

Translanguaging as a Bilingual Education Pedagogy in Early Childhood Education: A Systematic Review

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Abstract

Bilingual education has become a reality of early childhood education in several multilingual and monolingual countries. In this sense, translanguaging is suggested as an effective and alternative strategy for bilingual education. By following PRISMA guidelines for systematic reviews, this study conducts an in-depth analysis of the existing research articles on translanguaging practices in diverse multilingual and bilingual early childhood education settings across the world and to highlight possible avenues for further studies. Based on the predetermined eligibility criteria, 43 peer-reviewed full-length articles published between 2014 and 2023 were included from a search of three electronic databases: Web of Science, ERIC, and SCOPUS. The reviewed studies were analyzed under five major dimensions: publication trends, methodology, research focus, translanguaging implementations, and their overall impacts on early childhood educators and emergent bilingual preschoolers. While translanguaging facilitated transformative changes in preschool teachers' perceptions and pedagogical practices, it also fostered preschoolers' cognitive, cultural, and emotional development by providing an inclusive and interactive learning environment.

Keywords : *translanguaging pedagogies, bilingual education, multilingual education, early childhood education, preschool context*

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Introduction

English language learning practices in early childhood education (ECE) have often adhered to traditional methods, neglecting the essential role of authentic interactions and language use in promoting exposure to the extent that children can acquire the language over time. While children are provided only a limited number of hours, continuous exposure to English in authentic contexts is not commonly practiced. This approach often turns English into a course rather than a language that children can naturally acquire alongside their other languages. However, recent developments in the incorporation of multiple languages into teaching and learning have brought about a challenge to traditional language education in ECE. Translanguaging (TL) suggests that foreign language learners should be viewed as emergent bilinguals (EB) who have a single linguistic repertoire comprising multiple languages, rather than two distinct language systems (García & Wei, 2014).

Emerging within the concept of dynamic bilingualism, translanguaging has influenced standard language teaching practices in bilingual classrooms, English as a Specific Purpose (ESP) instruction, and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom, especially in the last two decades. The concept gaining greater importance is suggested to be evaluated not as a substitute for bilingual education (BE) but as an alternative strategy within BE programs in the sense that it suggests flexibility in language teaching policies to give some opportunities to the learners to practice languages by using their entire linguistic repertoire (García & Wei, 2014). TL is sometimes confused with code-switching in ECE contexts; however, the two concepts serve different pedagogical purposes. Whereas code-switching traditionally describes the alternation between distinct linguistic systems, translanguaging reflects children's use of their full, integrated linguistic repertoire to make meaning (García & Wei, 2014). By the Welsh educator Williams (1994, as cited in Baker, 2003), translanguaging is defined as "a pedagogical practice where students hear or read a lesson, a passage in a book, or a section of text in one language and develop their work in another." Through this pedagogical practice, learners are supposed to alternate between the languages in terms of receptive and productive skills, such as listening in their mother tongue and writing in the target language. From a theoretical perspective, TL practices are believed to foster learners' cross-linguistic awareness, cognitive flexibility, and metalinguistic skills (García, 2009).

Beyond these language-domain facilities of TL, it also supports bilingual/multilingual children's social-emotional development, by validating learners' linguistic and cultural identities (Dikilitaş, Bahrami, & Erbakan, 2023). In the light of these advantages, it is essential to explore the educational potentials of this pedagogy in ECE context.

Although BE plays a pivotal role across all instructional levels, some scholars argue that preschool bilingual education should be discussed as a distinct research field because of its own characteristics (Schwartz, 2018; van Lier, 2010). Initially, preschools mostly serve as the first contexts where most children encounter a novel language and develop an attitude toward learning a second language (Schwartz, 2018). As the attitudes are not born to the children, there are some factors such as experience and motivation shaping their language attitudes (Baker, 1988; Choudry, 1993). That's why a successful interaction of these children with a new language in a preschool context may pave the way for developing a positive attitude towards foreign languages. Secondly, Schwartz et al. (2016) argue that the main concern of bilingual preschool teachers should be creating a secure and low-anxiety atmosphere where the needs of the children are understood regardless of the language they employ. Children could feel "uncertain, helpless, and afraid of the unknown" when learning a new language for the first time (Lugossy, 2018). In this sense, translanguaging acts as a promising pedagogy for the learners to have a chance to shuttle between the blurry borders of the languages, use their entire linguistic repertoire to make meaning, and acquire a new language not in the way of a separate additional language but as a way of integrating new practices into this dynamic bilingual repertoire (García & Wei, 2014). Conducting a systematic literature review on the translanguaging practices in early childhood education programs in both multilingual and monolingual contexts is expected to provide a better insight for bilingual education practitioners and professional development trainers.

Up to the present, translanguaging pedagogies have been systematically reviewed in terms of their feasibility in the foundation phase referring to the learners between five to nine years (Carrim & Nkomo, 2023), in English medium instruction (EMI) classrooms and content and language-integrated learning (CLIL) classrooms (Lu, Gu & Lee, 2023), in TESOL contexts including ESL and EFL (Kim & Weng, 2022), in ELT classrooms (Gren, 2022), and across various education settings as general (Prilutskaya, 2021); however, there has not yet been studies which specifically report on the TL pedagogy in the preschool context. The present

systematic review aims to fill in this gap by documenting the existing articles according to their publication trends, methodology, and research focus. Furthermore, it seeks to examine the potential transformative effects of translanguaging on both instructors in BE and young preschool students. This review highlighting the effectiveness of translanguaging in ECE contexts also aligns with UNESCO's report entitled "Languages Matter: Global Guidance on Multilingual Education", which emphasizes the use of learners' home languages as a foundation for equitable and inclusive early education. In the light of this aim, the study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the distribution of articles published on translanguaging pedagogy in preschool contexts in terms of publication trends, methodological aspects, and research focus?
2. In what ways is translanguaging implemented in the preschools under investigation?
3. What are the overall impact dimensions of translanguaging on preschool teachers and preschoolers?

