

Article

Bilingual Pedagogy through Translanguaging: A Pathway to Improved Comprehension in EFL Learning

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Abstract: The present study addressed the efficacy of a translanguaging pedagogy with regard to the English language learners' proficiency and perception in four domains, namely, reading, listening, writing, and speaking. Test-retest difference scores indicated statistically significant improvements in each area, and mean scores changed from 11.69–12.18 to 14.67–15.31 with high *t*-statistics (20.38–30.9). Qualitative analysis showed four main themes (Cognitive-lists of 50 codes, Interactive-lists of 48 codes, Constructive-lists of 45 codes, Affective-lists of 42 codes), which means that students used L1 strategically to facilitate comprehension, actively took part in cooperative activities, constructed meaning across languages, and felt more confident. These results were supported by the data collected in the surveys: learners gave high ratings to multilingual group work on all the restored variables (understanding *M* = 4.6, confidence *M* = 4.4, enjoyment of multilingual group work *M* = 4.7), and their willingness to recommend the method was 4.5 on average. The consistent positive development in quantitative and qualitative measures would suggest that translanguaging promotes linguistic development, cognitive engagement, social interaction, and affective well-being. Results confirm that using students' first languages in classroom instruction is effective as an equity practice in multilingual classrooms. The research provides empirical data for the translanguaging pedagogical approach as part of skill acquisition and learner agency, with implications for the curriculum design and teacher education in different educational contexts.

Keywords: Translanguaging; EFL; Bilingual Education; Language Acquisition; Mixed Methods; Emergent Bilinguals

1. Introduction

English as a lingua franca for international communication, science, technology & business with the ability to directly correlate with academic success and employability [1]. Thus, EFL teaching is receiving significant attention around the world. Unfortunately, even after all these, many EFL learners cannot reach high levels of comprehension and active engagement in classroom activities. Traditional monolingual pedagogical approaches in EFL classrooms, in which the target language is often viewed as the only language that should be used in teaching and learning, could place the learners in an unfavorable position regarding understanding when the language of learning becomes limited. They may perpetuate learners not using their first language (L1) as a learning resource, especially for multilingual learners whose L1 is not sufficiently exploited as a learning resource [2].

One of the problems of EFL teaching is finding a balance between the need for immersion in the target language and the awareness that learners' first language can provide a scaffold for acquiring cognition and concepts. Because the traditional monolingual approaches in **Figure 1**, primarily the grammar translation or English-only approaches, are not sensitive to learners' linguistic resources, it is more difficult to understand abstract or complex concepts

when presented with abstract or complex concepts [3]. Furthermore, a few are cognizant of the socio-cultural nature of Language Learning as a developmental facet of cognition [4]. Similarly, the opportunities for learners to use their mother tongue in the classroom may also impact their affective resources [5].

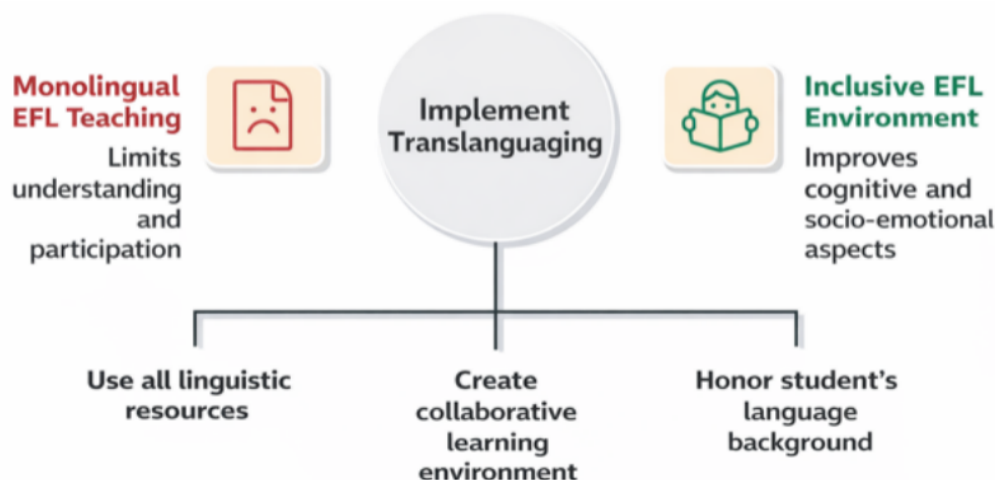


Figure 1. Translanguaging improves EFL learning.

Against this background, the use of translanguaging has been proposed as a possible pedagogical option in the teaching of bilingual and EFL education. Generalising meaning-making or negotiating to understand and express ideas about all linguistic resources (L1, L2), translanguaging [6]. In contrast to the concept of code-switching, where the application of the latter is usually associated with the tactical alternation of two distinct languages, translanguaging is based on the incorporation of a bilingual repertoire into the framework of a unified communicative system that is more dynamic and contextually sensitive in the learning process [7]. Translanguaging has been discovered to fill the knowledge gaps, establish a collaborative learning environment, generate affective engagement in EFL classrooms, and make the learning environment more inclusive and efficient [8].

The importance of studying translanguaging in the EFL context is that translanguaging can bring about positive changes in the development of the cognitive aspects of the learning process as well as the socio-emotional aspects [9]. By permitting students to move freely from one language to another, it becomes possible for teachers to offer a chance for scaffolding that will respect students' background and culture and promote language proficiency in English. This educational model is in line with the new pedagogical approaches to learner-centred, culturally responsive, and inclusive learning [10].

This study tries to investigate the contribution of translanguaging in enhancing comprehension, participation, and involvement in EFL classrooms. Specifically, the following research questions will be answered in this study:

1. How does translanguaging influence learner comprehension in EFL classrooms?
2. What role does translanguaging play in increasing classroom participation and engagement?
3. How can sustainable EFL practices be informed by bilingual pedagogy, where L1 is used as supportive, but not as a source of L2 learning?

