriers they face in real-world travel interactions. A primary issue lies in the domain of pragmatic competence, where students often do not comprehend the social and contextual aspects essential to effective communication in travel settings. Politeness strategies, for example, are difficult for many learners to interpret and apply, and indirect requests or culturally specific behaviours can lead to frequent misunderstandings. When travelling, students may feel unsure about when tipping is appropriate or how to respond to indirect expressions, such as the British understatement "That's not bad," which implies approval. Without a well-developed sense of pragmatic competence, students can inadvertently misinterpret or miss important social cues that affect the fluency and success of their interactions.

A related challenge involves students' limited vocabulary and strong reliance on formulaic expressions. Although they may have memorised essential travel phrases, their ability to adapt language flexibly in spontaneous or unfamiliar situations remains underdeveloped. This often occurs when they face scenarios that deviate from the standard, only to realise that the set phrases learned are not fully applicable, causing communication to break down. For instance, while they might be comfortable asking for basic directions, any deviation from a simple query – such as elaborating on the location or rephrasing – can lead to confusion. This dependence on fixed expressions restricts their adaptability and can be particularly limiting when facing complex or unpredictable interactions that require creative language use.

Another emerging linguistic obstacle in travel contexts is students' over-reliance on Globish. As mentioned earlier, this simplified language is useful for basic exchanges but inadequate for situations requiring more specific communication. The limitations of Globish become apparent in complex or culturally sensitive interactions, where students find that it lacks the expressive depth needed to convey politeness or manage delicate negotiations. In situations where students need to express disappointment politely, request a refund, or resolve a cultural misunderstanding, Globish's simplicity may make them appear too blunt. This reliance on a simplified form of English highlights the need for learners to develop a more confident command of the language if they wish to handle diverse cultural settings with sensitivity and tact.

Cultural differences further compound these linguistic challenges, as students are often unfamiliar with social norms related to concepts such as time, personal space, or appropriate greetings. Haggling over prices, for instance, is expected in some cultures, while in others it may be seen as rude. Students unfamiliar with these norms may either avoid haggling altogether, misinterpret it as disrespectful, or unwittingly offend by negotiating where it is not customary. Such cultural barriers reveal the need for students to go beyond language acquisition and prepare to understand and respect diverse social conventions. This awareness is essential for respectful and effective communication in varied travel environments, as it equips students to anticipate cultural dynamics.

These challenges emphasise the importance of a well-balanced approach to travel communication training. Students benefit from more than linguistic knowledge; they require an understanding of pragmatic aspects, the ability to move beyond formulaic language, balanced use of Globish and full English expression, and awareness of cultural expectations. This section addresses these barriers to equip students to handle real-world travel interactions with confidence, adaptability, and respect for the diversity they encounter.

Remedial Strategies for Overcoming Classroom Challenges and Building Linguistic Skills

Building on the challenges identified in travel communication, it is essential to develop practical strategies that help students overcome linguistic and cultural barriers. In this section, three key strategies are proposed to address the issues of pragmatic competence, limited vocabulary, and adaptability in unpredictable situations. Each strategy is accompanied by activities designed to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application and to enhance students' confidence and competence in diverse travel settings.

Improving Pragmatic Competence

Pragmatic competence is the ability to use language effectively and appropriately in a communicative context (Thomas, 1983). This involves understanding not only the literal meaning of words and structures, but also the intended meanings influenced by social, cultural, and contextual factors. In a language-learning context, pragmatic competence implies mastering speech acts (e.g., requests, apologies), understanding implicatures, managing conversations, and adapting language use according to the interlocutor and setting. Developing this competence is crucial for successful communication, especially in intercultural contexts. According to Bardovi-Harlig (2013), learners often have difficulties with pragmatics, as it is not taught as explicitly as grammatical or lexical aspects of language. However, recent pedagogical approaches emphasise the importance of exposing learners to authentic language use through role-plays, discourse completion tasks, and real-world interactions (Taguchi, 2011). These activities help learners acquire complex social cues and achieve a higher level of language use and understanding across multiple situations, contributing to the development of pragmatic competence.

Following this line, students should practise real-world interactions in which they adjust their language based on context, such as politeness levels or indirect requests. This can be done through structured role-plays, such as those mentioned in previous sections, that require different speech registers and cultural sensitivity.

