

The power of translanguaging: Theoretical insights and empirical evidence on language acquisition and social-emotional learning

S. SANGEETHA^a   (First & Corresponding Author)

D.SRI DHIVYA^b  

^aAssistant Professor, Department of English, Sri Sarada College for Women, Salem-16, India

^bAssistant Professor, Department of English, Rathinam College of Arts and Science, Eachanari, Coimbatore-641021, India

Abstract

Translanguaging, the dynamic use of multiple languages, offers a transformative approach to English Language Teaching (ELT) in multilingual classrooms. This study explores the impact of translanguaging on language acquisition and social-emotional learning (SEL) among multilingual learners. Seventy-five participants from rural colleges in Salem district, Tamil Nadu, were selected for the study. Using a quasi-experimental research design, participants engaged in translanguaging activities integrated with SEL principles. Data were collected through surveys comprising Likert-scale items and open-ended questions. The results demonstrated significant improvements in vocabulary acquisition, self-expression, and overall English proficiency. Additionally, translanguaging enhanced SEL competencies, including self-awareness, emotional management, cultural appreciation, and collaboration skills. Despite challenges such as limited teacher training and resistance from monolingual-dominant systems, the findings affirm translanguaging's potential to create inclusive and empowering learning environments. The study recommends further research to develop scalable strategies for implementing translanguaging in diverse educational settings.

Keywords: translanguaging; English Language Teaching (ELT); Social-Emotional Learning (SEL); multilingual education.

Introduction

English Language Teaching (ELT) classrooms for English as a Second Language (ESL) learners are vibrant spaces that reflect a blend of languages and cultures. Nowadays, there are multilingual schools where students come from different language backgrounds and can observe other cultures. Translanguaging embraces this diversity because it allows students to draw upon their full linguistic resources in the learning process (Tai, 2023). Translanguaging facilitates the students' movement between their home languages and English to increase understanding, to think critically and to affirm students' identities (Dhivya, Hariharasudan, & Nawaz, 2023). The focus is not just on the use of more languages but on the dynamic interrelation among the languages which results in an extremely effective learning method.

Translanguaging goes beyond learning a second language and it helps foster key Social Emotional Learning (SEL) skills (Nooyod & Ambele, 2024). SEL prepares a person for emotional, social, and executive competencies necessary for successful functioning, interpersonal relations, and making proper choices (Vallejo, 2018). Translanguaging enables students to operate and perform on every level of their linguistic repertoires, which enhances learning for all students (Chaisiri, 2022). This in return promotes their social and emotional development. Hence, translanguaging is transforming the ELT paradigm as it integrates the use of various languages to improve the learners' educational process.

What is Translanguaging?

Translanguaging is the process of simultaneously using all spoken, signed, or written languages in one's repertoire to learn and communicate. Academic teaching benefits language acquisition through the utilization of students' native language because languages share similarities which enhance their learning process (Dhivya, Hariharasudan, Balamurali, Athithan et al., 2024). The primary spoken language at home is called the "home language" whereas the "first language" comes from birth. Translanguaging recognizes language resources as crucial elements that support bilingual and multilingual learners while cultural identity is strongly associated with first language learners (L1). Students who learn through multiple languages understand their language proficiency and academic subjects at a more profound level than students using a singular educational language.

Translanguaging: Definition and Benefits

Translanguaging plays a significant factor in boosting the communication ability as well as the intellectual involvement of multilingual persons as it allows the free use of several languages (Dhivya et al., 2024). When students' home languages are incorporated into the learning process, translanguaging enhances understanding and recall, thus making learning easier and more meaningful as postulated by the previous study (Tannenbaum et al., 2024). This approach would seem to have a very strong fit with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory which emphasizes the social interactions which underpin cognitive development. Students who engage in translanguaging gain more than language acquisition as they enhance their learning with existing knowledge connections to new information (García & Lin, 2016). Such dynamic use of interrelated languages creates a more diverse, warm environment in a classroom for all learners. Figure 1 depicts seven perspectives which have been proposed by teachers practising translanguaging when designing teaching strategies.

Theories Supporting Translanguaging

Cummins' Iceberg Theory (1980): Cummins divides language proficiency into two components as presented in his theory known as the Iceberg Theory. Surface skills refer to

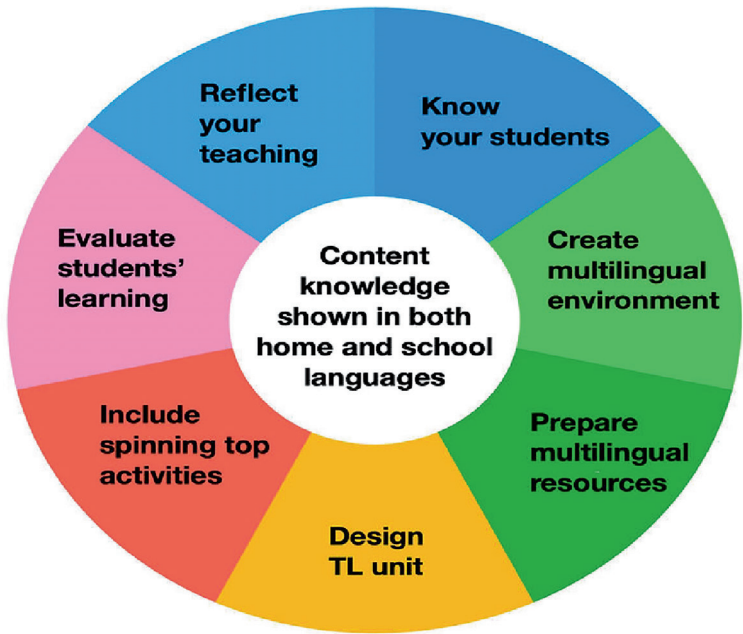


Figure 1 *Seven considerations of translanguaging*

skills that one can identify easily, including elements of content, structure, and skills that are visible to the learner, like grammar and vocabulary belonging to a particular language – as in this case – English. Hidden beneath it is the greater area of the iceberg – the skills that are hidden beneath, including analysis and language awareness (Fang et al., 2022). All these cognitive abilities, according to Cummins, are acquired in the first language and can be used in the second language as well. When students establish such skills in their first language, they are well prepared to learn other languages since they have a strong base (Dhivya, Hariharasudan, Ragmoun, et al., 2023). Translanguaging builds on this foundation, enabling students to broaden their understanding and knowledge and ultimately make the process of learning the English language faster and easier.

