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Translanguaging Pedagogies and the Making of Literate Multilinguals: A Cognitive and Sociocultural Inquiry

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Abstract

Translanguaging has emerged as a powerful pedagogical strategy in multilingual classrooms, offering students the opportunity to leverage all their linguistic resources for learning. This paper investigates how translanguaging practices shape learners' metalinguistic awareness and literacy development across both dominant and marginalized languages. Drawing on sociocultural and cognitive-linguistic frameworks, the study examines classroom interactions, literacy assessments, and student reflections in multilingual African contexts. Findings are expected to reveal that translanguaging enhances students' ability to reflect on language structures, fosters literacy skills across multiple languages, and strengthens learners' linguistic and cultural identities. By situating these insights within broader debates on multilingual education and language equity, the research highlights how inclusive pedagogical approaches can address literacy disparities and promote cognitive and socio-emotional growth. The study contributes to ongoing discussions in applied linguistics, education, and sociolinguistics by providing empirical evidence on the efficacy and transformative potential of translanguaging in contemporary classrooms.

Keywords: Translanguaging; Multilingual classrooms; Metalinguistic awareness; Literacy development; Sociocultural pedagogy

Introduction

Multilingual classrooms are increasingly common across Africa and other regions of the Global South, where students navigate multiple languages simultaneously in daily communication and formal education. In such contexts, the challenge of developing literacy is compounded by curricula that often privilege colonial or global languages, such as English or French, at the expense of students' indigenous tongues. This imbalance can lead to cognitive, cultural, and identity-related consequences, where learners struggle to see their full linguistic repertoire as a resource for learning and self-expression. Translanguaging, the strategic and fluid use of all available linguistic resources by learners and teachers has emerged as a transformative pedagogical practice that challenges traditional monolingual norms. Rather than enforcing strict separation of languages, translanguaging leverages students' home languages alongside dominant languages to scaffold understanding, facilitate metalinguistic reflection, and foster literacy across languages. Scholars such as García and Wei (2014) and Bialystok (2017) argue that translanguaging not only supports cognitive and linguistic development but also strengthens learners' socio-cultural identity by validating their linguistic heritage.

Despite growing interest, there remains limited empirical evidence on how translanguaging concretely influences metalinguistic awareness and literacy development across multiple languages, particularly in African classroom contexts where languages such as Kiswahili, EkeGusii, and other indigenous tongues coexist. Questions remain about which translanguaging strategies are most effective, how learners' awareness of language structures is enhanced, and how literacy outcomes vary across languages. Furthermore, few studies explicitly examine the sociocultural implications of translanguaging, including its role in promoting equity, linguistic justice, and cultural validation in education.

To address these gaps, this paper investigates how translanguaging pedagogies shape learners' metalinguistic awareness and literacy performance across languages in multilingual classrooms. Specifically, the study examines:

1. How translanguaging enhances students' ability to reflect on language structure and function.
2. Which classroom strategies best support literacy development across dominant and indigenous languages.
3. How translanguaging influences learners' linguistic and cultural identity, contributing to more equitable learning environments.

By foregrounding student voices and classroom practices, this paper seeks to illuminate the cognitive, pedagogical, and sociocultural dimensions of translanguaging, offering both theoretical insight and practical guidance for educators working in linguistically diverse contexts.

Review of the Literature

Translanguaging refers to the dynamic and fluid use of a multilingual individual's linguistic resources, transcending traditional boundaries between languages. García and Li Wei (2014) define it as "the process by which multilingual speakers utilize their languages as an integrated communication system." This approach challenges the conventional view of languages as separate entities, advocating for a more holistic understanding of language use in multilingual contexts. In African educational settings, translanguaging serves as a tool for linguistic justice, enabling students to leverage their full linguistic repertoires. This practice not only enhances communication but also affirms students' cultural identities and promotes inclusivity in learning environments (Canagarajah, 2011). By recognizing and valifying home languages, translanguaging fosters an equitable educational experience for multilingual learners.

