

What Is Translanguaging in the Classroom?

Adapted from the article by Drs. Yvonne and David Freeman, originally appearing on HMH's blog Shaped. [Read full article.](#)

Definition of *Translanguaging*

Using all linguistic and cognitive resources, including one's home language, to make sense of the academic content being delivered in a language one is just starting to learn.

Translanguaging vs *Code Switching*

Code switching describes the process of moving from one language (or linguistic code) to another. By contrast, the term translanguaging comes from a holistic view of bilinguals. This view recognizes that bilinguals have just one language system and that effective instruction involves finding ways to help students draw on all their linguistic resources to learn academic content in a new language.

Effective *Translanguaging* Strategies

While students do need solid and extended instruction in English to acquire English, strategic use of their home language can accelerate both their acquisition of English and their understanding of other subjects being taught in the new language. Effective translanguaging strategies draw on emergent bilinguals' home languages without direct translation of the content. Examples include:

- Helping students find cognates between their home and new language
- Providing multilingual resources to support work
- Placing students in same home-language groups to discuss the problems using their home language, English, or both
- Allowing students to make journal entries in their home language or in English