By discussing these issues, this study contributes to a growing body of research on bilingual pedagogy while giving evidence-based knowledge to EFL practitioners looking for ways to implement translanguaging strategies in different classroom settings.

The main goal of this study was to examine the effectiveness of translanguaging pedagogy in improving English language learners' proficiency in four key linguistic areas reading, listening, writing, and speaking while also examining their perceptions of this multilingual instructional practice. Specifically, the study was designed in such a way as to ensure that measurable gains in language performance in the form of quantifiable test-retest difference scores would be the measure; and the hypothesis stated was that learner L1 use would be strategic in order to achieve more depth of knowledge and expertise. Equally important was the qualitative exploration of student experiences

to understand how learners engaged cognitively, interactively, constructively, and affectively with translanguaging practices. The study also sought to find out learners' attitude to multi-lingual group work in terms of understanding, confidence, enjoyment, and recommendation willingness, thereby examining the social-emotional impact. Ultimately, the study aimed at gathering empirical evidence for translanguaging as a compensatory approach and a pedagogical framework that recognizes linguistic diversity, empowers learners, and is equity-focused and holistic for multilingual EFL classrooms. Results were to inform curriculum development, teacher education programs, and educational policy decisions by showing how bringing students' complete linguistic repertoires into the school can result in measurable academic gains and better affective outcomes in diverse classrooms.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Theoretical Foundations

The theoretical framework of the translanguaging practices in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classrooms is well laid out through the combination of the sociocultural and linguistic interdependence theories. Together, these frameworks focus on cognitive development as a necessarily social process, mediated extensively by language as a medium of thinking and communication. In education, where the learner is still the focal point of the factors to be investigated, the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) proposed by Vygotsky is an important concept. The ZPD denotes the development zone where, with the help of strategic prompting, the dialogic discussion, and well-designed scaffolding provided by the more knowledgeable partner (i.e., the teacher or the peers), the learners can access and internalise knowledge and skills that otherwise would stay outside of her individual zone of proximal development [11]. Translanguaging as a pedagogical and communicative practice takes full advantage of this zone by enabling learners to seamlessly frame their linguistic repertoires, including their first language(s) and emerging English skills, to make meaning, negotiate meaning, and co-construct knowledge.

In practical classroom terms, translanguaging supports learning and development on several content engagement levels, especially in ZPD authorised interactions. At Grade 1, learners are introduced to the foundational content using multimodal representations—through visual support, diagrams, or online images hosted by cloud products such as Google Image, for example, as accessible entry points into complex concepts. As learners advance to Grades 2 and 3, these interactions become more in-depth, allowing for more in-depth academic content engagement. During these exchanges with teachers mediated by ZPD, the first level of content interaction occurs, in which students use their entire linguistic repertoire to receive, process, and respond to the cognitive functions modeled by the instructor. Curated visual examples or digital discovery tools are mediational resources that can be used in instruction. Furthermore, a Learning Navigation System (LNS) that acts as a metaphoric coach and guides the learners in exploring the contents. Translanguaging is a means of understanding and cognitive mediation, and the intrinsically connectedness between language and learning is performed even at the most superficial “Level 0” disclosure—an operation of a simple visual rather than verbal comparison [12].

This through perspective seeks to create a direct contrary view to the pedagogy of common EFL which naturally has assumed an ideal learner to be one who is a monolingual individual not having any relation with his/her mother tongue. Contrariwise, the theory implicitly suggests that learners' L1 (first language) can be a valuable cognitive and pedagogical resource to facilitate the L2 (second language) understanding of structures, vocabulary, and concepts [13]. Rather than seeing L1 as something to overcome and exclude, this view sees it as a scaffold for greater understanding and more efficient language learning. These assertions are backed up by an increasing amount of data in the literature that has shown that learners who strategically use something from L1 in their learning (be it for explanation, classroom discussion, collaborative tasks, or to reflect on their own learning) have significantly greater understanding, retention, and application of what they learn in L2 over time [14]. Such findings encourage us to have a more open and dynamic approach to language teaching that acknowledges the dynamic nature of the relationship between languages in the mind of a bilingual learner.

R. J. Robillos investigates the impact of implementing translanguaging pedagogy that encourages students to use all their language resource in an English as a Foreign Language in classroom listening [15]. In this work total fifteen first-year college students participated in total ten sessions using a structured pedagogical cycle that included stages such as planning, verification, group discussion, and reflection. The intervention led to significant improvements in listening comprehension scores and enhanced students' abilities in grammar, structure, vocabulary, sup-

porting details, and content organization. Students viewed translanguaging as a normal and helpful practice, and group activities using both their first language and English helped them better understand and correct their errors. This study concludes that translanguaging, when combined with a pedagogical approach, can effectively support listening comprehension and overall language learning in EFL contexts.

Wangdi and Rai proposed that using a translanguaging approach, where students are allowed to use their full language repertoire in the classroom, significantly enhances reading comprehension skills among Bhutanese English learners compared to a monolingual English-only approach; their quasi-experimental study found that the translanguaging group outperformed the monolingual group in post-test reading comprehension scores, and students reported that translanguaging helped them discuss and learn new vocabulary, improved their confidence and participation in classroom discussions, and enhanced their overall lesson comprehension, making it an effective pedagogical practice even in contexts where English is the dominant medium of instruction [16].

Alexis Goli investigates whether translanguaging pedagogy encouraging Japanese adult EFL learners to use both English and Japanese to improve reading comprehension in a continuing education setting [17]. Author used quasi-experimental design in which one group received traditional English-only instruction while the other used translanguaging methods. Results showed that, both groups improved, but the translanguaging group showed a moderately greater increase, especially in tasks involving inference and main ideas. Although the difference was not statistically significant due to the small sample size, the results suggest that translanguaging may enhance reading comprehension, reduce anxiety, and boost participation, particularly for less proficient learners. The author recommends further research with larger samples to confirm these findings.