Metalinguistic awareness the ability to reflect on and manipulate the structural features of language is crucial for literacy development. Translanguaging practices have been shown to enhance this awareness by encouraging learners to compare and contrast linguistic structures across languages. For instance, students engaged in translanguaging activities often analyze differences in syntax, morphology, and

phonology, leading to a deeper understanding of language mechanics (García & Kleifgen, 2020). Moreover, translanguaging supports the development of phonological awareness, morphological awareness, and orthographic knowledge, all of which are foundational for reading and writing skills. Tighe and Fernandes (2019) highlight that these metalinguistic skills play a significant role in word reading development among learners. By facilitating explicit discussions about language forms and structures, translanguaging fosters a reflective approach to language use, thereby enhancing metalinguistic awareness.

Empirical studies have demonstrated the positive impact of translanguaging on literacy outcomes. In multilingual classrooms, allowing students to use their home languages alongside the language of instruction has been associated with improved reading comprehension, writing proficiency, and overall academic performance. For example, research by Mbirimi-Hungwe (2023) indicates that translanguaging practices in South African classrooms led to enhanced student engagement and better understanding of academic content. Translanguaging also facilitates critical literacy by enabling students to interpret, analyze, and critique texts through multiple linguistic and cultural lenses. This approach encourages deeper engagement with texts and promotes a more nuanced understanding of content, which is particularly beneficial in diverse educational settings.

Beyond its impact on literacy, translanguaging influences various cognitive and social aspects of learning. Cognitively, it enhances executive functions such as working memory, attention control, and cognitive flexibility (Bialystok, 2011). Socially, translanguaging fosters collaborative learning environments by allowing students to communicate complex ideas in their strongest languages, thereby reducing anxiety and increasing participation (Hornberger & Link, 2012). Pedagogically, implementing translanguaging requires educators to adopt flexible teaching strategies that recognize and incorporate students' linguistic resources. This may involve designing tasks that encourage code-switching, providing opportunities for peer discussions in multiple languages, and creating an inclusive classroom environment that values linguistic diversity (García & Kleifgen, 2020).

In Africa, multilingualism is the norm rather than the exception. Many students navigate several indigenous languages alongside colonial or official languages of instruction. Research in Kenya, South Africa, and Ghana highlights the challenges learners face when instruction is conducted solely in a high-prestige language, which often limits comprehension and reduces engagement (Heugh, 2011). Translanguaging strategies provide a mechanism to leverage students' linguistic repertoires for learning while fostering equity and inclusion. Furthermore, translanguaging in African classrooms is closely tied to language policy debates. National curricula often recognize multiple languages in theory but enforce monolingual instruction in practice, reflecting lingering colonial legacies. By foregrounding translanguaging, educators can reconcile policy mandates with students' linguistic realities, promoting both cognitive development and socio-cultural affirmation.

Despite its potential, translanguaging is not without challenges. Teachers often lack sufficient preparation to implement it effectively, resulting in inconsistent practices or misconceptions about its purpose. Curriculum constraints and high-stakes testing environments may limit opportunities for multilingual instruction. Additionally, entrenched language hierarchies and parental attitudes that favor dominant languages can create resistance to the inclusion of home languages in formal education (Baker, 2011). Addressing these challenges requires teacher training, policy alignment, and community engagement to ensure that translanguaging practices are sustainable and contextually appropriate. The literature underscores that translanguaging is a powerful pedagogical strategy with significant potential to enhance metalinguistic awareness and literacy development among multilingual learners. At the same time, its effective implementation depends on teacher preparedness, supportive policies, and broader sociocultural recognition of students' linguistic resources. The current study builds on these findings by examining how translanguaging practices specifically influence literacy outcomes and cognitive reflection in multilingual classrooms, situating the analysis within the African educational context.

