

**Assessment Practices in a Public and Private Institution to Promote Bilingualism by
Translanguaging Pedagogy: A Comparative Study**

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Abstract

This study analyzes how translanguaging pedagogy influences language assessment practices in promoting bilingualism within two different educational contexts in Colombia: a rural public school and an urban private language institute. For data analysis, a mixed-method approach was used. A format for classroom observations and student questionnaires were designed and applied to explore assessment methodologies and students' perceptions in both institutions. The findings reveal that by including translanguaging in assessments, students feel more confident since learners can draw on their full linguistic repertoire. Therefore, research highlights the importance of designing flexible and inclusive assessment practices that integrate students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds, promoting a more equitable and context-sensitive bilingual education.

Keywords: translanguaging pedagogy, assessment methodology, bilingual education, public institution, private institution.

Resumen

Este estudio analiza cómo la pedagogía del translenguaje influye en las prácticas de evaluación lingüística para promover el bilingüismo en dos contextos educativos diferentes en Colombia: una escuela pública rural y un instituto de idiomas privado urbano. Para el análisis de los datos, se utilizó un enfoque de método mixto. Se diseñó y aplicó un formato de observación de aula y cuestionarios para estudiantes con el fin de explorar las metodologías de evaluación y las percepciones de los estudiantes en ambas instituciones. Los hallazgos revelan que, al incluir el translenguaje en las evaluaciones, los estudiantes se sienten más seguros, ya que pueden aprovechar todo su repertorio lingüístico. Por lo tanto, la investigación destaca la importancia de

diseñar prácticas de evaluación flexibles e inclusivas que integren los antecedentes culturales y lingüísticos de los estudiantes, promoviendo una educación bilingüe más equitativa y sensible al contexto.

Palabras clave: pedagogía del translenguaje, metodología de evaluación, educación bilingüe, institución pública, institución privada.

Introduction

Nowadays, learning a second language and in particular English as a foreign language (EFL) is viewed as an alternative to foster better job opportunities in our globalized economic world, to gain insight and interact with other cultures. Thus, the role of assessment in Colombian institutions offers teachers and students a variety of methods and strategies to assess the development and language competencies of students.

However, assessment practices seldom consider the sociocultural and linguistic diversity present in Colombian classrooms, especially in bilingual education contexts. For example, rather than emphasizing holistic language development, schools frequently focus on achieving high scores on standardized tests that highlight isolated skills like grammar and vocabulary. Students may encounter difficulties because of this emphasis, especially those attending public schools where they may encounter strict curriculum requirements and limited educational resources.

Against such limits, there is an urgent call to consider alternative assessment methodologies that respond to the dynamic realities of bilingualism. For instance, translanguaging pedagogy allows students to deploy their complete linguistic repertoires in ways that are inclusive and meaningful for assessment. The implications of embracing translanguaging may be to reconsider monoglossic models that constrain students and toward engaging learners with linguistic and cultural capital to deploy these resources in ways that make sense to themselves in the process of learning.

On the aforementioned, this article attempts to explore how translanguaging pedagogies can reshape bilingual assessment in both public and private institutions in Colombia.

Additionally, it seeks to understand the different assessment approaches between these two

institutions, highlighting the benefits of translanguaging in promoting bilingualism. Accordingly, the following research question is proposed: How does translanguaging pedagogy encourage bilingualism and promote changes in language learning assessment practices in public and private institutions in Colombia?

Literature Review

The three main concepts around which this project revolves are bilingualism, translanguaging pedagogy, and language learning assessment. To provide a comprehensive overview of these concepts, both classic and contemporary authors and research studies have been included. Additionally, some figures were added to visualize in an easier and more dynamic way the information of some definitions.

Bilingualism

To begin, a definition of individual bilingualism will be provided and followed by an exploration of the policies developed in Colombia and other countries regarding bilingual education. To define bilingualism, Professor Grosjean (2016) stated that a person who can use two or more languages in everyday life is bilingual. Additionally, he stressed that utilizing these languages indicates that the speaker is proficient in them, as someone cannot use a language they do not know.

Additionally, Fierro-Cobas and Chan (2001), as cited in Herman et al. (2024), proposed the terms 'simultaneous' and 'late' bilingualism. They defined simultaneous bilingualism as the process in which a child learns two languages at the same time. On the other hand, sequential bilingualism occurs when a child learns the first language and later acquires a second language, typically at school.

When it comes to bilingual education in Colombia the type of bilingualism that is developed is sequential because students learn a second language at school rather than at home. Although, the Ministry of Education (2013), as cited in the Programa Nacional de Inglés (n.d), “Colombia has a large bilingual and multilingual journey in indigenous languages, creole languages and sign languages”, since 2006 the country’s policies have been focused on developing abilities in the English language. This concept of bilingualism focused on English began with the adoption of the National Bilingualism Program in 2006, then it was reinforced by the bilingualism law in 2013, and currently we have the Program Colombia Very Well! That is being developed from 2015 to 2025.

For some international researchers, this conception of bilingualism of EFL is a consequence of globalization. Therefore, many countries, including Colombia, consider that by promoting bilingualism their population will have access to more information, will know other cultures, and will be more competitive in the job market, as evidenced in bilingualism policies in Taiwan and China (Ferrer, 2021; Tong, Wang, Min, 2020).

Regarding this program, evidence showed an improvement in the level of English in higher education. In secondary schools, teachers receive training and materials to implement this program. While many teachers considered the knowledge, they gained on the training was useful and could be implemented in their classes, others believed that the program should have included them in the planning of the program and training sessions to better address local needs (Reales, et al., 2021).

Finally, based on the aforementioned, it is evident that the policies implemented in Colombia since 2006 reflect a strategic effort to provide citizens with greater opportunities to

participate in the dynamics of a globalized world. However, this emphasis on English as the primary language of bilingualism may also lead to the marginalization of other existing languages in the country, such as indigenous, creole, and sign languages. Therefore, there must be a balance between getting into global competitiveness and the need to preserve local languages.

Translanguaging Pedagogy

In Colombian bilingual education, translanguaging offers a powerful alternative to the rigid assessment models currently in place. Policies like Pruebas Saber reflect a monoglossic mindset, where languages are assessed separately, and English proficiency is prioritized over a more holistic bilingual development. However, this approach does not reflect the way bilingual individuals actually use language in real-world communication. Instead of treating Spanish and English as separate entities, translanguaging acknowledges that bilingual speakers fluidly draw from their full linguistic repertoires depending on context and need.

Research highlights the limitations of traditional assessments. For example, Jaramillo-Calderón (2023) critiques standardized tests for focusing on isolated linguistic skills: grammar, vocabulary, and reading comprehension without capturing students' broader cognitive and sociolinguistic abilities. This results in an incomplete language profile that fails to acknowledge how bilinguals truly function in society. Li Wei (2024) takes this further, arguing that translanguaging should not be seen as just a teaching method but as a transformative pedagogy promoting inclusion and social justice. He calls for assessment frameworks that reflect bilingual students' natural linguistic practices, rather than forcing them into artificial, separate-language categories. One promising approach is co-learning, where students and teachers construct

knowledge together, and transpositioning, which shifts perspectives to value students' full linguistic capacities.

Ubaque-Casallas' (2023) research in Colombia highlights how translanguaging can function as a transformative pedagogical strategy in English language teaching. The study, which presents the experiences of two teachers, reveals that rigid language separation in the classroom suppresses non-English-speaking identities and reinforces a “non-native” ideology. By encouraging students' full linguistic repertoires, educators challenge these monolingual norms and promote more authentic identity development.

However, the study also warns that translanguaging must go beyond just language mixing. Without supported critical reflection and curricular redesign, it risks becoming just another form of code-switching used only for convenience, rather than an intentional practice that challenges standardized teaching and assessment practices. Karl, one of the participants mentioned that teacher training in Colombia often prioritizes linguistic accuracy and compliance with global methodologies such as CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) or task-based learning, which are sometimes disconnected from local realities.