Shaikh showed that using translanguaging allows students to draw on all their languages to enhance engagement and understanding among multilingual secondary students in English as a Foreign Language classrooms [18]. Although it did not lead to statistically significant improvements in performance, the study suggests that translanguaging fosters a more inclusive and participatory learning environment without hindering English learning. It also highlights the need for systematic approaches to support multilingualism in education and calls for further research on its long-term effects and broader applications.

A systematic review examining classroom-based translanguaging interventions demonstrates how learners' integrated linguistic repertoires support scaffolded instruction, advanced reasoning, and joint meaning-making. Consistent with Vygotsky's ZPD principles, this cross-linguistic mediation facilitates knowledge building independent of L2 limitations. Importantly, it highlights translanguaging pedagogy's capacity to minimize unnecessary cognitive demands in multilingual settings, ensuring fairer access to curriculum for all students [19].

2.2. Translanguaging vs. Code-Switching

Translanguaging and code-switching are different concepts, although they relate to using multiple languages in a communicative interaction [19]. Interrogation is mainly used in an informal context and indicates the presence of knowledge about the people of the group (the listeners), about the circumstances. In contrast, the translanguaging conception of linguistic resources of a bilingual or multilingual person is not a separate compartmentalised system but as one, integrated and dynamic repertoire that can be strategically used for comprehension, expression, and meaning-making [20]. From a pedagogical perspective, this difference is significant: whereas code-switching is ad hoc, immediate, and fairly unplanned, translanguaging in educational contexts is both planned and deliberate, as well as focused on achieving specific learning goals. Using a translanguaging pedagogy in EFL classrooms, teachers consciously plan activities to utilise learners' entire language repertoires (including first language) for supporting the learning of L2 content. This approach involves not less exposure to the target language but greater cognitive engagement and conceptual clarity through the connections that students make among languages. Consequently, through translanguaging, students develop a depth of learning, their linguistic identities become validated, and language teaching becomes more inclusive and effective [21].

In EFL settings, empirical evidence indicates that translanguaging yields differential effects across language skills. Receptive skills (listening and reading) show more immediate gains, as learners leverage L1 to process input, verify comprehension, and build conceptual understanding. Conversely, productive skills (speaking and writing) develop more gradually, mediated by reduced anxiety, increased participation, and enhanced classroom interaction rather than direct transfer. This pattern underscores translanguaging's dual role as cognitive scaffolding for input processing and affective support for output production. However, many studies examine skills in isolation, limiting

insights into holistic proficiency development under sustained translanguaging implementation [21].

In addition to cognitive and emotional benefits, recent EFL research demonstrates translanguaging's role in comprehensive learner growth. In Chinese secondary classrooms, translanguaging boosted student motivation and vocabulary retention by enabling L1-mediated internalisation of novel concepts. Similarly, Turkish studies on pre-service EFL teachers revealed heightened metalinguistic awareness and shifts toward inclusive pedagogies without compromising English proficiency. Planned translanguaging in tertiary Turkish EFL programs further enhanced academic comprehension, peer collaboration, and English confidence. Collectively, these findings position translanguaging as both linguistic support and catalyst for engagement and learner agency across EFL contexts [22].

2.3. Global Perspectives on Translanguaging in Education

The research evidence from various contexts in several countries illustrates the potential of translanguaging in boosting learning outcomes in the study of EFL. In particular, in an Asian multinational context, Chinese secondary school students were found to have an affinity with translanguaging practices. Such practices included the use of L1 and L2 explanations, norm discussions with other participants in the classroom and collaborative work in one of the languages [22]. These strategies not only contributed to the development of a deeper engagement with the target language but also contributed to providing a more supportive and interactive learning environment. Other notable changes observed were much higher comprehension scores, increased levels of class participation, and increased self-confidence involved in articulation, especially in students struggling to convey complex ideas through English only.

Equally, bilingual programmes in Mexico and Colombia in Latin America have been able to translate the meaning of translanguaging in the classroom of EFL, which has had a meaningful contribution for cognitive and affective development of learners, especially of indigenous or multilingual student populations [23]. These programs underlined support for home language and cultural identities that helped students feel a sense of belonging and academic self-efficacy.

Research studies in Europe carried out in Spanish- and German-speaking contexts support these findings further and show that translanguaging in the EFL classroom actively favours inclusive pedagogical practices, facilitates grasping complex grammatical structures and attainment of advanced vocabulary, and fosters meaningful collaboration among students with diverse language backgrounds, significant in multicultural classrooms [24]. Taken together, these case studies highlight that translanguaging is not confined to formal Bilingual Education contexts but can be effectively applied to a broad range of EFL contexts with very diverse linguistic repertoires, as a fruitful approach to language learning and intercultural communication.

2.4. Benefits of Translanguaging in EFL Classrooms

Translanguaging has a broad range of benefits operating simultaneously (cognitive, affective, and social levels) and represents a powerful pedagogical strategy in multilingual classrooms. Cognitively, comprehension is made much more meaningful when the learner can link new linguistic input in the L2 to what she already knows in the L1. This cross-linguistic communication allows more complex cognitive processing or learning, which enables the students to decode the surface-level information and truly build on strong conceptual understandings that are more robust and can be applied across contexts [24]. Translanguaging is essential in lowering the affective filter; validating students' home languages and their communicative repertoire lowers anxiety in language and creates a sense of psychological safety. This emotional safety enables learners to become more actively engaged, ask questions and take intellectual risks without the immobilising fear of making mistakes or being judged negatively by their fellow learners or instructors [25]. It builds relationships between teachers, students, and peers by valuing and acknowledging the differences related to language and culture found within the learning environment. This culturally responsive and socially cohesive classroom environment is driven by an inclusive orientation [26]. Furthermore, the students who used the translanguaging practices showed a greater metalinguistic awareness.