Methods

This systematic review follows "a pre-specified method or protocol by which a body of literature is aggregated, reviewed and assessed" (Dekkers et al., 2022, p.40). In an attempt to carry out a rigorous review process, Pollock and Berge's (2017) six-stage guideline for conducting a systematic review comprising (1) clarifying aims and objectives, (2) identifying relevant research, (3) data collection, (4) quality assessment, (5) data synthesis, and (6) evidence interpretation was used to describe the research process. In addition, the PRISMA 2020 guideline (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) was adopted as the basis for reporting this review (The checklist is provided as a supplementary document).

Finding Relevant Research

As an initial step, the following Boolean search string was generated including relevant key terms in parallel to the scope of this systematic review: TITLE-ABS-KEY

(“translanguaging” OR “bilingual education”) AND (“preschool” OR “pre-school” OR “kindergarten” OR “early childhood”). The query was conducted in the three largest and most commonly used databases: Web of Science, The Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), and SCOPUS. The selected databases are the most representative multidisciplinary, electronic data sources in the academic domain. In addition, these three databases support precise Boolean searching (Gusenbauer & Haddaway, 2020). The screening process in these databases was primarily conducted in June 2023.

Relevant studies were included based on the pre-defined eligibility criteria as shown in Table 1:

Table 1. *Eligibility Criteria*

Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
- articles published in the last ten years - articles published in English - peer-reviewed full-length primary research articles - translanguaging in preschool contexts - emergent bilingual speakers	- articles published before 2014 - articles published in other languages - secondary research articles including proceedings, unpublished dissertations, reviews, chapters, <i>etc.</i> - translanguaging in other education levels - non-emergent bilingual speakers

Data Collection

The initial search was carried out by refining research articles in peer-reviewed journals indexed in three databases. The articles were refined by automated filters available in selected databases, including year (between 2014 and 2023), document type (research article), research area, and/or document language (English). After excluding articles by automated search filters, the metadata of the remaining articles (n=724) in each database was exported to an MS Excel document, and duplicates were removed before screening (n=252). Thereafter, the articles were screened by their titles, abstracts, or full texts (n=472), and those that did not meet the inclusion criteria concerning education context (preschool), the scope of study (relevance), and document type (primary research article) were excluded. The full texts of the remaining articles (n=56) were analyzed collaboratively by two researchers using Rayyan, a software used for systematic reviews to collaborate and reach a final decision about the inclusion of studies through a blind review process. Disagreements between researchers were first identified automatically within the platform and then discussed in detail to reach a

mutual decision. When consensus could not be reached through discussion, a third researcher was consulted to make the final decision.

Studies were assessed in terms of quality and relevance and those failing to meet the criteria ($n = 13$) were eliminated ($n=13$) on Rayyan using a checklist by Vissenberg et al. (2022), which includes two criteria related to the methodological trustworthiness and relevance to the review. Each study was independently evaluated by two researchers according to these criteria and categorized as high, moderate, or low quality. Only studies

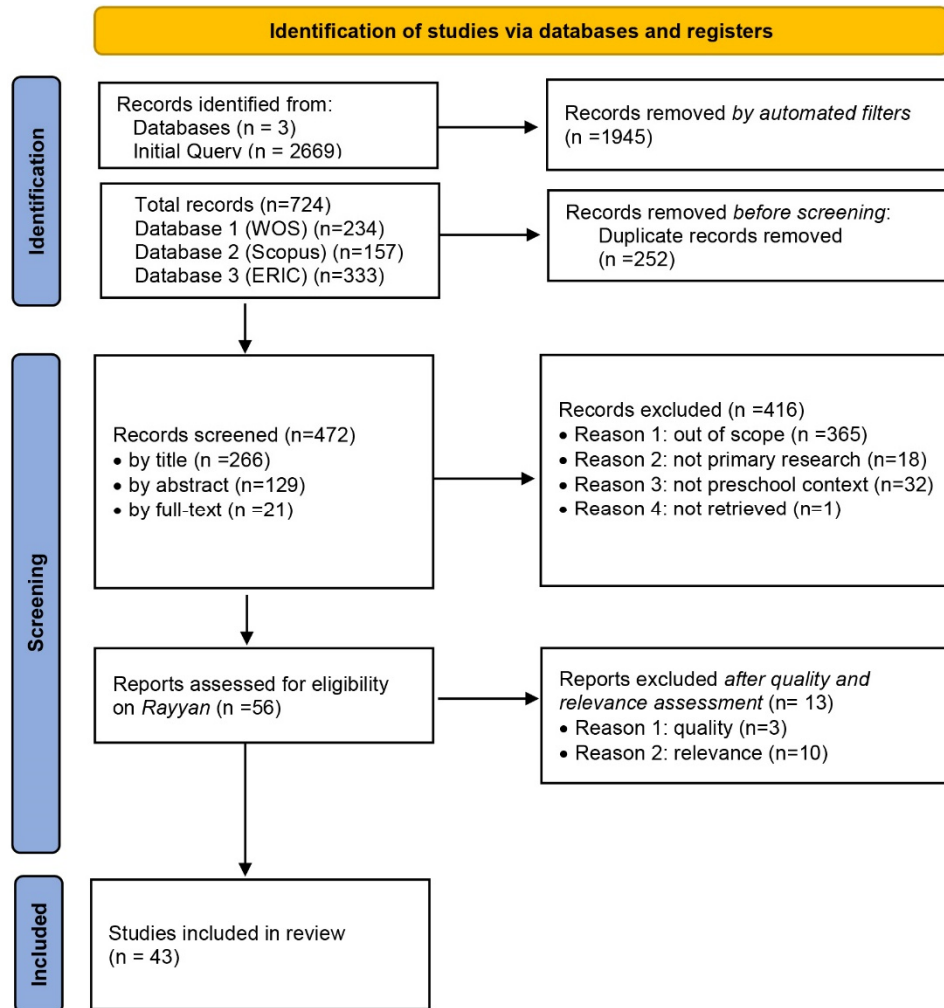


Figure 1. The PRISMA Flowchart

rated as ‘high’ or ‘moderate’ were retained for synthesis, while those rated ‘low’ quality were excluded due to insufficient methodological rigor or lack of relevance. Finally, the researchers arrived at a consensus on 43 articles that met the inclusion criteria (See Appendix).

The following PRISMA flowchart demonstrates the article elimination process (Page et al., 2021).

