Local Languages as a Resource in (Language) Education

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Abstract One of the most consistent and positive findings in research on attitudes towards NNESTs is that NNESTs may share their students' local language(s). Whilst having a shared language between a teacher and their students can be a strength in an English as an Additional Language (EAL) classroom, teachers need to be trained in how to use this resource appropriately to get the most benefit out of this. Currently, teachers, regardless of background, are rarely trained to use local languages efficiently in the classroom. After briefly discussing some of the reasons for this gap in training, this chapter describes ways in which teachers can effectively use local languages to enhance their students' learning. This chapter draws on work on Sydney School genre theory, critical applied linguistics, and language variation and adapts and extends it to describe how, when and why teachers can and should use local languages effectively in their classrooms. As such, this chapter will be a resource for researchers, teacher educators and teachers.

1 Introduction

In spite of a growing body of literature that shows that the use of 'mother tongue' or 'L1' can be useful for additional language development (e.g. Atkinson 1987; Brown 2014), there remains a general perception that the use of local languages is detrimental for additional language development, and should therefore be discouraged (e.g. Manan et al. 2016). In addition, teachers and administrators in many schools providing English medium instruction (EMI) also believe that letting students use local languages will negatively impact students' English language skills/learning, as well as the learning of other subjects (Manan et al. 2016). Thus, as in

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Fig. 1 A sign in a school in Pakistan discouraging the use of local languages. *Source* Manan et al. (2016)

Fig. 1 below, they discourage the use of local languages. Figure 1 is particularly illustrative because while, on the one hand, the school's administrators direct students not to speak their local languages; on the other hand, they have misspelled the word 'WelCome'. This is revealing because it suggests that regardless of the English language ability of the local administrators/teachers, there is still a push for using only English in the school. It also brings into foreground issues around localization of English and education (Mahboob 2014).

In a previous paper (Mahboob and Lin 2016), we identified some possible reasons for negative attitudes towards the use of local languages in English Language Teaching (ELT). We argued that non-recognition of local languages in dominant TESOL theories and practices is a consequence of the context in which these theories and practices developed rather than an outcome of well-researched investigations of the use and role of local languages in additional language learning contexts. As much of the dominant theory building over the last century was done by native speakers of English in inner circle countries (for the teaching of English in inner circle countries), this work did not need to consider a role for local languages. The paper illustrated how non-recognition of local languages in TESOL relates to, is supported by, and contributes to other hegemonic practices that further limit the role of local languages. In discussing the dominant work, we argued that emerging work, which questions static, monolingual and mono-modal models of language, opens up space for us to reconsider and theorize the role of local languages in additional language learning/teaching. That chapter, then, broadly outlined a teaching–learning model that built on a dynamic, situated, multimodal and semiotic understanding of language, and identified some possible roles that local languages can play in additional language education. In the current paper, we extend our

previous work by discussing the role of local languages in (language) education. In order to do this, we first outline, in some detail, how we use the terms 'local language' and 'target language' in this work. We then consider how, where and when local languages can be used in educational contexts—and not just in teaching additional languages.

2 On 'Local' and 'Target' Languages

This chapter, as pointed out above, looks at ways in which local languages can be used as a resource in (language) education. Our decision to put 'language' within parenthesis in the title of this chapter, is made to highlight the importance of local languages not just in teaching other languages, but also in teaching of other subjects (especially in cases where a language other than students' local language is used as a medium of instruction). This is important, not just in cases where students are taught various subjects through a language that is not their mother tongue (e.g. in the context of EMI in Pakistan or Hong Kong; or the use of Urdu as a medium of instruction in non-Urdu-speaking communities in Pakistan etc.), but also in cases where students use a local dialect or variety of a language that does not match the ways in which language is used in educational contexts; (e.g. speakers of Afro-American English learning (through) 'standard' English; or speakers of 'Laloo Khaiti Urdu' learning (through) 'standard' Urdu). In doing this, we want to expand the discussion regarding the use of local languages in education. In this chapter, we will exemplify our work with a focus on English, but many of the issues raised apply to other languages as well. Before moving on, we need to explain the use of brackets around 'through' in the examples shared above.

Drawing on Halliday's (2004) work on child language development, we differentiate between *learning language, learning about language* and *learning through language*. *Learning language* is about using language to make and communicate meaning—something that we start doing pretty much from birth. *Learning about language* refers to developing a level of understanding of 'the nature and functions of language itself' (p. 322). And, *learning through language*, 'refers to language in the construction of reality: how we use language to build up a picture of the world in which we live' (p. 317). In the context of education, students are doing (or failing to do) all three: they learn (or not) the language used in schooling; they develop (or not) an understanding of how language works in education; and they learn (or not) about different school subjects/content through language.

In discussing the role and use of local languages as a resource in language education, we first need to define what we mean by the terms 'local language' and 'target language'. Broadly speaking, local languages include the dialect or variety of a language—including those of English. Target language, on the other hand, is the language that is being learnt (or used as the medium of instruction) and refers to specific registers of that language (as used in educational contexts). To explain this further, we will briefly describe Mahboob's (2014, 2017), framework of language

variation and then discuss how we can interpret this framework in the context of the current chapter. We will then discuss how local languages can be used as a resource in language education.

2.1 Mahboob's Model of Language Variation

Mahboob's (2014, 2017), framework of language variation is based on four dimensions along which language can vary: user, use, mode and time. Of these, Mahboob uses the first three to develop the three-dimensional framework of language variation (Fig. 2). The fourth dimension, time, whilst very important to a study of language variation, is not considered as critical in its application to issues under consideration here.