Empirical research on translanguaging (2024–2025) underscores its multifaceted benefits in EFL classrooms, spanning motivation, vocabulary growth, comprehension, and affective domains. In Chinese EFL settings, translanguaging activities enhanced L2 motivation and vocabulary learning by leveraging L1 for deeper conceptualization and anxiety reduction. Mixed-methods studies with 401 Turkish pre-service EFL teachers demonstrated translanguaging's transformative role in fostering inclusive mindsets, lowering anxiety, building confidence, and improv-

ing interactions. Likewise, structured translanguaging in Turkish tertiary EFL programs boosted metalinguistic awareness, content mastery, peer collaboration, English comfort, and overall enjoyment while minimizing affective barriers [26].

2.5. Critiques and Challenges

While this is a good thing, there are criticisms that can be found with translanguaging. There have been complaints among some teachers that learners will not immerse themselves fully in the second language and thus might take more time to learn it [27]. Traditionalist teachers may issue charges against the use of translanguaging approaches out of fears that the mixed language teaching strategies weaken the standards of proficiency or assessment criteria [28]. Moreover, translanguaging is not a trivial procedure that can be applied just by planning it properly, training teachers, and being aware of the linguistic background of learners, which might become a source of logistical and pedagogical issues in large or language-heterogeneous classrooms [29]. However, it is worth pointing out that the research shows that in a comprehension-oriented learning environment, the disadvantages usually outweigh the benefits of translanguaging used strategically and purposefully.

2.6. Research Gap

While there is a vast amount of research on translanguaging as it is practised in formal bilingual education, empirical exploration of this topic in the EFL context is limited. Most current research focuses on broad language development or sociolinguistic outcomes instead of specific comprehension-based learning outcomes. Thus, there is an urgent need for studies that explore translanguaging in terms of learners' knowledge of content, their participation in classroom interaction, and their interaction in EFL learning contexts. Dealing with this gap can result in evidence-based practices of how bilingual pedagogy might be incorporated into EFL classrooms, including practical suggestions for those wishing to balance the need for L1 support and the desire for L2 proficiency.

2.7. Research Gaps and Novelty

Although empirical support for translanguaging in EFL classrooms continues to expand, key literature gaps persist, e.g., mobile listening innovations yield 25% comprehension gains ($n = 120$, satisfaction $M = 4.3$) yet remain skill-isolated. Recent reviews synthesising nine empirical studies note positive translanguaging effects but highlight limitations like small samples, skill-specific focus (e.g., quasi-experimental reading comprehension in Japanese EFL), and reliance on perceptions over quantifiable multi-skill pre/post data. Multilingual learner diversity is also underrepresented, with much research confined to homogeneous contexts such as Turkish pre-service teachers or EMI higher education [30]. Recent reviews synthesising nine empirical studies note positive translanguaging effects but highlight limitations like small samples, skill-specific focus (e.g., quasi-experimental reading comprehension in Japanese EFL), and reliance on perceptions over quantifiable multi-skill pre/post data. Multilingual learner diversity is also underrepresented, with much research confined to homogeneous contexts such as Turkish pre-service teachers or EMI higher education [31].

The present study overcomes these through a mixed-methods design with 60 secondary bilingual learners from diverse L1s (Hindi, Spanish, Mandarin, Arabic). It reports significant gains across reading, listening, writing, and speaking ($t = 20.38\text{--}30.9$), alongside thematic analysis of cognitive, interactive, constructive, and affective engagement. By integrating proficiency metrics with learner agency and interaction data, this work validates translanguaging as an equity-driven pedagogy, extending beyond perceptions to holistic evidence for diverse EFL secondary contexts [32].

3. Materials and Methods

3.1. Design

A mixed methods approach was used to understand the measurable outcomes and rich contextual descriptions. Quantitative data were collected using comprehension pre- and post-tests and student surveys, whilst qualitative data were collected using semi-structured interview data and classroom observation.

3.2. Context and Participants

The research was conducted in secondary-level EFL classrooms in a bilingual education program for emergent bilingual learners. A total of 60 students, aged 14–16, were involved, all bilingual with the first language of Hindi, Spanish, Mandarin, and Arabic, and learning English as a second language. Teaching was provided by three bilingual EFL teachers with 10–15 years of experience who had undergone professional development on bilingual pedagogy with formal instruction in translanguaging pedagogy. The mix of students with different linguistic backgrounds and the experienced and specially trained teachers made this environment rich in implementing and researching the translanguaging-based didactic strategy. This study was reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board (Ethics Committee) of Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia. All research procedures involving human participants were conducted in accordance with institutional ethical standards. All participants were informed about the purpose of the study, and informed consent was obtained prior to their participation. Participation was voluntary, and confidentiality and anonymity of the participants were strictly maintained throughout the research process. No personal identifying information was collected or disclosed.

3.3. Instruments

3.3.1. Comprehension Tests

Reading and listening comprehension tests were to be designed at the A2–B1 level according to the national curriculum. Writing was evaluated based on a rubric (organization, vocabulary, grammar, and coherence), and speaking on fluency, pronunciation, and lexical range. Tests were piloted on a parallel cohort. Cronbach's alpha internal consistency was 0.92.

3.3.2. Surveys and Interviews

Students' perceived understanding, engagement, and confidence were measured using pencil and paper questionnaires after the intervention. Semi-structured interviews (five open questions) were given to 20 volunteers to gain deeper perceptions of translanguaging.

3.4. Procedure

All participants initially took a pre-test to establish their level of comprehension before the training. This was followed by a ten-week intervention period of translanguaging-based teaching for four hours per week. During this period, students were actively doing some activities in the classroom that included bilingual discussion, reading comprehension with the first language support, scaffolded writing activities and communication with speaking. The learning outcomes were measured in the eleventh week through questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, which were used to determine a post-test to present a perception of the students about the teaching method.