Data Analysis

The included studies were synthesized based on five major dimensions in light of three research questions as seen in Table 2:

Table 2. *Data Analysis Framework*

Dimensions	Sub-dimensions
1. Publication Trends (RQ1)	• Year • Geographical setting
2. Research Methodology (RQ1)	• Research method & design • Participants
3. Research Focus (RQ1)	• Key attributions
4. Implementation (RQ2)	• Practices and activities
5. Impacts (RQ3)	• Teachers and Preschoolers

The first four dimensions were descriptively analyzed, and the last dimension focusing on overall impacts was analyzed through thematic analysis by employing open coding on MAXQDA software. To ensure the reliability of the coding process, a subset of articles representing 20% of the total included studies (n = 8 of 43) was randomly selected and separately coded by two researchers. Using the inter-coder agreement function embedded in MAXQDA, Kappa value of 0.77 was obtained, indicating a substantial level of agreement between two coders (Brennan & Prediger, 1981). The researchers cross-checked coded segments and compared emerging themes for consistency. Intercoder consensus was achieved through discussion, with an independent expert in the field consulted only when consensus could not be reached.

Findings

Publication Trends

This systematic review included 43 articles focusing on translanguaging pedagogy in preschool contexts published between 2014 and 2023. The publication trends were analyzed concerning their overall distribution by year and geography. Figure 2 demonstrates the distribution of the articles by their publication years.

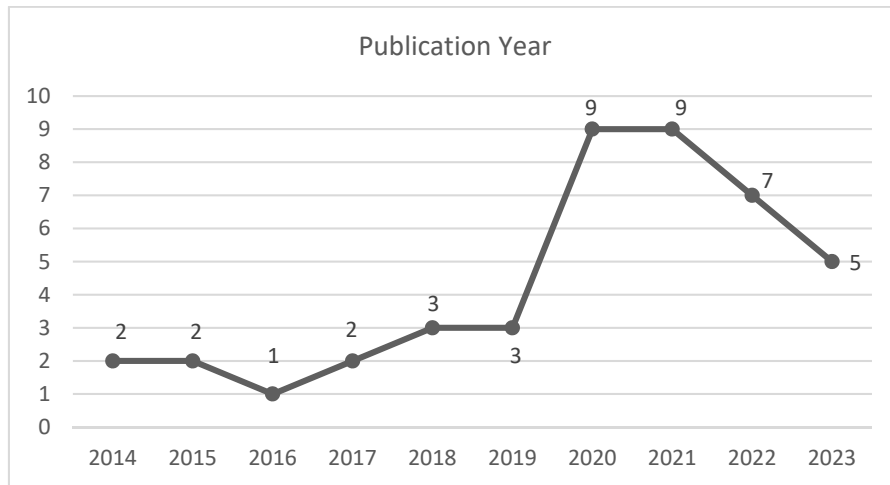


Figure 2. Distribution of Studies by Year

The number of reviewed articles has a relatively steady growth over the years ranging from 2014 to 2023, with occasional fluctuations. The table indicates an initial period of relatively low article production between 2014 and 2016, followed by an increase from 2017 onwards until the peak in 2021. There is a noticeable increase in the number of articles between 2020 and 2021 compared to previous years. Nearly half of the articles were published in this period (n=18).

Additionally, the geographical distribution of the articles demonstrates a variation of research across 13 different countries as shown in Figure 3.

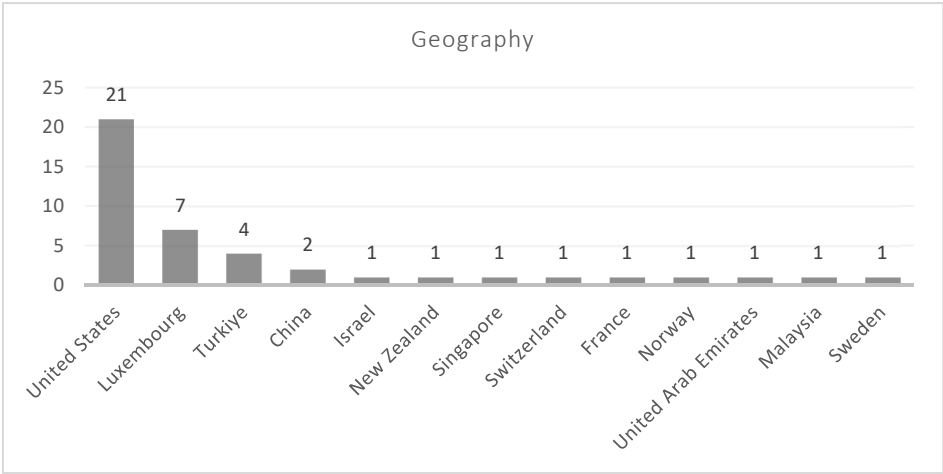


Figure 3. Distribution of Studies by Geographical Setting

Some countries were presented with a larger number than others. The two-thirds of the articles ($n=21$) were published in the United States, indicating a strong presence and interest in the field of translanguaging within the country. Luxembourg has the second highest number of articles ($n=7$), followed by Türkiye ($n=4$). With 2 articles, China demonstrates a modest presence on the topic. There are single studies from nine other countries worldwide.

Research Methodology

Most articles adopted a qualitative research method ($n=35$), while 8 articles had a mixed-method research approach, as demonstrated in Figure 4.

Figure 5 presents the research designs employed in the selected articles. This distribution indicates a diverse approach investigating translanguaging pedagogy with a prominent focus on ethnography ($n=14$), case study ($n=6$), and a variety of qualitative methods, including action research ($n=2$).

Figure 6 shows the distribution of studies per participant group. The studies were distributed across four participant groups: preschoolers, teachers, both preschoolers and teachers, and multiple participants.