Taking this into account, translanguaging is not merely a strategy for inclusion, but a pedagogical stance that questions dominant models and promotes a more context-sensitive and plural approach to language learning. As Ubaque-Casallas mentions, when the first language is seen not as interference but as a resource for meaning-making, language education can become a space to rethink inherited narratives and construct approaches grounded in diversity, contextual relevance, and epistemic justice.

An example of the tension between multilingualism and assessment policies comes from North Cyprus. Mavioglu (2024) reveals how, despite universities promoting multilingualism as a

marker of prestige, monolingual English assessments remain dominant. This paradox is also evident in Colombia, where bilingual education policies often overlook indigenous and regional languages, reinforcing a linguistic hierarchy that marginalizes students' full language skills.

By integrating translanguaging into assessment models, educators can develop more inclusive and realistic evaluations. Instead of forcing students to compartmentalize their languages, assessments should allow them to use both Spanish and English in meaningful ways mirroring real-life communication. A heteroglossic approach not only improves engagement and learning outcomes but also ensures that assessments reflect students' true communicative abilities. Moving beyond rigid, standardized tests to context-sensitive, flexible evaluations is crucial for making bilingual education more equitable and effective.

Language Learning Assessment

In this view, assessment based on Frey (2014) is 'To tests and other formal or informal data-gathering strategies used for the teachers to assess their students and themselves' (p.5) in which the students must follow and achieve a series of standardize guidelines proposed by the institution. However, this definition does not delimit the kind of data, strategies, and the purpose of the assessment. That is why, Gottlieb (2022) explain it ' [...] As what teachers and students on a continuous basis plan, gather, analyze, and interpret information to improve teaching and learning [...] ' (p.4) So, assessment is an evolving tool which allow teachers to measure student's performances based on what was taught by following a set of standards propose by the institution.

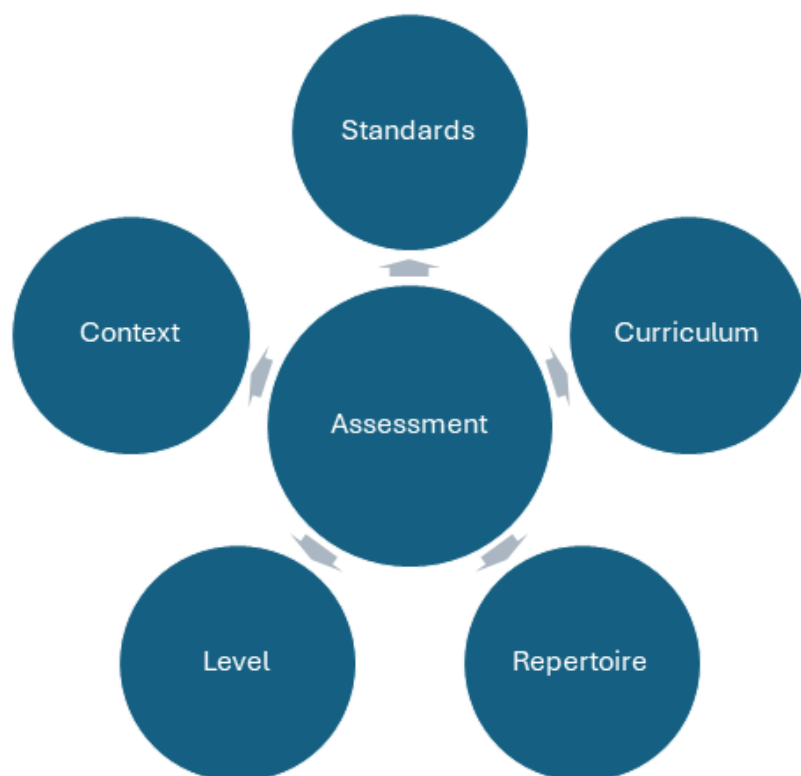


Figure 1. Aspects to consider in the assessment process.

For that reason, this process is not only scoring students by using a standardized test to determine which students have the highest result or the ones who do not. By this point, Frey (2014) and Giraldo (2020) explained validity as the way of selecting, designing, and implementing a test to grade students' learnings and understanding according to the curriculum guidelines. Yet, the issues presented above do not consider, analyze and stand out students' linguistic, academic, and socio-cultural perspectives (Garcia & Wei, 2022). So, assessment requires that the students develop some communicative goals about what to be assessed, evidence, interpret; actions and benefits (Brookhart, 2024). Therefore, assessment must consider the institutional standards, curriculum goals and objectives, students' repertoire, level, and context (Figure.1).

Bilingualism and Assessment in Translanguaging Pedagogy

The intersection of learning assessment, translanguaging pedagogy, and bilingualism is essential in reshaping evaluation practices to better reflect students' linguistic realities.

Translanguaging pedagogy offers a more inclusive approach, allowing students to fluidly use all of their linguistic resources to make meaning and engage more deeply in assessment tasks (Greenier, Liu, & Xiao, 2023).

Allowing learners to participate before they are fully competent, rather than delaying or denying their ability to express themselves, is essential in fostering meaningful engagement (Wang & East, 2023). We must know that creativity does not exist without constraints. As Jones (2020) reminds us, “the point of translanguaging is not that language users can do anything they want, but rather that they are able to bring to bear a wider range of resources to respond to the conventions and contingencies of whatever situation they find themselves in” (p. 540). This perspective shows the balance in translanguaging pedagogies, allowing our students to develop their linguistic abilities while assessing and pushing their understanding of their community through language.

By embracing a more student-centered assessment, educators not only support bilingual learners academically but also validate their linguistic identities. Our students bring great experiences to the classroom, experiences that cannot be lost due to the strict constraints of a monolingual EFL classroom. These perspectives add to a deeper understanding of culture and set the building blocks for a new linguistic identity, where all the cultural diversity of our country comes together in English.

Importantly, this research explores how these dynamics differ in two contrasting educational contexts: a rural public institution and a private urban language institute. Through a

comparative lens, the study examines how translanguaging pedagogy influences assessment practices and perceptions of bilingualism depending on the institutional context and student population.

Methodology

During the process of planning this research, the general objective is to interpret the influence of translanguaging pedagogy in bilingual education in a public and a private institution in Colombia. Also, there are three specific objectives:

- a) to describe translanguaging pedagogy in bilingual education within a public and a private institution in Colombia;
- b) to contrast assessment practices in a public and a private institution focusing on curriculum alignment and bilingualism through translanguaging pedagogy;
- c) to contribute to a flexible assessment design by considering translanguaging pedagogy in public and private institutions in Colombia.

To build up the research, a comparative case study is proposed, which is useful for analyzing sociocultural, temporal, spatial, methodological, and configurational aspects (Perreira, 2022) in education by focusing on translanguaging, assessment, and bilingual education (EFL) influences.

At first, this study will provide accurate data based on the pedagogical practices inside a public institution where the population ranges from fourteen to eighteen years old at an A1–A2 English level. On the other hand, the private institution is characterized by a mixed population ranging from fourteen to sixty years old or older, but at the same English levels: A1–A2.

Although the age ranges of both institutions are quite different, this will be a factor that enriches

the study, as it may provide meaningful insights into how bilingualism is perceived across different age groups and how translanguaging pedagogy might be adapted according to learners' needs (some study EFL to improve their professional profile, to complement or start higher education, or to enhance communication, among other reasons), as well as according to the institutional curriculum and methodology. Regarding assessment, when students put EFL linguistic components into practice, their previous knowledge and background can help reduce anxiety.