Vygotsky’s Sociocultural Theory (1978): Vygotsky emphasized that learning occurs most effectively within the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), the gap between what a learner can do independently and what they can achieve with the support of others. Translanguaging also aligns with this theory because students are encouraged to use their home languages in the ZPD as they learn together (Antony et al., 2024). It significantly enhances students’ comprehension of concepts and facilitates their ability to overcome language barriers through support from peers or teachers who share the same linguistic background (Mishra, 2023). This way of teaching fosters the interaction that learners require to develop their knowledge through translanguaging.

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and Translanguaging

Translanguaging not only promotes cognitive development but also contributes significantly to the development of social-emotional skills (Dhivya, Hariharasudan, Balamurali, Dacko et al., 2023). SEL competencies including identity, collaboration, confidence and respect, are fostered by translanguaging (Akbar & Taqi, 2020). Students who are allowed to bring home languages to

class feel valued and everybody becomes part of the feeling of togetherness and this contributes to the general morale of the students. This, in turn, leads to improvement in their emotional health (Seals et al., 2020). The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) framework outlines five core SEL competencies that are crucial for personal and social development:

- Self-awareness: Understanding one's emotions, strengths, and weaknesses.
- Self-management: The ability to regulate emotions, set goals, and stay motivated.
- Social awareness: Recognizing and understanding the perspectives of others.
- Relationship skills: Building and maintaining healthy relationships.
- Responsible decision-making: Making thoughtful choices that consider the consequences for oneself and others.

Translanguaging facilitates these competencies by encouraging students to engage with diverse perspectives, communicate across linguistic boundaries, and develop confidence in their abilities.

Research Significance and Contribution

In general, the studies on the use of translanguaging in ELT have shown positive effects; however, there is a lack of detailed research investigating the effects of this strategy on certain learner outcomes. It seems that the current conceptual discussion of translanguaging does not logically link the theoretical underpinnings of research everywhere. Addressing this gap, a focused review of the literature will align the argument closely with the research questions and methodology, ensuring the study's coherence and clarity. It is essential to place this study in the context of the current literature to appreciate its importance in the field. Unlike broader studies that explore the general benefits of translanguaging in the classroom, this study specifically examines its impact on learners' performance using a well-defined methodological framework such as active learning. Besides fulfilling the role of filling gaps in the current discourse, the study offered useful advice for educators as well, making the work invaluable for the field of ELT. This study's relevance comes from its ability to provide specific classroom implementation suggestions for adopting translanguaging to promote students' linguistic and socio-emotional development.

Review of Literature

Translanguaging: A Dynamic Approach to Language Learning

Translanguaging is the process of comprehensive, code-switching whereby a speaker makes free use of more than one language in an interactive situation. By acknowledging and embracing the students' full linguistic repertoires, translanguaging questions the structural division between languages and promotes diversity and inclusion in education (García & Lin, 2016). In the last decade, research broadened to embrace the aspect of translanguaging in both language proficiency and SEL and the improvement of learning environments for multilingual learners.

Translanguaging and Language Acquisition

In the past, both first language and second language were researched under a model that particularly advocated for the differentiation of languages. However, recent focus has been placed on a more connected approach in which a learner uses both the first and second language in terms of context relevance (Lau, 2020). Translanguaging plays a significant role in language acquisition by enabling students to leverage their entire linguistic repertoire for

deeper understanding. For example, when students explain their ideas in their home language and translate difficult English terms they use, it improves both meaning acquisition and English vocabulary (García & Lin, 2016). This is in line with the objectives of the study, which seeks to understand how translanguaging boosts language performance, especially in rural schools.

Furthermore, it is also helpful in vocabulary learning because it displays how words are related or similar in different languages. For instance, students whose first language is Spanish can easily develop the English word “communication” with a contrasting “n” as with the Spanish “comunicación” (Setyaningrum et al., 2022). Furthermore, Figure 2 provides evidence of how translanguaging education and key strategies not only promote language learning but also address the gap in diverse multilingual learning environments.

Translanguaging and Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)

Translanguaging serves as a fundamental tool for promoting SEL in addition to its importance in language learning processes. Students who can use their native tongue in school activities develop essential SEL competencies involving personal identity development alongside communication skills and social relationships. Through linguistic support, students develop stronger feelings