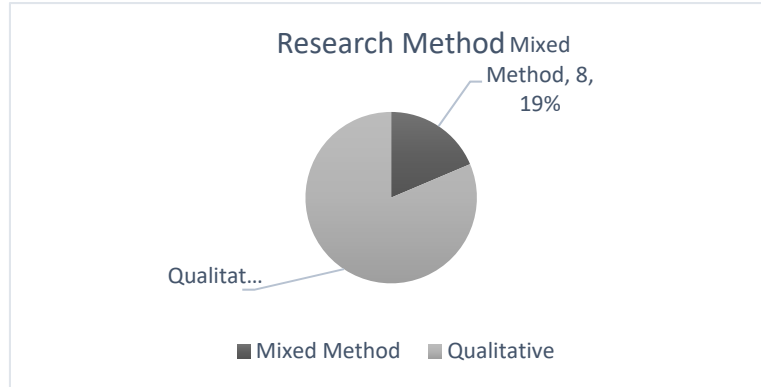


Figure 4. Distribution of Studies by Research Method

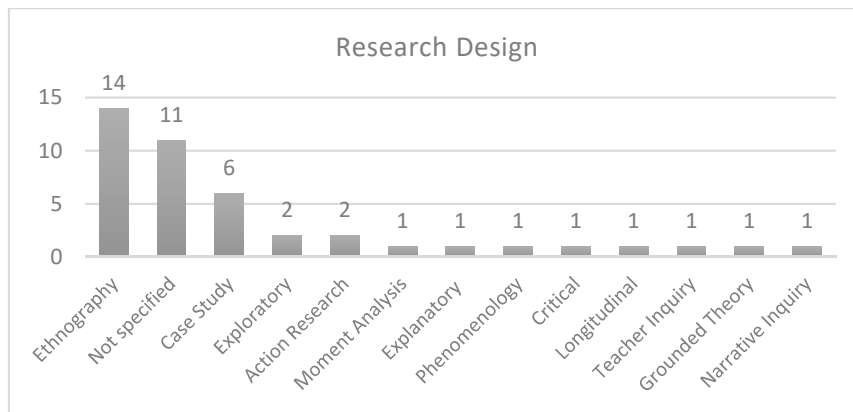


Figure 5. Distribution of Studies by Research Design

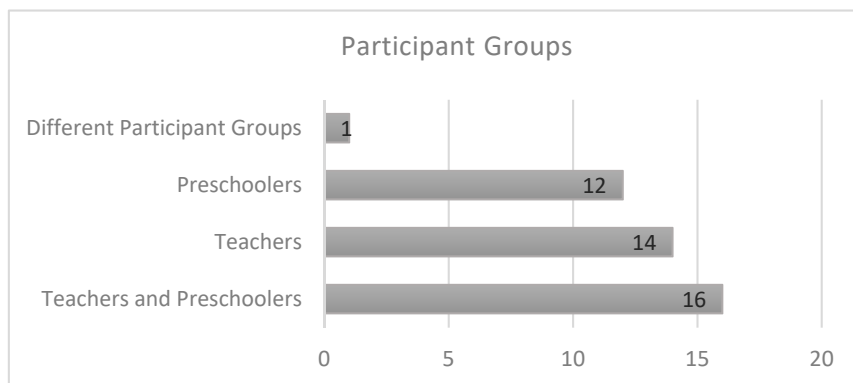


Figure 6. Distribution of Studies by Participants

16 studies were conducted on both teachers and preschoolers. 14 articles focused solely on preschool teachers as participants, while 12 articles specifically focused on preschoolers. Only one study was conducted on different participant groups including leaders, teachers, students, and parents.

Research Focus

The foci of investigation in selected articles were analyzed regarding the key attributes which were categorized under teacher-related and student-related issues. Table 3 demonstrates that 31 articles are based on teachers' translanguaging practice, while 12 articles provide evidence of students' perspectives and practices.

Table 3. *Distribution of Studies by Key Attributes*

Focus	Key Attributes	n	Evidence*
Teacher-related Issues	• Teachers' Translanguaging Practices and Experiences	14	[16, 20, 21, 28, 30, 31, 34, 35, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43]
	• Professional Development	11	[2, 3, 12, 13, 14, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 33]
	• Co-teaching Practices	2	[15, 32]
	• Language Hierarchies and Critical Consciousness	2	[9, 23]
	• Assessment	1	[7]
	• Creating Teaching Resources	1	[36]
Student-related	• Children's Translanguaging Practices	6	[4, 10, 17, 18, 29, 37]
	• Children's Biliteracy / Language Development	4	[1, 5, 6, 8]
	• Children's Meaning-making Process	2	[11, 19]

*The numbers displayed in the column 'evidence' refer to the article numbers in the Appendix.

The first category mainly encompasses aspects related to teachers' practices, experiences, and training in translanguaging. Teachers' translanguaging practices and experiences received the highest attention among the articles (n=14), followed by professional development (n=11). There are various key attributes under this focus area, each providing insight into specific aspects of teachers' practice in translanguaging, such as challenges and efforts, critical consciousness, creating materials, and assessment. On the other hand, the

second category revolves around aspects related to students' practices (n=6), biliteracy and language development (n=4), and the meaning-making process (n=2).

Translanguaging Implementations

The analysis of how translanguaging was implemented in the reviewed articles was examined through two primary classifications: official and natural translanguaging. Official translanguaging is planned, structured, and organized by teachers willing to consciously integrate translanguaging into their lessons while natural translanguaging is mostly pupil-led, emerging, and spontaneous (García & Wei, 2014). Table 4 showcases the findings on designs and a variety of strategies carried out within these translanguaging types.

Table 4. *The Implementation of Translanguaging in Selected Studies*

Type	Design	Main Strategies	n	Evidence
Official Translanguaging	Teacher-led	• Melodic learning & visual arts (e.g., songs & drawings) • Storytelling (e.g., narrating, retelling of wordless picture books) • Code-switching & strategic translation • Language modeling & scaffolding • Child-centered activities (e.g., show-and-tell activities & turn-and-talk activities)	36	[2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43]
	↓ Planned & Pedagogical	• Co-teaching & co-planning • Family engagement activities • Bilingual recasting & revoicing • Using cognates • Dialogic reading & reflexive dialogues • Buddy-pair interactions		
Natural Translanguaging	Pupil-led	• Socio-dramatic plays • Code-switching • Playing with words • Emergent curriculum & authentic activities	7	[1, 4, 10, 17, 18, 29, 37]
	↓ Emerging & Unstructured			

*The numbers displayed in the column 'evidence' refer to the article numbers in the Appendix

According to Table 4, most translanguaging activities are teacher-led and planned (n=36) while 7 articles are pupil-directed and take a more emergent and unstructured design.