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative case study design, which is particularly effective for exploring complex phenomena within their real-life contexts (Yin, 2018). The case study approach allows for an in-depth examination of translanguaging practices in multilingual classrooms, providing rich, contextual insights into how these practices influence students' metalinguistic awareness and literacy performance. The study focuses on two multilingual classrooms in Nairobi, Kenya, each consisting of approximately 25 students aged 10–12 years. These classrooms were selected based on their diverse linguistic compositions and the implementation of translanguaging practices in instruction. The participants' linguistic backgrounds include Kiswahili, English, and various indigenous Kenyan languages. In addition to the students, two teachers who actively incorporate translanguaging strategies into their teaching were selected for participation. The teachers' experience ranges from 5 to 10 years in multilingual educational settings.

To capture a comprehensive understanding of translanguaging practices and their effects, the study employs multiple data collection methods:

- 1) **Classroom Observations:** Non-participant observations were conducted over a period of six weeks to document instances of translanguaging during lessons. Field notes were taken to capture the context, frequency, and nature of translanguaging practices.
- 2) **Interviews:** Semi-structured interviews were conducted with both students and teachers. The interviews aimed to gather personal insights into the experiences and perceptions of translanguaging in the classroom.
- 3) **Document Analysis:** Samples of student work, including written assignments and projects, were analyzed to assess literacy performance and the application of translanguaging strategies.

- 4) **Audio-Visual Recordings:** Selected classroom interactions were audio-recorded to analyze the linguistic choices made by students and teachers during translanguaging episodes.

The data analysis follows a thematic approach, as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). The process includes:

1. **Familiarization with the Data:** Transcribing audio recordings and reviewing field notes and documents to become deeply familiar with the content.
2. **Generating Initial Codes:** Identifying significant features of the data that relate to the research questions.
3. **Searching for Themes:** Collating codes into potential themes that capture patterns across the data.
4. **Reviewing Themes:** Refining themes to ensure they accurately represent the data and research questions.
5. **Defining and Naming Themes:** Clearly defining each theme and its relevance to the study.
6. **Writing the Report:** Presenting the findings in a coherent narrative that addresses the research questions.

Findings and Discussion

Classroom observations revealed that students frequently engaged in translanguaging to negotiate meaning, clarify instructions, and express complex ideas. Key practices included:

Code-Meshing in Writing: Educational Implications and Practical Considerations

In multilingual classrooms, students often engage in code-meshing a practice where they blend elements from multiple languages, such as Kiswahili, English, and indigenous languages, within a single written text. This approach allows learners to express complex ideas fully in their home language before translating them into the target language for final submission. Such practices not only facilitate deeper understanding but also align with the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, particularly its weaker form, which posits that language influences thought and cognition. By navigating between languages, students develop enhanced metalinguistic awareness, recognizing the nuances and structures of each language. This cognitive flexibility is crucial for literacy development, as it enables learners to approach texts from multiple linguistic perspectives, enriching their comprehension and expression. However, the implementation of code-meshing presents several challenges, especially when teachers are not proficient in the students' first languages. Without a shared linguistic foundation, teachers may find it difficult to assess students' initial drafts, provide meaningful feedback, or support the translational process effectively. This linguistic barrier can hinder the pedagogical benefits of code-meshing, potentially leading to misinterpretations or missed opportunities for scaffolding students' writing development.

To address these challenges, educators can adopt several strategies. First, fostering a classroom environment that values multilingualism and encourages peer collaboration can help bridge linguistic gaps. Students proficient in both the target and home languages can assist their peers, facilitating mutual learning and understanding. Additionally, teachers can implement structured translanguaging practices, where students are guided to use their full linguistic repertoire in specific contexts, ensuring that code-meshing serves as a tool for cognitive and linguistic development rather than a source of confusion. Professional development for teachers, focusing on multilingual pedagogies and translanguaging strategies, can also enhance their ability to support diverse linguistic practices effectively. In conclusion, while code-meshing presents certain practical challenges in multilingual classrooms, its alignment with cognitive theories like the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis underscores its potential benefits for literacy development. By adopting inclusive pedagogical strategies and fostering a supportive multilingual environment, educators can harness the advantages of code-meshing, promoting deeper learning and appreciation of linguistic diversity.