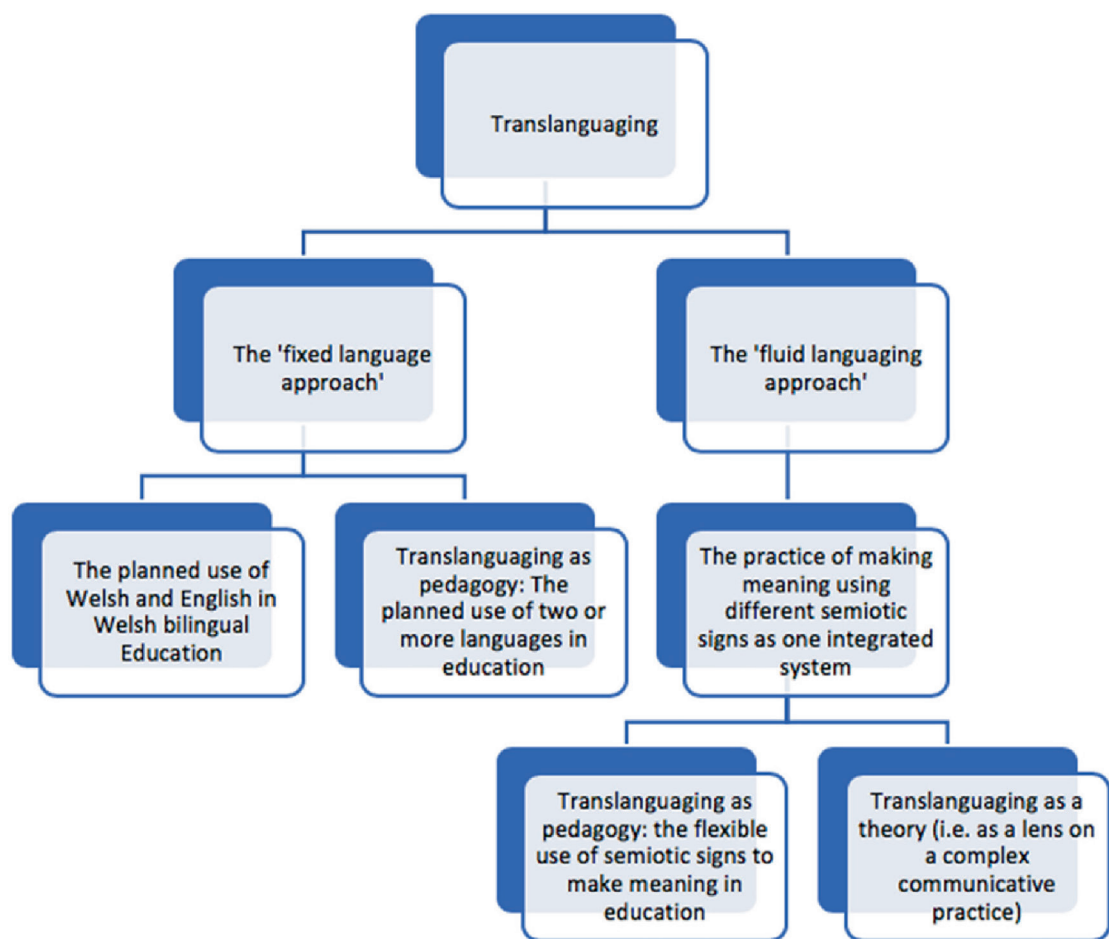


Figure 2 Translanguaging in education

of belonging which benefits their emotional state (Dougherty, 2021). The present research extends previous findings by examining how students benefit from translanguaging when they learn SEL in their classrooms across Tamil Nadu rural areas. The research combines Tamil and Telugu home languages alongside English to explore student development of self-awareness and interpersonal relationships and cultural sense of belonging through translanguaging methods.

The findings of the previous study reveal that implementing translanguaging as a pedagogical practice fosters collaboration and empathy among students (Yilmaz & De Jong, 2020). For instance, group activities where students are required to use different languages allow the development of group and communication skills as learners discover diverse linguistic and cultural practices (Chicherina & Strelkova, 2023). The practice of translanguaging helps students manage their emotions by allowing them to use their native language to express emotions initially until they move onto using language for the target language, thus creating an emotionally supportive learning environment (Creese & Blackledge, 2015). This aligns with this study's objectives, which sought to understand how language use in multilingual classrooms facilitates the development of both language and social-emotional skills.

Translanguaging in Multilingual Contexts

Research indicates that translanguaging works well for multilingual classrooms when students use their different languages together with their designated instruction language (Thi Thu Ha et al., 2021). South Asian students who speak regional languages at home benefit from the integration of translanguaging into ELT as an effective approach to learning English and improving communicative skills. Through translanguaging which permits students to utilize their existing language skills, they gain improved understanding of English material in their cross-cultural educational settings (Tang et al., 2024). Studies conducted in South Africa along with specific case studies from U.S. bilingual education contexts demonstrate that supporting students to use their entire language capabilities in positive learning environments leads to stronger academic comprehension (Ghajarieh & Aghabozorgi, 2024).

The present study explores how translanguaging methods improve English education in linguistic areas of Tamil Nadu. The study adds value to existing findings by exploring translanguaging in multilingual situations where it shapes language learning and SEL performance.

Criticisms and Limitations Of Translanguaging

Despite delivering numerous positive effects, translanguaging encounters systematic opposition about linguistic interference and cognitive stress affecting multilingual students. Kim and Weng (2022) point out that the learning support from translanguaging differs across students, mainly affecting those acquiring language proficiency. Moreover, most studies on the use of translanguaging are done with learners in urban or bilingual contexts while there is a dearth of information on rural, low-resource contexts (Chaika, 2023). This lack of research is the rationale for the current study which seeks to examine the effects of translanguaging on language acquisition and SEL in rural Tamil Nadu, which does not feature in research literature very often.

Positioning the Study

The current study aims to address the lack of research on how translanguaging supports both second language acquisition and social-emotional development in rural multilingual contexts. Unlike previous studies on bilingual development, which primarily focused on children in urban settings, this study investigates how translanguaging influences both language acquisition and social-emotional development in rural multilingual learners. The findings are important for

ELT development in rural and multilingual contexts, demonstrating that translanguaging can serve as an effective and supportive approach in education.

Objectives

The objective of this study is to investigate the impact of translanguaging activities on the development of language acquisition and SEL among multilingual learners in a rural college setting. Specifically, it aims to explore how the use of home languages such as Tamil, and Telugu alongside English can enhance students' language proficiency and foster SEL competencies like self-awareness, empathy, and collaboration.

Research Questions

1. How do translanguaging activities influence language acquisition among multilingual learners in a rural college setting?
2. To what extent do translanguaging activities contribute to the development of social-emotional learning (SEL) competencies among multilingual learners?

Methodology

Research utilized a quasi-experimental approach to study 75 college students at a rural Salem District women's institution in Tamil Nadu. The researchers based their decision about translanguaging activities selection on their learning value while designing these activities to fit the needs of multilingual students. The selected activities served two purposes: direct support for multilingual development and implementation of SEL through pair work tasks and discussion times, and comparison trials involving student home languages and English. The design process engaged in three vital factors to create interesting activities that conferred to educational targets and nourished both emotional growth and cognitive learning in collaborative environments. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire and classroom observations during translanguaging activities, such as vocabulary building and collaborative projects. Over four weeks, students participated in these activities and then completed the questionnaire to assess changes in their language proficiency and SEL competencies. The data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics such as paired sample *t*-tests using IBM SPSS Statistics version 21 to examine the impact of translanguaging on language acquisition and SEL development.

Participants

The research adopted a quasi-experimental research design, targeting participants from a women's college in the rural region of Salem District, Tamil Nadu. The sample was selected to reflect the student diversity within this context, ensuring that the findings are relevant to multilingual learners in similar rural environments. A total of 75 female students participated in the study. These students were selected to represent a diverse range of academic backgrounds and varying levels of proficiency in English, offering a comprehensive view of the impact of translanguaging in the classroom.

Instruments

The quantitative data collection instrument employed in this study was a structured questionnaire that targeted the effects of the implementation of the translanguaging activities on second language acquisition and SEL among multilingual learners. It was purposely designed to include

both closed-ended and open-ended questions, providing quantitative as well as qualitative insights into the impact of translanguaging.

