

Translanguaging As A Pedagogical Approach To Enhance Bilingualism And Enrich Sociocultural Identity Of Elementary Students In A Bilingual Institution In Colombia

Yineth Daniela Bolaños Bolaños, Isaías
Cogollo and Maria Alexandra Rhenals

Facultad de Educación, Universidad Santo
Tomás
Maestría en Ambientes Bilingües de
Aprendizaje

Directora

Carmen Helena Guerrero Nieto

Author Note

Bolaños: <https://orcid.org/0009-0000-4892-9319> yinethbolanos@usantotomas.edu.co

Cogollo: <https://orcid.org/0009-0006-1766-1077> isaiascogollo@usantotomas.edu.co

Rhenals: <https://orcid.org/0009-0003-8851-1242> mariarhenals@usantotomas.edu.co

We have no known conflict of interest to disclose.

Abstract

This research explores translanguaging as a pedagogical approach to enrich sociocultural identity and reduce monolingual practices among elementary students in a bilingual school in Colombia. Grounded in a qualitative case study design, data were collected through classroom observations and the analysis of student artifacts, complemented by reflective journals. These instruments allowed for an in-depth understanding of how translanguaging practices naturally emerged during classroom interactions and how they shaped the students' bilingual and cultural experiences.

Findings reveal that translanguaging occurred dynamically through strategies such as translation, rephrasing, and code-meshing, enabling both teachers and students to use their linguistic repertoires to transform meaning, foster comprehension, and build collaborative knowledge. Moreover, the analysis of artifacts demonstrated that integrating Colombian cultural elements into English instruction strengthened students' sense of belonging and cultural identity. Translanguaging also mediated the development of four interrelated dimensions of sociocultural identity: personal-cultural, family and affective, environmental-ecological, and linguistic identity.

Overall, translanguaging transforms the bilingual classroom into an inclusive and intercultural space where students' voices and lived experiences are legitimized. It not only enhances bilingual competence but also connects linguistic practices to emotional, cultural, and social dimensions of identity formation.

Key words: Translanguaging, Sociocultural, identity, enrich , linguistic repertoires.

Resumen

Esta investigación explora el *translanguaging* como un enfoque pedagógico para enriquecer la identidad sociocultural y reducir las prácticas monolingües entre estudiantes de primaria en una escuela bilingüe en Colombia. Basada en un diseño de estudio de caso cualitativo, la recolección de datos se realizó a través de observaciones de aula y del análisis de artefactos elaborados por los estudiantes, complementados con diarios reflexivos. Estos instrumentos permitieron una comprensión profunda de cómo las prácticas de *translanguaging* surgieron de manera natural durante las interacciones en el aula y cómo moldearon las experiencias bilingües y culturales de los estudiantes.

Los hallazgos revelan que el *translanguaging* se manifestó de forma dinámica mediante estrategias como la traducción, la reformulación y la combinación de códigos (*code-meshing*), lo que permitió tanto a docentes como a estudiantes utilizar sus repertorios lingüísticos para transformar significados, favorecer la comprensión y construir conocimiento colaborativo. Además, el análisis de los artefactos demostró que integrar elementos culturales colombianos en la enseñanza del inglés fortaleció el sentido de pertenencia y la identidad cultural de los estudiantes. El *translanguaging* también midió el desarrollo de cuatro dimensiones interrelacionadas de la identidad sociocultural: la identidad personal-cultural, familiar y afectiva, ambiental-ecológica y lingüística.

En general, el *translanguaging* transforma el aula bilingüe en un espacio inclusivo e intercultural donde se legitiman las voces y las experiencias de los estudiantes. Este enfoque no solo potencia la competencia bilingüe, sino que también conecta las prácticas lingüísticas con las dimensiones emocionales, culturales y sociales de la formación de la identidad.

Palabras clave

Translanguaging, Sociocultural, identidad, enriquecer, repertorios linguisticos.

Table Of Content

Introduction	6
Research question	10
Justification of the research.	10
1. Objectives	12
1.1 General Objective	12
1.2 Specific Objectives	12
2. Theoretical Framework.....	13
2.1 Translanguaging for sociocultural inclusion.....	13
2.2 Challenging the traditional view on bilingualism.....	14
2.3 Sociocultural identity as a pivotal element in the translanguaging approach.....	15
3. Methodology.....	18
3.1 Methodological approach and design	18
3.2 Data Analysis process	19
3.3 Participants.....	21
3.4 Data Collection instruments.....	21
3.4.1 Observation form.....	22
3.4.2 Artifacts	22
3.5 Ethical Considerations	24
4. Findings	25
4.1. Dynamic and flexible use of linguistic repertoires	26
4.1.1. Translation.....	26
4.1.2 Rephrasing	27
4.1.3 Code-meshing.....	28
4.1.4 Integration of grammatical and semantic structures from both languages.....	30
4.2 Cultural-personal identity.	32
4.2.1 Family and affective identity.....	33
4.2.2 Environmental and Ecological Identity	34
4.2.3 Linguistic identity and translanguaging	35
5. Discussion and Conclusion.....	37
6. Contributions to Bilingual Learning Environments	40
7. Appendix	43



Appendix 1.....	43
Appendix 2.....	43
Appendix 3.....	43
Appendix 4.....	43
Documentos comite de etica CEBIC	43
8. References	44

List of tables

Table 1. Participants	21
Table 2. Data collection instruments	23
Table 3 Class plan format.....	24

Introduction

For bilingual schools in Colombia, a big challenge is to move away from the practice of monolingual practices in the target language such as an English-only policy. Brock-Utne (2001) berates such monolingual approaches that alienate students that live in rural areas, areas where they rarely use the language of instruction outside of school, which has negative impacts on their learning processes. Hamel (2008) supports Brock-Utne's perspective by adding that such policies are based on the misconceptions about the "dangers" of language-mixing and totally disregard the cognitive and cultural benefits of bilingualism. This critique is further supported by Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory, which asserts that language is a very important tool for learning. In line with Vygotsky's theory, cognitive development for learners occurs through social interaction within a cultural context, and this learning occurs best when students are interacting with content that is within their zone of proximal development through more knowledgeable peers or instructors. This theory states that both content and context are inherent to one another, which tells one that content can never be isolated from an actual learning experience where said content can be seen and perceived tangible. For this reason, one can think of translanguaging. Translanguaging practices align well with this theory in the way that it enables students to use their full linguistic repertoire as they construct knowledge and negotiate meaning collaboratively.

Translanguaging is an educational practice through which multilingual learners draw freely and strategically from their full linguistic repertoires to communicate, learn, and construct meaning (García & Wei, 2018). Rather than treating languages as separate systems, it recognizes the flexible and dynamic ways people use language in real-life contexts. This approach affirms learners' identities and gives value to their diverse linguistic and cultural knowledge.

One of the researchers in this project has implemented translanguaging practices over several years in a bilingual elementary school in Montería, Colombia. These classroom experiences revealed how students, when permitted to navigate between Spanish

and English without rigid restrictions, engage more deeply with the content and develop confidence in their linguistic expression. Once Students were no longer limited by language performance expectations their participation in meaningful, identity-affirming learning experiences increases.

Despite Colombia's rich cultural and linguistic diversity, many private bilingual schools continue to adopt monolingual approaches, often privileging English while disregarding Colombian regional cultures and students' home languages. Brito-Chiquillo et al. (2023) note that bilingualism in Colombia is understood as a tool for navigating economic and global demands. Similarly, the Ministry of Education (MEN, 2023) emphasizes that English proficiency as a way into academic success and professional mobility more particularly. Despite this understanding of the concept is known to promote foreign language acquisition, it ends up overlooking local linguistic realities and cultures. Arteaga and Ibarra (2020) reveal that English proficiency in Colombia remains low, exposing deeper flaws in current bilingual education policies.

In these contexts, monoglossic practices, particularly the "use English only" ones, alienate students, especially in rural areas where English is rarely used outside the classroom. Brock-Utne (2001) critiques these practices since they silence students and represent an obstacle in their learning processes. Hamel (2008) puts the blame on the fact there are some misconceptions on the mixing of languages which leads to the application of said monolingual policies ignoring the cognitive and cultural benefits of the use of multilingualism in the classroom.