The first dimension of variation in language in the framework relates to who we are as 'users' of the language and with whom we are interacting. The user cline of language variation can be based on 'low' vs. 'high' social distance. People who have low social distance (i.e. they have many shared social factors, e.g. age, education, ethnicity, family, gender, location, origin, religion, profession, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, etc.) may have unique ways of using language that reflect their relationship and this language may not always be transparent to others.

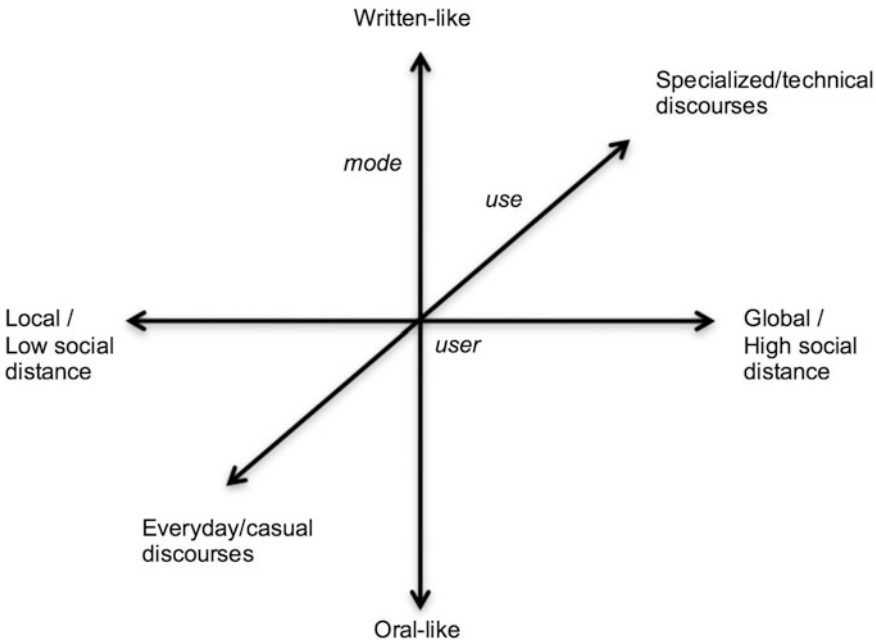

Fig. 2 Mahboob's three-dimensional framework of language variation

The indicator 'low social distance' helps us understand why people use 'local' forms of language, with their local denotations and connotations. For example, couple talk or language used between very close friends reflects the unique and shared histories, experiences and relationships between these people. The way they talk reflects that relationship and it is possible that a close group of friends may say things where only they know what they mean; others who hear it may not be able to interpret it accurately. Perhaps you want to avoid this word…appropriately? In such situations, and where people share multiple languages, they may also feel free to 'code-switch' because they know that they share the same locally oriented linguistic repertoire with their interlocutors. Anti-language is another example of language that is used in closed, tightly knit groups 'in which metaphorical modes of expression are the norm; patterns of this kind appear at all levels, phonological, lexicogrammatical, and semantic' (Halliday 1976, p. 570). On the other hand, the indicator 'high social distance' helps us explain why people use 'global' forms of language, minimizing local forms and features and facilitating communication with people who speak a different 'local' variety of the language. For example, when interacting with people that one does not know well, or when one wants to keep a formal/distant relationship, one tends to use a more 'standard' or 'global' language —one that minimizes 'local' idioms, forms and features and is thus less prone to miscommunication. In such contexts, one will also find a less frequent use (if not an absence) of 'code-switching' as one would not share (or acknowledge to share) each other's linguistic repertoire; instead, one would draw from a shared distant/ global linguistic repertoire (what is often called 'standard' language).

The second dimension of variation in language is related to the purpose or 'use' of the language. To understand this dimension of language variation, we consider whether the language being used is about 'everyday/casual' discourses or about 'specialised/technical' discourses. For example, one could talk about music using everyday/casual language and talk about the various genres of music or one's favourite reggae band; or, one could talk about music in specialized/technicalized way, e.g. a musicologist. Whilst, in the first instance, most people will be able to understand and perhaps even participate in conversation about music in everyday/ casual language; only people who are familiar with the technical terms and concepts will be able to understand a lecture by a musicologist on the technical aspects of the music of, say, Mozart. In both cases, the topic remains the same; however, the specific linguistic choices will vary based on the purpose/use of the exchange. In linguistic terms, this variation is understood as register variation, a concept used extensively in literature in genre and English for Specific Purposes (ESP) studies.

The third dimension of language variation is 'mode'. Modes of communication include aural, visual and mixed channels of communication (multimodal). The way we use language varies based on whether we are speaking, writing or—as is becoming common today—combining these two modalities (e.g. in social media, blogs, etc.). Note that the framework uses 'written-like' and 'oral-like' as the two end points. These labels acknowledge that language may be transcribed through a writing system, but may be more similar to oral language in terms of its linguistic characteristics than to written language, e.g. a dialogue included in a textbook or a

novel, or a personal travel blog that includes images and texts. Similarly, language can be more written-like even when it is spoken, e.g. a plenary talk at a conference. Texts, of course, can also be multimodal, i.e. they can draw on various modalities simultaneously (e.g. a lecture which uses a PowerPoint that includes images and text).