Recognising indirect language, for example, is a key aspect in intercultural settings, as cultures vary in the expression of reluctance, disagreement, or refusal. In many contexts, people avoid direct refusals to maintain harmony, save face, or show respect, particularly in professional or formal situations. Thus, instead of saying "no", someone might say "I'll think about it" or "Let's see how things go". Misinterpreting these indirect cues can lead to misunderstandings, frustration, or offence. By understanding and responding appropriately to indirect language, individuals demonstrate cultural awareness, improve communication, and achieve more respectful and effective interactions across diverse cultural backgrounds.

A suitable classroom activity could be a role-play task in which students, after being divided into pairs or small groups, receive a scenario card detailing a situation that involves making a polite request or responding to an ambiguous statement. It is important to emphasise that they should try to stay "in character". Taking turns in each role-play, the student chooses one answer they believe to be the most culturally appropriate from several response options provided by the instructor. These are three possible scenarios:

- Scenario 1: You are at a hotel. You would like a late check-out. The front desk agent responds with, "We usually don't allow it, but I'll see what I can do."
- Scenario 2: You ask your boss for a few days off, and they respond, "I'll think about it."
- Scenario 3: You are in a restaurant and ask if you can substitute a side dish. The server says, "Hmm, let me check with the kitchen."

These are some response options for each scenario:

- "Thank you, I'll wait for your confirmation."
- "I'd appreciate it if you could let me know as soon as possible."
- "Oh, I understand; let me know if it's possible."
- "I really need this, could you please try harder to confirm?"

The instructor can also encourage students to consider body language and tone, as both can greatly affect how polite requests or indirect responses are perceived. Another resource to incorporate into this practice is to show a few video examples to illustrate polite language in various cultures.

Expanding Vocabulary and Handling Unpredictability

Expanding vocabulary is fundamental to achieving communicative competence, as a rich lexical repertoire enables learners to express themselves more precisely and effectively. However, managing unpredictability in conversations – such as unfamiliar words, unexpected shifts in topic, or unfamiliar contexts – is equally crucial. Learners must not only acquire new vocabulary but also develop strategies to resolve communication breakdowns when they encounter gaps in their lexical knowledge or unexpected discourse moves. Research reveals that successful language users rely on circumlocution, inferencing, and context clues to handle unpredictable elements in speech (Nation, 2013). Moreover, recent studies emphasise the role of task-based language teaching (TBLT) in promoting both vocabulary acquisition and the ability to deal with unpredictable communication. By engaging learners in authentic, real-world tasks that simulate spontaneous language use, TBLT helps learners expand their vocabulary and practise managing unpredictability (Ellis, 2018). This pedagogical approach, combined with deliberate vocabulary-learning strategies, improves flexibility and adaptability in communication, preparing learners for more dynamic and real-life language situations.

Therefore, it is essential to introduce students to a broader range of travel-specific vocabulary and train them to improvise when exposed to unfamiliar terms. It is equally important to emphasise the use of context clues and synonyms when the exact word is unknown. Another useful activity is conducting vocabulary-building exercises in which students describe travel scenarios using alternative phrases or synonyms when they lack specific terms.

It is also possible to design a task-based activity that expands travel-related vocabulary and allows learners to practise handling unpredictable situations in spoken interactions. The first session could focus on discussing and listing unexpected situations travellers might face (e.g., flight delays, lost reservations, incorrect directions). The instructor can introduce key vocabulary and phrases that will be helpful, such as “rebook”, “alternative route”, “compensation”, and “confirmation”. This prepares students for the vocabulary they will encounter in the activity. A second step would be to present the task-based activity: a role-play in which students face unexpected challenges while travelling. The goal is to use the provided vocabulary, adapt creatively to the situation, and emphasise that the “unexpected” element is intentional to help them practise managing unpredictability. Once the students are distributed into pairs or small groups, they receive a “situation card” describing a travel challenge they must solve. They then spend a few minutes reviewing the scenario and deciding how to handle it. These are some sample scenarios that can be included:

- *Flight delay:* “You’ve arrived at the airport and learned your flight is delayed by 6 hours. What will you do? How will you ask for compensation or an alternative?”
- *Overbooked hotel:* “You arrive at your hotel, but there’s a mistake with your reservation, and no rooms are available. How will you handle this?”
- *Lost luggage:* “Your luggage didn’t arrive. Go to the airline counter and inquire about what can be done.”
-

Developing Cultural Awareness

Cultural awareness implies understanding the values, beliefs, practices, and social norms that shape communication in diverse cultural contexts. In language learning, success in communication involves going beyond combining a set of phonological, lexical, and syntactic elements (Baker, 2015: 132). It also includes the ability to engage in intercultural interactions with sensitivity and adaptability, recognising that effective communication is not only linguistic accuracy but also the skill to identify cultural characteristics.