Oral Language Switching

In multilingual classrooms, the ability of students to express themselves fully in their home language plays a crucial role in comprehension and learning. Even when a teacher understands the meaning or requirement of a student's response, the student may still struggle if they cannot articulate their ideas in the language of instruction. During classroom discussions, learners often alternate between languages to facilitate understanding and collaborative problem-solving for instance, a student may explain a concept in Kiswahili, then summarize it in English for the class. This practice illustrates the cognitive and pedagogical value of translanguaging: it allows students to process information in the language in which they are most competent before negotiating it in the target language. From a theoretical perspective, this aligns with the weak form of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, which suggests that language influences thought rather than rigidly determining it (Boroditsky, 2011). By first conceptualizing an idea in Kiswahili, the student leverages linguistic and cognitive scaffolds inherent in their home language, enabling deeper understanding and reasoning. Translating the concept into English thereafter reinforces metalinguistic awareness, as the student must reflect on differences in syntax, semantics, and discourse conventions between languages (García & Li Wei, 2014).

Educationally, this process is highly beneficial. It encourages cognitive flexibility, promotes accurate comprehension of complex ideas, and supports the transfer of skills across languages. However, it also highlights a critical challenge: if students are unable to express themselves in the language of instruction, they may face limited participation in formal classroom assessments and discussions, potentially affecting academic performance. This underscores the importance of inclusive pedagogical strategies, such as peer-assisted translanguaging, scaffolding, and explicit support for translating knowledge into the target language. Such strategies allow students to benefit cognitively from their home language while gradually developing proficiency and confidence in the language of education.

Peer Scaffolding

In multilingual classrooms, translanguaging extends beyond teacher-student interactions and plays a critical role in peer learning. More proficient multilingual students often act as linguistic mediators, assisting their classmates by interpreting instructions, translating key terms, or explaining complex concepts in languages that their peers understand. This peer scaffolding not only facilitates immediate comprehension but also promotes collaborative problem-solving and deeper engagement with the material. For instance, a student struggling to understand a scientific concept in English might first discuss it in Kiswahili with a peer before attempting to formulate an explanation in English for the class. Cognitively, peer scaffolding through translanguaging aligns with the weak form of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, which posits that language influences thought (Boroditsky, 2011). By negotiating meaning in a familiar language, learners are able to conceptualize ideas more clearly, analyze the structure of the knowledge, and then transfer this understanding into the target language. This process not only enhances metalinguistic awareness but also strengthens **cross**-linguistic cognitive flexibility, as students must reflect on differences in grammar, vocabulary, and discourse structures when reformulating ideas.

From an educational perspective, peer-mediated translanguaging is highly beneficial. It reduces anxiety associated with language barriers, encourages active participation, and fosters a sense of classroom community where students support one another. Moreover, it allows learners to internalize academic concepts while gradually building proficiency in the language of instruction. However, the effectiveness of peer scaffolding depends on the proficiency of the mediating student and the structured guidance of the teacher, who must ensure that translations are accurate and that key learning objectives are met. In practice, classrooms that implement peer scaffolding through translanguaging demonstrate improved comprehension, higher engagement levels, and more equitable participation, particularly in contexts where students' home languages differ from the language of instruction. Such practices also exemplify how multilingualism can be leveraged as a cognitive and pedagogical resource rather than being viewed as a barrier to learning. These classroom practices exemplify the principles outlined by García and Li Wei (2014), who conceptualize translanguaging as a fluid and strategic deployment of learners' full linguistic repertoires. By engaging in code-meshing, alternating languages during discussions, and supporting one another through peer scaffolding, students actively leverage all available linguistic resources to negotiate meaning, enhance comprehension, and develop metalinguistic awareness. Collectively, these practices demonstrate that translanguaging is not merely a compensatory strategy but a purposeful pedagogical approach that fosters cognitive flexibility, collaborative learning, and literacy development in multilingual contexts.