Secondly, the location of both institutions will help this study determine factors that may influence bilingualism and assessment within translanguaging pedagogy according to each context, since the public institution is located in a rural area (Table 1), whereas the private one is in an urban setting (Table 1). Thus, by analyzing variables such as location, age, English level, and assessment practices, among others, it will be possible to propose recommendations in the conclusion section based on theory and data analysis to reduce the gaps between public and private educational contexts.

Regarding the data collection instruments (DCIs), a class observation format and a questionnaire were selected and designed. The class observation format was used to document the use of translanguaging in English classes in both a public and a private institution, focusing on classroom practices and assessment procedures such as “the physical and social environment, individual and group activities (actions), artifacts used by participants and the functions they serve, relevant facts, and events” (Hernández-Sampieri & Mendoza, 2018, p. 508). The questionnaire designed for this research is based on current theories related to formative assessment, translanguaging pedagogy, and student participation in bilingual contexts. Therefore,

it includes questions about feedback frequency, students' perceptions, emotions, and suggestions regarding classroom assessment.

Before implementing the DCIs, both institutions granted the necessary authorization to conduct the comparative study, in which the researchers described the goals, types of data to be collected, and the scope and relevance of the information. Additionally, the DCIs were designed and applied considering the specific contexts of both institutions.

For class observations in the private institution, the researchers observed three types of classes — *Speak Up*, *We Talk Basic*, and *Regular Class* (Table 1) — which cover English levels A1 to A2. Subsequently, the questionnaire was administered to a sample of twenty students enrolled in the aforementioned classes and levels. In the public institution, class observations were also conducted three times, similar to the private one. However, the English course maintained the same level (A1–A2) and was divided into two stages: *teaching time* (in which the teacher introduces and develops topics based on grammar, vocabulary, and skills) and *assessment time* (where concepts presented, learned, and used by students are validated and tested).

For the questionnaire, the sample consisted of twenty 11th-grade students (Table 1), matching the private institution's sample. Therefore, the total sample included forty participants from both institutions, ensuring balance in terms of participants and English levels for the data analysis and subsequent conclusions on bilingualism and assessment in translanguaging pedagogy.

For data analysis, the study will employ two different software tools to code and analyze the collected data. Quantitative data will be processed using **Power BI**, which enables

categorization, visualization, and analysis of the information obtained from the questionnaire.

Conversely, qualitative data from classroom observations will be analyzed using **Atlas.ti**, which facilitates the coding and interpretation of qualitative information. This dual approach aims to integrate both quantitative and qualitative data to provide a comprehensive analysis and address the research objectives.

Finally, participants were informed about how to complete the questionnaire and were assured that their responses would remain confidential. Since some participants were minors, they were required to read and sign an informed consent form, with prior parental agreement, before completing the questionnaire. Regarding class observations, participants were informed about the aspects the researchers would focus on, based on the research questions and objectives.

Context and participants

For this research, a public institution in Cundinamarca and a private one located in Bogotá were compared. The public is in the municipality of Páime, Cundinamarca. The Nationalized School of Páime offers education from 6th grade to 11th grade, and most of its students live in rural areas, spending between 1 to 3 hours traveling to school by bus. Although the municipality has many beautiful places worth visiting, tourism has not developed due to the town's distance from Bogotá and the frequent landslides that occur during heavy rains, leaving the municipality disconnected from other towns.

The main economic activities in the municipality are centered around agriculture, including the cultivation and sale of coffee, plantains, and oranges, as well as livestock farming and the production of panela (raw sugar). As a result, exposure to the English language is minimal, and most students are at an A- or A2 level.

For this research, 11th grade students were selected to gather data, as despite their basic level of English, these students are motivated to learn because they view English as valuable for their ICFES exam and future careers. Additionally, due to their level of English, it is worth implementing the translanguaging pedagogy so students can learn English in a way that is comprehensible for them and in which they can include their culture in the English classroom.

On the other hand, the private is American School Way, an institution for English education with a presence in several cities across the country. It focuses on offering flexible learning programs, combining in-person and interactive classes with digital resources. Its methodology incorporates approaches such as Action-Oriented Learning, Natural Approach, Blended Learning, and Cooperative Learning, promoting dynamic and student-centered learning.

To this end, American School Way offers three types of classes for A1 to A2 level students according to the Common European Framework: a) We Talk class, which focuses on developing speaking skills through activities involving grammar and the presentation of Anglo-Saxon culture, primarily from the United States and England, with a maximum of 15 students; b) Regular class, where students will develop a communicative objective through the learning of vocabulary and grammar topics, with a maximum of 6 students. This class follows the PPP methodology (presentation, practice, and production); c) Speak Up class, which focuses on assessing students' speaking competence according to their level and considering linguistic and communicative components, student's self-evaluation (three different emoticons) and teacher comments (Image 1). This class has a maximum of 9 students.

Speaking test

SPT01 Version 1

GOAL:

Evaluate student's oral progress

Complete :	Calificaci	/ 5,0
Coherent:	Calificaci	/ 5,0
Intelligible:	Calificaci	/ 5,0
Fluent:	Calificaci	/ 5,0
Appropriate:	Calificaci	/ 5,0
Pronunciation:	Calificaci	/ 5,0

Comments:

Figure 2. *Speak up Class components.*

Since some participants are minors, an assent form was provided, and for adult participants, an informed consent form was used. In both cases, participants were informed of the scope, benefits, and risks of the research.

Table 1. Description of the institutions and participants.

Private			
Participants	English level	Background	Type
20 Students who intends three different classes: Regular, We Talk, and Speak Up, designed them to learn and improve English Skills.	A1 to A2 English students according to the Common European Framework.	It is a mixed population of teens, adults and elderly from the ages of 14 to 60 years old or above. Most of them live in Soacha municipality. Further, the teens are starting their graduate education, and it is complemented by the EFL course. Some adults and elderly already have a graduate degree, and they study EFL to complement their curriculums.	A private institution for English education with a presence in several cities across the country. It focuses on offering flexible learning programs, combining in-person and interactive classes with digital resources. It implements PPP methodology (presentation, practices, and production).
Public			
Participants	English level	Background	Type

20 students from 11 th grade.	A1 to A2	The students who make up this study mostly live in the rural areas of the municipality of Paime, while a few reside in the town center. Their families are primarily engaged in agricultural activities such as growing coffee, oranges, and lemons, as well as raising chickens and producing panela through traditional methods.	A public school located in Paime municipality where instruction is provided from sixth to eleventh grade for students from the urban and rural area of Paime. It seeks to cultivate holistically developed students, which is why it continuously implements both academic programs (such as agricultural technical training) and human development initiatives (including interest groups, inter-grade and inter-school games, and partnerships with cultural institutions focused on dance and writing).
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Table 1. Own elaboration of public and private schools in context.

Instruments

For data collection and according to our mixed comparative study, the researchers will use two types of instruments: classroom observation, through which we will collect information about the methodology used by the teacher, the way of evaluation, and when and how the translanguaging pedagogy is evidenced, promoted, and contributes during student assessment.

A semi-structured questionnaire will also be used, consisting of 9 closed-ended questions and 1 open-ended question, which will allow us to understand the use of translanguaging in both institutions during class and in the assessment process, as well as the students' perceptions when being evaluated.

Table 2. Instrument's purpose

Type	Purpose	Link
Observation format	To document the use of translanguaging in English class in a public and private institutions with focus on classroom practice and assessment procedures. Additionally, items were designed to encompass, as comprehensively as possible, all classroom elements, following the suggestion by	Formato de observacion versión 2.docx

	Hernández-Sampieri and Mendoza (2018): “ the physical and social environment, individual and group activities (actions), artifacts used by participants and the functions they serve, relevant facts, and events” (p. 508).	
Questionnaire	The design for this research is based on current theories related to formative assessment, translanguaging pedagogy, and student participation in bilingual contexts. For this reason, the survey includes questions about the frequency of feedback and students' perceptions of classroom evaluations. Therefore, the questionnaire includes sections dedicated to students' emotions during assessment and suggestions for improvement, thus promoting a student-centered approach capable of informing more equitable and effective pedagogical practices.	Questioner.docx

Table 2. Own elaboration of data collection instruments.