Additionally, Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory supports the use of translanguaging by emphasizing that learning occurs most effectively through social interaction and cultural tools within a student's zone of proximal development. It can be said that, translanguaging aligns with this theory by enabling students to construct meaning collaboratively, using all their linguistic resources to access and internalize new knowledge.

In this research, classroom practices are grounded in the cultural experiences of students, making translanguaging a bridge between linguistic practice and cultural identity. According to Holliday et al. (2021), sociocultural identity is not something fixed but

constantly shaped and dynamic thanks to the interaction of the individual with social, cultural, and linguistic environments. By focusing on these dimensions in instruction, this project seeks to challenge dominant monoglossic practices and affirm students' voices, heritage, and knowledge from a translanguaging perspective.

Problem statement and research question.

In Colombia, learning English as a foreign language faces some challenges on teaching-learning factors. Overlooks the inclusion of sociocultural identity under the false premise that students should learn only about the L2.” One of these factors that influence the EFL is the use of monolingualism and implementation of Anglo-Saxon culture. This deficit is partly attributed to the disconnect between pedagogical practices and students' sociocultural contexts, limiting meaningful bilingual development. English learning has become a standardized process that generally is disconnected from a student's sociocultural identity. In that sense, Zittoun et al. (2022) describe sociocultural identity as a "product of ongoing meaning-making processes through cultural tools and social interactions." It incorporates dimensions such as ethnicity, language, religion, and community affiliations, constantly evolving with changing social realities. Taking into account these features, and integrating them with bilingualism practices using translanguaging as a pedagogical approach, it wants to explore how the use of this approach can enrich student's sociocultural identity and engagement in their bilingual educational process.

A common limitation in bilingual classrooms in Colombia is the use of standardized textbooks and pre-designed curriculum that prioritize Anglo-Saxon content and linguistic norms, leaving aside the opportunity to integrate sociocultural realities. These materials often present disconnected cultural references, overlooking the diversity and complexity of students' lived experiences. This leads to a type of learning that feels imposed for students who are expected to assimilate foreign content while their own knowledge, language, and cultural practices are included, in this way students can achieve a more meaningful learning.

Translanguaging allows the integration of linguistic cultural features. Rather than forcing the inclusion of traditional cultural elements that may not reflect students' current lives, translanguaging creates opportunities to work with the cultural practices that truly matter to them, those they live and value every day. Whether through local expressions, popular media, family traditions, or neighborhood customs, this pedagogical approach values culture as dynamic and student-centered. In doing so, it challenges the limitations of standardized instruction and repositions learners as active agents whose voices, languages, and cultures are worthy of being heard, explored, and celebrated in the classroom.

One of the main factors contributing to this concern is the traditional approach to English learning, which prioritizes memorization of grammatical and implementation of standardized lessons that put apart sociocultural identity over fostering critical and integrated skills this results in a fragmented learning, where students struggle to practice skills between their native language and the foreign language. Additionally, the lack of cultural relevance in educational materials creates a barrier to language acquisition, as students fail to find significance in the content presented, Herrmann (2020) emphasizes that including culturally relevant materials enhances students' engagement and understanding. This approach aims to demonstrate that translanguaging can be an effective strategy to enrich sociocultural identity, making learning more meaningful in the Colombian context.

Moreover, the absence of strategies incorporating translanguaging as a pedagogical approach contributes to separated teaching methods that do not align with students' real linguistic practices. Duarte (2020) highlights that translanguaging allows students to flexibly use their languages to build knowledge, fostering deeper and more meaningful understanding. However, little is known about integrating translanguaging to reinforce sociocultural identity in elementary Colombian educational institutions.

From this perspective, it is necessary to apply pedagogical approaches that integrate both languages within a culturally relevant context, leveraging Colombia's rich culture heritage. Rodríguez et al. (2023) emphasize that including elements of cultural identity in the classroom not only enhances student engagement but also strengthens their sense of belonging and appreciation for local cultures. This project aims to address these gaps by describing how translanguaging activities in elementary classrooms promote linguistic

interdependence and the development of cultural identity in both Spanish and English integrating a bilingual alignment. This approach seeks to explore how this method could enhance this feature of translanguaging, but also to contribute to building a more significant and meaningful bilingual education in the Colombian context corresponding to the MABA axis of bilingualism.

Research question

Considering these postulates, the research purpose is oriented to answer the question **How does translanguaging as a pedagogical approach enhance bilingualism and enrich sociocultural identity of elementary students in a bilingual institution in Colombia?** The methodology to consider is case study, a qualitative approach focused on the sociocultural identity of the students; this approach allows understanding of a specific phenomenon within its real-world context. It explores educational practices, and experiences. This paper presents the project statement, concepts and previous studies that supports the viability of the proposal, also it includes objectives, expecting results and methodology.

Justification of the research.

This research is relevant since it addresses a central issue of Colombian bilingual teaching practices. Lots of bilingual schools based their teaching learning practices on teaching English from a global view, leaving aside sociocultural identity, integrating American or British culture. This practices are based on a monolingual English model, imposing English as the only legitimate language in the classroom, losing student's motivation and engagement during the classroom. Without seeing a meaningful learning experience. This approach limits learning, as students who are not yet proficient in English are excluded from actively participating in class, creating both cognitive and affective barriers in the learning process.

This project justified its pertinence to enhance bilingual learning environments in Colombia through the integration of a translanguaging approach to improve bilingualism development and foster the cultural identity and representations in elementary students in a bilingual institution in Colombia. Translanguaging addresses current gaps in traditional pedagogical approaches by fostering interdependent learning, where students utilize both Spanish and English to construct meaning, improving their cognitive and linguistic abilities. The project aligns with contemporary educational demands to create inclusive practices that reflect students' linguistic realities, addressing a critical need in Colombian classrooms.

Additionally, the project is relevant since it bridges the gap between language learning and sociocultural identity. By incorporating Colombian culture into the curriculum, it ensures that students engage with socially meaningful content, in that way increasing their motivation and language learning. This approach not only supports the development of linguistic competencies but also reinforces students' sense of identity and belonging, a crucial aspect of fostering meaningful learning in bilingual settings. Duarte (2020) highlights how translanguaging allows students to flexibly use their languages in learning, promoting deeper understanding and personal connection with the content. Moreover, preserving and implementing the cultural identity of Colombia's regions in a significant setting is achieved through the translanguaging approach, as it pertains to learning in educational contexts.

Moreover, the research responds to the importance of advancing bilingual education in Colombia by applying an adaptable model. By integrating strategies that link language with culture, this project contributes to the ongoing improvement of bilingual education practices. It offers a foundation for future research and serves as a practical example of how culturally responsive methodologies can improve educational outcomes in diverse settings.

One of the main features of translanguaging is its capacity to invite different perspectives of knowledge that students bring into the classroom, including their cultural practices and experiences. Translanguaging creates space for authentic cultural expressions that emerge from their daily lives, communities, and situations. This approach allows

teachers to engage with the cultural realities that children actively participate in making learning more meaningful and relevant. In this way, translanguaging supports a culturally sustaining pedagogy, where students' identities are not just included, but centered as a foundation for building knowledge and fostering bilingual development

Despite its potential, translanguaging remains underexplored in Colombian elementary education, especially as a means to connect bilingualism with sociocultural identity. There is a need to investigate how this approach can contribute to more inclusive and culturally responsive teaching practices that value students' voices, languages, and identities.

1. Objectives

1.1 General Objective

Explore how the use of translanguaging as a pedagogical approach enriches students' sociocultural identities and their bilingualism.

1.2 Specific Objectives

1. Identify the translanguaging practices used by the teacher and the children within the classroom.
2. Analyze sociocultural identity aspects that children bring to the classroom.