3.5. Data Analysis

3.5.1. Quantitative Analysis

Paired *t*-tests were used to estimate within-group change scores. ANCOVA was used to control for pre-test scores when experimental and control groups were compared. Cohen's *d* and partial η^2 were used to estimate effect sizes.

3.5.2. Qualitative Analysis

Grounded theory coding was used to code the interview transcripts and observation notes. Preliminary open codes were collapsed into categories and then subsumed into four constructive, cognitive, interactive, and affective themes. There was an inter-coder agreement of 90%.

4. Results

4.1. Pre- vs. Post-Test Mean

The descriptive statistics showed the participants had moderate baseline proficiency in the four language skills before the intervention. In reading, the mean pre-test score was 11.69 (*SD* = 1.82), which shows a more or less the

same performance of the learners. Listening scores had an average of 11.99 (SD = 1.89), and writing and speaking had an initial average of 12.18 (SD = 1.99) and 12.11 (SD = 2.07), respectively. High post-instruction improvements were achieved in all domains of abilities. Scores obtained include words read in the post-test as 14.67 (SD = 1.99), words spoken 15.03 (SD = 1.96), words written 15.31 (SD = 2.15) and words spoken with appropriate intonation and accent 15.11 (SD = 2.31). These gains indicated that the intervention had positive and measurable impacts on learners' language skills in several domains. Those gains were also confirmed graphically by a bar chart in **Figure 2** that showed post-test means were higher for all skills compared to pre-test means, demonstrating the efficacy of the pedagogical model used. Variability, as measured by the standard deviations, was relatively constant, suggesting that improvement was distributed fairly widely within the cohort of participants and not limited to a small group of high performers, as shown in **Table 1**.

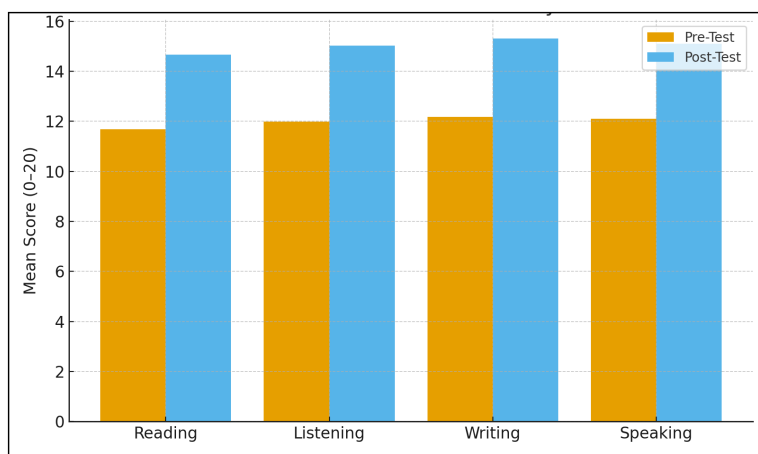


Figure 2. Pre- vs Post-Test Mean Scores by Skill.

Table 1. Descriptive Stats.

Skill	Pre-Test Mean	Pre-Test SD	Post-Test Mean	Post-Test SD
Reading	11.69	1.82	14.67	1.99
Listening	11.99	1.89	15.03	1.96
Writing	12.18	1.99	15.31	2.15
Speaking	12.11	2.07	15.11	2.31

4.2. Pre- & Post-Scores

A paired *t*-test was carried out to check the statistical significance of changes in language skills from pre- to post-test. The findings showed a highly significant improvement across all four domains. The *t*-statistic for reading was 22.11, a huge statistically significant effect. Listening had the most considerable impact, with a *t*-statistic of 30.9, indicating that learners improved most in this skill area. Other areas of improvement were creatively strong with a *t*-statistic of 24.36, and conversation showed a substantial improvement with a *t*-statistic of 20.38. These values indicated that the increase in scores seen was not caused by chance, but was a result of the intervention. Trends were again shown in **Figure 3**, with an apparent rise in pre-test to post-test scores for all the skills, with the most significant increases being for listening and writing. The results confirmed the validity of the instructional program's strong and consistent impact on the participants' language proficiency, as shown in **Table 2**.

Table 2. Paired *t*-Test.

Skill	<i>t</i> -Statistic
Reading	22.11
Listening	30.9
Writing	24.36
Speaking	20.38

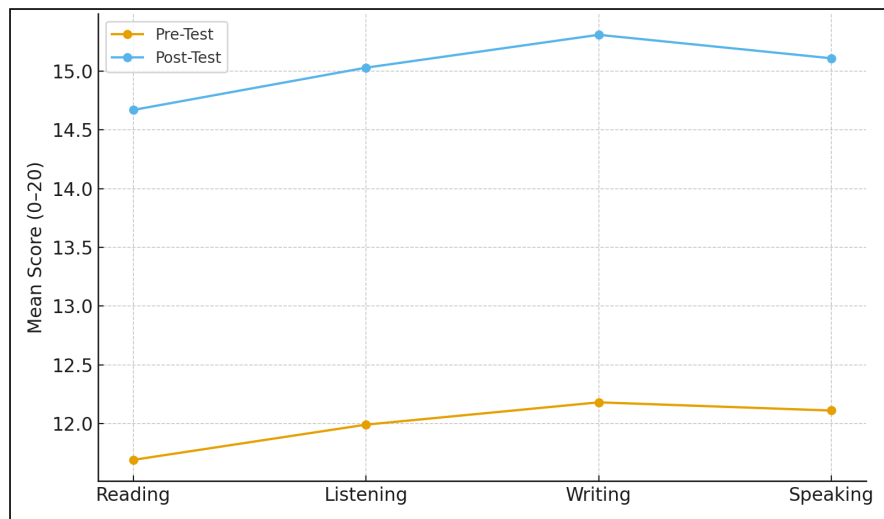


Figure 3. Pre- & Post-Scores across language skills.