Overall Impacts of Translanguaging on Preschool Teachers and Preschoolers

The reviewed articles are categorized under two broad themes to examine overall impact dimensions: bilingual emergent preschoolers and teachers. Each topic contains three categories, as indicated in Figure 7. The emerging categories related to BE teachers include conceptual, practical, and professional aspects, while emergent students are analyzed through cognitive, socio-cultural, and socio-emotional dimensions.

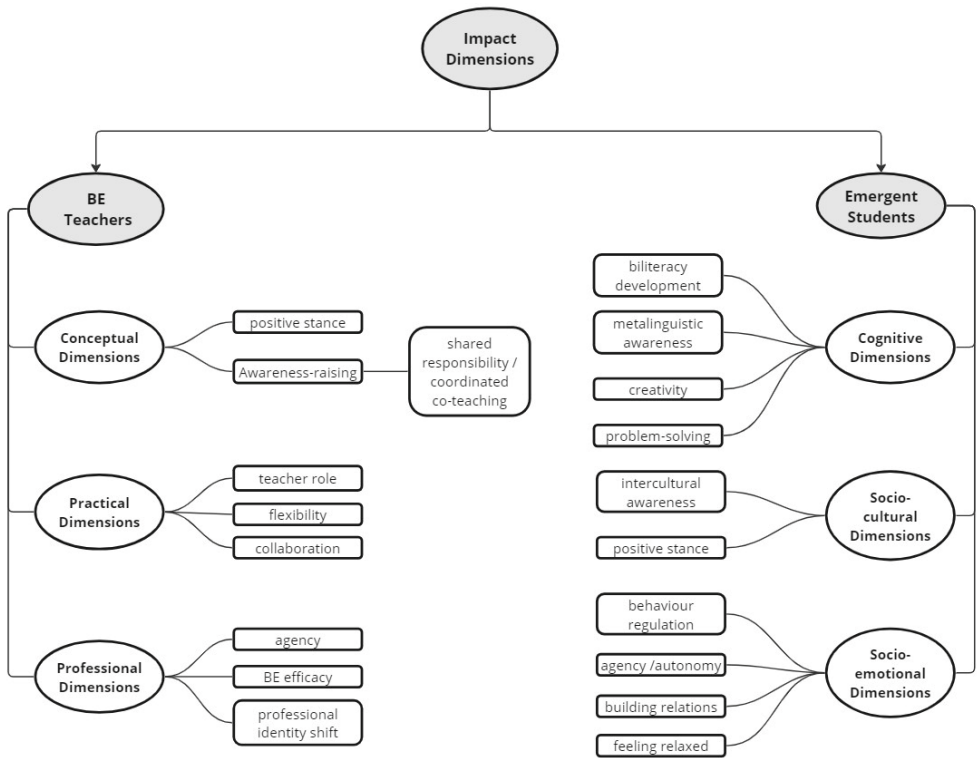


Figure 7. Impact Dimensions

Discussion

RQ1: What is the distribution of articles published on translanguaging pedagogy in preschool contexts in terms of publication trends, methodological aspects, and research focus?

The publication trends by year revealed that there has been a growing body of research on TL pedagogy in ECE in the last ten years. This increasing interest indicates that there has been an awareness towards the recognition of students' linguistic diversity and promotion of inclusivity due to the educational policy changes and a shift in language education paradigms around the world. In this regard, the monolingual language policy of bilingual education has been challenged by the idea of plurilingualism, suggesting that learners should engage in dynamic meaning-making and language practices (García, 2009). In response, the coexistence of two or more languages has started to be seen as a valid means of communication rather than a problem of emergent bilingual preschoolers, and translanguaging practices have been legitimized in bilingual or monolingual ECE classrooms in recent years.

Additionally, the distribution of the articles by geographical setting revealed that most of them were conducted in multilingual contexts like in the USA or Luxembourg. It is an expected result in the sense that translanguaging pedagogy is more aligned with the cultural and linguistic realities of multilingual communities. On the other hand, the existence of four articles in Türkiye (Dikilitaş & Mumford, 2020; Dikilitaş & Bahrami, 2022; Dikilitaş, Bahrami & Erbakan, 2023; Gelir, 2022), a monolingual country, suggests that this pedagogy has started to penetrate to the monolingual ECE settings probably because of its cognitive and social potentials for the emergent bilinguals such as more cognitive flexibility and higher metalinguistic awareness (Bialystok et al., 2004; García, 2009).

Concerning the research method and design, a great majority of studies employed a qualitative research approach, whereas mixed method studies amounted 19% of the corpus. Ethnography was the most applied research method among these qualitative studies. As it entails a prolonged presence of researchers in the field and observations (Creswell, 2007), it increases the possibility of characterizing translanguaging pedagogies in the classroom

context more closely. One interesting result was found that there was no quantitative research. The reason might be that the quantitative approach is not well-suited for the nature of translanguaging. Despite the convenient orientation of qualitative methodology with translanguaging studies, there is a need for more diverse research designs such as mixed-method quasi-experiments, mainly because integrating different data collection techniques into the investigation might lead to different results. For instance, while some studies following qualitative research design concluded that the professional development trainings on translanguaging pedagogy enabled the participants to have a positive stance towards the implementation of translanguaging (e.g., Kirsch, 2020; Kirsch, Aleksic, Mortini & Andersen, 2020), the research with a mixed method design by Aleksić and Bebic-Crestany (2022) grouped teachers as those with a mild monolingual stance, a mild translanguaging stance and a true translanguaging stance. Using a questionnaire to identify the teachers' stance followed by in-depth interviews, the study had a chance to present a more detailed translanguaging categorization concerning how their changing attitudes toward pupils' multilingualism.