Influence on Metalinguistic Awareness

Analysis of classroom interactions, student work, and interviews revealed that translanguaging significantly enhances metalinguistic awareness among learners.

Metalinguistic awareness the ability to reflect on and manipulate the structural features of language is a critical component of literacy development, as it enables students to understand how language functions and to compare linguistic systems effectively (Bialystok, 2011). The study found that students engaged in translanguaging practices such as code-meshing, alternating languages during discussions, and peer scaffolding, which allowed them to negotiate meaning across multiple linguistic systems. For example, learners frequently explained concepts in their home language before reformulating their ideas in English, demonstrating conscious reflection on differences in syntax, vocabulary, and discourse conventions. Similarly, peer interactions provided opportunities to discuss and clarify linguistic choices, reinforcing their understanding of how language operates in diverse contexts.

These practices illustrate the cognitive and educational value of translanguaging. By navigating between languages, students develop heightened awareness of linguistic structures, improve problem-solving abilities, and enhance their capacity to transfer skills across languages. From a theoretical perspective, this aligns with the weak form of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, which posits that language influences thought (Boroditsky, 2011). Through translanguaging, learners leverage their linguistic repertoires to conceptualize and express ideas more effectively, thereby reinforcing both comprehension and metalinguistic development. Overall, the findings indicate that translanguaging is not merely a compensatory strategy but a purposeful pedagogical tool that supports cognitive growth, reflective language use, and the development of multilingual literacy skills.

Cross-Linguistic Comparisons

Engaging students in cross-linguistic comparisons, such as analyzing differences in verb conjugation between Kiswahili and English, has clear cognitive and educational benefits. By actively reflecting on the structures and rules of multiple languages, learners develop metalinguistic awareness, which strengthens their ability to manipulate language, identify patterns, and transfer skills across linguistic systems (Bialystok, 2011). This skill is not only useful for academic literacy but also fosters cognitive flexibility, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities that extend beyond language learning. In the long term, cross-linguistic comparisons can help students internalize grammatical and syntactic rules more effectively, enhancing both comprehension and written expression in the language of instruction. While students may initially rely on their home language to scaffold understanding, over time these comparisons support a more nuanced grasp of the target language's structure and usage, thereby improving proficiency in English or other languages of instruction.

However, there are important considerations regarding standards of the language of instruction. Translanguaging and cross-linguistic comparisons do not automatically guarantee that students meet formal academic language benchmarks. Teachers must provide structured guidance and feedback to ensure that students' outputs conform to the expected norms of the target language, such as standardized grammar, vocabulary, and discourse conventions. Without such scaffolding, there is a

risk that students may develop habits of non-standard language transfer that could affect formal assessments. Overall, when implemented thoughtfully, cross-linguistic comparison is highly beneficial. It allows students to leverage their linguistic repertoires to understand complex concepts while gradually aligning their skills with the standards of the language of instruction, thus supporting both cognitive development and long-term academic achievement.

Reflective Language Use

Interviews with students revealed that translanguaging fosters reflective language use, whereby learners consciously monitor and evaluate their linguistic choices. Students reported noticing subtle differences in vocabulary, syntax, and discourse structures when switching between languages, and they were able to adapt their expressions to suit the context or audience. This reflective practice enhances metalinguistic awareness, enabling learners to think critically about how language operates and how meaning is negotiated across languages (García & Li Wei, 2014). However, the extent to which this benefit is realized can vary depending on the student and the learning environment. Factors such as linguistic proficiency, classroom support, exposure to multiple languages, and teacher guidance influence students' ability to engage in reflective language practices. For instance, students with stronger literacy skills in both the home language and the language of instruction are more likely to demonstrate advanced metalinguistic reflection, whereas learners with limited proficiency in one of their languages may focus primarily on comprehension rather than analysis. Similarly, in environments where translanguaging is discouraged or where teachers lack training in multilingual pedagogies, opportunities for reflective language use may be restricted. Thus, while translanguaging encourages reflective engagement with language and promotes deeper cognitive processing, its effectiveness is context-dependent. Structured classroom practices, teacher support, and exposure to diverse linguistic experiences are necessary to ensure that all students can benefit from this aspect of multilingual learning.