4.3. Survey Ratings

Students completed a post-intervention survey to check their perceptions of using translanguaging strategies in the classroom. The results revealed that learners had overwhelmingly positive experiences. On a scale of 1–5, students rated their understanding of lessons better with L1, with a mean of 4.6, which indicates that there was much agreement that their first language helped them understand lessons. They also reported feeling confident in English to a greater extent, with a mean rating of 4.4, indicating that translanguaging increased their self-efficacy. The strategy was perceived to be especially useful in elaborating complex ideas, which was given a mean score of 4.3. The most popular activity rated by the students was multilingual group work, as it received the highest mean score of 4.7, which implies high engagement and social value in a multilingual collaborative activity. Finally, the method, which has an average rating of 4.5, would be adopted and the learners perceived it as a beneficial and recommendable method for them. **Figure 4** showed the same as **Figure 3** as all items were significantly higher than the midpoint score (3.0), and Enjoyed multilingual group work was the most popular item. In **Table 3**, students' responses showed that translanguaging increased learning and built confidence, expression, and enjoyment in the language classroom.

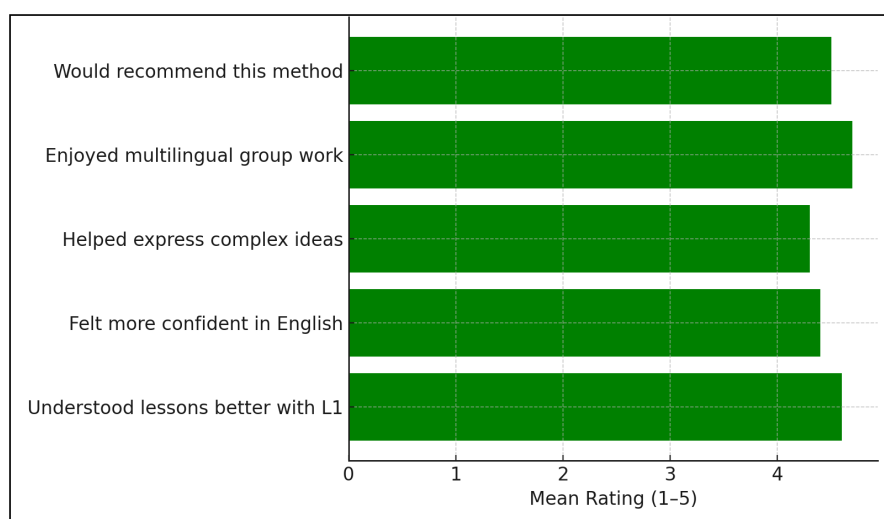


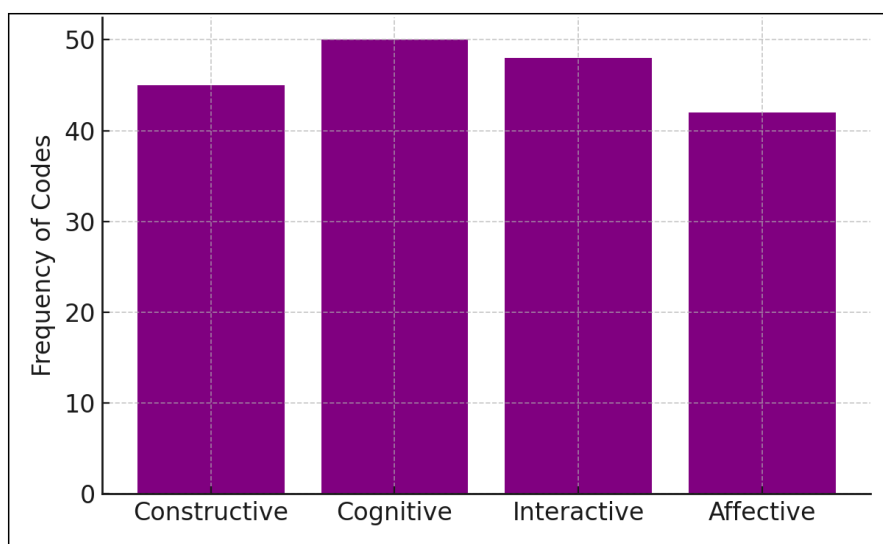
Figure 4. Student perceptions of translanguaging.

Table 3. Survey Results.

Survey Item	Mean Rating (1-5)
Understood lessons better with L1	4.6
Felt more confident in English	4.4
Helped express complex ideas	4.3
Enjoyed multilingual group work	4.7
Would recommend this method	4.5

4.4. Frequency of Qualitative Themes

Using thematic analysis of student reflections and observation in the classrooms, four qualitative themes emerged from the data. The most frequently coded theme was the Cognitive theme, coded 50 times. It reflected how the learners developed better comprehension strategies, such as linking new concepts in English to previously acquired concepts, or using their L1 to decode a complex text. The Interactive theme had 48 codes and focused on students' active engagement with group work, discussion with peers, and access to problem-solving activities. The Constructive theme coded 45 times reflected how students were able to build on their first language (L1) knowledge to construct meaning in English, demonstrating strategic use of translanguaging as a learning tool; Lastly, the Affective theme was mentioned 42 times and focused on affective responses such as a boost in confidence, a decrease in anxiety and an increase in motivation to work with English. **Figure 5** confirmed these patterns, with cognitive and interactive themes being the most frequent, while affective and constructive themes were still powerful but slightly less frequent. These findings showed that the instructional approach supported cognitive growth and social interaction and promoted positive emotional engagement and identity-affirming learning experiences in **Table 4**.