Instrument validation

To guarantee the validity and reliability of the observation format, it was validated by an external teacher using an instrument validation form. The purpose of this validation was to verify

the alignment of the instrument with the objectives of the project, as well as the internal coherence of its components. The process was conducted by Professor Carlos David Díaz Díaz, who holds a master's degree in Bilingual Learning Environments, He is a professional in International Business and has extensive experience in the field of bilingual higher education.

Research timeline

Table 3. Research Timeline.

Schedule		
Weeks	Date	Steps
1 week	April 1st- April 7th	Sending letters of endorsement from both schools.
1 Week	April 8th -April 10 th	Signing of Format of informed consent and/or assent, Data Management Protocol, and Habeas Data Protocol.
2 weeks	June 9th – June 20th	Data Collections Techniques application in the public one.

1 weeks	June 1st – June 6 th	Data Collections Techniques application in the Private one.
3 weeks	June 26-July 18th	Quantitative Data analysis

Note: Own elaboration

4. Budget

Regarding the budget, it is clarified that this research did not incur any costs, as the application of the instruments was carried out with the help of ICTs, which helped save on photocopying costs. The research was also conducted at the researchers' workplaces, avoiding transportation costs.

Data Analysis

The data collection techniques in this comparative study are based on Hafsa's view (2020), which allows researchers to combine quantitative and qualitative data to explore the concepts of the research through numbers and statistical analysis. The qualitative approach focuses on “knowing how people understand and experience their world at a particular point in time and in a particular context” (Merriam & Greiner, 2019, p. 22). Therefore, this study implemented class observations and a questionnaire as DCIs to understand the individual findings and contrast them with statistical information to determine how translanguaging pedagogy encourages bilingualism in language learning assessment practices.

Quantitative Results

Quantitative data from questions 1 through 3 of the questionnaire were used to measure (counting the number of students and displaying their answers in percentages on a 0–100 scale), classify (students' perceptions of assessment into five different categories—see Table 1), and contrast (comparing questionnaire results from both public and private institutions regarding bilingualism and assessment in translanguaging pedagogy). For the open-ended question, qualitative data (question 4) were categorized by assigning letter A to the public institution and B to the private one. Each participant was numbered (A1, A2, A3...; B1, B2, B3...). The data were then codified into five categories according to the scope of the questions (Table 4).

According to the assessment category, some similarities were found in the public and private institutions, in which the students consider the assessment process proportionately reflect their level of English: 70% in the public and 80% in the private (Figures 2 and 3).

Table 4. *Relation between questionnaire questions and quantitative categories.*

Quantitative Data Categories	
Assessment	Questions 1.2, 3.1 and 3.2
Assessment Perception	Questions 1.3 and 4.1
Feedback	Question 1.1
Assessment Methodology	Questions 2.2 and 3.3
Feelings and Emotions	Questions 2.1, 2.3

Note: *Own elaboration*

This occurs when the assessment is created and administered solely to determine the number of questions that were right or wrong in accordance with institutional standards and curricular recommendations. Therefore, the validation process (Frey, 2014; Giraldo, 2022) is only moderately implemented because it did not cover the students' views of their linguistic systems, their reality interpretations, and benefits (Brookhart, 2024). Despite the fact that this data demonstrated a notable improvement in the EFL, some negative emotions were displayed during the exam.

1.2. DO THE ASSESSMENTS REFLECT YOUR REAL LEVEL OF ENGLISH?

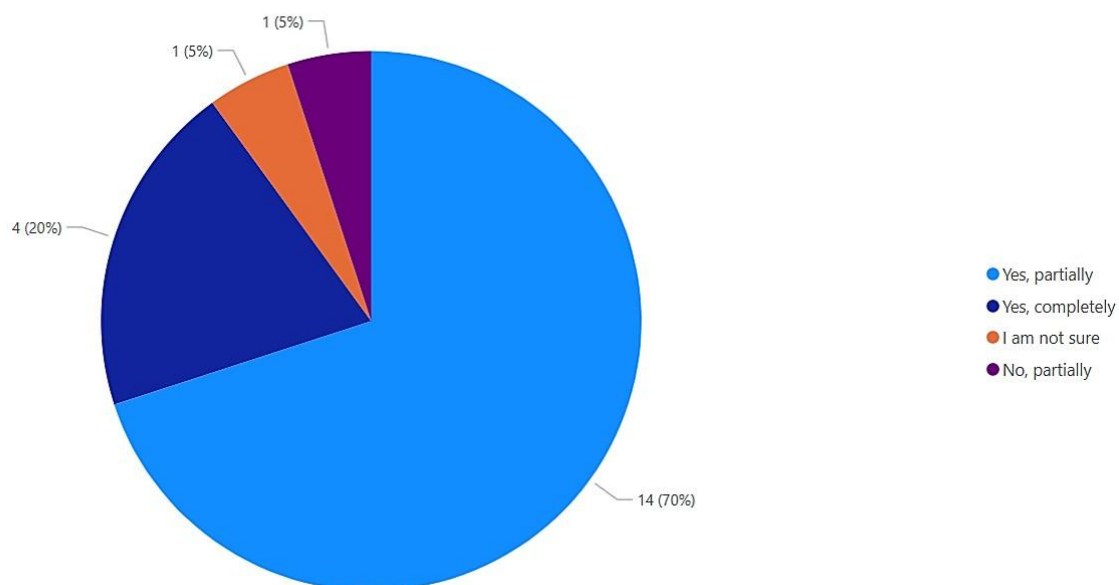


Figure 2. Assessment in a public school.

3.2. Do assessments help you improve your English learning?

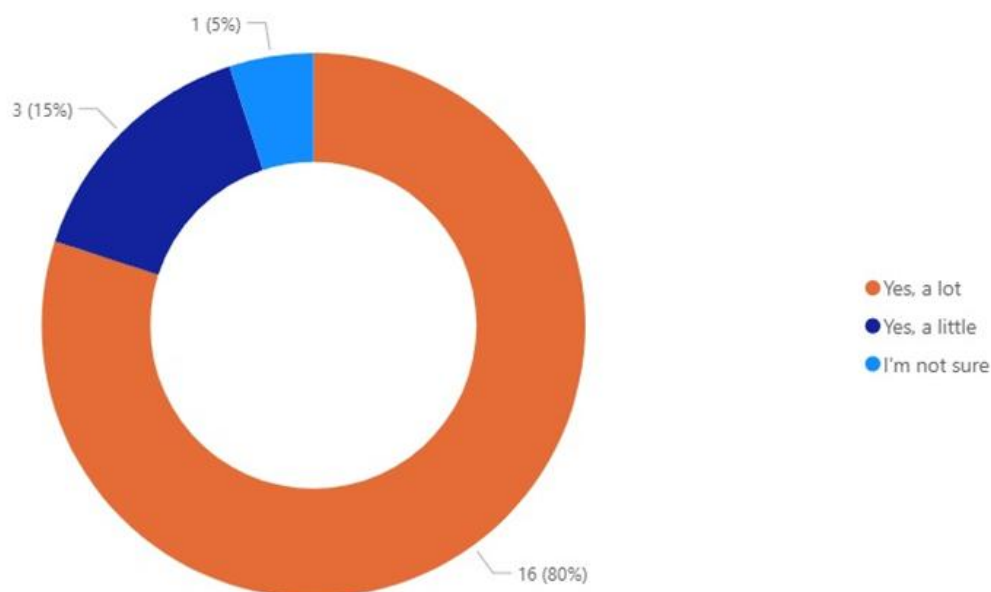


Figure 3. Assessment in a private institution.