2. Theoretical Framework.

2.1 Translanguaging for sociocultural inclusion

Translanguaging is the process where a person is allowed to use its linguistic resources, regardless of the language limitations to communicate, learn, and make sense of the world. It recognizes that individuals, especially bilingual or multilingual speakers, can fluidly express ideas, emotions, and understanding by effectively combining two “or more” languages. This approach values all languages equally and encourages their dynamic interplay, fostering deeper learning and inclusivity and encouraging sociocultural identity. According to García (2009), translanguaging moves beyond rigid language separation policies and opens up spaces for authentic linguistic identity expression. This perspective highlights the importance of recognizing how language practices reflect and construct cultural identities within the classroom context. Furthermore, García and Lin (2017) emphasize that translanguaging pedagogies are transformative because they challenge the hierarchy of languages prevalent in traditional bilingual programs, promoting equity and empowerment among speakers of all linguistic backgrounds.

In this sense, translanguaging does not separate languages; rather, it views them as rivers that flow together and operate as one unified system. This approach is applied in bilingual contexts and also carries a strong cultural dimension. It is important to emphasize that the value does not lie solely in the code (the system of signs of each language), but in the actual use of the languages. Both languages can coexist, complement each other, and be used in an integrated way to construct meaning and strengthen cultural identity.

On the other hand, (Creese & Blackledge, 2018) state that translanguaging pedagogy is an educational practice that promotes the full use of the linguistic repertoire, innovating the boundaries between established languages. Moreover, translanguaging pedagogy enables students in a bilingual elementary school to merge languages, enriching the development of bilingualism and thus fostering the sociocultural identity of each

student, and leads to meaningful experiences that support local culture and reduce monolingual practices. Thus interconnecting the observations, the purpose of this project is to employ translanguaging as an approach or pedagogical practice that favors bilingual competencies with complete linguistic repertoires immersed in the classroom, considering the sociocultural identity of a specific region as fundamental.

2.2 Challenging the traditional view on bilingualism

Bilingualism is the skill to use two languages effectively. This involves different levels of proficiency in speaking, understanding, reading, and writing each language. It may vary depending on the context. such as growing up in a multilingual environment, formal education, or cultural immersion. Nagel et al. (2015) states that bilinguals are generally defined as individuals or groups of people who obtain the knowledge and use of more than one language and who have various degrees of proficiency in both languages. This author remarks the ability of using two languages obtaining different levels between them, however, the understanding of both languages is considered a bilingual individual. On the other hand, Brito-Chiquillo et al. (2023) describe bilingualism as the ability an individual has to express themselves properly in two different languages, additionally, they have the necessary competences to respond to different situations in economic contexts. This view on bilingualism shows what is one of the essential reasons why bilingual programs are so important for a globalized reach, often framing bilingualism to only being a tool for professional purposes. The aim is to change the way bilingualism is understood not merely as a key to professional success, but as a means to strengthen cultural understanding and appreciation, as well as to develop the ability to use the language in any given situation. In this regard, translanguaging emerges as a pedagogical approach that complements bilingualism by encouraging students to use their full linguistic repertoire, allowing for fluid and authentic communication that bridges both languages and strengthens their cultural identities.

2.3 Sociocultural identity as a pivotal element in the translanguaging approach

Sociocultural identity refers to the sense of individuality of people or community from interactions with their social and cultural environment. It includes beliefs, culture, folklore and practices shared within a community, which highlights how individuals see themselves and are perceived by others. Also, influence how individuals direct their roles, connections, and sense of belonging within society, according to Holliday et al. (2021), is dynamic and changes based on social interactions and historical contexts, allowing individuals to continually negotiate and reshape their sense of belonging to various groups. These authors highlight sociocultural identity as an interactive process in which the exchange of ideas defines one's sense of belonging. Bennett (2020) stands out incorporating culture enhances student engagement and comprehension. This strategy allows bilingual students to reflect the content and relate it to their cultural backgrounds, additionally, these practices encourage students to appreciate the cultural heritage while fostering meaningful and individualized learning experiences. Therefore, in this project the sociocultural identity is understood as a foundational element of translanguaging, as it supports students in drawing on their full linguistic and cultural repertoires to communicate, learn, and construct knowledge in ways that are authentic and culturally responsive.

The sociocultural identity of the students recognized in bilingual education furthers ties to their heritage, even as it builds a background on how to participate in global perspectives. According to Holliday et al. (2021), sociocultural identity alludes to a dynamic aspect in a person which changes continuously in process with the social interaction and historical contexts. It is through this process that one negotiates and gives form to their sense of belonging. Considering the above, translanguaging becomes an important tool since it reinforces the students' socio-cultural identity by encouraging interaction between students' mother tongue languages and their target language, here in this case, being English. López and Valdés (2021) complement this idea by putting weight on the relevance of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), arguing that it refers to the level of skill, knowledge, and attitudes that provide efficiency in communicating and acting across cultures. Said authors also develop arguments on the premise that learning a foreign

language contributes to increasing world knowledge and the development of personality and culture while maintaining sociocultural identity. Brito-Chiquillo (2023) says that national progress depends on the recognition and utilization of cultural diversity to create opportunities for collective progress. For example, as Yuzlu and Dikilitas (2021) suggest, translanguaging enables the interchangeable use of native and target languages, bridging linguistic gaps while enriching cultural understanding. This practice fosters bilingual competence while it nurtures the students' developing identities to engage authentically with confidence and pride in diverse social and professional contexts.

According to García (2009), *translanguaging* is a pedagogical practice that allows bilingual or multilingual individuals to use their entire linguistic repertoire to communicate, learn, and construct meaning, transcending rigid boundaries between languages. Building on this foundation, Yuzlu and Dikilitas (2021) define *translanguaging* as a pedagogical practice in bilingual education that deliberately allows for the interchangeable use of the languages of input and output (p. 177). As a pedagogical and cultural approach, *translanguaging* encourages the integration of multiple languages in the classroom, enabling learners to draw from their full linguistic resources to build meaning and express their identities.

In multilingual contexts such as Colombia, this approach becomes essential to valuing and preserving linguistic diversity. This dynamic has been particularly evident in Colombia during recent decades, with a preference for English and Spanish often overshadowing indigenous languages, which, according to León (2012), lie at the core of the country's cultural heritage and represent a vital part of Colombian identity. These languages are full of historical and cultural value yet are frequently marginalized in educational policies, directly influencing how learners relate to the content and perceive their own identities.

Translanguaging can not only reinforce students' usage of their native languages and their cultures but can also contribute to the linguistic and cultural development of the individuals involved. Vygotsky's theory of scaffolding explains that through the use of

translanguaging, educators are able to scaffold learning in a way that it builds on pre-existing linguistic knowledge, enabling students to access new concepts within their ZPD (zone of proximal development), which allows students to use their first language along with English, providing a bridge for both understanding and engagement, creating enhanced conditions for absorbing and internalizing new information (Vygotsky, 1978).

Previous studies remark the importance of use translanguaging to enhance sociocultural identity and reduce monolingual practices, for example, Gomez (2021) presents bilingual education as something that has been mistakenly interpreted, given that this concept is often understood as the monolingual use of the second language to the point of promoting and encouraging the disuse of the first language. Through an analysis of why this can occur, an identification of the objectives of bilingual education in Colombia, and its quest for a globalized society while incentivizing students with promises of a better future and more opportunities by being bilingual, it is pointed out that this can lead to an overemphasis on the second language, putting the first language at risk by not ensuring its preservation. This study is highly relevant to what this research seeks to explore: studying the subtle factors that have led educational institutions to practice bilingual education in this way, and arguing why the use of the first language is not detrimental when learning a second language and how its use can strengthen the student both linguistically and culturally. Similarly, Prilutskaya, (2021) conducted a systematic review that highlights how translanguaging promotes inclusive language practices, especially in multilingual classrooms. The article synthesized over 200 empirical studies, focusing on how translanguaging supports flexible use of students' linguistic repertoires and fosters identity formation in multicultural settings. It found that translanguaging facilitates not only language development but also students' connection to their sociocultural identities by using their full linguistic and cultural backgrounds in the classroom. This study remarks how translanguaging encourages bilingual practices and help students integrate their linguistic and cultural identities.

This Review of previous studies demonstrates viability of using translanguaging as a pedagogical approach to reinforce sociocultural identity with Colombian culture and

literature with the objective of reducing monolingual practices in bilingual schools, creating bilingual environments using aspects of their own context.