Although each of these three dimensions (as well as the fourth dimension, time) can be understood and studied separately (as in the examples above), in reality they always work in tandem. Since language is used by people (users) to communicate something (use) through a medium (mode) and at a particular time, all four of the dimensions are constantly relevant to all our linguistic choices. A model of language needs to consider and account for language variation across all of these dimensions consistently. One way of doing this is using Mahboob's three-dimensional framework (Fig. 2), which plots 'use', 'user' and 'mode'.

2.1.1 Eight Domains of Language Variation

Mahboob's framework helps identify eight broad domains (Table 1), with each domain including a range of variations (or sub-domains), based on varying combinations of users, uses and mode. Interestingly, as pointed out in Table 1 , different sub-specializations of linguistics tend to focus on different (sub-)domains of

Table 1 The eight (broad) domains of language variation

	Domains	Study in linguistics	Example
1	Local, oral, everyday	Dialectology, World Englishes	Family members planning their vacation
2	Local, written, everyday	Dialectology, World Englishes	Old school friends exchanging e-mails with each other
3	Local, oral, specialized	Anthropological linguistics; needs more attention	Members of an Aboriginal community talking about the local weather system
4	Local, written, specialized	Needs more attention	Newsletter produced by and for a rural community of farmers in rural Australia
5	Global, oral, everyday	English as a Lingua Franca (ELF)	Casual conversations amongst people from different parts of the world
6	Global, written, everyday	Genre studies; traditional grammar	International news agencies reporting on events
7	Global, oral, specialized	ELF; Language for specific purposes; genre studies	Conference presentations
8	Global, written, specialized	Language for specific purposes; genre studies	Academic papers

language variation. Table 1 lists the eight domains,[1] identifies areas of linguistic study that focus their research on that domain and examples of where one would find such language.

Amongst other things, Table 1 points out that what we call 'standard' language, the language that is typically used to describe traditional/pedagogical grammars is the language of domain 6. It is therefore not surprising that the 'rules' of grammar are often violated in the language found in other domains. For example, whilst some people use double negatives (e.g. *I don't want none* in Afro-American English) or double modals (e.g. *I might could come there* in varieties of English in the Southern USA) in their local, oral, everyday talk (domain 1), traditional/pedagogical grammars do not include these features. As a consequence, some people consider these local features of English to be ungrammatical or non-standard.

2.1.2 Some Implications of the Three-Dimensional Model for Education

Mahboob's three-dimensional framework of language variation model has a number of implications for language learning/teaching. One key observation is that we all develop our first language (often called 'mother tongue') in the context of domain 1, this is our primary 'local' language. We may develop domain 2, if the language that we learn in our local communities has a script. However, this is not always the case as not all local/oral languages have a writing system (e.g. the Toda language spoken by a small group of people in southern India). It is, however, possible that children develop multiple 'languages' in the local context and that one (or more) of these do have a written script that these children may learn to recognize and read.

People essentially learn the language of domains 5 and 6 in formal educational settings (including people who may speak a local variety of that language as a mother tongue). This is often the case with (standard) English around the world and the language of domains 5 and 6 is the most common 'target' language for learners. The majority of speakers of English are non-mother tongue users of this language. For example, whilst children may learn their local dialects of English in their home community (e.g. Chicano English), they need to learn 'standard' English (domains 5 and 6) to succeed in school. In other cases, e.g. where English is first learnt in a schooling context (as is the case where English is taught as a foreign language such as Japan), children are first taught and learn the English of domains 5 and 6 (and they come to school with a range of 'mother tongues' or 'local' languages). This is one reason why people who learn English in a school setting and then travel to an

[1]The ordering of the domains here is different than in earlier publications on this framework (Mahboob 2014, 2015). The mode dimension has been reversed here to reflect the primacy of oral language over written language.

English-speaking country have trouble understanding 'mother tongue' speakers of English, who have lots of features of domain 1 in their everyday language (features not shared with the English of domains 5 and 6). This is also one reason why non-mother tongue speakers of English typically find the English of other non-mother tongues users of English easier to understand than that of mother tongue speakers of the language (Smith 1992): most non-mother tongue speakers of English typically learn 'standard' English in the context of domains 5 and 6 and therefore share a number of features; whereas, mother tongue speakers of English develop their language in the context of domain 1 and therefore use language differently. And, this is also one reason why mother tongue speakers of English in different parts of the world (e.g. Kingston, Jamaica vs. Cairns, Australia) may not be able to understand each other's local dialects (because they have different 'local' ways of using English).

Finally, the language of domains 7 and 8 are almost always learnt in special domains. For example, linguists learn the terminology used in their field by being trained in linguistics. No one is a 'native' or 'mother tongue' user of the language of these domains—we all learn this 'target' language either in educational contexts, as apprentices in specialized fields, or as members of communities of practice where such language is used.

One insight of this framework for education is to help us develop a better understanding of how language variation relates to educational contexts and to students. Students come into educational contexts with a range of 'local' languages (their language in domain 1) and may need to develop different 'target' languages (it may be the language of a (sub-)domain 5 or 6 or 7 or 8). There are a lot of variations in both the local and the target languages across the student body. In some cases, the differences between a student's local language (domain 1) and the target language (domain 5) may be minimal; as may be the case with some children from white middle class population in the northern states of the USA. Or, these differences may be quite substantial; as may be the case with Pushto-speaking children in rural Pakistan or Afro-American kids in Bronx learning (through) 'standard' English (domain 5 and 6). These challenges will also exist when the target language is that of domain (or a sub-domain of) 7 and 8. In this case, the language that students bring with them may be the language of their domains 1 and 2 or domains 5 and 6. An understanding of these differences can help teachers develop and use an appropriate set of strategies.