This was documented in the private institution where 64% of students reported feeling anxious, and in the public one, 30% of students said they felt fearful. This high level of anxiety and fear may be tied to several factors: the use of English only during the assessment (English for reaching academical goals and Spanish for cotidianity), the oral and the public nature of some assessments (some students could listen to the grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation errors and mistakes committed by the others), the lack of scaffolding and translanguaging strategies during assessments, and pressure to perform well.

Besides, this could be because the students consider their proficiency is not good enough due to the lack of some opportunities to practice their English outside [cotidianity], which may lead them to perform poorly on the test. Additionally, this relates to the "sequential bilingualism" (Fierro-Cobas and Chan, 2001; Cited in Herman et al, 2024) where youngsters study English at public or private institutions and communicate in Spanish at home.

About Assessment Perception, questions 1.3 and 4.1 evidenced that after the assessment time, in both institutions the opinions are divided due to in the private, the assessment is based on the speaking ability which covers linguistic and communicative aspects (see Speak Up Class description on the Methodology Section). Even though the students have been developing the ability to express themselves in English, during classes time (We Talk, Regular, and Speak up), it is consistently portrayed the dominance of a foreign culture and accent (American or British). So, 15% of them would like to have more support in Spanish and the 50% want to continue the assessment based on speaking (Figure 4) as a mean to interrelate their background, identity and culture with the EFL.

1.3. How would you like English assessments to be?

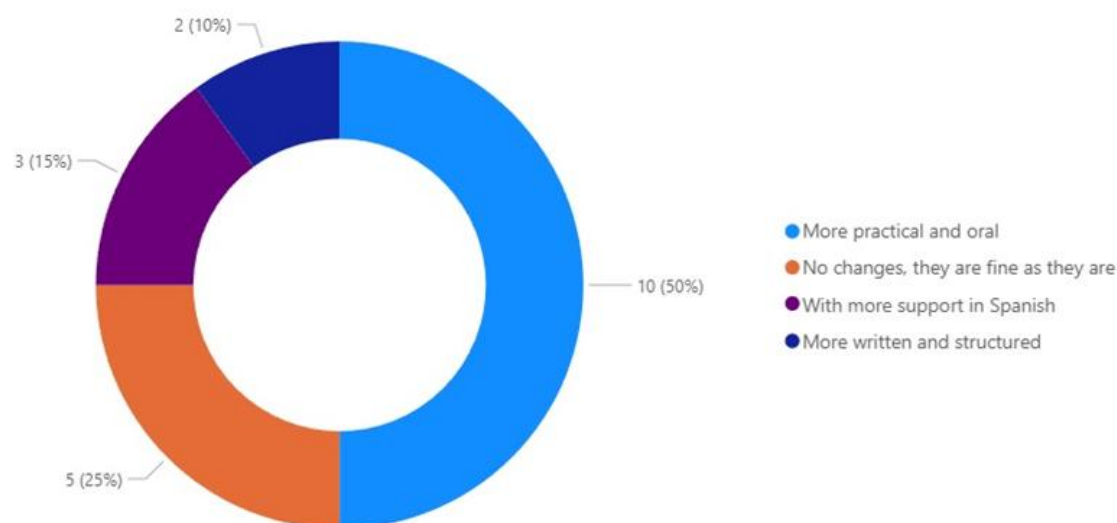


Figure 4. Assessment perception in a private institution.

In contrast, the public's answers revealed that the assessment is enough in the way it rates their understanding and use of English, but they add that they would like to have a more inclusive and practical one (speaking approach) as a way to improve it because the “participant A13” mentioned on question 4.1: “Well, in my opinion the way it is done, is excellent. Maybe we could use more English than Spanish to help us memorize and learn more”.

Furthermore, the responses of participants A14 “I would prefer the evaluations [assessment] to be oral”; A16 “I would like them to include more Speaking”; A18 “I think assessments could be oral”; A20 “Both written and oral evaluations [assessment], with more Spanish to help us understand better” demonstrated that a crucial aspect arises when the teacher encourages students to speak more and provides help by using Spanish. Thus, by connecting materials and methodologies where students' cultural diversity, creativity, and experiences are

presented and developed, the assessment may embrace the students' understanding of their local communities through their linguistic identity (Greenier, Liu, & Xiao, 2023; Jones, 2020).

To continue, the Feedback Category, in the private one (Figure 5), the range in responses goes from Always to Rarely, with an average score of 3.25 and a standard deviation of 0.89. Nonetheless, 50% of students report receiving feedback 'always' and 25% report receiving feedback 'often' indicating that feedback is a common practice in the classes. Similarly, in the public (Figure 6), 80% of students indicate receiving feedback Always or Often, and an average score of 3.25 and a standard deviation of 0.77. This data shows that feedback is also a consistent practice in this institution. Contrasting with both scenarios, it can be concluded that feedback is an essential component of assessment practices in both contexts.

For building on the feedback practices, the study also explored assessment methodologies in both institutions where students report preference for the following activities: conversations and oral activities, followed by games and group dynamics and written exercises (See Image 3, for statistics). Although the public institution is focused on "Pruebas Saber" preparation, the data obtained shows the presence of elements of the communicative approach in both institutions which encourages active language use and supports translanguaging pedagogy by leveraging students' full linguistic resources (García & Wei, 2014). On the other hand, 8 students from the private one prefer individual reflection work in contrast to only 4 students from the public one.

1.1. How often do you receive feedback from your teacher after classroom exercises?

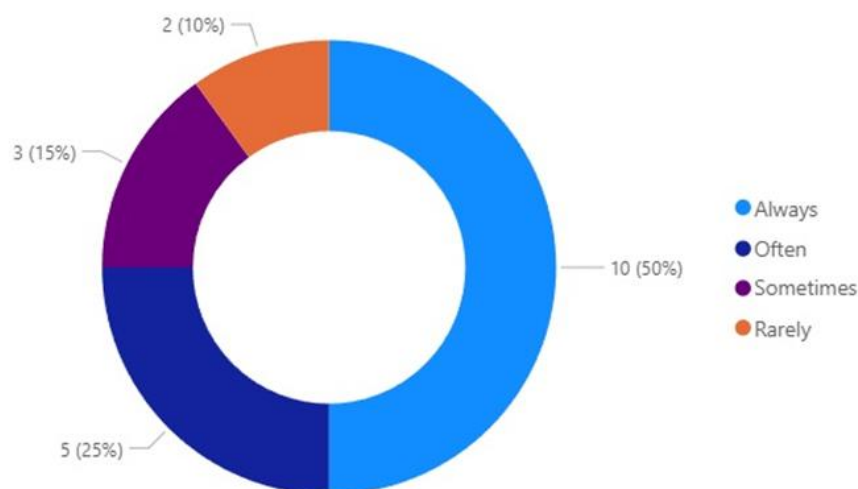


Figure 5. Feedback frequency in a private institution.

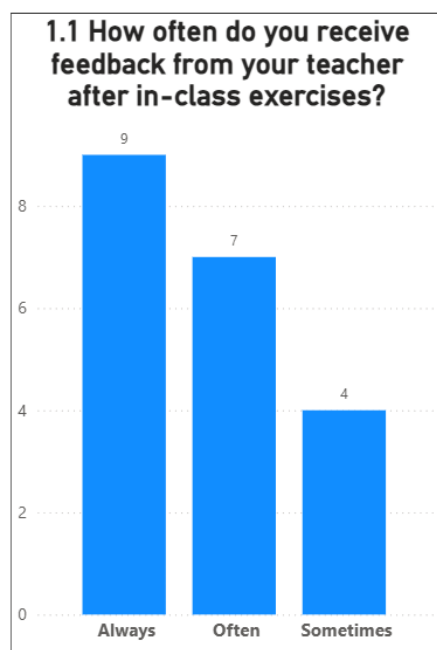


Figure 6. Feedback frequency in a public school.

