

EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES IN THE CONTEXT OF ENGLISH MEDIUM INSTRUCTION: TRANSLANGUAGING IN THE INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE DIPLOMA PROGRAMME

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Abstract: Although EMI International Baccalaureate contexts are characterized by high degrees of linguistic diversity, prevailing monolingual ideologies continue to structure both instructional norms and assessment expectations. Such ideologies often obscure the cognitive and epistemic work required of multilingual learners, who must simultaneously engage with complex disciplinary content and navigate heightened linguistic demands. Consequently, learners' multilingual resources remain systematically underleveraged, and the pedagogical potential of translanguaging is constrained by institutional policies that privilege English as the sole legitimate medium of academic expression. This study therefore addresses the misalignment between students' multilingual meaning-making practices and the restrictive language regimes that shape their educational trajectories. This article examines translanguaging as a learning practice in English-Medium Instruction (EMI) International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IB DP) classrooms. Using an Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) design, semi-structured interviews were conducted with eight IB DP graduates from different multilingual schools. The analysis revealed superordinate themes like cognitive strategies, emotional security and community, identity and linguistic capital negotiations, institutional policy, monolingual ideologies and practices of resistance, language-mediated assessment and the cost of time for language. The results show a cyclical trajectory of meaning construction—from L1 conceptual stabilization to L2 disciplinary expression—which reduces semantic loss, supports Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) development, and maintains participation in high-stakes tasks. Identified institutional tensions, such as English-only norms, linguistic load of assessment often limit translanguaging despite its pedagogical value. The study's findings underscore the need for institutional re-evaluation of language policies within EMI IB contexts, particularly with respect to the pedagogical legitimacy of translanguaging. Recognizing translanguaging as a cognitively generative practice would enable educators to support conceptual consolidation in the L1 while facilitating more precise disciplinary articulation in the L2. Such an approach could mitigate semantic loss, enhance CALP development, and reduce the inequitable linguistic burden placed on multilingual students during high-stakes assessments. Furthermore, the results suggest that teacher professional development should incorporate theoretically grounded translanguaging pedagogies, and that assessment bodies may need to reconsider linguistic complexity as a potential confounding variable in the evaluation of subject-matter knowledge.

Keywords: *English-medium instruction; IB Diploma Programme; multilingual learning strategies; phenomenological analysis; language policy.*

1. Introduction

Translanguaging has gained prominence in secondary EMI settings but still its enactment in IB DP classrooms remains uneven, especially where English-only ideologies shape assessment and classroom discourse. Recent research carried out by Cenoz & Gorter (2020) and Li (2018) confirms that translanguaging—the conscious and flexible use of multiple languages in the learning process—enables learners to draw on their entire linguistic repertoire not only for communication, but also for constructing complex academic knowledge and strengthening identity. According to Jonsson & Blåsjö (2020) and García & Li (2014), implementing translanguaging strategies can increase students' motivation, facilitate the understanding of complex concepts, strengthen identity, and contribute to a more inclusive and equitable educational process. However, Li (2018) claims that monolingual ideologies and limited use of the native language remain barriers to the full realization of the potential of translanguaging, and clear language policies and teacher training programs are needed.

This study addresses this gap by asking the following questions: (1) How do IB DP graduates describe the translanguaging episodes they experience when learning academic content in EMI? (2) What functions (cognitive, affective, identity) do these episodes serve? (3) What institutional conditions facilitate or restrict translanguaging? We present an IPA-based report that (a) models the L1→L2 meaning-making cycle; (b) describes the policy ecology at the school level, ranging from constraining to language-supportive; and (c) identifies assessment frictions and designs levers to ensure more equitable EMI.

Despite the clearly demonstrated benefits of multilingualism, it still often faces practical implementation challenges in EMI settings. Macaro (2018) and Hultgren (2014) argue that many teachers do not have sufficient knowledge or competences to apply multilingual strategies, and some schools have a strict single-language (English) ideology that limits translanguaging practices.

The relevance of this study stems from the fact that in the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme (DP) setting, EMI is often implemented on a monolingual basis, and students' multilingualism remains underutilized to achieve educational goals. The aim of this phenomenological study is to reveal how IB DP graduates experience and reflect on the application of translanguaging strategies in an EMI context and how this influenced their academic, linguistic, cultural and social development.

2. Literature Review

Translanguaging defines the flexible use of different languages or elements of languages in learning and communication. Li (2009) argues that translanguaging is a dynamic language use practice in which multilingual individuals freely use all their linguistic competences as a unified system, shifting between languages according to the situation and the need. García et al. (2017) stress that translanguaging is not simply code-switching, but the mobilisation of the entire linguistic repertoire in the process of learning, thinking and communicating. In this way, the translanguaging paradigm can be seen as a tool for both social inclusion and epistemological justice, a practice that fundamentally rejects the linguistic separation inherent in traditional bilingual education and relies on the integration of all languages, which promotes a deeper understanding of the content, the construction of identity and social inclusion.