The last concern of the first research question is to present the studies by their research focus. Concerning key attributions, most researchers pay their attention to the preschool teachers' multimodal practices (e.g.; Duarte, 2020; Gelir, 2022) and BE teacher training programs through which the teachers were suggested to gain awareness, update their classroom practices in parallel with the changing educational policies, and get a tolerance towards students' home language use in the classroom (e.g.; Dikilitaş, Bahrami & Erbakan, 2023; Kirsh, 2020). However, this review reports that there is not adequate research on the assessment or material development shaped with a translanguaging stance. The study of Bauer, Colomer, and Wielmet (2020) on assessment and Seals et. al. (2020) on creating translingual teaching resources are the only ones conducted in the ECE context on this issue. Thus, this review suggests that more study is needed on how BE teachers can design multimodal materials to observe emergent bilingual learners' literacy acts in preschool contexts and to find alternative assessment ways without comparing emergent bilinguals with monolinguals. On the other hand, the category of student related-issues demonstrates that the studies mainly examine the students' translanguaging practices and meaning-making process. This specific focus may be driven by figuring out how emergent bilingual preschoolers navigate among the languages in their learning process is critical in creating supportive

language environments and classroom activities for BE teachers. For instance, Arreguin-Anderson et al. (2018) state in their article that observing children's translingual practices in their authentic plays enables the teachers to develop the curriculum and reshape it with authentic themes.

RQ2: In what ways is translanguaging implemented in the preschools under investigation?

In order to utilize the multilingual repertoire of students, translanguaging practices in the selected articles were mainly incorporated into the lessons in two ways: official and natural translanguaging.

A salient theme emerging from the studies in the group of official translanguaging is the collaborative nature of this pedagogy in the classrooms. Through the strategic design of interaction-promoting practices such as 'show and tell presentations' or 'Turn and talk' activities, emergent bilingual children were encouraged to move from individual meaning-making to shared meaning-making process (e.g., Kirsch & Martini, 2021; Sembiente et. al., 2020). These collaborative translanguaging practices driven mainly from dialogic teaching and peer interaction also function as a key scaffolding support for students' oral and early written language developments. This interactional translanguaging space was usually created through multilingual language routines such as circle time, morning circles, or story circles where the teachers' modeling created new possibilities for students' flexible and meaningful language practices (e.g.; Axelrod & Cole, 2018; Sembiente, Bengochea & Gort, 2022; Wagner, 2021) Another point worth mentioning relates how teachers' translanguaging practices were contextualized in accordance with the linguistic and cultural background of the students. In this respect, teachers' most frequently translanguaging techniques were translation and language modeling, which were incorporated for different purposes by the context. In some monolingual settings like Türkiye, translation was mainly used to teach unfamiliar concepts reported to be effective for cross-linguistic comparisons (e.g., Dikilitaş, Bahrami & Erbakan, 2023). However, ECE teachers in some multilingual contexts strategically applied translation and language modeling to valorize minority students' home languages and leverage their linguistic repertoire (e.g., Sembiente, Restrepo-Widney,

Bengochea & Gort, 2023).

On the other hand, the articles in the natural translanguaging category emphasize the importance of creating an authentic and play-based environment, inviting students to draw from their whole linguistic repertoire, which was enacted mostly through child-led free play activities such as socio-dramatic plays, visual arts, Reggio-inspired tasks or storytelling (e.g., Alamillo, Yun & Bennet, 2017). These studies reported that the flexibility of such activities allowed children for natural translanguaging in an authentic and embedded manner. For example, feeling the ownership of the translingual tasks such as the child-initiated drawing or talking increased the students' involvement and interest resulting in more flexible language practices (Escamilla, Allanis & Meier, 2023).

RQ3: What are the overall impact dimensions of translanguaging on preschool teachers and preschoolers?

The reviewed articles include a group of studies conducted on the professional development (PD) programs driven by TL pedagogy and their transformative effects on preschool educators in conceptual, professional, and practical ways. Firstly, most studies have noted the importance of teacher training programs for early childhood educators in terms of changing their conceptualization of translanguaging and gaining positive attitudes towards this multifaceted pedagogy (e.g., Kirsch, 2020). Teachers' collective reconceptualization of translanguaging enabled them to develop awareness towards not only the importance of students' home language as a resource not as a barrier for teaching (e.g., Aleksić & Bebic-Crestany, 2023; Pontier & Riera, 2022) but also the power of shared responsibility and simultaneous co-teaching in the classroom (e.g., Dikilitaş & Bahrami, 2022; Dikilitaş, Bahrami & Erbakan, 2023). These articles also provide evidence for some BE teachers' professional identity shifts towards being more cooperative and complementary. To illustrate, it is worth mentioning that Dikilitaş and Bahrami (2022) suggest the 'dyadic identity' concept to describe this mutual collaboration between co-teachers who described themselves as 'married couples' in their study. Similarly, Pontier and Riera (2022) describe these co-teachers' collaboration as 'team sport'. Although working together in close collaboration for designing and running BE courses is a much-needed skill for BE teachers,

the data show that there are limited studies regarding the experiences of BE co-teachers (Dillon & Gallagher, 2019; Pontier & Gort, 2016) and how to empower preschool teachers to incorporate translanguaging into their co-teaching strategies through training (Dikilitaş & Bahrami, 2022).

Additionally, some researchers describe how the PD programs should be designed to obtain more effective outcomes for BE teachers and their professional changes. In this sense, most articles stress reflectivity as a critical aspect of the teacher training process. It has been suggested that ECE teachers need to get involved in critical and insightful discussions of their bilingual education teaching to be more self-aware, and they also need to make observations of their development for a radical change (Dikilitaş & Bahrami, 2022; Dikilitaş, Bahrami & Erbakan, 2023; Harju & Akerblom, 2020). Besides reflectivity, collaboration is suggested as another driving force for an effective translanguaging training especially concerning peer learning and diverse expertise (Aleksić & García, 2022; Kirsch, Aleksic, Mortini & Andersen, 2020). The coordinated and planned practice of TL pedagogies by drawing each other's pedagogical expertise were reported in some articles to increase BE teachers' agency in terms of developing more innovative teaching methods and to increase their confidence as a bilingual educator (e.g., Dikilitaş, Bahrami & Erbakan, 2023; Dillon & Gallagher, 2019). The findings draw attention to the significance of PDs for the concepts of teacher agency and efficacy; however, further studies are needed to investigate the interplay between these concepts and how BE teacher self-efficacy and agency could be fostered by a translanguaging-driven PD training with more references to the early childhood educators' before and after reflections. Along with reflectivity and collaboration, some other PD studies point to another crucial component of teacher training in the way that preschool educators need to spend enough time to practice and adopt translanguaging pedagogy. For instance, Aleksić and Bebic-Crestany (2023) came up with the conclusion that a group of teachers showed resistance to change and insisted on holding a monolingual language ideology, which is believed to stem from the need for more time and practice in translanguaging pedagogy to internalize it. Nearly all the articles in this group stress the need of a long-term sustained external support including other stakeholders such as school administrations and families, so that the BE preschool teachers can develop more inclusive and effective translanguaging pedagogy (e.g., Dikilitaş & Bahrami, 2020; Kirsch, Aleksic, Mortini & Andersen, 2020).