The variations in local and target languages also implies that the 'local' language that teachers can draw on in their teaching may need to be different. For example, in some contexts, and where feasible, teachers may use the language of domain 1 (this can be a local dialect of English or a different language altogether) to help their students develop the language of domain 5. In other cases, e.g. in multilingual classes, where students come from a range of language backgrounds, teachers may have to use more multimodal resources (e.g. images, gesture, signs, videos etc.) or use whatever the shared (English) language that the students have developed so far to help them further. And, in the context of higher education where students are learning specialized/technicalized language (domains 7 and 8) and already have the

shared linguistic resources of domains 5 and 6, teachers can use the language of domains 5 and 6 to help their students. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to discuss or describe how teachers may productively use local languages across educational contexts, such as the ones identified above. What we will do, therefore, is to provide some examples of how teachers in particular contexts use local languages effectively in their teaching and relate this to some recent theoretical developments in Sydney School work on genre theory (in specific with Rose and Martin 2012).

3 Using Local Languages in Education

Our goal in this section is to provide some examples of how to use local languages effectively in the class, and to theorize these so that the readers can consider ways of using these ideas in their own settings. We start this by first considering the use of local languages in relation to the Teaching–Learning Cycle (TLC) and then in the design of a learning task. The TLC is of particular interest in our consideration of how to systematically plan the use of local languages because of the systematic stages of the TLC, each with its unique pedagogical functions. Below we shall consider these in detail illustrating how local languages can be integrated into different stages of the TLC to contribute to the scaffolding functions inherent in each stage.

3.1 Use of Local Languages and the Teaching–Learning Cycle

The Teaching–Learning Cycle (TLC) (Rothery 1996) is a useful curriculum approach to consider in conjunction with the planning of local language use as the TLC adequately prepares students for a writing task through three successive stages, each with its unique functions. Rothery's (1996) model (Fig. 3) implements the idea that knowledge is constructed in a social context and that in order to successfully gain control of language, learners need to be led through cycles of deconstruction, joint construction, and independent construction, whilst simultaneously building their understanding of the field. In doing so, they move towards a critical orientation to, and control of the skills, knowledge and language that is required within specific genres and valued in particular social contexts. The TLC requires that in the deconstruction stage, the teacher first models the text and, in thus deconstructing the text, enables students to understand its purpose, structure and important language features. In the deconstruction stage, local languages can play an important role of helping students with basic target language proficiency to grasp all these important features. Following the deconstruction stage is the joint

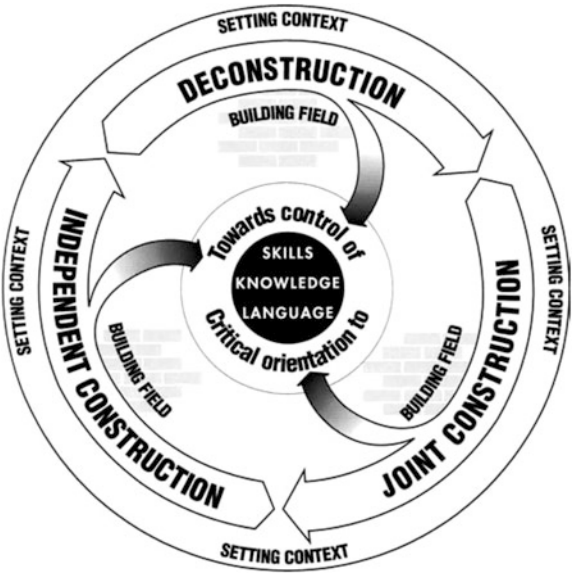

Fig. 3 Teaching–learning cycle. *Source* Rothery (1996)

construction stage, where together with the teacher, who provides the leadership and guidance, students draft an oral/written text of the same type on another topic. During this stage, local languages again can play an important scaffolding role especially if students' target language skills are still fledging. For instance, local languages can be used to provide students with signposts and comments about how a coherent text can be constructed. Finally, and after successfully scaffolding this writing process, learners are given the opportunity to create a text independently.

In the TLC, there should be a gradual shift of responsibility from teacher support (deconstruction and joint construction) to learners taking responsibility for their own learning (independent construction). In contexts where the language used in the texts (which can be either written or spoken) belongs to a (sub-)domain that the students are not already familiar with, there needs to be even greater support in the modelling of a text from a given genre (e.g. exposition, explanation, description) and in joint construction. Again, local languages play an important role in assisting students to grasp both the genre and lexicogrammatical knowledge required to construct a cohesive text in the target language. A recent design intervention study (Ningsih 2015) reported on the positive impact of the use of the students' local language (Bahasa Indonesia) in conjunction with a further developed version of the TLC (called R2L—Read-to-Learn Cycle; see Rose and Martin 2012). The R2L Cycle was used in teaching the science description genre (a descriptive report on an Indonesian bird). It showed that the systematic use of the students' familiar local language led to improved genre and linguistic metalinguistic knowledge and better writing performance in the target language of English. Recent work by Rose (2014 forthcoming) also pointed to the importance of analysing the different stages and phases of curriculum genres (e.g. TLC, R2L) in building a pedagogical