Problem-Solving Strategies

The data indicate that translanguaging functions as an effective problem-solving strategy, enabling students to navigate comprehension challenges by leveraging their home languages. When learners encounter complex concepts in the language of instruction, they often revert to their more dominant or familiar languages to clarify meaning, reorganize ideas, or identify gaps in understanding. This process demonstrates heightened metalinguistic skills, as students are required to reflect consciously on linguistic structures and meaning across languages, analyzing similarities and differences to resolve ambiguities.

For instance, one teacher observed:

"When students explain an English concept in Kiswahili, they actually understand the rules better, they see the connections and differences between the two languages."

This observation aligns with earlier findings on cross-linguistic comparisons and reflective language use. By first conceptualizing a concept in their home language, students engage in deliberate reflection on vocabulary, syntax, and discourse, which reinforces their understanding of the target language. Similarly, peer scaffolding complements this process, as students often collaborate to negotiate meaning, discuss linguistic choices, and resolve misunderstandings collectively. From a cognitive perspective, these problem-solving strategies exemplify the benefits of translanguaging for executive functioning and cognitive flexibility. Drawing on multiple languages allows learners to process information through different linguistic and conceptual frameworks, enhancing critical thinking and analytical skills (Bialystok, 2011). It also strengthens metalinguistic awareness by encouraging students to identify structural patterns, infer rules, and make cross-linguistic connections skills that are essential for literacy development and academic achievement. Educationally, the strategic use of home languages as a scaffolding tool demonstrates that translanguaging is not merely compensatory; rather, it is a purposeful pedagogical practice that deepens comprehension, supports problem-solving, and fosters meaningful engagement with content. When integrated with structured classroom support and guided reflection, it reinforces the learning outcomes highlighted in previous sections, including improved metalinguistic awareness, reflective language use, and the ability to compare grammatical and syntactic structures across languages.

Impact on Literacy Performance

Document analysis and classroom observations revealed that translanguaging had a significant and positive impact on students' literacy outcomes. These effects were observed across comprehension, writing, and engagement, highlighting the pedagogical potential of strategically leveraging students' full linguistic repertoires. Students who employed translanguaging strategies demonstrated a stronger understanding of reading texts, particularly in English. By using their home languages to clarify complex terms or negotiate meaning, learners were able to access and process challenging content more effectively. This aligns with García and Li Wei's (2014) view of translanguaging as a dynamic cognitive tool, which allows learners to draw on multiple linguistic resources to construct meaning. Translanguaging thus serves as a bridge between prior knowledge in the home language and new knowledge in the language of instruction, facilitating deeper comprehension and retention of academic content.

Analysis of student drafts revealed that multilingual writing often exhibited richer vocabulary, more coherent ideas, and improved organization. Translanguaging enabled students to initially express thoughts in the language in which they were most competent, allowing for more precise articulation of ideas. Subsequent translation or reformulation into the target language encouraged reflective editing, cross-linguistic comparison, and attention to grammar and syntax. This process not only strengthened

writing skills but also reinforced metalinguistic awareness, as students became conscious of structural differences and semantic nuances across languages (Bialystok, 2011).

Engagement and Motivation

The study also highlighted a strong link between translanguaging and student engagement. When learners were permitted to use their full linguistic repertoire, they reported higher motivation to participate in classroom discussions, reading activities, and written assignments. This increased engagement fostered active learning and collaboration, as students felt empowered to contribute meaningfully without being constrained by language barriers. Over time, these motivational gains translated into improved performance in both oral and written assessments, reinforcing the connection between linguistic confidence and academic achievement. Overall, these findings demonstrate that translanguaging is not merely a compensatory mechanism for struggling learners; it is a strategic pedagogical practice that enhances comprehension, supports the development of advanced writing skills, and promotes sustained engagement. By allowing students to navigate between languages, educators can foster an inclusive learning environment that respects linguistic diversity while simultaneously cultivating literacy and cognitive growth in the language of instruction.