The last impact dimension of translanguaging pedagogy for ECE teachers is regarding how it reshapes their classroom practices in line with their changing perceptions. The most obvious theme is the facilitating power of translanguaging for teachers in terms of designing more interactional space in the classroom (e.g., Dikilitaş & Mumford, 2020; Kirsch, 2020; McClain, Mancilla-Martinez, Flores & Buckley, 2021). Translanguaging acts as a ‘third space’ (García & Li, 2014) where collective involvement matters. Additionally, as the teachers developed a growing interest in bilingual activities, they were observed to improve in using planned language, designing a joint lesson activity, and shifting from separate tasks to holistic practices.

The impacts of translanguaging in ECE on preschoolers can be discussed in terms of cognitive, socio-cultural, and emotional aspects. From a cognitive perspective, some articles suggest although fostering metalinguistic awareness is challenging for young learners still developing their cognitive skills, translanguaging pedagogies had an effective role in encouraging them to make conscious comparisons of syntactic, semantic, and phonological features across languages (e.g., Axelrod & Cole, 2018; Dikilitaş, Bahrami & Erbakan, 2023; Kirsch, 2020;; Valesco & Fialais, 2018). These studies indicate that reflecting on the structures of different languages does not necessarily require being fluent in both languages for preschoolers, and this is a crucial skill for their biliteracy development. In addition to the contribution of translanguaging methodology to the young children’s language development and metalinguistic awareness, some studies illustrate how it fosters their creativity as well (Axelrod, 2014; Bengochea & Gort, 2022; Vijayakumar, Steinkrauss & Sun, 2023). The results can be summed up in the sense that children participating in translanguaging are encouraged to use their entire linguistic repertoire, which includes their native language(s) and any other languages they may have encountered. As youngsters are invited to express themselves, explore and share their ideas in many languages, increasing linguistic resources can foster their creativity. These young emergent bilinguals are depicted as learners who are more inclined to take risks with language structures to construct meaning (e.g., Alamillo, Yun & Bennet; 2017). In this sense, some studies highlight how the students’ engagement in these dynamic language practices creatively fosters their increased language-based agency in making language choices (e.g., Flynn, Hoy, Lea & García, 2021; Harju & Akerblom, 2020; Sanders-Smith & Davila; 2019; Vijayakumar, Steinkrauss & Sun, 2023). Flexibility in

switching between languages enables emergent children to be strategic language users who are more sensitive to the context and interlocutors with the ability of adjusting their language accordingly. The tendency of English dominant children to use Spanish phrases with their Spanish dominant peers (Axelrod, 2014), or the students' changing multimodal practices by fulfilling teacher's task and playing with peers (Bengochea, Sembiante & Gort, 2020) are a few examples of how the emergent bilinguals develop adaptability, a context awareness and goal-oriented communication as taking part in translanguaging. These studies also report that students' dynamic language choices are not arbitrary but sensitive and sophisticated shifts between languages.

On the other hand, the systematic review reveals translanguaging is also a method to explore different cultures and identities by contributing to young learners' cultural and bilingual identity constructions (e.g. Alamillo, Yun & Bennet, 2017; Arreguin-Anderson, Salinas-Gonzales & Alanis, 2018; Bengochea & Gort, 2022; Escamilla, Alanis & Meier, 2023). To illustrate, while engaging in culturally relevant sociodramatic spaces, especially in free play events, children from diverse backgrounds have chances to make exchanges and gain an awareness of some culturally assigned roles, such as gender (Arreguin-Anderson, Salinas-Gonzales & Alanis, 2018). Similarly, by suggesting some authentic activities allowing translanguaging space for preschool children, such as inviting them to reflect on their personal stories based on their home lives, it creates a sense of pride in their bilingual identities (Escamilla, Alanis & Meier, 2023). The findings also underscore the need for further research, especially on creating supportive and culturally sensitive language environments through translanguaging pedagogy at preschool context. For socio-emotional aspects, some studies show a relationship between the translanguaging implementations and their positive effects on childrens' enjoyment, participation, sense of comfort, curiosity and eagerness (e.g. Harju & Akerblom, 2020; Kirsch, Aleksic, Mortini & Andersen, 2020; Ting & Jintang, 2022; Wagner, 2021), and some others present evidences for increasing interaction, communication and relationship among the peers and teachers (e.g., Axelrod & Cole, 2018; Bengochea & Gort, 2022; Dikilitaş & Mumford, 2020; Leung, 2019).

Conclusion

The study of translanguaging pedagogies has recently been an evolving area of bilingual education, significantly impacting both instructors and their developing multilingual learners. This systematic review presents a comprehensive overview of existing literature on translanguaging as a dynamic language practice in ECE, and it sheds light on the specific implementations and their potential for preschool educators and preschoolers, highlighting some research gaps that need more attention by researchers. Translanguaging practices encourage preschool and language teachers to build inclusive and engaging learning environments where linguistic variety is considered an asset rather than a hindrance for preschoolers (Aydın-Yazıcı & Dikilitaş, 2024; Axelrod, 2017). As a result, they create a nurturing and supportive environment in which emergent bilingual preschoolers can thrive cognitively, culturally, and emotionally. However, the extent of its impact on children's broader developmental outcomes remains underexplored and should be interpreted with caution. As such, future research is needed to deepen our understanding of its pedagogical potential across diverse early childhood contexts. To sum up, the findings of this systematic review are limited in their generalizability to the different educational levels.