3. Methodology

This chapter presents the methodology selected to conduct “this” research, that reflects the social dynamics within an educational institution, a qualitative approach was selected, as it supports thoughtful and in-depth inquiry presented in the research question and focused on understanding the reality of the situation. According to Flick, (2025, p.3).

Doing quality qualitative research refers to the research practice itself: from ethical issues, the reflective use of theories and methods, to respectful relationships with participants and obtaining appropriate results as the final product. Quality issues, therefore, refer to how a study was planned, how well the choice of methods was justified, and, even more importantly, whether the use of those methods was appropriate, up-to-date, and transparent. Thus, the interpretation of data is expected to be consolidated with clarity and coherence.

3.1 Methodological approach and design

This research, through a qualitative lens, employs the case study method, which is appropriate for this proposal as it enables an in-depth and contextualized analysis of how translanguaging has been implemented in a specific bilingual educational setting. This methodology provides the opportunity to explore real dynamics within a classroom or institution, identifying practices in the integration of translanguaging approaches from a subjective perspective that considers all these factors, as well as their impact on students’ sociocultural identity. Yazan and De Jong (2020) define the case study as a research approach that allows for an intensive exploration of a phenomenon within its real-life context, particularly when the boundaries between the phenomenon and its context are not clearly defined. By focusing on a particular case, diverse and detailed data can be obtained to better understand the diverse and detailed data that can be gathered to better understand such

phenomena, including complex issues such as the adoption of foreign celebrations, the loss of cultural identity, and how these elements affect participation in bilingual learning.

Therefore, the case study is considered the most suitable methodological design for this research because it allows an in-depth understanding of how translanguaging practices emerge and operate within a real educational environment. It also facilitates the examination of students' authentic interactions and cultural expressions, providing valuable insights into how translanguaging contributes to bilingualism development and the enrichment of students' sociocultural identity in a Colombian bilingual context.

3.2 Data Analysis process

The data analysis was based on the systematic observation of three classes sessions, each lasting approximately 30 minutes. The purpose of this observation was to highlight the connection between the use of translanguaging and the integration of students' sociocultural identity criteria. Although the sessions maintained the transversal nature of the topics established in the teaching curriculum, translanguaging was implemented as a didactic strategy to foster the expression of sociocultural identity.

According to the objectives established in the project, a qualitative approach was adopted, allowing for a deep and subjective understanding of each student's reality from an inductive perspective. This approach begins with the collection and systematization of data obtained through classroom observations, which are fully transcribed to ensure accuracy. Subsequently, an analysis matrix is constructed to organize the initial information and enable the coding process. First, open coding is carried out, during which the data are fragmented and conceptualized, assigning codes that help identify emerging patterns and categories. These codes are complemented by the creation of memos—written reflections derived from the analysis of the codes—that serve to deepen interpretation (Strauss & Corbin, 2002).

The procedure is carried out manually, using colors to differentiate the categories related to the linguistic repertoire of translanguaging, which constitutes the central focus of this study. In a second phase, the codes from both the previously recorded and upcoming class observations will be grouped to consolidate broader and more meaningful categories. This process will lead to the writing of the findings, where data interpretation will be articulated with theoretical references and relevant authors to strengthen the validity and coherence of the analysis. In this way, the study seeks to ensure a rigorous and ethically responsible process that reflects the complexity of students' linguistic practices and contributes to knowledge construction in the educational field.



3.3 Participants

To collect information and define the characterization of both the teacher and the students, the use of appropriate data collection techniques is essential. Since the target population consists of elementary students and their teacher, the most suitable methods for understanding their linguistic repertoires include a class observation format and the analysis of artifacts created by students during the lessons.

Table #1. Participants

Participants	Age	Place	Grade	Characteristics
21 Students	10 Years	Bilingual private School of Monteria	5th grade	Students with A1+ English level
1 teacher		Bilingual private school of Monteria	5th grade	

Source: Own elaboration

3.4 Data Collection instruments

In order to collect the necessary information, two data collection instruments were designed: an observation form, where the transcriptions of the classes were recorded, and an artifact analysis, through which the students' productions were organized and examined.



3.4.1 Observation form.

Classroom observation is a critical methodological approach for capturing authentic language use and pedagogical practices, particularly in multilingual settings where translanguaging occurs. According to García and Wei (2018), observing real classroom interactions allows researchers to document how translanguaging functions as a dynamic resource that supports both linguistic development and cultural identity expression. Furthermore, Creese and Blackledge (2019) emphasize that detailed observation of oral and written production provides valuable insights into the spontaneous strategies teachers and students use to negotiate meaning and co-construct knowledge. These observations reveal the complex interplay between language practices and cultural identities within educational contexts, supporting more inclusive and responsive pedagogy (Li & Zhu, 2020). Thus, classroom observation serves as an indispensable tool to describe and analyze the rich, lived experiences of bilingual and multilingual learners in naturalistic settings.

3.4.2 Artifacts

The second data collection instrument implemented in this project is the artifacts produced by students. This method is fundamental in qualitative research as it provides tangible evidence to explore how students construct meaning, express identities, and negotiate knowledge through their own productions (Bowen, 2023; Leavy, 2021). Artifacts such as notebooks, assignments, journals, and other curricular materials offer insight into how institutional frameworks and curricular guidelines influence classroom practices and linguistic ideologies (Rapley, 2022). In the context of bilingual education, often shaped by hierarchical policy structures, it is essential to critically analyze these artifacts to uncover how they either facilitate or limit translanguaging practices and the affirmation of students' sociocultural identities.



Table #2.

Data collection instruments

Type of instrument	Purpose of the instrument	Appendix of DCI
<i>Observation form</i>	Describe and analyze real classroom interactions where translanguaging practices, pedagogical strategies, oral and written production, and expressions of cultural identity are observed. The purpose is to document authentic and spontaneous practices within the educational context.	Formato de observacion de clases..docx
<i>Artifacts</i>	To analyze artifacts produced by students and teachers (notebooks, books, journals) to identify how linguistic and cultural resources are integrated in the educational process. This allows researchers to examine meaning-making, identity, and learning through tangible evidence.	Artifacts.docx

Source: Own elaboration

Table #3 Class plan format

Week	Outcomes	English Time complementary activity - Discussion on students' experiences during the event, students share their opinions and their thoughts on the different parts of the event. Then,	C	TLL	XP	PC	P P
5	:1-2-3-4	students are to create a poster where they portray their favorite act, what did they like about that particular act, something they learned and talk about the importance of English Time Activity.	M X				
Date:			N	TA	VB	LB	FC
27-05			B	B X			
			X				
				PL	AP	TXT	pg.

Source: Own elaboration

3.5 Ethical Considerations

Ethical principles are fundamental to ensure the integrity and credibility of this qualitative research. Before data collection, authorization from the institution and informed consent from the teacher were obtained, as well as assent from the students' parents or legal guardians, ensuring that all participants were fully aware of the study's purpose and procedures. The anonymity and confidentiality of participants were strictly preserved by assigning codes instead of real names in all records and reports. During classroom observation and artifact analysis, the researcher maintained a non-intrusive role, avoiding any disruption to regular pedagogical practices. Additionally, all data were used exclusively for academic purposes, respecting the participants' rights, dignity, and cultural backgrounds. This ethical stance aligns with the principles outlined by the American

Educational Research Association (AERA, 2011), which emphasize voluntary participation, protection of vulnerable populations, and responsible handling of educational data.

4. Findings

In response to the research question *‘How does translanguaging as a pedagogical approach enhance bilingualism and enrich the sociocultural identity of elementary students in a bilingual institution in Colombia?’*, this section presents the findings derived from the two specific objectives of the study:

(1) Identify the translanguaging practices used by the teacher and the students.

(2) Analyze the sociocultural identity aspects that children bring to the classroom.

Together, these objectives provide a comprehensive understanding of how translanguaging functions as both a pedagogical and sociocultural phenomenon within the bilingual classroom context.