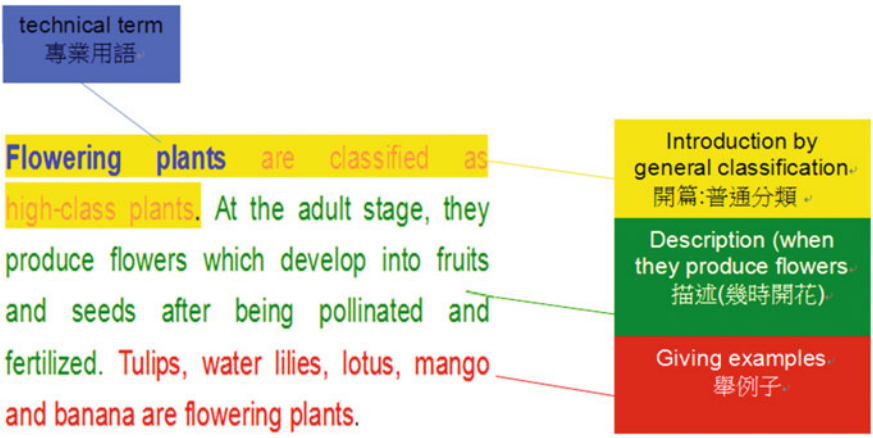

Fig. 4 Modelling Analysis/Deconstruction of a description text (Using the students' local language to scaffold understanding of key text features)

metalanguage to enable teachers to analyse their own classroom discourse. This pedagogical metalanguage will also enable teachers to systematically plan the use of students' familiar, local language(s) in different stages and phases of curriculum genres with different pedagogical functions. Below we shall illustrate with a simple design example to show what this planning process might look like.

Taking the TLC as an example, in the deconstruction stage, teachers can engage students in discussing the main communicative purpose and main ideas of a text and how the writer organizes these ideas systematically through different stages in order to achieve the main communicative purpose by using *both* the local language and the target language. Teachers can introduce a metalanguage to help students identify the different parts of a text in the target language and explain these in the local language. The focus of this phase is on guiding students to notice the global genre structure of the text and to see how the academic content (i.e. *field*) unfolds through the different stages of the genre. Figure 4 shows an example analysis of a description text adapted from a textbook of Grade 4 Science from an Asian context.

The overall purpose of this text is to provide a description of flowering plants (which is a subject-specific technical term) and thus this text is an example of the genre called *description*. Even though it is a short text, the academic content (i.e. the field) unfolds through the two main stages of the genre: Introduction, and Description. Within the Description stage, there is a sub-stage (called *phase*): Giving Examples. There can be more than one Description in a description text, although this short description text has just one. When the teacher jointly reads the text with the students, the teacher does the 'de-construction' or analysis of the text together with the students by drawing the students' attention to these global genre stages of the text. The local language (Chinese, in this case) alongside the English (L2) helps the students to grasp these stages and phases and their communicative purposes.

Table 2 Joint note-making from a text (Scaffolded with local linguistic resources)

Introduction (開篇)	Flowering plants (有花植物)	—A kind of high-class plants (—種高等植物)
Description (描述)	Adult stage (成年期)	—Produce flowers(開花) → pollination (授粉) + fertilization (施肥) → fruits (果實) + seeds (種子)
Giving examples (舉例子)		—Tulips (鬱金香), water lilies (荷花), lotus (蓮花), mango and banana (芒果和香蕉)

Then, the teacher can orient students' attention to the main idea of each stage of the text. For instance, in the Introduction stage, the writer presents the main topic of the text (flowering plants) by classifying them or putting them into a general category of plants (high-class plants). This is a usual way of introducing the topic in description texts. As the teacher guides the students to read to the second stage (Description stage), the teacher summarizes the main idea of this stage for the students: When will flowering plants produce flowers? As the teacher reads the last part of the text with the students, the teacher can summarize the main idea of this last phase: Giving examples of flowering plants. In this way, the teacher models analysing the general structuring of information in the description genre through reading and analysing an example text of such a genre together with students. And with students with very basic target language proficiency, the use of the local language of the students helps students to understand the key features of the model text. For example, the students' local language can be used to scaffold students' learning in the paragraph-by-paragraph detailed reading conducted in the Deconstruction stage of the Reading to Learn (R2L) Cycle (see Ningsih 2015).

During this first joint deconstruction lesson stage, the teacher can jointly make notes with the students on the main ideas of the text using a simple graphic organizer or a table. Table 2 below shows a bilingual note-making table that the teacher and students can use to make bilingual notes whilst reading the text together:

After the first stage of joint analysis in paragraph-by-paragraph reading and joint bilingual note-making (see Ningsih 2015), the teacher can engage students in the joint construction of a new description text based on the notes made in the previous stage. The teacher can ask a student to be the 'scribe' at the blackboard, whilst s/he works with the class to come up with new wordings for each stage of the new description text and produce a new text together. In this phase, local languages can be used to assist the students in the joint note-making process. Bilingual notes can help students to grasp the meaning of key lexicogrammatical items and to connect target language knowledge to local knowledge. Below is a design lesson conversation involving the teacher and students in the joint production of a new text; the underlined parts can be conducted in the students' familiar local language (in this case, it is Cantonese; the English gloss is put in square brackets):

Text 1. Lesson Conversation: Teacher and Students Co-constructing a Text

T: 好嘞,我地依家试下用翻啱啱做嘅笔记嚟写一篇新嘅描述文。边个想做抄写员?Winnie, 你嚟做抄写员好唔好?[Okay, let's try to write a new description text using the notes we've just made. Who wants to be the scribe? Winnie, can you be our scribe?]
{Winnie comes out to the blackboard}

T: First of all, in the first paragraph, what should we have? Just now we have analysed a description text together, do you remember, what do we have in the first stage of a description text? {T pointing to the word INTRODUCTION in the table of notes made on the board.}

S1 : Introduction!