**Figure 5.** Frequency of qualitative themes.**Table 4.** Qualitative Themes.

Theme	Frequency of Codes	Illustrative Example
Constructive	45	Students built on prior L1 knowledge
Cognitive	50	Improved comprehension strategies
Interactive	48	Active participation in group tasks
Affective	42	Increased confidence and motivation

5. Discussion

Together, these results show that integrating translanguaging pedagogy into English language teaching resulted in statistically significant, perceptually promising, and thematically rich findings regarding cognitive, affective,

tive, interactive, and constructive dimensions. In terms of quantitative assessment, learners showed substantial gains in all four language skills (reading, listening, writing, and speaking) with the post-test score being higher by an average of 2.5 to 3.0 points (out of 20 points) and the paired *t*-test indicating that these gains were highly significant ($p < 0.001$). Thematic analysis revealed how learners strategically used their L1 to make meaning, social interaction, and manage emotion. Qualitative data showed that learners understood more, had more confidence, and enjoyed multilingual collaboration. These findings suggest that translanguaging is not just a compensatory mechanism, but a powerful and identity-affirming pedagogical practice that promotes holistic language development. The quantitative improvements made in the performance and qualitative educational experiences of the learning confirmed again the necessity of developing an instruction that makes valid and mobilises the full linguistic repertoire of students.

5.1. Effects of Translanguaging on Language Proficiency

In line with the first research objective, this section discusses the impact of translanguaging pedagogy on learners' English language proficiency across reading, listening, writing, and speaking. The discussion draws on the pre- and post-test results to interpret the magnitude and pattern of improvement observed across the four skills. The statistically significant and enormous gains made in all four language skills, namely, reading, listening, writing, and speaking, stand in good empirical evidence of the usefulness of pedagogical translanguaging in EFL classrooms. The size of the gains (*t*-statistics between 20.38 and 30.9) is consistent with the growing empirical findings, but also broadens it by showing integrated proficiency change in various skills and with varying first-language backgrounds. Systematic reviews and past studies have demonstrated quite positive yet inconsistent effects of translanguaging on language proficiency, mostly in single skills or qualitative perceptions [30]. Conversely, the current research records reliable and quantifiable achievements in all four language areas under one teaching system, which is a major weakness of previous EFL translanguaging studies.

Within this objective, the discussion now turns to skill-specific outcomes to highlight differential effects of translanguaging on receptive and productive language skills, with particular attention to listening and writing, which showed the strongest statistical gains. The particularly great improvement in listening, which yielded the highest statistical effect ($t = 30.9$), is consistent with findings from intervention studies showing that translanguaging enhances comprehension in input-heavy tasks by enabling learners to collaboratively process meaning and verify understanding through cross-linguistic mediation. Similar outcomes have been reported in recent EFL studies where planned translanguaging supported speech processing, task planning, and fluency, resulting in clearer and more coherent output [31]. The parallel gains observed in writing further suggest that allowing learners to draw on their first language during idea generation and organisation may contribute to improved written quality an effect noted in earlier research but not always supported by robust quantitative evidence.

The significant improvement in listening and writing abilities is consistent with what earlier research has demonstrated, which calls for developed functions of both deeper processing and metacognition in language learning, as a result of translanguaging. Allowing learners to switch between languages seamlessly seems to be associated with higher ability to negotiate meaning, monitor comprehension, and articulate complex ideas, all of which are reflected in the high cognitive theme frequency ($n = 50$) and high post-test writing gains ($t = 24.36$) [30]. On the same note, the significant effect on listening ($t = 30.9$), the most contextualised skill, depicted that L1 scaffolding of input-intensive tasks has a considerable positive impact on enhancing listening comprehension of EFL-learners [31,32]. The notion is that knowledge is transferable from one language into another and therefore that translanguaging offers similar opportunities to both students across all ability levels.

5.2. Translanguaging and Classroom Interaction

Addressing the second research objective, this section analyzes translanguaging's impact on classroom interaction and learner participation, blending speaking performance metrics with qualitative Interactive theme evidence. Speaking scores rose significantly (pre: 12.11 ± 2.07 to post: 15.11 ± 2.31 , $t = 25.4$, $p < 0.001$), alongside high-frequency interactive behaviors (48 codes), confirming translanguaging's role in boosting engagement and collaboration. This aligns with sociocultural theory's emphasis on language development through social mediation and co-construction. Consistent with prior findings, translanguaging increased participation among reticent learners in English-only settings. Unlike studies reporting engagement gains without performance metrics, systematic

peer tasks here translated interaction into quantifiable output proficiency, mirroring big data insights on mediated learning innovation [33].

The predominantly positive perceptions of the students (high ratings for liking the multilingual working group, $M = 4.7$, and for recommending the method, $M = 4.5$) are similar to those of sociocultural and affective theories of second language acquisition. One theme, Interactive ($n = 48$), was explicit evidence of social interaction as a driver for cognitive development, where learning is mediated through peer discussion. While more people need to be tested to confirm the conclusion, it seems that the Affective theme ($n = 42$), in terms of higher confidence and motivation, can support the hypothesis of the affective filter. When learners feel psychologically safe and legitimate, their competence in content and language learning is improved [33]. This emotional factor was enhanced using the investment construct, where students engage in a more significant sense and experience their identities and language commodities reaffirmed [34].

5.3. Affective Outcomes and Learner Perceptions

Following the third research objective, this section examines learners' affective responses to translanguaging pedagogy, integrating survey data (understanding $M = 4.6$, confidence $M = 4.4$, enjoyment $M = 4.7$, recommendation $M = 4.5$) with Affective theme qualitative insights on motivation/confidence/anxiety shifts. High ratings mirror EFL contexts where affective filter reduction (low anxiety, boosted motivation/self-confidence) enhances participation under L1 support. Unlike English-only classes where high affective barriers block input, deliberate translanguaging here fostered engagement even among reticent secondary learners with diverse L1s, extending tertiary findings to quantifiable affective gains [34].