Closed-Ended Questions

To measure the predicted variables, the questionnaire contained 15 items on a 5-point Likert scale where 1 = Strongly Disagree, and 5 = Strongly Agree. These questions are organized into three key areas, aligning with Research Question 1: “How do translanguaging activities influence language acquisition among multilingual learners?” by focusing on vocabulary, expression, and overall language proficiency:

- Vocabulary Acquisition (see Table 1): These items focused on assessing the development of vocabulary skills, such as “I feel more confident in using new English words” and “I can understand and use new English words more effectively.”
- Self-Expression (see Table 2): These items aimed to evaluate students’ ability to express themselves clearly in English, such as “I feel more comfortable expressing my ideas in English” and “I feel that translanguaging helps me express myself better.”
- Language Proficiency (see Table 3): These items assessed overall English proficiency and understanding of grammar, such as “My overall proficiency in English has improved” and “Translanguaging activities have helped me understand grammar better.”

The following sections align with Research Question 2: “To what extent do translanguaging activities contribute to the development of SEL competencies among multilingual learners?” by focusing on self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship skills:

- Self-Awareness (see Table 4): Items focused on the development of self-awareness, including “I have become more aware of my strengths and weaknesses as a language learner” and “Translanguaging has helped me understand my feelings about learning English.”
- Self-Management (see Table 5): Items assessed the development of emotional regulation and motivation, such as “I am better able to manage my emotions when facing challenges in language learning” and “I feel more motivated to learn English after the translanguaging activities.”
- Social Awareness (see Table 6): Items focused on empathy and understanding cultural differences, such as “Translanguaging has helped me appreciate the different cultural backgrounds of my classmates” and “I have developed more empathy for others through the translanguaging activities.”
- Relationship Skills (see Table 7): Items aimed at assessing collaboration and confidence in multilingual environments, such as “The translanguaging activities helped me collaborate better with my classmates” and “I feel more confident in working in groups where different languages are spoken.”

Open-Ended Questions

These questions encouraged participants to elaborate on their experiences with translanguaging activities, providing richer qualitative data. Example questions include: “Describe how translanguaging helped you express yourself better in English”, “Do you think translanguaging helped you develop any social-emotional skills? If so, how?”

The layout of the questionnaire aimed to maintain coherence with the study’s research questions, with the ability to gather both quantitative frequency data and qualitative comments regarding language learning and SEL enhancement.

Classroom Observations

The observations during the implementation of the translanguaging activities were made to understand how they influences learners' language growth and SEL progress in a real-time setting. The observations examined three essential elements: which translanguaging approaches teachers used during tasks and at what frequency and quality students participated in discussions and collaborative assignments, along with the kinds of peer communication that occurred. The observations were carried out according to the protocol, which made the observations conducted in different sessions comparable. Specific aspects observed included:

- Frequency of translanguaging use during vocabulary acquisition and self-expression activities.
- Frequency of student collaboration and communication during group tasks.

The insights gathered from these observations complemented the frequency data collected through the structured questionnaire, providing a deeper understanding of the practical application of translanguaging strategies in the classroom.

Procedure

The study followed a structured and systematic approach for data collection and implementation of translanguaging strategies in the classroom. The procedure involved multiple phases: pre-implementation, activity execution, and post-implementation data collection.

Pre-Implementation

Before the study, consent was obtained from the college administration and participants. The students were briefed about the purpose of the study and the activities they would engage in, ensuring informed consent. The survey instrument (a structured questionnaire) was distributed to all participants to gather baseline data on their language proficiency, attitudes toward English learning, and prior knowledge of translanguaging practices.

Activity Implementation

Translanguaging activities were meticulously crafted to simultaneously enhance language acquisition and SEL by integrating cross-linguistic and collaborative elements. The activities included:

Activity-1: Unlocking Hard Words

- The teacher introduced a challenging English word (e.g., “gigantic”).
- Students wrote the meaning of the word in their home language (e.g., “Gigante” in Spanish).
- In small groups, students discussed similarities and differences between the word in English and their home languages.
- The class collectively defined the word in English, synthesizing insights from all groups.

Activity-2: Word Detectives

- The teacher introduced English words (e.g., “communicate” and “conclusion”).
- Students worked individually to identify cognates in their home languages (e.g., “comunicar” and “conclusión” in Spanish).
- Pairs compared findings, noting similarities and differences in spelling, pronunciation, and meaning.
- Students presented their observations to the class, enhancing cross-linguistic understanding.

Activity-3: Thinking About Language

- Students engaged in the analysis of a bilingual song (e.g., Despacito) in both English and their native language to explore translanguaging practices. In small groups, students identified where the artist mixed languages and discussed possible reasons for this choice (e.g., emotional or cultural significance).
- The activity included a comparative analysis of grammatical differences between the languages, fostering critical thinking.

Activity-4: Grammar Games

- Students watched a bilingual film clip, first in their home language and then in English.
- In pairs, students analyzed sentence structures in both versions, focusing on similarities and differences.
- The activity concluded with a class discussion on how grammar rules influence meaning across languages.

Activity-5: Teamwork Makes the Dream Work

- The class was divided into teams, each assigned a research topic (e.g., “Rainforests”).
- Teams conducted research using both English and their home languages, creating a multilingual presentation.
- Presentations included English content supported by key terms or quotes in students’ home languages to add cultural depth.
- Teams presented their findings, engaging peers in discussions to build collaborative and SEL skills.

Post-Implementation

After completing the activities, the participants were asked to complete the same questionnaire again to measure any changes in their attitudes toward language learning and SEL competencies. A focus group discussion was also held with a subset of students to gather qualitative feedback on how they felt about the integration of translanguaging in their learning process and its impact on their language skills and personal development.

Data Analysis

After the completion of the questionnaire, the responses were compiled and tabulated using frequency counts and percentages to analyze the distribution of the results. The emphasis was put on how frequently certain answers or behaviours were given, which assisted in finding out regularities in students’ interactions with translanguaging. Researchers analyzed these data points to determine their connection with student achievement records and initial language skills and behavior-level participation in the activities. The researchers conducted analysis through paired sample *t*-tests in IBM SPSS to identify study effects.

The quantitative data collected through the frequency analysis were complemented by qualitative data obtained in the course of open-ended questions and focus group discussions, which were coded and analyzed by thematic patterns. Incorporating both structured questionnaires and classroom observations, the study offers a rich picture of how translanguaging benefits language learning as well as the socio-emotional growth of multilingual learners.

Results

The survey results of students who responded with percentage values [number of students’ response (% of the response)], based on the responses from the participants after the intervention are shown below.