The findings reveal that translanguaging naturally and strategically emerges in classroom interactions through the flexible and dynamic use of linguistic repertoires. Teachers and students fluidly combine English and Spanish to negotiate meaning, support comprehension, and co-construct knowledge collaboratively. Practices such as translation, rephrasing, and code-meshing illustrate García and Wei’s (2014) notion of translanguaging as an inclusive process that challenges language hierarchies and promotes meaningful communication in bilingual settings.

Furthermore, translanguaging transcends linguistic mediation to become a tool for expressing and negotiating identity. Through bilingual practices, students integrate their cultural, familial, and personal experiences into classroom interactions, linking learning with real-life contexts. As highlighted by Creese and Blackledge (2018) and García and Lin (2017), these practices not only enhance linguistic development but also empower students to affirm their sociocultural identities. Overall, translanguaging bridges language and

identity, fostering an intercultural and equitable environment where learners develop as legitimate bilingual and bicultural individuals.

In the following section, we describe the findings corresponding to the first specific objective.

Specific Objective 1

Identify the translanguaging practices used by the teacher and the children within the classroom.

For this specific objective, we have concluded that our findings are to be labeled as dynamic and flexible use of linguistic repertoires as from the teacher but also from the students.

4.1. Dynamic and flexible use of linguistic repertoires

The analysis of the observed lessons allowed the identification of various linguistic strategies used by both the teacher and the students, which reveal the dynamic and flexible use of their linguistic repertoires within a translanguaging approach. These practices, which include *translation, rephrasing, code-meshing, and integration of structures and semantics from both languages*, shape the classroom as a communicative space where languages intertwine naturally to foster comprehension, participation, and meaning-making.

4.1.1. Translation.

Within the framework of translanguaging, translation goes beyond a mere equivalence in languages. It is a tool that enables learners to connect their newly acquired knowledge to prior. García and Lin (2016) highlight that translation facilitates meaning-making and construction of understanding more particularly in contexts where linguistic diversity demands flexibility. Also, Creese and Blackledge (2018) state that these translation practices dismantle the hierarchical separations between languages and help them coexist. However, it is important to state that, following the stated by Treffers-Daller (2024) that providing translation equivalents alone does not automatically guarantee a deep learning.

Translation only complements the statements, understanding that the process of translating should go beyond “mere equivalence” between the languages in question and function as a mediator of understanding.

During classroom interactions, the teacher uses *translation* as a linguistic mediation strategy to ensure access to meaning and reinforce content understanding. For instance, in the following excerpt, where the teacher is opening space for discussion on a school event called English Time, we can see that he translates into Spanish the last part of his sentence and complements it with new information in English, as we can see below:

“Welcome everyone. Today we’re going to talk about English Time, which is a very exciting and representative moment. Un momento muy representativo for the English community at the school,”

In this interaction, the teacher alternates between English and Spanish not as separate systems, but as a pedagogical resource to connect information, maintain students’ attention, and also, as a way of making content accessible for all students. It shows that translation functions not only as a mechanical process but more as a discursive bridge between languages which ensures access to meaning for all students. The aforesaid aligns with what Cui and Pacheco (2023) explain, when teachers translate strategically within a translanguaging pedagogy, they scaffold students’ understanding and promote deeper conceptual learning.

4.1.2 Rephrasing.

Similarly, *rephrasing* was observed as a recurrent strategy, through which the teacher reformulated expressions in both languages to check comprehension and promote students’ oral production. This linguistic repertoire can be understood as the reformulation of an idea making use of different linguistic forms, this is done by any member of the class, whether it is the teacher or the student. This does not only allow the teacher to check comprehension, but it also expands learners’ communication skills. Unlike translation, although rephrasing still alternates the use of languages, it does include a different way of expressing the idea keeping the original message.

In the following fragment we illustrate the aforesaid point:

“Very good. What else can you tell us? ¿Qué más información nos puedes dar, Taliana?”

In this example, the teacher’s intention to foster participation and expand students’ linguistic expression becomes evident here by integrating bilingual resources in a functional way. It could be observed that the teacher used this not only to elicit responses, verify understanding, they were also used as an input for students to make use of both languages in their responses.

In the following interaction, it can be seen what Lyster and Ranta (1997) describe as *recasts*, which are “the teacher’s formulation of all or part of a student’s utterance, minus the error” (p. 46).

Student 10: Because when it's thunderstorm is a lot of the the air throw trash in the street and it is a lot of water too.

Teacher: So, your street gets full of water.

This example aligns with what Lyster and Ranta (1997) stated as it highlights the teacher’s commitment to reshape learners’ productions without interrupting their communication, which, once seen through a translanguaging perspective, it can function not only as a way of correcting students but also as a mediator of understanding which in a way, models what is a flexible use of linguistic resources from students.

4.1.3 Code-meshing.

Code-meshing refers to a discursive integration of linguistic features from multiple languages. It is the process where diverse linguistic elements are blended creatively, which demonstrates rhetorical flexibility and communicative ownership Canagarajah (2011). It is important to say that code-meshing should not be taken as code-switching; unlike the later, *Code-meshing rather than alternating between distinct systems* reflects the spontaneous and integrated use of both languages within a single utterance, where bilinguals make use of their full linguistic repertoire to convey meaning. In the next example, the teacher is talking about

a snack from Colombia, here, we can say one of the many uses of this linguistic repertoire in action:

“You can find this at the DI Uno. Has anybody tried this? So, esto es un snack del Huila... de hecho se llaman achiras huilenses,”

The teacher seamlessly combines English and Spanish structures, generating a hybrid discourse that enhances proximity, belonging, and collaborative knowledge construction.

In this other example, we can see that the use of this practice enabled students participate more actively during the classes as they understood that there were no boundaries in the class and they felt free to pick from whatever language available in order to communicate themselves:

“Entonces every kid of my neighbor killed the cat because that was the mascota of the neighbor.”

This finding supports the choice of code-meshing over code-switching as an analytical category within the study. Although both terms refer to the combination of languages, code-switching implies alternation between separate linguistic systems, whereas code-meshing consistent with the translanguaging perspective conceives the integration of linguistic resources as part of a single repertoire. As Canagarajah (2011) explains, “code-meshing does not separate languages as autonomous systems; rather, it integrates linguistic features from different codes within a single communicative act, reflecting the fluidity of speakers’ full linguistic repertoires” (p. 401). This aligns with García and Wei’s (2014) concept of *translanguaging*, which understands languages as parts of a single, dynamic linguistic repertoire rather than as separate systems. Therefore, code-meshing more accurately reflects the continuous, creative, and non-hierarchical nature of language use in bilingual contexts, contrasting with the structuralist view of code-switching.

The code-meshing practices observed in the classroom made visible how students naturally and flexibly used their languages to construct meaning, demonstrating an active learning process in which linguistic boundaries become blurred. This phenomenon aligns with what Creese and Blackledge (2018) refer to as translanguaging pedagogy, which seeks to leverage the learner’s entire linguistic repertoire to expand comprehension and strengthen

sociocultural identity. Moreover, the inclusion of Spanish and local cultural references, such as achiras huilenses, reinforces the connection between language, culture, and territory, promoting situated and meaningful learning.

4.1.4 Integration of grammatical and semantic structures from both languages.

This category is not to be understood as one of the linguistic repertoires seen previously, but rather, it is to be seen as a phenomenon within the context observed. The integration of grammatical and semantic structures from both languages implies the combination of morphosyntactic patterns from both languages in question to express meaning. This phenomenon reflects the cognitive and creative processes bilingual speakers go through in order to internalize and construct linguistic knowledge and meaning. We would like to call this a phenomenon in which students explore languages, in which this integration reveals the dynamic nature of bilingual competence. Supported by what García and Wei (2014) explained, this form of linguistic interpretation eventually leads to a deeper understanding.

In the process of this phenomenon, students make use of components from each language in order to make meaning and communicate (Díaz, 2018), although, this phenomenon might look like a code-meshing, it is totally different, in the integration of grammatical and semantic structures from both languages, students are not actually alternating languages, they are just creating meaning through grammatical and semantic interplay (Simon-Cerejido & Gutiérrez-Clellen, 2009).

During the classes, students constantly combined semantic and grammatical patterns mostly of Spanish in order to communicate their ideas in English, just as shown in this example:

“When I have six years”.