This difference may be caused by the collaborative methodology implemented in the public institution. This data is directly related to the second objective of this project, since it

allows us to contrast assessment practices and how they are shaped by the curriculum and national policies. It also connects to the third objective, since identifying students' preferred assessment activities can help institutions adapt and make their assessment practices more flexible.

ACTIVITY	PAIME		AMERICAN SCHOOL WAY	
	FREQUENCY	STANDARD DEVIATION	FREQUENCY	STANDARD DEVIATION
Conversations and oral activities	13	0,476	19	0,218
Games and group dynamics	11	0,498	14	0,458
Written and structured exercises	9	0,498	8	0,49
Individual reflection tasks	4	0,4	8	0,49

Image 2. Student Preferences for Assessment Activities.

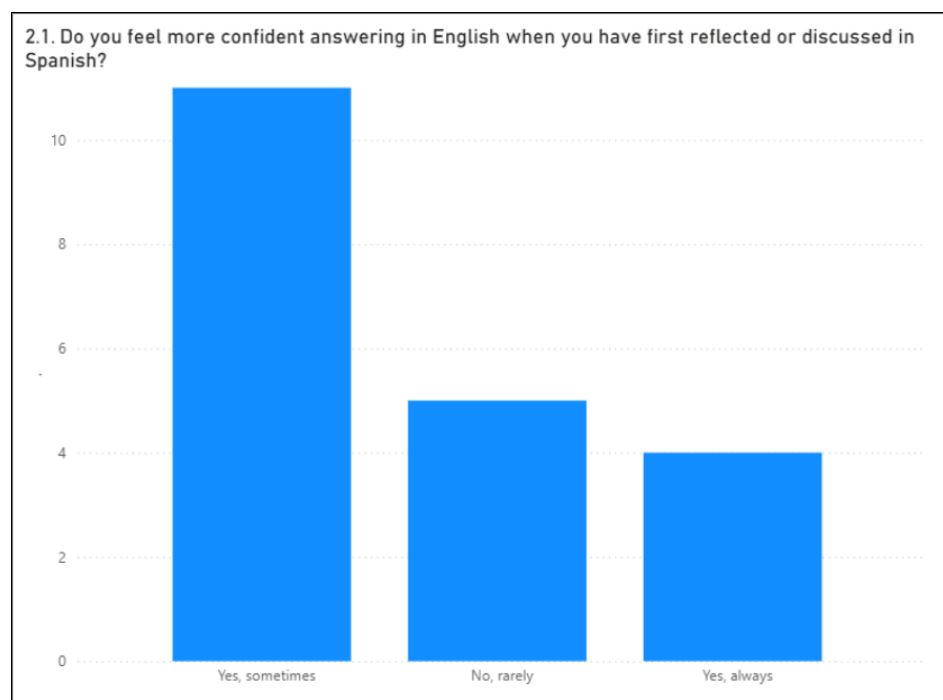


Figure 7 Feelings during conversations private institution

In this question, the scale went from 1 to 3, where 1 = “No, rarely,” 2 = “Yes, sometimes,” and 3 = “Yes, always.” The results from the Feelings and Emotions category show that using both English and Spanish helps students feel more confident when learning English. In question 2.1, “Do you feel more confident answering in English when you have first reflected or discussed in Spanish?”, 80% of students answered “Yes, sometimes” or “Yes, always,” and 20% said “No, rarely.” The mean was 1.95, the median 2.00, and the mode 2, which match the option “Yes, sometimes.” Even though the average is a bit lower than 2, both the median and mode show that most students do feel more confident when they can think or talk in Spanish before answering in English. This means that using their first language helps them feel calmer, less nervous, and more willing to participate. To summarize, translanguaging not only helps with language learning but also makes students feel more comfortable and confident in class.

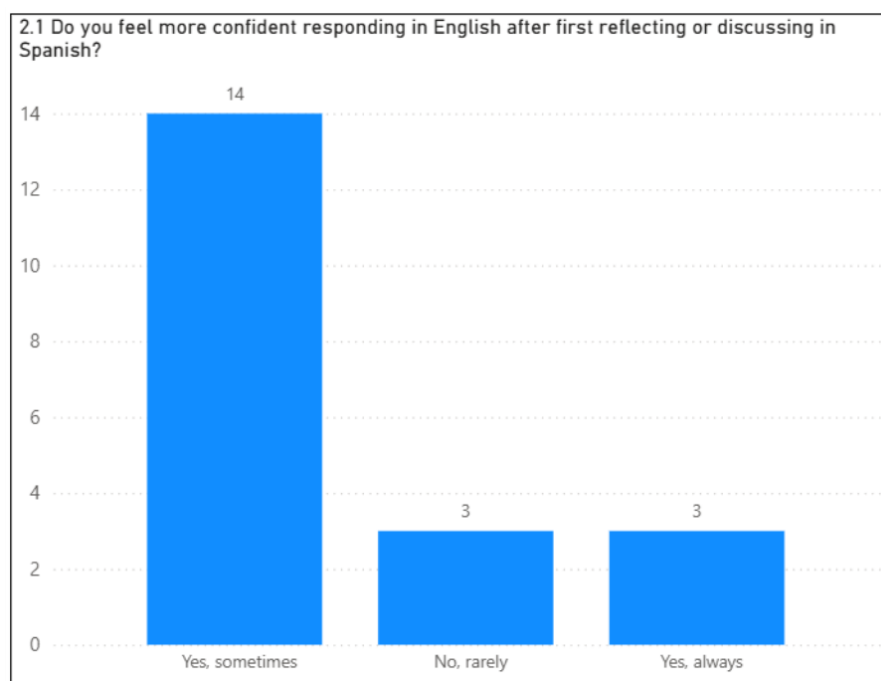


Figure 8 Feelings during conversations public institution

When comparing both institutions, students from both contexts showed a generally positive view of translanguaging as emotional and linguistic support.

In the public institution ($n = 20$), “Yes, sometimes” reached 66.67%, “Yes, always” 20.00%, and “No, rarely” 13.33%, with a mean of 2.07, a median of 2, a mode of 2, a standard deviation of 0.57, and a range from 1 to 3.

In the private institution ($n = 20$), “Yes, sometimes” made up 60.00%, “Yes, always” 20.00%, and “No, rarely” 20.00%, giving a mean of 2.00, a median of 2, a mode of 2, a standard deviation of 0.63, and the same range.

This slight variation in mean scores indicates that while students in both situations emotionally cherish the chance to use their mother tongue, translanguaging may have an even greater effect on boosting confidence in the public, perhaps as a result of higher language barriers or less exposure to English.

Qualitative Results

The researchers used qualitative data from the class observations to identify the methodologies and approaches in both contexts. Then, the data collection was contrasted with the literature review. Therefore, the class observations allowed this study to establish and to codify five categories, which are similar in both institutions (Figure 1): Although these categories are presented in both contexts, each of them portrayed different experiences, techniques and influences.

Also, that exercise excelled that translanguaging is easily implemented in the public institution since it incorporated Spanish into the assessments due to the students’ basic level of English (Image 3). Conversely, in the private, elements of the students’ culture are included,

which aligns with one of the principles of translanguaging. Nonetheless, English remains as the primary language used for input and output due to its policies and the rubric on Speak Up Class.