Developing cultural awareness allows learners to appreciate specific social behaviours, such as politeness strategies, non-verbal cues, and conversational conventions, which can vary significantly across cultures (Byram, 2021). This competence is crucial for mutual understanding and for reducing miscommunication in intercultural exchanges. Recent research recognises the importance of integrating cultural components into language teaching through intercultural tasks, virtual exchanges, and reflection activities that encourage learners to compare and analyse cultural differences (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013).

Furthermore, an evolving approach to cultural awareness emphasises the view of culture as dynamic and multifaceted rather than fixed. As Dervin (2016) notes, this perspective prepares learners to deal with cultural fluidity and unpredictability – a skill increasingly valuable in our interconnected world. By promoting an understanding of culture as adaptable, educators encourage learners to use language empathetically and effectively in diverse intercultural settings.

Students must be aware of this to become effective communicators, and they must develop intercultural skills that can be equally, or even more, relevant than purely linguistic elements (Baker, 2015: 133). Teachers can support this by exposing students to different cultural norms and practices related to travel, such as greetings, tipping customs, or perceptions of personal space in different countries. Analysing these scenarios allows students to explore how greater cultural awareness can prevent misunderstandings and lead to more positive interactions.

Teachers can apply different sources and tools that contribute to developing cultural awareness, mainly in language-learning contexts. These resources provide research findings and practical activities that can enhance students' understanding of intercultural dynamics. This is a list of some of the academic sources to design classroom activities:

- *Teaching and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence* by Michael Byram (2021): This text explores incorporating intercultural competence into language teaching, providing theoretical frameworks and practical tools for developing cultural awareness in the classroom.

- *Culture and Identity through English as a Lingua Franca: Rethinking Concepts and Goals in Intercultural Communication* by Will Baker (2015): This book emphasises the evolving nature of culture in globalised communication and discusses the role of English as a lingua franca. It is useful for understanding how learners can build cultural awareness through flexible and adaptive language use.

- *Intercultural Language Teaching and Learning* by Anthony Liddicoat and Angela Scarino (2013): Liddicoat and Scarino offer a comprehensive approach to intercultural language teaching, with chapters on developing cultural awareness, adapting to various cultural norms, and providing reflective practices in learners.

- *Interculturality in education: A theoretical and methodological toolbox* by Fred Dervin (2016): This book offers a dynamic perspective on cultural awareness, treating culture as fluid and multifaceted. Dervin's approach encourages educators to teach cultural awareness as a skill that can be adapted, not a fixed set of rules.

Other tools and resources for developing cultural awareness include, for instance, the online platform *Cultural Detective* (https://www.culturaldetective.com), which offers intercultural training modules, activities, and simulations. It is designed to help users explore cultural values, practise problem-solving in cross-cultural contexts, and improve empathy. The *Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI)* (https://www.idiinventory.com) is an assessment tool that measures intercultural competence and provides feedback to help individuals understand their cultural mindset. It is commonly used in educational and corporate settings to facilitate cultural awareness. The *Global Leadership and Organizational Behaviour Effectiveness (GLOBE) Project* (https://globeproject.com) provides a database of cultural norms and values across various countries, contributing to a deeper understanding of how different societies operate. This resource is often used in educational settings for comparative cultural studies.

The *Intercultural Communication Institute (ICI)* offers workshops, training, and certifications in intercultural communication, with both theoretical and practical resources. Educators and language professionals can benefit greatly from the tools and research available through the ICI. Finally, the *UNESCO Intercultural Dialogue Toolkit* (https://www.unesco.org/interculturaldialogue/es) provides a structured approach for educators to integrate intercultural dialogue into their teaching practices. The toolkit includes activities, reflection questions, and case studies to enhance cultural awareness.

These sources and tools offer valuable theoretical and practical support for instructors seeking to develop cultural awareness in language learners.