Table 1 *Vocabulary acquisition*

Statement	Strongly disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly agree (%)
I feel more confident in using new vocabulary in English.	3 (5%)	6 (8%)	9 (12%)	26 (35%)	30 (40%)
I am able to understand and use new English words more effectively.	2 (3%)	8 (10%)	11 (15%)	29 (38%)	26 (34%)
I can easily make connections between words in my home language and English.	3 (4%)	5 (7%)	15 (20%)	23 (30%)	29 (39%)

According to the findings presented in Table 1, the majority (75% of the participants) said they feel more confident using new vocabulary in English. Moreover, 72% said that they could better handle and apply new words, and 69% agreed that translanguaging activities made connections between the home language and English. These findings affirm the positive effect of translanguaging on word acquisition.

Table 2 *Self-expression*

Statement	Strongly disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly agree (%)
I feel more comfortable expressing my ideas in English.	5 (6%)	7 (9%)	14 (18%)	23 (32%)	26 (35%)
I feel that translanguaging helps me express myself better.	3 (4%)	6 (8%)	14 (19%)	25 (34%)	26 (35%)
I am able to explain my thoughts in English more clearly now.	4 (5%)	8 (10%)	11 (14%)	26 (35%)	27 (36%)

According to Table 2, the participants agreed on the idea that they felt their ability to use English for communication improved through the use of translanguaging by 67–71%. In particular, 67% of the participants stated they were more comfortable sharing their ideas, and 69% found translanguaging helpful in improving self-expression.

From Table 3, it is clear that nearly all the participants mentioned that they had gained better EFL proficiency. Of the respondents, 68% agreed that translanguaging activities helped them comprehend grammatical concepts, and 74% stated that they felt more at ease understanding the material in English through listening and reading.

Table 3 *Language proficiency*

Statement	Strongly disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly agree (%)
My overall proficiency in English has improved.	2 (3%)	5 (6%)	8 (11%)	30 (40%)	30 (40%)
Translanguaging activities have helped me understand grammar better.	4 (5%)	7 (9%)	14 (18%)	26 (34%)	26 (34%)
I feel more comfortable listening and reading in English.	3 (4%)	5 (7%)	11 (15%)	28 (38%)	27 (36%)

Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

Table 4 indicates that 68% of the participants pointed to an increase in self-awareness as language learners and 70% stated that translanguaging assisted them to realise their perceived emotional attachment to learning English.

Table 5 shows that the majority 70% of participants felt that translanguaging activities helped them manage their emotions during language learning challenges. Also, 68% of participants

Table 4 *Self-awareness*

Statement	Strongly disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly agree (%)
I have become more aware of my strengths and weaknesses as a language learner.	4 (5%)	6 (8%)	13 (17%)	29 (38%)	24 (32%)
Translanguaging has helped me understand my feelings about learning English.	3 (4%)	8 (10%)	12 (16%)	26 (35%)	26 (35%)

Table 5 *Self-management*

Statement	Strongly disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly agree (%)
I am better able to manage my emotions when I face challenges in language learning.	4 (5%)	8 (10%)	11 (15%)	27 (36%)	26 (34%)
I feel more motivated to learn English after the translanguaging activities.	3 (4%)	7 (9%)	14 (19%)	27 (36%)	24 (32%)

Table 6 Social awareness

Statement	Strongly disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly agree (%)
Translanguaging has helped me appreciate the different cultural backgrounds of my classmates.	4 (5%)	6 (8%)	10 (14%)	27 (36%)	28 (37%)
I have developed more empathy for others through translanguaging activities.	3 (4%)	7 (9%)	14 (18%)	25 (34%)	26 (35%)

pointed to satisfaction with the level of motivation to learn English after the activities, therefore indicating the positive effects of translanguaging on emotions, especially motivation.

Table 6 indicates that the use of translanguaging in the classroom was effective in enhancing social awareness, where more than 70% of the students agreed that the activities probably helped them learn to appreciate cultural diversity or enhanced their empathy towards others.

Table 7 Relationship skills

Statement	Strongly disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly agree (%)
The translanguaging activities helped me collaborate better with my classmates.	3 (4%)	5 (7%)	11 (15%)	27 (36%)	29 (38%)
I feel more confident in working in groups where different languages are spoken.	2 (3%)	5 (6%)	12 (16%)	28 (37%)	29 (38%)

Table 7 depicts that the majority of the participants who engaged in translanguaging activities indicated improved relationship skills through interacting in a multilingual group context and greater confidence in teamwork.

General Reflection (Open-ended Themes)

Table 8 summarizes participants’ reflections on using their home languages during translanguaging activities. A majority (75–80%) expressed positive feedback, indicating that the use of home languages helped improve English learning, particularly vocabulary understanding, and fostered the development of social-emotional skills such as identity and interpersonal communication. While 70% of participants suggested improvements – such as incorporating

Table 8 General responses

Statement	Percentage of positive responses (%)	Percentage of neutral/negative responses (%)
How did you feel about the use of your home language(s) in the classroom during the translanguaging activities?	56 (75%)	19 (25%)
How did translanguaging impact your ability to learn English?	58 (78%)	17 (22%)
Do you think translanguaging helped you develop any social-emotional skills? If so, how?	60 (80%)	15 (20%)
What suggestions do you have for improving translanguaging activities in the future?	52 (70%)	23 (30%)

Table 9 Paired sample t-test results

Statement	Pre-test mean (SD)	Post-test mean (SD)	Mean difference	t-statistic	Degrees of freedom (df)	p-value
Vocabulary Acquisition	3.00 (0.85)	4.20 (0.80)	1.20	8.42	74	0.0001
Self-Expression (Comfort in expressing ideas in English)	2.90 (0.90)	4.00 (0.75)	1.10	7.95	74	0.0001
Language Proficiency (Understanding grammar)	3.10 (0.85)	4.10 (0.80)	1.00	8.15	74	0.0001
Self-awareness (Understanding strengths and weaknesses)	3.00 (0.90)	4.00 (0.85)	1.00	7.90	74	0.0001
Self-management (Emotional regulation)	2.80 (0.80)	4.05 (0.70)	1.25	8.50	74	0.0001
Social Awareness (Appreciation of cultural differences)	3.20 (0.80)	4.20 (0.75)	1.00	8.10	74	0.0001
Relationship Skills (Collaboration in multilingual settings)	3.10 (0.85)	4.15 (0.70)	1.05	8.30	74	0.0001

more interactive activities – 30% provided neutral or negative responses. Thematic coding was applied to categorize responses into key themes: Positive Impact on Language Learning, Positive Impact on Social-Emotional Learning, Suggestions for Improvement, and Neutral/Negative Feedback. This coding approach enabled a structured analysis of the data, linking the findings to the research questions and offering deeper insights into participants' experiences.