The aforesaid, which can be seen as a very common example of Spanish taken to English (which is seen as an error) is actually seen as an attempt to construct meaning using available linguistic resources. It also shows how engaged learners are in connecting these

structures from two different languages into one speech, reflecting students' creativity and agency.

The findings reveal that both the teacher and the students mobilize translinguaging strategies that transform the classroom into an intercultural and equitable space for interaction. This pedagogical use of linguistic repertoires responds to what Bettney (2022) describes as a reconfiguration of linguistic hierarchies, where English and Spanish coexist without subordination. Thus, translinguaging emerges not only as a pedagogical tool but also as a social practice that legitimizes students' bilingual identities and acknowledges their prior knowledge.

In line with the results of Bogota (2024), who found that translinguaging practices increase students' motivation and participation, this study also observed that the free and strategic use of linguistic repertoires fostered comprehension and the development of communicative skills in both languages. The classroom experience analyzed demonstrates that pedagogical translinguaging enables children to construct meaning from the totality of their linguistic and cultural resources, thereby strengthening both their bilingualism and their sociocultural identity.

Specific Objective 2

Analyze the sociocultural identity aspects that children bring to the classroom

For the second specific objective, it was aimed to analyze which aspects belonging to the sociocultural identity of students that they brought into the classroom. The findings on this matter show that translinguaging mediates how students construct and express their sociocultural identities and that translinguaging works as a mediator through which sociocultural identity is negotiated and reshaped. Bilingual practices served as a bridge for students to connect personal, family, and cultural experiences with what they were being instructed at school. During the course of the observation process, four main sociocultural identity aspects emerged: cultural-personal, family and affective, environmental-ecological, and linguistic identity.

4.2 Cultural-personal identity.

This dimension implies belonging, self-expression, and creativity through which students merge both local and global cultural references. The analysis of this socio-cultural aspect shows that translanguaging enables students to express individuality and connect personal realities with academic contexts (Holliday et al., 2021; García & Lin, 2017). It could be observed that students conveyed comfort and confidence as to what they bring into the classroom, not only their linguistic repertoires but also the experiences from outside of the classroom that they bring into the class. The aforesaid allows us to highlight cultural-personal identity in the bilingual classroom as a space for students' self-expression and self-awareness as students mix local and global components that shape their own identities. This dimension integrates local culture, creativity, and aspects that give meaning to students' sense of belonging. The use of varied linguistic and artistic resources in the classroom to describe students' likes and interests, areas where they normally feel comfortable in, alongside the use of both English or Spanish gives shape to the forms of expressions from students.

In the following example, students are talking about their personal likes on music as the teacher had started the class asking students about their experience and thoughts on a school event that was based on music.

Student 5: Michael Jackson is my favorite artista. I like the pop.

Teacher: What is your favorite song of Michael Jackson?

Student 6: Speed Demon.

Teacher: Never, nunca la había escuchado. What did you learn about other kinds of music?

Student7: I learned that Palladas son un instrument musical.

Student8: My favorite type of music is reggae.

Teacher: What instruments are used in reggae?

Student8: The bass.

Teacher: And who is the most iconic voice in reggae?

Student 8: Bob Marley.

In the second example, students are asked on their ability to cook traditional dishes, dishes that represent their culture, which students show understanding and knowledge of.

Teacher: Okay, very, very good. ¿Alguien sabe cocinar algún plato tradicional?

Student 2: Cheese soup, toca hervir agua, profe, echarle las verduras primero, luego la leche de coco, luego se revuelve se le echa el ñame y el queso.

These manifestations confirm what was proposed by Holliday et al. (2021), who argue that identity is a relational and constantly evolving process. Similarly, García and Lin (2017) emphasize that translanguaging fosters spaces where local and global identities intersect, while Creese and Blackledge (2018) highlight that translanguaging pedagogies promote agency, creativity, and artistic culture.

4.2.1 Family and affective identity.

This dimension reveals how translanguaging validates lived experience and students' emotional connections. When students bring anecdotes, traditions, and affection into the classroom language, they affirm that knowledge is not separate from emotion and that learning has as foundations students' personal and familiar contexts. Bennett (2020) points out that the inclusion of personal and cultural contexts fosters deeper motivation and empathy in intercultural education. In the following example, it can be seen how a student connects learning with her domestic and emotional environment.

“My mom cooks carbonara pasta, but I prefer it in a restaurant”.

This interaction between family narratives and school learning strengthens empathy, social connection, and cultural pride. Now, it is important to mention that translanguaging works as a bridge that connects emotional and cognitive domains in

learners, which allows them to make meaning through these affective aspects as much as with their linguistic agency (Wei, 2022).

García and Lin (2017) propose translanguage as a transformative tool inside a classroom which humanizes these spaces where students are allowing them to live within an environment where life experiences intersect with academic learning.

4.2.2 Environmental and Ecological Identity

This dimension shows that translanguage goes beyond mere linguistic competence to grow on students a sense of ecological consciousness and civic responsibility. Thus, students use language to reflect on environmental issues affecting their immediate contexts, demonstrating that bilingual education does serve as a way toward critical citizenship and sustainable awareness. Haukås et al. (2021) highlighted that integrating environmental aspects such as sustainability into language education fosters students' sense of agency and participation in global citizenship through communicative action.

The following classroom excerpt exemplifies this ecological stance:

“The problem in my neighborhood is that there are many thunderstorms. People trash in the street, and the dogs make the street dirty.”

The student's intervention shows how environmental reflection and linguistic exploration coexist as the student negotiates meaning around environmental responsibility. This dynamic interaction represents what García and Lin (2017) describe as the pedagogical potential of translanguage spaces, which are those places where language use, critical thinking, and social consciousness merge.

Environmental and ecological identity within the bilingual classroom transcends vocabulary learning, it represents a commitment to connect global ecological challenges with students' local contexts. Through translanguage, learners become both meaning-

makers and change agents, capable of linking language, community, and sustainability in the same communicative act.

4.2.3 Linguistic identity and translanguaging

The category of linguistic identity and translanguaging revealed that translanguaging strengthens metalinguistic awareness. Students demonstrate agency as they navigate between linguistic repertoires, supporting the idea that translanguaging-based environments foster critical thinking and linguistic self-efficacy. Linguistic identity and translanguaging lie at the core of bilingual development, as they involve the flexible and integrated use of students' linguistic repertoires, in situations such as the following:

“Teacher, how can I say vecino?” → “Neighbor.”

This example brings to attention the fact that students are aware of the differences existing between the languages but make efforts to connect said differences in order to communicate themselves, which is a process that Bialystok (2021) considers key for students' bilingual metalinguistic development. Cenoz and Gorter (2020) argue that the use of translanguaging nurtures students' self-righteousness as it makes them (learners) decision-makers who are free to use their linguistic resources to communicate effectively or at least in an acceptable and understandable way.

Through the analysis of specific objective 2, it was found that the sociocultural identity of bilingual students does not manifest as a static or predetermined attribute, but rather as a living construction that is constantly exchanged, transformed, and redefined as the student interacts. In these moments, translanguaging emerges as the means through which

children make sense of their world, position themselves socially, and legitimize their voice within an educational environment that often tends to impose boundaries between languages, cultures, and forms of knowledge. In the studied context, instead of limiting themselves to a single linguistic resource, students communicated freely through translanguaging, turning this pedagogical practice into a way of inhabiting the classroom with authenticity and a sense of belonging.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The findings of this study demonstrate that translanguaging, as a pedagogical approach, enriches both the development of bilingualism and the construction of students' sociocultural identities. The classroom becomes a dynamic and inclusive space where linguistic and cultural repertoires are used at the same time, allowing learners to use their entire communicative resources to make meaning, express identity, and participate fully in the learning process.

The general objective of the research was to ***explore how the use of translanguaging as a pedagogical approach enriches students' sociocultural identities and their bilingualism***. We conclude that translanguaging promotes a flexible and integrated use of linguistic repertoires, where *translation, rephrasing, and code-meshing* operate as mediating strategies that support comprehension and participation. The teacher's translanguaging practices not only provided linguistic scaffolding but also validated the coexistence of English and Spanish as equally legitimate tools for learning. These results align with García and Wei's (2014) argument that bilingual speakers do not operate with two separate linguistic systems but with a single, dynamic repertoire that reflects their full linguistic identity. Similarly, as Canagarajah (2011) suggests, code-meshing fosters fluid communication and challenges traditional hierarchies between languages, enabling more equitable classroom interactions.