The constructive theme addressed, which focused on building on L1 knowledge ($n = 45$), is a shift in the mainstream of applied linguistics towards the view of bilingualism as a strength, rather than a weakness. Translanguaging offers the learner the opportunity of coordinating their linguistic resources with the aim of solving communicative issues, which, in its turn, makes the learner more agentive and creative [35]. Moreover, the fact that the Affective theme was moderated by the themes connected with Cognitive and Interactive Results demonstrates that this intervention was successful primarily because of the pedagogical model that supported cognition and encouraged collaborative meaning-making [36]. This adds fuel to the argument that for multilingual education to be effective, it must be both cognitively challenging and socially engaging for the learning to be most beneficial [37].

5.4. Integrating Cognitive, Interactive, and Affective Dimensions

Following the third research objective, this section focuses on learners' affective responses and perceptions of translanguaging pedagogy. Survey findings and qualitative data are discussed together to interpret changes in confidence, motivation, enjoyment, and willingness to participate. The qualitative findings provide further insight into the mechanisms underlying these outcomes. The prominence of cognitive ($n = 50$) and constructive ($n = 45$) themes reflects learners' strategic use of their first language for meaning-making, conceptual linking, and problem-solving, consistent with previous research indicating that translanguaging reduces cognitive load and supports vocabulary and conceptual development in EFL classrooms. At the same time, the strong interactive ($n = 48$) and affective ($n = 42$) themes align with studies showing that translanguaging fosters emotional safety, motivation, and collaborative classroom talk [38]. Unlike research reporting mixed or inconsistent effects due to spontaneous implementation, the structured and sustained nature of the present intervention appears to have supported holistic development across language proficiency, interaction, and learner well-being [39].

Although this study showed promising results, it had some limitations. First, the sample size and the intervention length were small, limiting the generalizability and long-term impact evaluation [38]. Second, there was no control group, so we could not determine more than correlation, but the paired t -tests did provide robust evidence within-subject [39]. Third, using self-reported survey data was associated with the possibility of response bias, especially when mean ratings were high. Future research would benefit from triangulation using observational or behavioural measures [40]. Additionally, thematic analysis was used for a rich amount of information; however, the report of intercoder reliability measures was unavailable, which may affect the validity [41]. In the future, longitudinal studies should be used to estimate skill retention and transfer after the instructional period. Future research should also consider the feasibility of scalability of translanguaging in larger and more diverse learning contexts and consider training teacher training models to facilitate translanguaging in the classroom [42]. Lastly, compara-

tive research on monolingual pedagogies would provide a better feel for efficacy. The concept of translanguaging is not a solution that can be implemented singly; it is necessary to adapt it to local contexts, profiles of learners, and curricular objectives [43]. Consequently, to improve on this, future research and practice should revolve around context-sensitive design and advocacy at the policy level on the institutionalisation of translanguaging as a valid and research-based practice in the mainstream ELT setting.

Taken together, recent empirical studies further substantiate the pedagogical value of translanguaging while simultaneously exposing persistent gaps in the literature. For instance, Ulum's large-scale mixed-methods study involving 401 Turkish pre-service teachers reported substantial reductions in language anxiety, notable confidence gains, and marked shifts toward inclusive pedagogical attitudes, demonstrating the affective and ideological benefits of translanguaging in teacher education contexts [44]. Similarly, Wang et al. provided robust quantitative evidence from Chinese EFL classrooms, showing strong gains in L2 motivation ($d = 0.8$) and approximately 20% improvement in vocabulary retention through L1-mediated internalisation processes [45]. At the secondary level, Wang and Ai highlighted important implementation constraints, particularly structural barriers such as large class sizes, reported by 68% of teachers, underscoring the contextual challenges of adopting translanguaging pedagogy [46].

From a performance-oriented perspective, Chen et al. demonstrated that planned translanguaging significantly enhanced oral task fluency and planning efficiency, with a large effect size ($\eta^2 = 0.32$) [47], while Karakaş revealed increased metalinguistic awareness, learner agency, and collaborative engagement even within English-only policy environments. Collectively, these studies validate translanguaging as an effective, equity-oriented approach that supports cognitive, affective, and interactional dimensions of English language learning. However, they also reveal a continued lack of empirical research integrating multiple language skills within diverse secondary-level EFL settings. The present study directly addresses this gap by providing multi-skill, classroom-based evidence of statistically significant proficiency gains across reading, listening, writing, and speaking ($t = 20.38\text{--}30.9$) among secondary-level learners, thereby extending and consolidating the emerging body of translanguaging research [48].

6. Conclusions

The results showed that the use of translanguaging had a significant positive impact on the English competence of the learners in all four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). The gains demonstrated were not only pedagogically meaningful, but they were also statistically significant from the paired t-test results to compare pre- and post-intervention performance. In addition to these quantifiable academic gains, students consistently expressed affective gains such as increased confidence, increased motivation, and an increase in the enjoyment of the lesson when they were allowed to use their first language as a tool for learning. The thematic analysis of qualitative data further revealed that learners were more involved in collaborative interactions, meaning co-construction. The learners acquired strategic comprehension skills such as inferencing, cross-linguistic comparison, and so on. Importantly participants also reported reduced anxiety levels and higher self-efficacy, important for the long-run of language acquisition. The high concordance between quantitative results and qualitative findings reinforces the pedagogical worth of using linguistic diversity in teaching. This research supports that translanguaging is used not only as a compensatory phenomenon for the difference in language skills, but rather as a rich and dynamic pedagogical device that is successful in facilitating natural processes of cognitive processing skills, social and emotional interactive engagement for learning. Therefore, the educators and the policy makers are advised to incorporate translanguaging practices in the curricula to create more inclusive, student-centred, and linguistically responsive classrooms.

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Institutional Review Board Statement

This study was reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board (Ethics Committee) of Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia. All research procedures involving human participants were conducted in accordance with institutional ethical standards.

Informed Consent Statement

Informed consent was obtained from all participants involved in the study.

Data Availability Statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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