T: Yes, Introduction. We shall introduce the topic. What is the topic? {T pointing to the relevant words in the notes on the board}

S2: Flowering plants.

T: Yes, flowering plants. 我地可以通過分類去介紹有花植物。有花植物屬於邊個普通類別呢?[We can introduce flowering plants by classifying them. Which general class do flowering plants belong to?] Flowering plants belong to the category of …. of what?
{T pointing to the relevant words in the notes on the board}

S3: High-class…

T: Yes, high-class, high-class plants. Flowering plants belong to the category of high-class plants. Let's write this down. Winnie, please help us write this down on the board: Flowering plants belong to the category of high-class plants.{As Winnie is trying to write this down, she stops before the word category}

T: 好嘞,category呢個字點串呢? 邊個可以幫忙? 點串category啊? 睇翻課文,我地啱啱讀過嘅,就喺嗰度。[Okay, what's the spelling of category? Who can help? How to spell category? Look at the text we've just read and it's there.]

Ss: c-a-t-e-g-o-r-y

T: Very good! Yes, c-a-t-e-g-o-r-y category
{Winnie continues to write out the sentence on the board}

T: Very good! Thank you, Winnie. 好嘞,通過分類介紹完個主題,咁描述文嘅下一個文步係乜嘢呢?[Okay, after introducing the topic by classifying it, what's the next stage in a description text?]
{no response}

T: 睇翻我地頭先做嘅筆記。[Look back at the notes we've just made.] {T pointing to the relevant words in the notes on the board}

Ss: Description

T: Yes, very good! Description. 有花植物幾時開花呢? [When do flowering plants produce flowers?]

S5 Adult, adult…

T: Yes, excellent! Adult stage… 咁我地可以點樣表達呢? [How can we say this?] During the adult stage, during, 我地可以用[we can use] during, like,

during recess time, during holidays, now, it's during the adult stage… 邊個可以幫我串during呢個字? [who can spell during for me?]

S6: d-u-r-i-n-g

T: Thank you! During, let's spell it together for Winnie: d-u-r-i-n-g.
{Winnie writes on the board: during}

T: 我地開始寫一個新嘅句子,所以應該大寫字母 'D' [We're starting a new sentence, so we should use capital letter 'D'.]. {Winnie corrects it on the board}

T: Very good! During the adult stage, what happens? {T pointing to the relevant words in the notes on the board}

S7: Produce flowers

T: Yes, during the adult stage what produce flowers?
{T pointing to the relevant words in the notes on the board}

Ss: Flowering plants

T 啱嘞,咁你能唔能夠將成個句子講嗰出嚟啊? [Yes, can you give me the whole sentence]: During the adult stage…

S8: Flowering plants produce flowers…

T: Yes! During the adult stage, flowering plants produce flowers.
{T gesturing Winnie to write this on the board; Winnie stops at the word produce; T asks the class to spell the word together; Winnie continues to finish writing the sentence on the board}

T: Thank you Winnie! 咁接住落嚟點呢? 啲花會點啊? 佢地會唔會變成 [Now what happens next? What happens to the flowers? Can they turn into] fruits and seeds?.
{No response}

T: 好,睇翻我地啱啱做過嘅筆記。[Okay, look at the notes we've just made.]
{T pointing to the relevant words in the notes on the board}

S9: pollination

S10: fertilization

T: Very good! After pollination and fertilization, flowers turn into fruits and seeds.

T: 咁description嘅下一個句子可以係點? [What can be the next sentence in the description then?]

S11: turn into…

T: Yes, after pollination and fertilization, flowers turn into fruits and seeds.
{T gestures Winnie to write the sentence on the board. Winnie hesitates. T asks the class to spell out the word pollination together, then the word fertilization together; Winnie dictates the words on the board}

T: 唔該嗰Winnie! 做得非常好!咁依家我地寫到描述嘅最尾部分嘞。應該仲有啲乜嘢呢? [Thank you so much Winnie! Wonderful job! Now, we have come to the last part of our description text. What should we have now ?]{T pointing to the relevant words in the notes on the board}

S12: Examples
T: Excellent, we can give examples of the flowering plants, right? 咁,邊個記得啲例子呢? 睇翻我地做嘅筆記。[Now, who can remember the examples, look at the notes we've made.]
{T pointing to the relevant words in the notes on the board}
Ss: papaya, mango, banana, rose…
T: Very good! To give examples, 我地應該點樣寫個句子嘅開頭啊? [How should we start the sentence to give examples?]
S13: For example
T: Yes, for example, papaya, mango, banana, rose are flowering plants.
S14: sunflower!
S15: hibiscus!
T: 哦,講得啱,唔該晒!Winnie,你記得晒啲例子嗎?[Oh, yes, thank you! Winnie, have you got all of these examples?]
{Winnie writes the last sentence: For example, papaya….; she stops at some words and the T repeats the practice of asking the class to spell out the words for her; finally she completes the sentence on the board}
T: Winnie, 你做得好好啊!全班都表現好好!依家我地將呢篇新寫嘅文寫翻落個筆記本嗰度。[Excellent job, Winnie! Well-done class! Let's write down this new text in your notebook.].
{T gives some time to the class to copy the text from the board onto their notebook}

In the above design conversation, we can see that the students' familiar local language can be used to achieve a variety of useful functions:

Signposting for students the boundary of tasks (e.g. Okay, let's try to write a new description text using the notes we've just made) Boundary making is an important classroom function. The more clearly the boundaries of tasks and lesson stages are highlighted (e.g. in local languages), the more likely that students can follow the teacher.