Conclusion

This chapter outlined the foundations of simplified travel language, as effective travel communication is a crucial skill in the present interconnected world. One of the main objectives has been to provide instructors and learners of English with specific guidelines and tools for navigating linguistic and cultural complexities effectively in the English language. Key aspects, such as Globish, pragmatic competence and cultural sensitivity, have been analysed since they are essential for successful interactions in global contexts.

Moving forward, this chapter encourages language educators to go beyond these foundational practices, presenting environments where students can simultaneously learn a language and embrace the intercultural complexity of global communication. Through the linguistic strategies, role-play, and reflection presented here, students can acquire practical language skills. They can also obtain the cultural adaptability required to communicate respectfully and effectively across borders using the English language with fluency. Moreover, students practice linguistic and pragmatic skills with scenarios, gaining the confidence to manage real-world travel situations. The key to success in these tasks is repetition, feedback, and the opportunity to reflect on the strategies that worked well in handling these travel challenges.

By integrating these practical classroom activities tailored to real-life travel scenarios, educators can connect theoretical knowledge with real-world applicability, equipping learners with confidence and key skills to face unexpected travel challenges.

Considering the analysis of these essential aspects and the material presented, learners of English for travel communication can build a "suitcase" of linguistic tools ready for international interactions as they engage with simplified language and cultural pragmatics, which facilitate and improve their communication.

Appendix 1

Negotiation: class material

These are three practical examples and classroom tips for negotiation in travel contexts: booking a hotel room, arranging a tour itinerary and resolving a dispute over travel services.

Booking a hotel room:

A traveller tries to negotiate an early check-in or a room upgrade. The student practising this role can use phrases like “Would it be possible to…” or “Could we arrange…” to politely make requests and explore options if the initial response is negative. These are other optional phrases for three different contexts:

Request options:

- "Would it be possible to have an early check-in or late check-out?"
- "Do you offer any complimentary room upgrades?"
- "Could you let me know if any other rooms with a better view are available?"

Negotiate price or package:

- "Is there any flexibility on the rate, especially for longer stays?"
- "Are there any discounts available for booking directly with you?"

- "Could we arrange a package deal if I include breakfast or other amenities?"

Clarify terms:

- "Can you confirm the cancellation policy for this booking?"
- "Could you clarify if there are any additional charges I should be aware of?"
- "What is included in the rate? Are any extra complimentary services?"

Handling a refusal:

"I understand. Could you let me know if any rooms open up in that category?"

"Thank you. I'd still like to explore if there's any possibility of a discounted rate."

Arranging a tour itinerary:

A traveller discusses options with a tour guide who may be unfamiliar with their preferred schedule or sites. This interaction allows students to practice asking open-ended questions, such as "What alternatives do you recommend?" or making suggestions, "How about if we start with…?"

Suggesting itinerary changes:

- "Could we adjust the itinerary to include an additional hour at [location]?"
- "Would it be possible to replace one of the stops with [another location]?"

- "Is there a way to combine some activities so we have more time in the afternoon?"

Requesting alternative arrangements:

- "Are there alternative routes or activities if the weather is not ideal?"
- "If [site] is too crowded, could you suggest a less busy alternative?"
- "Could we arrange a private tour instead of joining a larger group?"

Inquiring about flexibility:

- "What flexibility do we have with timing if we're running a bit late?"
- "Could we add an extra activity at the end of the tour for an additional fee?"
- "If we wanted to make adjustments on the day of the tour, how should we communicate that?"

Reacting to limited options:

- "I see. Could you tell me more about what's unique about the current schedule?"
- "Thank you. Let's go ahead with the original plan, but I'd appreciate it if you could keep me updated on any changes."

Resolving a dispute over travel services

A traveller addresses an issue with a service, such as delayed transport. Students can practice calmly stating the problem, "I noticed that…" and proposing solutions, "Could we arrange for a discount or alternative transport?"

Describing the issue:

- "Unfortunately, our [service] was delayed, which affected our plans."
- "I was expecting [service], but there seems to have been an error."
- "The [service] provided didn't meet the expectations set at the time of booking."

Requesting compensation or alternatives:

- "Could we receive a partial refund due to the inconvenience?"
- "I'd appreciate it if we could receive a voucher or discount for future services."
- "Would it be possible to switch to another [service] to better fit our schedule?"

Suggesting solutions:

- "Perhaps an alternative arrangement could be made to meet our needs?"
- "Could we work together to find a solution that would accommodate our original plan?"
- "I'd be happy to consider any alternatives you can provide."