Limitations and Future Directions

From a methodological point of view, a limitation of this study is that, although a protocol was developed prior to conducting this systematic review, it was not registered in a public database. However, the protocol was reviewed by an external expert to ensure methodological rigor and transparency. Another limitation of the study is that percentages were not calculated while presenting findings. We reported the frequency (n) of studies contributing to each subtheme and provided specific evidence from these studies to support the findings. This approach allows readers to clearly see which studies informed each subtheme and the corresponding evidence, ensuring transparency and depth in the synthesis. In terms of scope, a limitation of this study is the exclusion of gray literature and non-English sources, which may limit the comprehensiveness of the findings.

Based on the findings and insights gathered from the data, some major directions for future

studies emerged. There is a need for longitudinal studies exploring children's cognitive, linguistic, and socio-emotional development. Future studies should be also designed to develop models for evaluating teacher professional development in translanguaging. Lastly, to strengthen the empirical and evidence-based data, more study is needed to design and validate quantitative and mixed-method instruments.

Declarations

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Appendix – List of Documents Included in Systematic Review

Included studies in this systematic review have been referenced in the order of the author's name.

No	Author(s)	Year	Geography	Research Approach	Research Design	Participants
1	Alamillo, Yun & Bennet	2017	United States	Qualitative	Case study	6 focal children + 1 teacher
2	Alekšić & Garcia	2022	Luxembourg	Qualitative	Moment analysis	3 teachers
3	Alekšić & Bebić-Crestany	2023	Luxembourg	Mixed-method	Not specified	40 teachers
4	Arreguin-Anderson, Salinas-Gonzales & Alanis	2018	United States	Qualitative	Critical	1 teacher + 15 students
5	Axelrod	2014	United States	Qualitative	Ethnographic case study	13 Spanish-English emergent bilinguals
6	Axelrod & Cole	2018	United States	Qualitative	Ethnographic case study	Students (number not specified)
7	Bauer, Colomer & Wiemelt	2020	United States	Qualitative	Not specified	6 Spanish-English emergent bilinguals
8	Bauer, Presiado & Colomer	2017	United States	Qualitative	Not specified	2 focal students (buddy pairs)
9	Becker & Knoll	2021	Switzerland	Qualitative	Focused ethnography	students (number not specified)
10	Bengochea & Gort	2022	United States	Qualitative	Case study	3 focal children
11	Bengochea, Sembiane & Gort	2020	United States	Qualitative	Ethnographic case study	A single Spanish-English emergent bilingual
12	Dikilitaş & Bahrami	2022	Türkiye	Qualitative	Narrative inquiry	One pair of language and homeroom teachers
13	Dikilitaş & Mumford	2020	Türkiye	Qualitative	Longitudinal	3 teachers
14	Dikilitaş, Bahrami & Erbakan	2023	Türkiye	Qualitative	Exploratory	3 pairs of co-teachers
15	Dillon & Gallagher	2019	United Arab Emirates	Qualitative	Linguistic ethnography	6 pairs of co-teachers
16	Duarte	2020	Luxembourg	Mixed-method	Exploratory	44 pupils + 9 teachers
17	Escamilla, Alanis & Meier	2023	United States	Qualitative	Grounded theory	students + teachers (number not specified)
18	Flynn, Hoy, Lea & Garcia	2021	United States	Qualitative	Case study	A focal child
19	Garrity, Aquino-Sterling & Day	2015	United States	Qualitative	Phenomenological design	16 infants + 4 teaching staff
20	Gelir	2022	Türkiye	Qualitative	Ethnographic Study	One preschool teacher + 3 Syrian children
21	Gort & Sembiane	2015	United States	Qualitative	Ethnography	3 teachers + 17 children
22	Harju & Akerblom	2020	Sweden	Qualitative	Action Research	Different participant groups

23	Kilinc & Alvarado	2021	United States	Qualitative	Ethnographic study	2 teachers + 20 students
24	Kirsch	2020	Luxembourg	Qualitative	Not specified	3 preschool teachers
25	Kirsch, Aleksic, Mortini & Andersen	2020	Luxembourg	Mixed-method	Not specified	7 early education practitioners
26	Kirsch	2021	Luxembourg	Qualitative	Not specified	3 teachers
27	Kirsch & Mortini	2021	Luxembourg	Mixed-method	Not specified	2 teachers + 5 caregivers
28	Kleemann	2021	Norway	Qualitative	Not specified	students (number not specified)
29	Leung	2019	China	Qualitative	Case study	88 children
30	McClain & Schrodt	2021	United States	Qualitative	Action Research	7 boys + 7 girls
31	McClain, Mancilla-Martinez, Flores & Buckley	2021	United States	Mixed Method	Explanatory sequential	7 teachers + 12 preschoolers
32	Pontier & Gort	2016	United States	Qualitative	Ethnography	A pair of Spanish-English teachers + 17 students
33	Pontier & Riera	2022	United States	Qualitative	Not specified	22 teachers
34	Sanders-Smith & Davila	2019	China	Qualitative	Case study	22 children + 2 teachers
35	Schwartz & Abeer	2014	Israel	Mixed-method	Linguistic ethnography	3 kindergarten teachers
36	Seals, Olsen-reeder, Pine, Ash & Wallace	2020	New Zealand	Qualitative	Microethnographic study	teachers (number not mentioned)
37	Sembiente, Bengochea & Gort	2020	United States	Qualitative	Microethnographic study	19 Spanish-English children + 4 teachers
38	Sembiente, Bengochea & Gort	2022	United States	Qualitative	Microethnographic study	3 pairs of co-teachers
39	Sembiente, Restrepo-Widnet, Bengochea & Gort	2023	United States	Qualitative	Ethnography	2 teachers + 19 students
40	Ting & Jintang	2022	Malaysia	Mixed-method	Not specified	15 students + 2 teachers
41	Velasco & Fialais	2018	France	Qualitative	Case study	1 teacher + 18 students
42	Vijayakumar, Steinkrauss & Sun	2023	Singapore	Mixed-method	Not specified	5 Tamil language teachers + 33 students
43	Wagner	2021	United States	Qualitative	Teacher Inquiry	5 teachers