Moreover, students' spontaneous use of translanguaging reflected their ability to draw upon their personal, cultural, and emotional experiences to construct meaning. This confirms that translanguaging is not simply a linguistic phenomenon but a deeply social and identity-based process. The inclusion of local cultural references, such as traditional

foods or community practices, illustrates how students connect classroom learning to their lived realities. In this sense, translanguaging bridges the gap between home and school, fostering belonging, recognition, and cultural continuity. This supports Creese and Blackledge's (2018) view that translanguaging pedagogies promote agency, creativity, and cultural affirmation among learners.

The findings also showed that translanguaging mediates the *development of sociocultural identity* through four interrelated dimensions: personal-cultural identity, family and affective identity, environmental-ecological identity, and linguistic identity. Through classroom discourse, students positioned themselves as active members of multiple cultural worlds, combining local and global elements to express who they are. These manifestations confirm Holliday et al.'s (2021) assertion that identity is a relational and evolving process, and demonstrate that bilingual classrooms can serve as spaces for identity negotiation and social empowerment.

Particularly, the linguistic identity dimension highlights how students use translanguaging to explore their metalinguistic awareness and exercise agency over their language use. Asking questions like "Teacher, how can I say vecino?" reveals not only curiosity but also autonomy in managing linguistic knowledge. Such interactions reflect the transformative potential of translanguaging to foster critical and reflective bilingual learners, echoing Norton's (2013) concept of identity as dynamic investment in language learning.

Furthermore, translanguaging validated students' family and affective experiences, emphasizing that learning is emotional and relational. By incorporating familiar references and affective narratives, students connected academic content with their personal lives, which, as Bennett (2020) suggests, deepens intercultural empathy and intrinsic motivation. Likewise, the environmental identity category revealed that bilingual education can extend beyond linguistic goals to promote ecological and civic awareness, empowering students to express global issues through their local realities.

Overall, the discussion highlights that translanguaging transforms the bilingual classroom into a *space of recognition, equity, and community*. It challenges the traditional hierarchies that privilege one language over another, creating opportunities for all voices to be heard. By integrating linguistic, cultural, and emotional repertoires, students experience learning as an act of self-expression and belonging. Consequently, translanguaging not only enhances linguistic competence but also nurtures holistic development and intercultural understanding.

In response to the research question '*How does translanguaging as a pedagogical approach enhance bilingualism and enrich students' sociocultural identities?*' The evidence demonstrates that translanguaging fosters a natural, inclusive, and meaningful form of bilingualism. It bridges cognitive, cultural, and emotional dimensions of learning, allowing students to build identities that are confident, plural, and contextually grounded. Therefore, translanguaging emerges as both a pedagogical strategy and a form of identity work that humanizes language education and redefines what it means to be bilingual in contemporary Colombian classrooms.

6. Contributions to Bilingual Learning Environments

This research represents not only an academic exercise but more importantly, a potentially transformative proposal to the field on bilingual education in our country and many others around the globe. This research responds to an urgent need to think of bilingualism not only from a perspective where linguistic competence is the center of education, but it should be driven towards a more human, equitable, and critical practice in all educational settings. Hence, the pertinence of the use of translanguaging, but not only using it for the sake of using it but understanding it thoroughly. Translanguaging, as explored in this study, becomes an act of recognition that puts students' voices, identities, and linguistic repertoires (or languages) at disposal for learning.

This project has allowed us to understand that the teaching of languages does not only rely on good instruction of grammar and vocabulary and the transferring of the aforesaid to students, but rather on the creation and providing spaces of encounter and transformation for students from all backgrounds. García and Wei (2014) propose translanguaging as a pedagogical and political approach that dismantles hierarchies that separate languages and legitimizes the diverse linguistic repertoires bilingual learners have. The aforesaid can help us answer two questions that from the very start of this road we have asked ourselves:

What is the importance of our research? - What will it be useful for?

Well, in the immediate context of this context and generally in Colombia, English often has a position of privilege when compared to other languages (Spanish and indigenous languages), with this research, we aim to call for a reconfiguration of these

hierarchies, starting from abolishing the hierarchy giving Spanish and any other language, the opportunity to be welcome in educational settings, allowing local expressions coexist with dignity and respect shaping a bilingualism that is rooted both on global but also local cultural aspects. Evidence for the aforesaid has been gathered during the course of this research, hence, we state that translanguaging practices foster inclusion, and students' agency and creativity, eventually making classroom spaces where multiple cultures mingle allowing students construct knowledge through their lived experiences.

The concept of translanguaging is not only to be understood as a language-only driven approach, but as a way of seeing and understanding the world from multiple perspectives fostering a sense of awareness in students, which takes us to propose that bilingual education must go beyond the mere reproduction of linguistic models, it should implement pedagogies that speak from our local realities, based on the aforesaid, we find translanguaging as a great ally within this framework as it validates all sources of knowledge and embraces bilingualism as a way of social justice.

As educators, we have observed transformation in the context studied as it eventually became a space where linguistic exploration, freedom, sense of belonging, and cultural expression all converge, a space where all students and their backgrounds are welcome and are shown the way they are.

Finally, this research project contributes to the MABA program due to its commitment in the reaffirmation of the importance of promoting critical, contextualized, and ethically committed bilingual education. We call educators and educational settings to see bilingualism as a path of creation of identity and knowledge as local and global cultures merge in order to give space for meaning, communication, and ultimately, education.

4. Recommendations

Based on this study, several recommendations are proposed to strengthen the pedagogical use of translanguaging and its impact on students' sociocultural identity and bilingual development.

It is recommended to integrate translanguaging as an intentional strategy within classroom practices. Teachers can design activities that promote the flexible and functional use of English and Spanish, allowing students to draw on their linguistic repertoires to negotiate meaning, build knowledge, and express their identities.

Furthermore, it is important to foster metalinguistic and reflective awareness among students by encouraging them to analyze how and why they use both languages during communication. This process helps learners recognize translanguaging as a tool for critical thinking and linguistic empowerment. Similarly, the classroom should be consolidated as a space of recognition where students' voices, experiences, and emotions are valued as essential components of the learning process.

For future research, it is recommended to expand the study of translanguaging to different educational levels in order to analyze its evolution in academic literacy and cognitive development. It would also be pertinent to include the analysis of multimodal artifacts and digital tools that reflect students' translanguaging practices and the ways they express their sociocultural identities through various media. Furthermore, exploring teachers' perceptions and experiences regarding translanguaging implementation could provide valuable insights for improving institutional policies and pedagogical practices in bilingual education contexts.

7. Appendix

Appendix 1.

Observation class format [Observacion de clases](#)

Appendix 2.

Analysis of artifacts [Artifacts](#)

Appendix 3.

Formato de asentimiento informado [6. Asentimiento informado](#)

Appendix 4.

Documentos comite de etica CEBIC

[GR 24 MRhenals ICogollo YBolaños](#)

8. References

- American Educational Research Association. (2011). *Code of ethics. Educational Researcher*, 40(3), 145–156. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X11410403>
- Arteaga, C., & Ibarra, P. (2020). *El nivel de dominio de inglés en Colombia: Un análisis crítico*. Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de Colombia.
- Bennett, M. (2020). *Exploring cultural identities and learning: A focus on bilingual/ESL classrooms*. En *Frontiers in Education*. Recuperado de <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/feduc.2020.00014/full>
- Bennett, M. J. (2020). *Developing intercultural competence: A reader*. International Society for Intercultural Education, Training and Research (SIETAR).
- Bialystok, E. (2021). Bilingualism: The good, the bad, and the indifferent. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*, 24(3), 563–577.
- Bogotá, C. (2024). *Translanguaging in Colombian bilingual classrooms: A pedagogical approach for inclusion and linguistic identity* [Tesis de maestría, Universidad Santo Tomás].
- Bowen, G. A. (2023). *Document analysis as a qualitative research method*. *Qualitative Research Journal*, 23(1), 35–47. <https://doi.org/10.1108/QRJ-04-2022-0067>
- Brito-Chiquillo, D., Mosquera Medina, A., & Valverde Mosquera, S. (2023). *Linguistic diversity in Colombia: Challenges and opportunities in bilingual education*. Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de Colombia.