Showing flexibility:

- "I understand these things happen. Is there another option that might be available?"
- "Thank you for explaining. Is there any way to expedite the solution?"

- "I appreciate your help in finding a way to resolve this."

Appendix 2

Classroom Scenario 1: At the Hotel Reception

-Objective: Develop students' ability to interact effectively in a hotel setting, focusing on polite requests, problem-solving, and dealing with unexpected issues (e.g., room unavailability or incorrect bookings).

-Material Needed:

- Role-play cue cards for different scenarios (e.g., lost reservation, room upgrade, broken amenities)

- Handouts with common hotel phrases and polite expressions to make requests or complaints.

-Sample task: Role-play a Hotel Check-in

- Material needed: A hotel reception desk setup (could be virtual or physical), cue cards for students playing hotel staff with various problems to introduce (e.g., "The room is not ready," "The booking was lost," "The guest was upgraded to a suite").

- Instructions for Students:

1. The students will play the role of guests checking into the hotel. They must interact with the receptionist (another student) to resolve various issues, such as confirming their booking, asking for room details, or resolving a problem (e.g., a wrong room type or missing amenities).

2. The receptionist will have a card indicating the problem they need to present to the guest, requiring the guest to navigate the issue politely and effectively.

3. After each interaction, students will discuss what strategies were effective, particularly focusing on politeness, negotiation, and problem-solving.

Classroom Scenario 2: Asking for Directions in a Foreign City

-Objective: Teach students how to ask for and understand directions in a foreign city, helping them handle different accents, unclear instructions, and unfamiliar vocabulary.

-Material Needed:

- Map of a fictional city with key landmarks

- Pre-recorded audio clips of directions in different English accents

- Cue cards with partial or unclear directions

- Vocabulary sheets with useful phrases for asking and confirming directions.

-Sample task: Direction-seeking simulation

- Material Needed: A map of a fictional city with key landmarks and locations marked. Audio recordings of different accents providing directions and written cue cards with confusing or vague instructions.

- Instructions for students:

1. Students will listen to pre-recorded audio files of people from different regions providing directions to a particular landmark on the map. The directions will be given in various accents (e.g., British, American, Indian, Australian) and include slang or regional expressions.

2. Students must navigate the map based on what they hear and ask clarifying questions if they're unsure (e.g., "Could you repeat that?" or "Do you mean the second street on the right?").

3. Pair students together, one acting as a tourist and the other as a local. The locals will have a cue card with the destination and directions. The tourist must ask for and follow the directions, and the local gives incomplete or slightly vague responses. The tourist must clarify and confirm details.

Classroom Scenario 3: Negotiating in marketplaces

-Objective: Teach students negotiation language and cultural practices involved in bargaining or haggling in markets.

- Materials Needed: Role-play cards with buyer and seller details, sample items, and price points for bargaining.

- Instructions: Students simulate buying items in a marketplace. The seller can raise, or lower prices based on cultural norms, and the buyer must respond using polite bargaining strategies.

Managing Language Barriers in Non-English Environments

- Objective: Improve students' creativity in communication using gestures, simplified language, and visual aids.

- Materials needed: Sample phrases in various languages, basic icons or picture cards.

- Instructions: Students communicate with limited language skills or entirely through visual aids. They practice ordering food, finding directions, or asking for help.

FINAL TASK SUGGESTION: At the end of every activity, the students can identify typical sentences in the context given and prepare a language phrasebook from all the tasks as a final task assignment.

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Lost and Found in Translation is an accessibly written handbook intended for translation teachers, students, and practitioners from the field. Via its seven chapters, it aims to shed light on translation practices in different contexts, highlighting common mistakes and obstacles through vivid examples, and offering practical approaches to overcome them.

The chapters of *Lost and Found in Translation* aim to prevent any such failure; written and organised in a reader-friendly way - each section provides a brief introduction to the explored concept, supports it all by illustrative examples, puts it into perspective via some scenarios and/or useful practical advice. This structure allows users to cherry-pick from the spectrum of chapters and enjoy them separately - as they all could be explored and savoured as independent sections. However, consuming the book as a whole can undoubtedly deepen the understanding of many phenomena that might arise along the way, prevent some mistakes, increase awareness, and improve, as a result, our translation practices and realities.