

Bilingualism and multilingualism are realities for students across the world, and research suggests that teaching children in their home language promotes effective learning.^{1, 2, 3, 4} Languages are important aspects of students' identities and cultures, and being able to use all of their linguistic abilities in school is important to students' development as learners.⁵

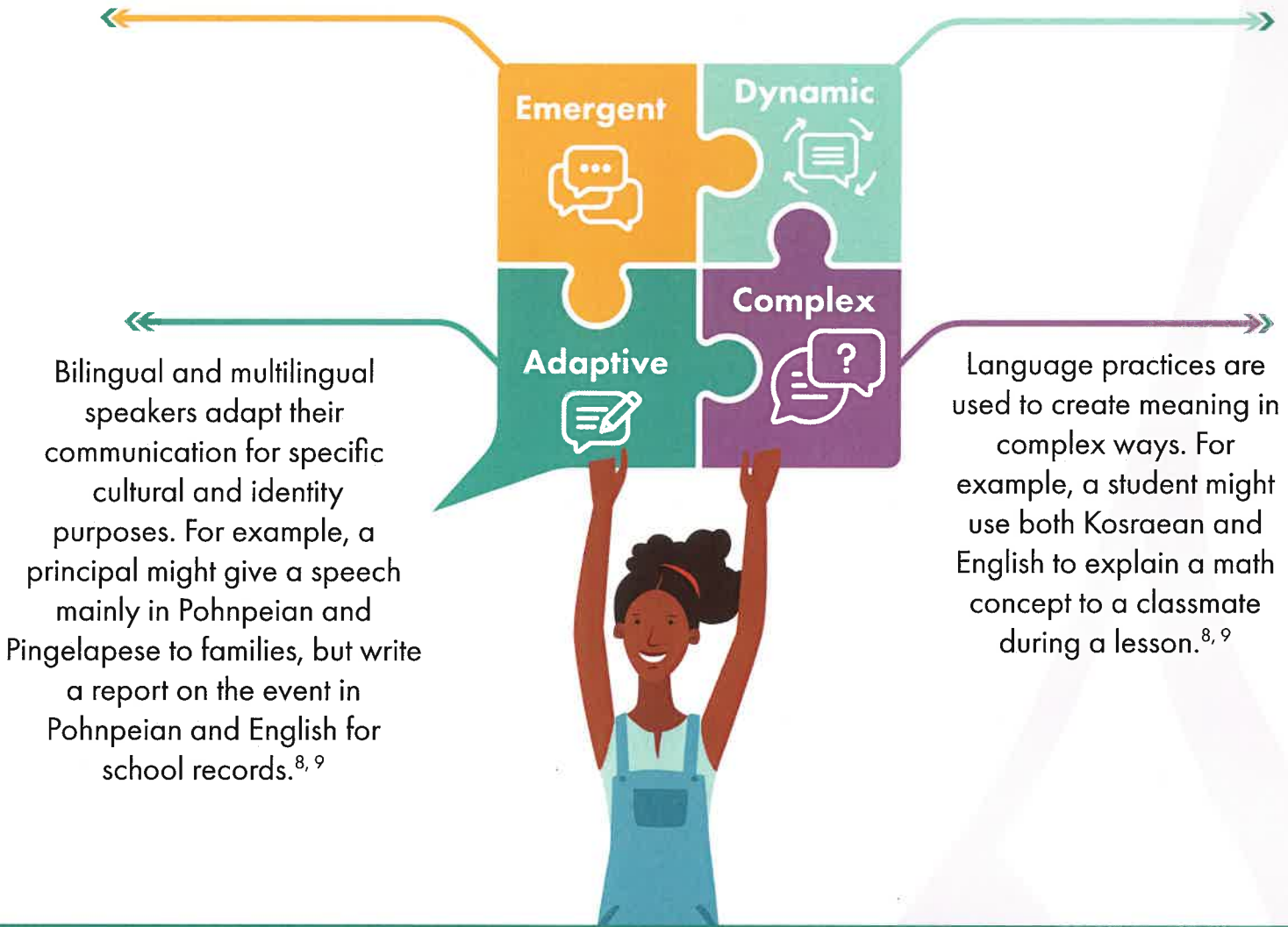
Benefits of Bilingualism and Multilingualism ^{6,7}



About Bilingualism and Multilingualism

Any additional language skills learned by a child develop from their initial set of language practices (their “home language”). In other words, the more developed a student’s home language is the easier it is, in general, to learn new language skills.^{8,9}

Languages are not separated from one another: all language skills, abilities, and practices are interconnected and form a shared pool of resources that students can use to make meaning.^{8,9}



Translanguaging as Pedagogy

Using translanguaging to teach and learn in school mobilizes all of students' linguistic skills.¹³ When used in school, translanguaging has four goals:¹⁴



Support students as they engage with complex content and texts.



Provide opportunities for students to develop academic language practices.



Make space for students' bilingual or multilingual ways of knowing.



Support students' social and emotional development and bilingual or multilingual identities.

Translanguaging Strategies for Teachers



Use bilingual or multilingual labels and word walls, repetition and translation across languages.¹⁴



Pair students with similar language backgrounds but different proficiency levels so that they can support and learn from each other.¹⁸



View students' language abilities as a resource and essential to making meaning.¹⁵



Provide a variety of resources in multiple languages for students. If resources are only available in one language, explain and discuss concepts in the language(s) spoken in the classroom. Encourage students to do the same.¹⁹



Create some learning objectives that support bilingualism and multilingualism and are not tied to specific languages. For example, "Students will be able to summarize solutions to math problems both orally and in writing."¹⁶



Model and accept flexible language use both orally and written.²⁰



Create an assignment in which students read or tell stories to one another using their home language and then translate them into English to share with other students.¹⁷



Scaffold and use exploratory talk, providing space for students to use language to try out new ideas and new grammatical forms.²¹ This practice can also support the development of academic language.²²

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