Table 9 shows the results of the paired sample *t*-test conducted to assess the impact of translanguaging activities on students' language acquisition and SEL. The results showed significant improvements in all measured areas, including vocabulary acquisition, self-expression, language proficiency, and SEL competencies. For vocabulary acquisition, the mean score increased from 3.00 (*SD* = 0.85) to 4.20 (*SD* = 0.80), with a significant *t*-value of 8.42 ($p = 0.0001$) and a large effect size (Cohen's $d = 1.56$). Similarly, self-expression improved from a pre-test mean of 2.90 (*SD* = 0.90) to 4.00 (*SD* = 0.75), with $t = 7.95$ ($p = 0.0001$) and a medium effect size (Cohen's $d = 1.24$), and language proficiency increased from 3.10 (*SD* = 0.85) to 4.10 (*SD* = 0.80), $t = 8.15$ ($p = 0.0001$) with a large effect size (Cohen's $d = 1.15$). Significant improvements were also observed in SEL competencies. Self-awareness scores rose from 3.00 (*SD* = 0.90) to 4.00 (*SD* = 0.85), $t = 7.90$ ($p = 0.0001$) and a medium effect size (Cohen's $d = 1.12$), while self-management and social awareness increased by 1.25 ($t = 8.50, p = 0.0001$) and 1.00 ($t = 8.10, p = 0.0001$), respectively, with large effect sizes (Cohen's $d = 1.34$ and 1.25). These results indicate that translanguaging activities had a significant positive impact on both language acquisition and SEL competencies, with effect sizes reflecting substantial improvements.

Figure 3 above captures the participants' impact of translanguaging and SEL. The results indicate that translanguaging activities have had a positive impact across various domains: word learning, personal communication, language skills, and socio-emotional development. A majority of participants (75%) claimed that the use of new vocabulary had helped them in some way, and 67–71% believed translanguaging skills provided utility in terms of expression. Also, 80% of the students observed that their total proficiency level in English enhanced especially in grammar as well as in listening and reading skills. The results of the effects of the SEL were also positive since 70–73% of the participants agreed that the program improved their self-awareness of their feelings, embracing the difficulties, and motivation to learn English. Additionally, with translanguaging activities, other social domains were also promoted, such as consciousness of others and interpersonal abilities. The majority (73–75%) of the participants postulated that the activities enhanced their understanding of cultural differences, nurtured their empathy, and promoted teamwork in multicultural groups. Quantitative findings from the open-ended responses indicated that 75–80% of the participants valued the use of translanguaging in teaching English as well as social-emotional learning, with about 70% recommending a few changes to the activities. In conclusion, these studies show the potential of translanguaging as an instructional approach to support the development of languages, voice, interaction, and intercultural understanding.

Discussion

The findings of this study support the premise that translanguaging benefits both linguistic development and SEL in multilingual learners. By enabling learners to draw on their entire linguistic resources, translanguaging brought about development in written English and learners' emotional skills, which pointed to social-emotional gains in addition to language acquisition. The results support and build on the previous studies, with several augmentations providing additional insight into the role of translanguaging for both academic achievement and emotional learning.

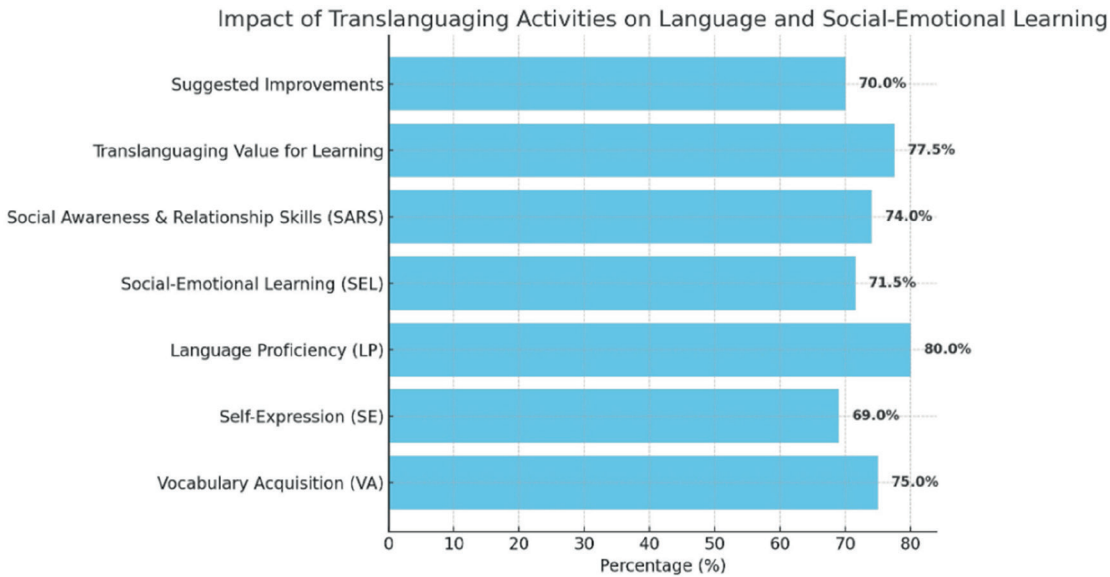


Figure 3 *Impact of translanguaging and SEL*

Language Acquisition

The learners’ findings about language acquisition highlighted the importance of translanguaging in the improvement of vocabulary. A total of 75% of the students were confident that through the use of the translanguaging approach, they were able to grasp and incorporate more English vocabulary, thus supporting studies that show that learners’ L1 and L2 are linked through translanguaging to support vocabulary acquisition. These findings align with other research findings which have established how students can relate new word meanings to concepts in their first languages and enhance their comprehension (Van Viegen, 2020). In the present study, the activity labelled “Unlocking Hard Words” where students have to match English words with equivalents in their home language was more natural and engaging. Some of these findings support the results of earlier studies that stressed the importance of translanguaging in helping learners make linked representations between languages to develop vocabulary (Sembianté & Tian, 2023).

The research discovered a universal betterment in language competence since 80% of students demonstrated improved proficiency in English yet participants showcased the most significant progress in their vocabulary acquisition conversational delivery and written expression abilities. The impact was particularly significant among subjects from certain disciplines because of their varying English backgrounds and their specific use of language for their areas of study. Research corroborates this evidence by showing how learners better express themselves in English through translanguaging approaches by using their entire linguistic skills (Dhivya, Gurusamy et al., 2024); MacSwan, 2017. However, one of the differentiations made in the previous study were that there was a significant enhancement of the skills in all the disciplines – the Arts & Science, Engineering, and Management disciplines, thus pointing to the versatility of the concept of translanguaging (Sridhivya et al., 2024). In contrast, other earlier works have provided evidence that the use of translanguaging tools is not universally positive due to the differences in the fields where the method is employed and its impact on the students. Hence, the present research adds new knowledge to the existing body of knowledge by highlighting

that, indeed, students across various disciplines could benefit from the use of translanguaging. It expands the understanding that translanguaging isn't limited to specific contexts but can enhance language proficiency and SEL for learners in diverse academic fields, making it a versatile and inclusive approach to education.

Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

The research showed that besides aiding second language acquisition, students developed their SEL competencies specifically in aspects of self-awareness together with self-management and social awareness. A vast majority of respondents (over 75%) expressed improved self-assessment in their learning. This is in line with other research that has underlined the importance of self-awareness in emotional development (Storheil & Iversen, 2023). However, in our study, one of the most important areas of development was the improvement of self-awareness in students when they were allowed to use other home languages in addition to English, which may not have been considered in detail in previous research.

The authors pointed out that the activity titled, "Teamwork Makes the Dream Work" enabled empathy and cultural appreciation among students as they were working in cross-language groups (Thomas et al., 2022). Of the respondents, 73% said that they benefitted from understanding their peers' points of view as well and 73% said that they learned to accept cultural diversity through the use of translanguaging strategies. Another interesting contrast in the current study, however, was the students' level of empathy and this was found to be higher among the Arts & Science students. This implies that although translanguaging fosters social awareness, the context and mode of such activity intervention could affect the level of empathy observed among students.

In addition, 70% of students reported a higher interest in learning English, which is in accordance with other investigations, indicating that student engagement motivates them and makes them perseverant when learning culturally appropriate and meaningful activities (Liu & Fang, 2022). The current study builds upon prior research by revealing that, in addition to having a positive effect on language development, translanguaging fosters students' emotional skills and motivation. This study yields divergent results from previous research which mainly focused on cognitive achievements of translanguaging. The current research demonstrates how translanguaging supports both academic growth together with emotional student development. The study produces a valuable finding because it identifies dual academic and emotional benefits of translanguaging which previous literature failed to address.

Contribution to the Literature

The research provides an original finding by examining how the translanguaging approach develops language abilities and SEL competencies in rural educational settings. In the past, the concept of translanguaging has mainly focused on language gains and this research adds to literature by seeking to establish the emotive development produced by the same. This study contributes to the literature by showing that the use of translanguaging has a positive effect on both student achievement and SEL.

Translanguaging takes a broader approach than traditional classrooms since it unites bilingual language skills with emotional learning. This combined focus not only enhances students' linguistic abilities but also supports their personal growth, social interactions, and overall learning experiences. This study also advances knowledge regarding the use of translanguaging for Multilingual students to engage with content, tackle academic difficulties, and foster social-emotional growth. Based on the study, it can be therefore be argued that while using translanguaging as a tool to enhance language proficiency, it also fosters; cultural sensitivity, an

accepting and safe learning environment, and these learning environments that keep on being ignored in prior studies. This study thus offers new knowledge regarding possibilities for the translanguaging development of multilingual learners and their bilingual and social integration for the understanding of the function of translanguaging in the education sector.

In-Depth Analysis

Even though this study shows that translanguaging enhances language learning and SEL, certain limitations must be considered. The most important of them is the limited participant sample: the study involved only 75 students, which may interfere with the overall stability of the performed research. A more extensive and heterogeneous sample would increase the study's credibility and generalizability of the results. Furthermore, the experimental approach used in this study restrains the investigation of longer-term effects and thus calls for future cross-sectional studies. Another limitation may be that owing to the rural-based study, regional biases may be expected to arise because the findings may not necessarily generalize to urban or more diverse educational environments. Further, social desirability response sensitivity might have been an issue because the data were self-reported and required participants' perceptions of their experiences.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study highlights the significant benefits of translanguaging in promoting both language acquisition and SEL among multilingual learners in a rural educational context. The key findings highlight that translanguaging facilitates vocabulary development, improves overall English proficiency, and fosters greater self-confidence, empathy, and cultural awareness. These outcomes align with previous research, underscoring translanguaging as an effective pedagogical approach for multilingual classrooms. The study's practical implications suggest that integrating translanguaging into language teaching can create more inclusive, engaging, and supportive learning environments, helping students bridge the gap between their home languages and English while developing essential SEL competencies.

However, the study also has limitations, such as the need for extensive teacher training and the challenges posed by monolingual-dominant educational systems. These challenges suggest a need for further research into scalable professional development models and policy adaptations to effectively incorporate translanguaging practices. Future recommendations include exploring longitudinal studies to assess the long-term impact of translanguaging on language learning and SEL, as well as investigating its application in different educational contexts and among a broader range of student populations.

References

- Akbar, R. S. S., & Taqi, H. A. (2020). Translanguaging as an ESL learning strategy: A case study in Kuwait. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 9(6), 54–63. <https://doi.org/10.5430/ijhe.v9n6p54>
- Antony, S., Ramnath, R., & Ellikkal, A. (2024). Examining students' perspectives on pedagogical translanguaging in the multilingual classroom context. *IAFOR Journal of Education: Language Learning in Education*, 12(1). <https://doi.org/10.22492/ije.12.1.08>
- Chaika, O. (2023). Interlanguage as a type of translation in a multicultural educational environment. *Philological Journal*, (1), 127–135. <https://doi.org/10.31499/2415-8828.1.2023.281366>
- Chaisiri, P. (2022). The potential of translanguaging for English language teaching in Thailand. *Journal of Studies in the English Language*, 17(2), 56–80. <https://doi.org/10.14456/jsel.2022.6>
- Chicherina, N. V., & Strelkova, S. Y. (2023). Translanguaging in English language teaching: Perceptions of teachers and students. *Education Sciences*, 13(1), 86. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci13010086>