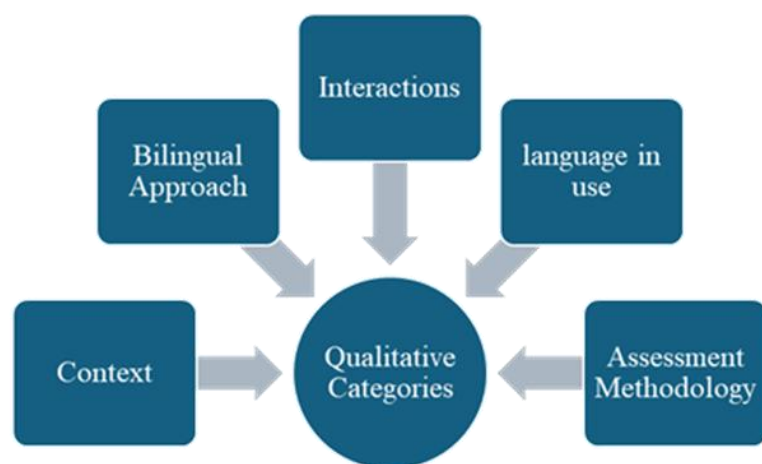
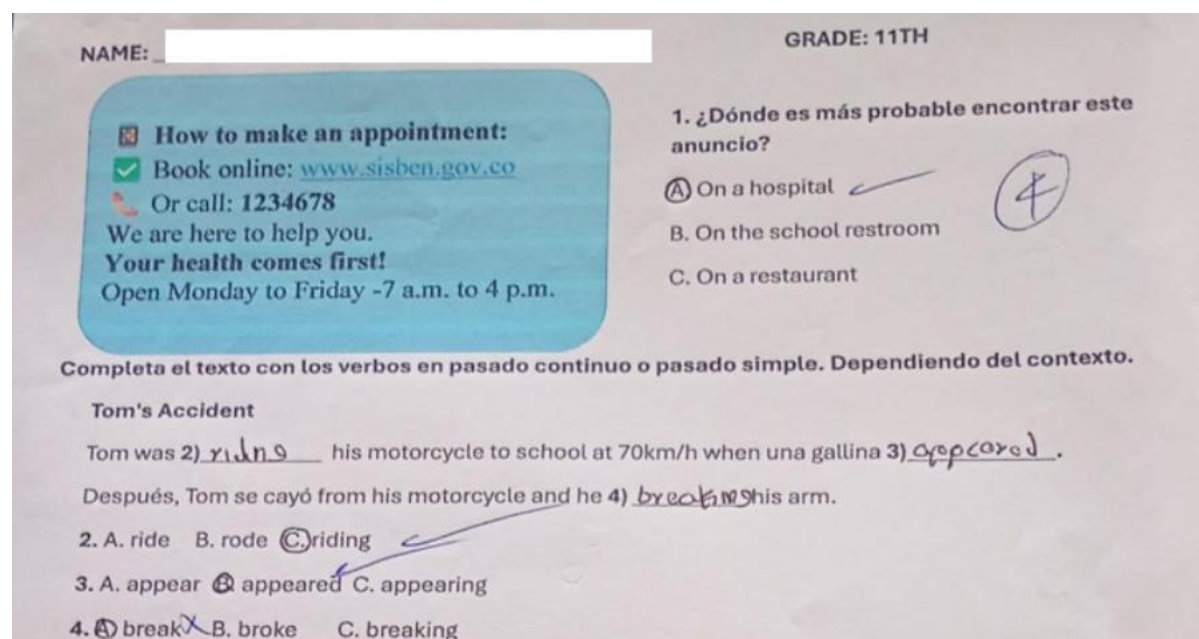


Figure 8. Own qualitative categories.



NAME: _____ GRADE: 11TH

How to make an appointment:
 ✓ Book online: www.sisben.gov.co
 ☎ Or call: 1234678
 We are here to help you.
 Your health comes first!
 Open Monday to Friday -7 a.m. to 4 p.m.

1. ¿Dónde es más probable encontrar este anuncio?
 A. On a hospital ✓ 4
 B. On the school restroom
 C. On a restaurant

Completa el texto con los verbos en pasado continuo o pasado simple. Dependiendo del contexto.

Tom's Accident
 Tom was 2) riding his motorcycle to school at 70km/h when una gallina 3) appeared.
 Después, Tom se cayó from his motorcycle and he 4) broke his arm.

2. A. ride B. rode C. riding
 3. A. appear B. appeared C. appearing
 4. A. broke B. broke C. breaking

Image 3. Example of an assessment instrument applied in 11th grade in the public institution.

To introduce the categories' findings, firstly, the private institution showed that the context (Figure 7) depends on the type of class (Regular, We Talk or Speak Up) because either

the teacher or the students have relative flexibility in using their own repertoire during the ninety minutes of each class. For instance, in the Regular Class, the teacher was able to relate the current location of the institute for practicing the topic ‘Give Directions to a Place,’ where the students used the grammar of prepositions of place and time to get to a place in Soacha Municipality. In consequence, some of the students were more enthusiastic and relaxed in putting into practice the grammar explained and leading the conversation mainly in English with some familiar places in their municipality, such as Ventura Mall, Xua Theater, or Yanguas Hospital.

In We Talk Class, it was possible to lead the class as a slightly conversation where the students discussed the topic ‘Food and Restaurants’ to describe and create a thematic restaurant where the typical Colombian food was presented, like *masato* and *empandas*. However, in the Speak Up Class, translanguaging did not have a relevant role due to its methodology is more restrictive, in which the students were assessed according to the institution’s standards, methodologies, and communicative goals that just centered their operation in some foreign culture (British or American).

Likewise, the assessment questions that were established by the institute do not consider the students’ repertoire (they live in Soacha and belong to the working class), even though translanguaging is considered inside the other classes. So, it recommends that the private institution reconsiders how they may achieve the students’ goal of EFL in a Colombian context and how they could design a more inclusive assessment where not only the linguistic components are relevant, and a foreign culture is imposed.

Secondly, in the public, the classes’ observations revealed that the teacher made a comparative activity to contrast the Colombian health system and the USA, where phrases like

‘No everybody tiene access’ and ‘Everybody tiene access pero es mejor pagando’ showed a set of lexical and structural features, culture, and experiences were using simultaneity in the class activity to express a socio-political problem in both countries but remarking the Colombian issues. Thus, Spanish and English are not separate entities, and they demonstrate a fluid use of the translanguaging pedagogy (Jaramillo-Calderón, 2023; Wei, 2024). So, translanguaging may be the pedagogical stance that promotes a more sensitive context with a rich set of linguistic features, heteroglossic approach, and communicative strategies that connect local realities (Ubaque-Casallas, 2023).

Regarding classroom interaction, some differences are observed in the use of languages by teachers and students in both institutions. In the private one, the teacher mainly uses English in explanations, while students rely on Spanish for peer interaction. For instance, during an activity about occupations, one student commented to another: “*es como una hoja de vida.*”

In parallel, in the public, the teacher combines English and Spanish to provide explanations and clarifications. Students interact mostly in Spanish, although in their written production they more frequently use English or combine both languages. Likewise, it was observed that in both institutions classes are developed in alignment with the institutional curriculum. This analysis highlights the first and second objectives of the project, as it describes translanguaging pedagogy in bilingual education and contrasts the assessment methodologies, which are guided by the curriculum and bilingualism while making use of translanguaging.

The analysis of both institutions shows explicit differences during the assessment process. In the public one, practices are linked to Basic Learning Rights (DBA) and external tests such as, ‘Prueba saber’ which orient assessment toward written and standardized formats. This is reflected in the fact that students use English mainly in written exercises, while Spanish

predominates in oral production. Consequently, translanguaging is legitimized as an assessment resource, as the combination of languages in responses is accepted (e.g., “I was watching TV when my mother called me”), which encourages participation. However, this flexibility makes the results more heterogeneous and less comparable to each other.