- Brock-Utne, B. (2001). Education for all or just for the few? Globalisation and the transformation of education. *International Review of Education*, 47(3-4), 283-293.
- Canagarajah, S. (2011). Codemeshing in academic writing: Identifying teachable strategies of translanguaging. *The Modern Language Journal*, 95(3), 401–417. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2011.01207.x>
- Canagarajah, S. (2011). *Codemeshing in academic writing: Identifying teachable strategies of translanguaging*. *The Modern Language Journal*, 95(3), 401–417.
- Carrero Corzo, L, Salas Martínez, M y Oliveros Rodríguez, Z. (2023). *Addressing translanguaging practices at higher education in a bilingual virtual learning environment involving learners from diverse regions of Colombia*. Universidad Santo Tomás.
- Creese, A., & Blackledge, A. (2015). *Translanguaging and identity in educational settings*. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 35(1), 20-35. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190515000048>
- Creese, A., & Blackledge, A. (2018). The Routledge Handbook of Language and Superdiversity. En Routledge eBooks. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315696010>
- Creese, A., & Blackledge, A. (2018). *The translanguaging classroom: Leveraging student bilingualism for learning*. Multilingual Matters.
- Creese, A., & Blackledge, A. (2018). *Theorising translanguaging for education*. In A. Creese & A. Blackledge (Eds.), **Translanguaging and education** (pp. 1–22). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-51784-7_1

Creese, A., & Blackledge, A. (2019). Translanguaging and pedagogic practice: A critical overview. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 39, 94–112.

<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190519000110>

Cui, Y., & Pacheco, M. (2023). Translanguaging and language mediation in bilingual classrooms: Beyond equivalence. *Journal of Multilingual Education Studies*, 15(2), 45–62.

Duarte, J. (2020). Translanguaging in mainstream education: A sociocultural approach.

International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism, 23(4), 456–470.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2020.1724171>

García, O. (2009). *Bilingual education in the 21st century: A global perspective*. Wiley-Blackwell.

García, O., & Lin, A. M. Y. (2017). *Extending understandings of bilingual and multilingual education*. In O. García, A. M. Y. Lin, & S. May (Eds.), **Bilingual and multilingual education** (3rd ed., pp. 1–20). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-02258-1_1

García, O., & Lin, A. M. Y. (2017). Translanguaging in bilingual education. In O. García, A. M. Y. Lin, & S. May (Eds.), *Bilingual and multilingual education* (pp. 117–130). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-02258-1_9

García, O., & Wei, L. (2014). *Translanguaging: Language, bilingualism and education*. Palgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137385765>

García, O., & Wei, L. (2018). *Translanguaging: Language, bilingualism and education*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Gómez, L. (2021). Problematizing bilingual education: Principles, types, measurement.

Oficina de Educación Virtual USTA. Holliday, A., Hyde, M., & Kullman, J. (2021).

Intercultural communication: An advanced resource book for students (4th ed.). Routledge.

Hamel, R. E. (2008). Indigenous languages and bilingual education in Latin America:

Conceptual and methodological foundations. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 11(3-4), 181-201.

Haukås, Å., Andrews, T., & Dypedahl, M. (2021). *Sustainability and global citizenship in language education*. Routledge.

Herrmann, L. (2020). Affirming culture and cultural identity in the bilingual/ESL classrooms. *Frontiers in Education*, <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2020>

Holliday, A., Hyde, M., & Kullman, J. (2021). *Intercultural communication: An advanced resource book for students* (4th ed.). Routledge.

Holliday, A., Kullman, J., & Hyde, M. (2021). *Intercultural communication: An advanced resource book for students* (3rd ed.). Routledge.

Hussein, H. A. R. A., Jamal, D. A. H. A., & Sadi, I. (2020). Students' Reflective Journals and Creative Writing in EFL. *Universal Journal Of Educational Research*, 8(8), 3484-3495. https://www.hrpub.org/journals/article_info.php?aid=9553

León, C. (2012). *Lenguas indígenas en Colombia: Identidad y riqueza cultural*. Revista de Cultura, 45, 23-36.

Li, W., & Zhu, H. (2020). Translanguaging in teaching and learning: Theories, pedagogies and practices. *Applied Linguistics Review*, 11(4), 501–523.

<https://doi.org/10.1515/applirev-2019-0109>

López, A. G., & Valdés, L. M. (2021). The impact of EFL on intercultural competence: A mixed-methods study. *Journal of Language and Intercultural Communication*, 21(1), 27-42.

Lyster, R., & Ranta, L. (1997). Corrective feedback and learner uptake: Negotiation of form in communicative classrooms. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 19(1), 37–66.

Ministerio de Educación Nacional de Colombia. (2020). *Informe nacional de competencias bilingües*.

Ministerio de Educación Nacional. (2023). *Programa Nacional de Inglés: Colombia Very Well!* [PDF]. Recuperado de https://www.mineduacion.gov.co/1759/articles-343837_Programa_Nacional_Ingles.pdf

Nagel, O. V., Temnikova, I. G., Wylie, J., & Koksharova, N. F. (2015). Functional Bilingualism: Definition and Ways of Assessment. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 215, 218–224. <https://doi-org.crai-ustadigital.usantotomas.edu.co/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.11.625>

Noels, K. A., Chaffee, K. E., Lou, N. M., & Dincer, A. (2016). Self-Determination, Engagement, and Identity in Learning German. *Some Directions in the Psychology*

- of Language Learning Motivation. *FLuL – Fremdsprachen Lehren Und Lernen*, 45(2). <https://www.periodicals.narr.de/index.php/flul/article/view/2835>
- Norton, B. (2013). *Identity and language learning: Extending the conversation* (2nd ed.). Multilingual Matters.
- Ortega Yesid, J. (2019). *El uso de la lengua materna en el aprendizaje del inglés*. Editorial Académica.
- Parra Toribio, H. L. (2019). *El diario reflexivo como estrategia para desarrollar competencias comunicativas* [PDF]. Revista Científica Hallazgos21. Recuperado de <https://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=7148225>
- Prilutskaya, M. (2021). Examining pedagogical translanguaging: A systematic review of the literature. *Languages*, 6(4), 180.
- Rapley, T. (2022). *Doing conversation, discourse and document analysis* (2nd ed.). SAGE.
- Researcher.Life. (2023). *What is a case study in research? Definition, methods & examples*. Retrieved from <https://www.researcher.life>
- Simon-Cereijido, G., & Gutiérrez-Clellen, V. F. (2009). A cross-linguistic study on the grammatical and semantic interactions in bilingual children. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research*, 52(3), 542–560.
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications.

- Treffers-Daller, J. (2024). Translation and translanguaging: Meaning-making across languages. *Applied Linguistics Perspectives*, 12(3), 210–228.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Harvard University Press.
- Wei, L. (2022). Translanguaging as a theory of language and cognition. *Applied Linguistics Review*, 13(2), 145–160.
- Yazan, B., & De Jong, E. J. (2020). Case study methodology: Applications in language education research. *TESOL Quarterly*, 54(1), 5–30. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.543>
- Young, A. I. (2014). Book Review: Translanguaging: Language, Bilingualism and Education. (2014). Ofelia García and Li Wei. Hampshire, UK: Palgrave Macmillan. 165 pp. *Heritage Language Journal*, 11(3), 243-248. <https://doi.org/10.46538/hlj.11.3.4>
- Yuzlu, M. Y., & Dikilitas, K. (2021). Translanguaging in the development of EFL learners' foreign language skills in Turkish context. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, 16(2), 176-190. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17501229.2021.1892698>
- Zittoun, T., Gillespie, A., & Cornish, F. (2022). *Dynamics of Meaning-making: Social and Cultural Psychology in Dialogue*. Oxford University Press