- Creese, A., & Blackledge, A. (2015). Translanguaging and identity in educational settings. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 35, 20–35. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190514000233>
- Dhivya, D. S., Hariharasudan, A., & Nawaz, N. (2023). Unleashing potential: Multimedia learning and Education 4.0 in learning professional English communication. *Cogent Social Sciences*, 9(2), Article 2248751. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2023.2248751>
- Dhivya, D. S., Hariharasudan, A., Ragmoun, W., & Alfalih, A. A. (2023). ELSA as an Education 4.0 Tool for learning business English communication. *Sustainability*, 15(4), 3809. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su15043809>
- Dhivya, S., Gurusamy, K., Balamurali, E., & Pradheepa, A. (2024). Mastering professional English communication: A guide to Education 4.0 tools and techniques for ESL teachers. *World Journal of English Language*, 14(5), 146. <https://doi.org/10.5430/wjel.v14n5p146>
- Dhivya, D. S., Hariharasudan, A., Balamurali, E., Dacko-Pikiewicz, Z., & Michalek, J. (2023, November). Investigating the role of Education 4.0 in the performance of HEIs. In *The Global Conference on Entrepreneurship and the Economy in an Era of Uncertainty* (pp. 183–203). Singapore: Springer Nature Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-97-0996-0_11
- Dhivya, D. S., Hariharasudan, A., Balamurali, E., Athithan, A. A., & Mukil, A. (2024, August). Innovating Education 4.0: A substitution, augmentation, modification, redefinition (SAMR)-driven approach to learning. In *AIP Conference Proceedings*, 3161(1). AIP Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1063/5.0229393>
- Dougherty, J. (2021). Translanguaging in action: Pedagogy that elevates. *ORTESOL Journal* 38, 19–32.
- Fang, F., Zhang, L. J., & Sah, P. K. (2022). Translanguaging in language teaching and learning: Current practices and future directions. *RELC Journal*, 53(2), 305–312. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00336882221114478>
- García, O., & Lin, A. M. Y. (2016). Translanguaging in bilingual education. In *Bilingual and Multilingual Education* (pp. 1–14). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-02324-3_9-1
- Ghajarieh, A., & Aghabozorgi, A. (2024). Translanguaging approaches and perceptions of Iranian EGP teachers in bi/multilingual educational spaces: A qualitative inquiry. *Qualitative Research Journal*, 24(5), 630–642. <https://doi.org/10.1108/QRJ-07-2023-0108>
- Kim, G. J. Y., & Weng, Z. (2022). A systematic review on pedagogical translanguaging in TESOL. *TESL-EJ*, 26(3). <https://doi.org/10.55593/ej.26103a4>
- Lau, S. M. C. (2020). Translanguaging as transmediation: Embodied critical literacy engagements in a French-English bilingual classroom. *Australian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 3(1), 42–59. <https://doi.org/10.29140/ajal.v3n1.299>
- Liu, Y., & Fang, F. (2022). Translanguaging theory and practice: How stakeholders perceive translanguaging as a practical theory of language. *RELC Journal*, 53(2), 391–399. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0033688220939222>
- MacSwan, J. (2017). A multilingual perspective on translanguaging. *American Educational Research Journal*, 54(1), 167–201. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831216683935>
- Mishra, R. K. (2023). Communication barriers in legal English: A brief analysis. *International Journal of Research in English*, 5(1), 188–191. <https://doi.org/10.33545/26648717.2023.v5.i1c.103>
- Nooyod, A., & Ambele, E. (2024). Translanguaging pedagogy for meaning making through classroom interactional competence in Thai EMI context. *NIDA Journal of Language and Communication*, 29(45), 81–92. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/383703509>
- Seals, C. A., Olsen-Reeder, V., Pine, R., Ash, M., & Wallace, C. (2020). Creating translingual teaching resources based on translanguaging grammar rules and pedagogical practices. *Australian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 3(1), 115–132. <https://doi.org/10.29140/ajal.v3n1.303>
- Semiante, S. F., & Tian, Z. (2023). Translanguaging: A pedagogy of heteroglossic hope. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 26(8), 919–923. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2023.2212835>
- Setyaningrum, R. W., Setiawan, S., & Anam, S. (2022). Translanguaging as a scaffolded practice in a primary school content and language integrated learning context during the COVID-19 pandemic. *European Journal of Educational Research*, 11(4), 2043–2055. <https://doi.org/10.12973/eu-jer.11.4.2043>
- Sridhivya, D., Gurusamy, K., & Balamurali, E. (2024). Utilizing ELSA speak and Busuu apps to enhance english for professional purposes among Indian students: An Education 4.0 approach. *Australian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 7(3), 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.29140/ajal.v7n3.1717>

- Storheil, I. V., & Iversen, J. Y. (2023). Translanguaging strategies in multilingual newly arrived students' writing. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, 68(7), 1410-1423. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00313831.2023.2250366>
- Tai, K. W. H. (2023). Documenting students' conceptual understanding of second language vocabulary knowledge: A translanguaging analysis of classroom interactions in a primary English as a second language classroom for linguistically and culturally diverse students. *Applied Linguistics Review*, 15(6). <https://doi.org/10.1515/applirev-2023-0181>
- Tang, X., Rousse-Malpat, A., & Duarte, J. (2024). Implementing translanguaging strategies in the English writing classroom in higher education. *AILA Review*. <https://doi.org/10.1075/aila.23018.tan>
- Tannenbaum, M., Haim, O., & Shohamy, E. (2024). Incorporating translanguaging in English instruction: Teachers' beliefs, practices, and influencing factors. *International Multilingual Research Journal*, 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19313152.2024.2418158>
- Thi Thu Ha, T., Thi Ngoc Phan, T., & Hoang Anh, T. (2021). The importance of translanguaging in improving fluency in speaking ability of non-English major sophomores. In *Proceedings of the 18th International Conference of the Asia Association of Computer-Assisted Language Learning (AsiaCALL-2-2021)*, 621, 338-344. Atlantis Press. <https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.211224.032>
- Thomas, E. M., Siôn, P. G., Jones, B., Lloyd-Williams, S., Dafydd, M., Tomos, R., Mair Jones, L., Jones, D., Maelor, G., Evans, R., Caulfield, G., & Jones, L. (2022). *A quick reference guide for educators: Translanguaging in the classroom*. National Collaborative Resources: Aberystwyth University and Bangor University.
- Vallejo, C. (2018). Translanguaging: Language, bilingualism and education, by Ofelia García and Li Wei. *Bellaterra Journal of Teaching & Learning Language & Literature*, 11(1), 85-95. <https://doi.org/10.5565/rev/jtl3.764>
- Van Viegen, S. (2020). Translanguaging for and as learning with youth from refugee backgrounds. *Australian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 3(1), 60-76. <https://doi.org/10.29140/ajal.v3n1.300>
- Yilmaz, T., & De Jong, E. (2020). Translanguaging as a boundary crossing mechanism: A Turkish-American youngster and her linguistic negotiation of three discursive spaces. *Australian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 3(1), 11-25. <https://doi.org/10.29140/ajal.v3n1.284>