In contrast, the private organizes its assessment based on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) and Pearson's Global Scale of English (GSE), which allows it to measure progress against international standards. One of its main strengths is the periodic oral assessment, applied to every two or three units of the book, which forces students to prepare constantly. Unlike the public, English is used primarily in oral interaction through role-plays and real-life scenarios that simulate practical contexts for language use. This approach strengthens fluency and spontaneity.

However, the private does not use translanguaging as an assessment approach; only Spanish-language input is given, and all production is required to be in English. Although this approach guarantees rigor and conformity to global standards, it may restrict the involvement of basic-level students, who are more likely to contribute when they feel uneasy. Therefore, it is suggested that translanguaging be taken into consideration as a pedagogical support to lessen anxiety and encourage inclusiveness, without necessarily lowering the GSE criteria.

Data triangulation

When comparing quantitative and qualitative data, several similarities become evident. First, feedback emerges as an integrated practice in both institutions, since the quantitative data show that the 40 participating students (20 from a public institution and 20 from a private one) report receiving feedback frequently. The classroom observations also corroborate that feedback

is incorporated as a key tool within assessment practices. This finding is relevant because it aligns with one of the objectives of the research, which aims to contribute to the development of flexible assessment practices, where feedback becomes an important strategy to enhance students' linguistic skills. This is consistent with Brookhart's (2024) assertion that formative feedback is one of the most powerful strategies for promoting self-regulation and improving linguistic performance.

On the other hand, differences were found regarding the use of translanguageing in the classroom. In the public institution, translanguageing appears as a pedagogical necessity, since the use of Spanish and contextualized examples is essential to motivate and facilitate learning for students with a basic level of English. In contrast, in the private institution, where English is the predominant language of instruction, Spanish is used occasionally as a **strategic tool** to negotiate meaning or clarify tasks. These differences are consistent with García and Wei's (2014) claim that translanguageing dynamically adapts to the educational context and the learner's linguistic repertoire. Furthermore, Cenoz (2025) argues that the effective implementation of bilingual practices depends on balancing institutional policies with real communicative needs, which is clearly reflected in both educational settings.

In summary, the triangulation shows that, although institutional policies determine the extent of translanguageing use, similar practices exist in both environments, such as continuous feedback and assessment based on the communicative approach. These results reinforce the idea that translanguageing pedagogy contributes to the development of bilingualism while considering the educational context, thus allowing for the design of more flexible and inclusive assessment practices.

Conclusions

Through the data analysis and the author's discussion, this comparative study considered how translanguaging pedagogy encourages bilingualism in language learning assessment practices. Also, the goals for this study directed the researchers to analyze current trends and perspectives of translanguaging and bilingualism according to two different Colombian contexts (a public and a private institution).

In this way, it is conceivable to conclude firstly, authors like Garcia & Otheguy (2016); Garcia & Wei (2014; 2022); Greenier, V., Liu, X., & Xiao, Y. (2023); Jones, R. (2020); Ubaque-Casallas (2023); Wei, L (2024) exposed that the base of translanguaging pedagogy is the recognition and implementation of the student's repertoire in a learning environment. However, the DCIs evidenced that the inclusion of that pedagogical strategy in Colombian depends on factors such as the type of institutions (public or private), EFL level (A1 or A2), class methodologies (PPP^[1] or “ Pruebas Saber” training), and skills development (the public focused the English classes mainly on reading while the private on speaking), and class type (Regular, Speak Up, and We Talk in the private institution and eleventh-grader English classes in the public institution).

Therefore, institutional policies, curriculum, multimedia materials, and educators training should be directed at present translanguaging, not just as a language mixing throughout complex grammar explanations and giving feedback after the assessment implementation, but as the pedagogical bridge where all the educational participants can develop a complete understanding of the linguistic, communicative, and cultural features of EFL.

Secondly, the assessment involves nothing about the student's comprehension of English and it just assigning a score. Hence, its design changes in the sort of institutions because the private one goes after worldwide standards like GSE and CEFR, while the public pays attention to present the “Pruebas Saber” designed by ICFES and regulated by the Ministry of Education. In addition, when both institutions concentrated on measuring the number of questions that were right or wrong, those two design styles created some tensions.

On one hand, that strategy revealed some significant advances in EFL acquisition and comprehension, which strengthens linguistic proficiency but limits flexibility, especially for beginners.

On the other hand, both institutions conceive English in globalized and decontextualized standards, and consequently, EFL has a better status: it is fashionable, it is popular, and it is for better educational or job opportunities than Spanish. In consequence, this view may produce anxiety, nervousness, insecurity, and low psycho-emotional resilience, which affect learners' participation and motivation. Therefore, both languages must have the same recognition in the way educators and learners can employ their mother tongue as a cognitive and emotional strategy that promotes a more active engagement in the EFL acquisition and assessment, lower anxiety and foster feelings of security.

Thirdly, achieving a balance between institutional standards and local realities can make assessment practices more inclusive, fair, and effective. When teachers value both international guidelines and students' own language backgrounds, assessments can stay rigorous while also fitting the real context of learning. Using translanguaging as a helpful strategy instead of seeing it as a mistake, it allows students to feel more confident and involved. This kind of balance helps schools keep good academic quality while also respecting students' culture and identity, creating

a more authentic path to bilingual learning, instead of transmitting a culture that remains distant from their sociolinguistic reality.

Contributions to Bilingual Environments

Curriculum and Assessment Design in Bilingual Education

This research gives important contributions to bilingual education by suggesting new ways to design curriculum and assessment according to the realities of Colombian classrooms. The results from both public and private institutions show that translanguaging should not only be used as a classroom technique but should also be part of curriculum design and assessment processes. When teachers plan lessons and assessments that connect language, culture, and students' local experiences, learning becomes more meaningful and inclusive. Using both English and Spanish as tools for communication helps students understand better, participate more, and feel more confident. This approach also helps institutions balance international standards with local needs, creating assessments that are flexible, continuous, and closer to real communication in bilingual contexts. In this way, curriculum and assessment design can truly support bilingual development in a fair and realistic way.

Towards more flexible Assessment Practices and Policies.

This study provides empirical evidence that invites to rethink language assessment and bilingual education policies toward more inclusive and context-sensitive assessment practices. The findings align with recent research showing that translanguaging pedagogy enables a more comprehensive assessment of communicative competencies and promotes linguistic justice in the classroom (Li & García, 2022; Wang & East, 2024).

Hence, researchers considered that the present research contributes to thinking about creating bilingual education policies and practices that include the students' context and mother tongue. However, certain limitations are acknowledged, including the sample size and the short-term scope of data collection, suggesting the need for further research in diverse educational settings to strengthen the policy and pedagogical recommendations derived from this work.

Further Research in Bilingual Environments

Psycho-Emotional Perspective in Assessment Practices

Through the triangulation of the quantitative and qualitative data, this study evidenced that teachers used Spanish as a facilitator that contributes to a meaningful and active academic performance. Even though the objectives of the study do not cover the participants' well-being, we suggest for our future national and international readers of this paper to lead some investigations in the following frameworks: a) analyze the impact of the psycho-emotional perspective in assessment validation and implementation; b) design and propose some translanguaging strategies which develop confidence, motivation, and feelings of security during oral assessment; c) review and study some cutting-edge theories about the role of the mother tongue in improving students' learnings, self-acceptance, and EFL confidence. Simultaneously, further investigations are needed to understand how assessment design can integrate translanguaging to enhance emotional well-being without compromising the local contexts, academic rigor or international standards.

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Appendixes

- Appendix A-CARPETA CEBIC:
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 - o Appendix A2: [Hojas de vida maestrantes](#)
 - o Appendix A3: [Formato de presentación del proyecto](#)
- Appendix B-CARPETA DISEÑO METODOLÓGICO:
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- Appendix C-CARPETA DE RECOLECCIÓN DE LA INFORMACIÓN
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