Encouraging students' participation (e.g. Who wants to be the scribe? Winnie, can you be our scribe?) (e.g. Thank you so much Winnie! Wonderful job!) (e.g. Well-done class!) (e.g. Yes, can you give me the whole sentence?) Using students' familiar local languages can encourage students' participation by negotiating a shorter social distance between the teacher and the students.

Unpacking key genre and linguistic knowledge (e.g. We can introduce flowering plants by classifying them. Which general class do flowering plants belong to?) (e.g. Okay, after introducing the topic by classifying it, what's the next stage in a description text?) (e.g. How should we start the sentence to give examples?) (e.g. We're starting a new sentence, so we should use capital letter 'D'.) (e.g. What can be the next sentence in the description then?) (e.g. Now, we have come to the last part of our description text. What should we have now?) To help students to deconstruct the genre stages and linguistic features of a target language text, using students' familiar local language can help students gain confidence in

analysing the text by giving them a handle on the different steps in the deconstruction process.

Providing locational cues (e.g. Okay, what's the spelling of category? Who can help? How to spell category? Look at the text we've just read and it's there.) (e.g. Look back at the notes we've just made.) To help students to locate useful information in the text, the locational cues can be provided in students' familiar local language.

The new text co-constructed by the teacher and students would look like the following:

> Flowering plants belong to the category of high-class plants. During the adult stage, flowering plants produce flowers. After pollination and fertilization, flowers turn into fruits and seeds. For example, rose, hibiscus, sunflower, mango, banana, papaya are flowering plants.

In the above lesson extract, students are engaged by the teacher in co-constructing a new text based on the bilingual notes that they have made during the first stage of text analysis. In this second stage of joint reconstruction, the teacher provides ample local language scaffolding to students as they jointly reconstruct a new text based on the notes made, with the teacher constantly pointing at the notes made previously on the board to provide clues to the students to answer his questions as they jointly reconstruct the text based on the notes. The new text looks very similar to the original text in terms of content but new wordings are used. Students feel a sense of accomplishment during the joint reconstruction process, even if they may be heavily guided and scaffolded by the teacher. This joint reconstruction process can be repeated several times with a few more text examples before the students are asked to independently write their own texts as assignments. In this way, the students are prepared for the writing task through the three stages of the TLC.

Through the three stages of the TLC, students can be guided by the teacher to *unpack* an academic text and to make summary notes (joint deconstruction stage) and then scaffolded by the teacher to *repackage (or repack)* the notes into a new text with new wordings both elicited from the students and provided by the teacher (joint reconstruction stage) before they are asked to construct their own text on their own (independent construction stage). Teachers can use students' local languages in this context to capture students' attention and help them to express their ideas freely.

4 Use of Local Languages and the Learning Task

In the previous section, we looked at how local languages can be used in the larger TLC. We will now consider how this may be done within the scope of a particular learning task. However, before we do that, let's look at an example of how a Grade 9 math teacher (Miss Sitt) in a Hong Kong school uses the local language

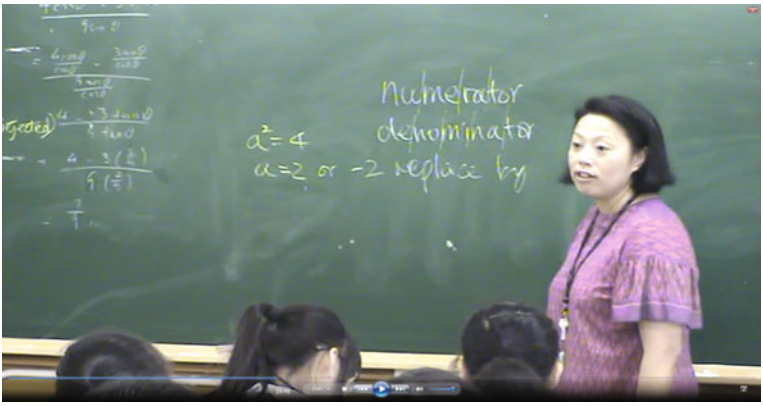

Fig. 5 Syllabification strategy used by Miss Sitt. *Source* Miss Winnie Sitt With permission from Miss Winnie Sitt

(Cantonese in this case) as a *bridging strategy* to provide scaffolding to the students via classroom talk. Miss Sitt is explaining a mathematical operation that requires the understanding of the key lexical phrase: replace… by…

Text 2. Miss Sitt's use of Chinese as a scaffolding strategy. (Source: Tavares 2015, pp. 328–331) (translation of local language in square brackets [])[2]

18:40 … replace Tangent Θ by 2.
Look at the board.
replace Tangent Θ by 2. *(T repeats)*
replace by 代替咗佢 [to replace it], okay?
18:56 For this second way, what have they done here, Alice?
…
And then? What happens on the third line?… What have they done here?
How about the fourth line? What have they done?…
… to replace the…
20:22 Okay, Alice, one more question.
Why do they have to replace it?

In this example, the teacher annotates the key lexical phrase using the local language (domain 1), in this case Chinese, which is shared by all students. In addition, as can be seen in Fig. 5 below, she also uses the *syllabification strategy* to help students 'chop up' multisyllabic words such as 'numerator', 'denominator' into different syllables in order to aid their learning of these key terms in math. In using the syllabification strategy, the teacher draws on the students' knowledge about language (of domain 6 in Mahboob's three-dimensional framework) to help them understand a more technical concept. By skillfully interweaving a focus on the

[2]Data used with the consent of the author, N. J. Tavares and the research participant, Miss Sitt.