Teachers in the study widely acknowledged translanguaging as a powerful pedagogical tool, capable of enhancing comprehension, fostering engagement, and promoting metalinguistic awareness. They recognized that allowing students to strategically draw on their home languages supports cognitive processing, enables richer expression of ideas, and facilitates collaborative problem-solving. At the same time, teachers identified several challenges and constraints that affect the effective implementation of translanguaging in multilingual classrooms. The teachers highlighted the importance of guiding students to use translanguaging purposefully rather than as a compensatory crutch. While home languages can scaffold understanding, excessive reliance on them may impede proficiency in the target language. For example, students might default to their strongest language during tasks, limiting their practice and mastery of English or Kiswahili the primary languages of instruction. Teachers therefore emphasized the need for structured translanguaging strategies, where the home language is used to support comprehension, reflection, and planning, but the final product or oral presentation aligns with the language of instruction. Standardized assessments and formal curriculum requirements often prioritize monolingual proficiency, creating tension between translanguaging practices and academic expectations. Teachers reported difficulties integrating translanguaging in graded tasks, as students are evaluated based on adherence to target-language norms. This highlights a structural challenge: while translanguaging can enhance learning and literacy development, prevailing assessment frameworks may inadvertently discourage its use. Teachers stressed the importance of curricular flexibility and policy recognition of multilingual competencies to allow students to benefit fully from translanguaging practices.

Many teachers expressed a desire for training and support in implementing translanguaging effectively. While they intuitively recognize its benefits, they often lack formal pedagogical strategies to integrate multilingual practices into lesson planning, classroom management, and assessment. Professional development could include training on scaffolding techniques, designing translanguaging-friendly tasks, and evaluating students' multilingual outputs while maintaining alignment with curriculum standards. Such support is critical to ensure that translanguaging enhances learning outcomes without compromising language-of-instruction requirements. Teachers also noted contextual factors affecting translanguaging implementation. Large class sizes, heterogeneous linguistic backgrounds, and limited classroom resources sometimes constrained their ability to provide individualized support. Moreover, societal and institutional attitudes toward home languages influenced both teacher practices and student willingness to use translanguaging openly. Teachers emphasized that creating an inclusive classroom culture that values multilingualism and legitimizes home languages is essential for translanguaging to reach its full pedagogical potential. While teachers perceive translanguaging as a valuable strategy for fostering comprehension, literacy, and engagement, its effectiveness depends on careful guidance, alignment with curricular standards, teacher training, and supportive classroom environments. Addressing these challenges is crucial for ensuring that translanguaging serves as a bridge to linguistic and cognitive development rather than a barrier to formal academic achievement.

Conclusion

The analysis of classroom observations, student work, interviews, and document review indicates that translanguaging in multilingual classrooms plays a pivotal role in enhancing both cognitive and literacy outcomes. Students strategically leverage their full linguistic repertoires to understand complex concepts, interpret reading materials, and produce written and oral texts, demonstrating heightened metalinguistic awareness, reflective language use, and cross-linguistic problem-solving skills. Practices such as code-meshing, language alternation during discussions, peer scaffolding, and cross-linguistic comparison enable learners to negotiate meaning, clarify ambiguities, and organize ideas effectively across languages.

Teachers recognize the pedagogical value of translanguaging as a tool for improving comprehension, engagement, and literacy development. At the same time, they note challenges related to balancing language use, aligning activities with curriculum and assessment requirements, and addressing professional development needs for structured translanguaging implementation. These findings underscore that while translanguaging is highly beneficial, its effectiveness depends on careful classroom planning, teacher support, and institutional recognition of multilingual practices. Overall, the study confirms that translanguaging is more than a compensatory strategy; it is a deliberate, strategic pedagogical approach that promotes cognitive growth, linguistic flexibility, and literacy development while highlighting the need for supportive policies and teacher preparation to fully realize its potential.

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