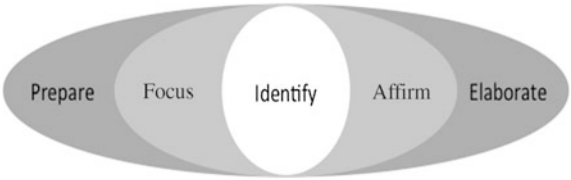

Fig. 6 Design principle: Orbital structure of a learning task. *Source* Rose and Martin (2012)

language aspects into her math lesson, the teacher builds in language support via classroom talk (Tavares 2015).

Scaffolding via classroom talk can go beyond the minimum level of annotating key vocabulary. For example, if students have a very basic English language proficiency and yet owing to policy issues there is a strong desire for parents to put their children into English medium schools, then classroom scaffolding using local languages may be systematically planned into the structure of a learning task. In order to discuss this, we draw on Rose and Martin (2012) orbital structure of a learning task (Fig. 6).

Prepare—In the Prepare phase of the task, the teacher prepares students for tackling the task by arousing their interest and providing necessary background knowledge or key vocabulary for the task.
Focus—In the Focus phase of the task, the teacher focuses students' attention on the question.
Identify—In the Identify phase of the task, the student(s) give the answer to the question, or identify the information required by the question.
Affirm—In the Affirm phase of the task, the teacher affirms the student(s)'s answer or performance in the task.
Elaborate—In the Elaborate phase of the task, the teacher provides additional useful information related to the topic or skills in question.

Amongst the above five phases, the 'Prepare' phase will be most amenable to use of familiar local languages, which can be used to help students prepare for the task. For example, in Miss Sitt's lesson, students' local language (Cantonese in this case) can be used to teach difficult L2 vocabulary (e.g. using Cantonese to annotate 'to replace it') in the Prepare phase of the task. Similarly, in the 'Elaborate' phase of the activity, local languages can be fruitfully used to help students apply what is learnt in new contexts and to provide additional knowledge and information. For example, in Miss Sitt's math class mentioned above, the students' local language can be used in the 'Elaborate' phase to offer more nuanced comparisons of different ways of reaching the same solution to a math problem. The most extensive use of local languages should therefore be in the 'Prepare' and 'Elaborate' phases of the learning task. This is because the teacher is helping students build interest in the topic or connecting the topic with their previous knowledge in the 'Prepare' phase and then extending it in the 'Elaborate' phase.

In the Focus, Identify and Affirm phases of the learning task, teachers should mostly use the target language as they have already helped students develop a

Focus through the use of local languages in the Prepare phase. However, even here, local languages may be used systematically and judiciously to provide annotations of key vocabulary (as shown in Miss Sitt's example above) and multimodalities can also be used to assist the students to accomplish the task (e.g. teacher pointing to the relevant parts of a graphic organizer, a table, or a diagram to provide the position cues of the relevant words/content).

As pointed out above, teachers can use the local language(s) most productively in the Prepare and Elaborate phases. Below, we give some more suggestions on how this might be done in a lesson focusing on 'flowering plants'.

The Prepare Phase In preparing students to read a description text about flowering plants, the teacher needs to arouse students' interest in the topic. This is called the Prepare phase in Rose and Martin's structure of a learning task. In this phase, a lot of strategies can be used: showing students pictures or videos of different kinds of flowering plants, or having students to actually observe and examine a real flowering plant in the school garden (if this is available and feasible), or tell the life story of a flowering plant using the first-person perspective (using personification: e.g. I'm a papaya tree… I grew up in Bangkok…). In this phase, local languages can be used to stimulate students' interest and background knowledge about the topic. Students can brainstorm all their knowledge about flowering plants using local languages (e.g. they might know the names of some flowering plants in their local languages) and the teacher can help them translate some of these words into the target language.

The Elaborate Phase In the Elaborate phase, i.e. the final phase of the learning task, local languages can also be used to apply what has been learnt in new contexts. For instance, students can be encouraged to produce an info-poster on flowering plants. In this phase, the teacher can use local languages to explain how to make an info-poster using an e-tool (e.g. comic life, toondoo, glogster) or how to organize and lay out different kinds of information about flowering plants in the poster. Furthermore, local languages can be used to help students gain awareness of some new language patterns useful in creating new sentences for the poster, for instance, how to design a catchy heading for the poster.

5 Concluding Remarks

This chapter pushes our understandings of language and language variation to rethink how (and what) languages may be used to support student learning in instructional settings—both in language classrooms and in content classrooms. In doing this, the paper first presents Mahboob's three-dimensional model of language variation and identifies some implications of this model for education. This chapter then describes ways in which local languages can be used effectively in teaching/learning by discussing this in relation to some of the recent developments in Sydney School genre-based pedagogy and the Teaching/Learning Cycle (TLC) (Rothery 1996; Rose and Martin 2012). We hope that teachers can take some

inspiration from some of these examples and adapt the principles for their own use in their own unique contexts. The use of local languages serves not only in pedagogical scaffolding functions but also in identity affirmation purposes. By actively and systematically planning the use of local languages in conjunction of the TLC, teachers both build on and affirm the valuable resources that students bring to their classrooms, and in the process, demonstrate to their students that their local cultural identities are valued, just as their local languages. This chapter thus provides a theoretical as well as a practical overview of a number of key issues, and points teachers, teacher educators and researchers into thinking about languages and their use in classrooms in new ways.

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