2.1. Historical development of translanguaging

The term translanguaging first appeared at the end of the 20th century, introduced by Cen Williams (1994) to describe the practice of Welsh English bilingualism, whereby students interpreted what they had learned in other languages. The concept of translanguaging was later developed by Lewis et al. (2012), who highlighted its applicability in a variety of pedagogical contexts, particularly in bilingual contexts.

The work of García and Li (2014) developed the concept further, defining translanguaging as "the creative use of all available linguistic resources, regardless of language boundaries ". This paradigm has transformed the approach to teaching multilingual learners, paving the way for a pedagogy in which linguistic diversity is seen as an asset rather than a barrier.

According to Makoni & Pennycook (2006) and Kramsch (2014), translanguaging also draws on post-structuralist theories of language, which understand language as a fluid, socially constructed and identity-building phenomenon. Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory of learning, which stresses the role of language as a cognitive tool and a means of social interaction, has also been a major influence.

In recent decades, translanguaging has become one of the cornerstones of theoretical models for the study of multilingualism, especially in EMI (English Medium Instruction) contexts and IB programmes.

2.2. Recent translanguaging research

The number of translanguaging studies has been growing rapidly over the last five years. Empirical studies by Jonsson & Blåsjö (2020), Cenoz & Gorter (2020), Palmer (2014) have shown that translanguaging in EMI settings

not only facilitates the acquisition of complex academic concepts but also strengthens students' linguistic and cultural identity. For example, Jonsson and Blåsjö's (2020) exploratory work on the use of translanguaging strategies in Swedish secondary schools found that students who were able to use their mother tongue fluently alongside English achieved higher academic performance and experienced less linguistic stress.

Lee & Canagarajah (2022) analysed an IB DP mathematics lesson in which students from Turkey, Colombia and Japan fluently exchanged English and their mother tongues when explaining the principles of differential calculus - this practice of translanguaging not only deepened understanding but also promoted the active construction of knowledge.

Research in IB DP programmes suggest that translanguaging can help to bridge the gap between the level of English proficiency and the required academic level.

2.3. Benefits and strategies of translanguaging in the context of EMI

Translanguaging in EMI settings offers the following key benefits:

- Morton (2023) argues that deeper understanding of academic content allows to use the full linguistic repertoire available to analyse complex concepts.
- Creese & Blackledge (2015) acknowledge that identity enhancement and psychosocial well-being: Encourages students to feel like full members of the community, bridging cultural and linguistic gaps.
- According to Li (2018), motivation and engagement: Helps to overcome language barriers, boosts self-confidence, and encourages active participation in class () .
- Metalinguistic, cognitive and affective benefits: Develops the ability to reflect on language, reduces anxiety, and enhances problem-solving skills through cross-linguistic applications, claim Li & Wu (2019).

Translanguaging can be applied in a variety of ways: developing bilingual or multilingual teaching materials, group discussions in several languages, planning written work in the mother tongue, comparing and analysing concepts in several languages, reflective activities, etc. Comparing concepts or analysing texts in several languages is particularly useful to help pupils acquire not only the language but also the cultural context.

Although multilingualism offers clear benefits in the EMI/IB context, its implementation faces significant challenges. Recent research by Lee & Canagarajah (2022) and Tian & Shepard-Carey (2023) show that the most common barriers are the teachers' lack of knowledge and methodological experience, limited opportunities to apply multilingual strategies due to

standardized assessment and testing requirements, and prevailing monolingual ideologies that marginalize the home language and limit linguistic diversity. In addition, Cenoz & Gorter (2020) and Li (2018) acknowledge that many schools lack clear institutional language policy guidelines, so translanguaging often remains the initiative of individual teachers, and the hegemony of English poses a risk to the status of minority languages and cultural diversity.

3. Research Methodology

Research Background and design. Smith et al. (2009) and Eatough & Smith (2017) assert that interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA), which focuses on the idiographic reconstruction of participants' experiences and a dual hermeneutic process, was used: participants give meaning to their experiences, and the researcher interprets these meanings based on theoretical assumptions and context. Ontologically, the multiplicity of experiences is recognized, while epistemologically, a constructivist-interpretivist approach is used to reveal how translanguaging practices mediate cognition, emotions, and identity in EMI situations from the participants' perspective.

Research question:

How do IB DP graduates describe translanguaging episodes while learning academic content in EMI and what functions (cognitive, affective, identity) do these episodes serve?

Selection of participants. Data was collected from eight IB DP graduates, whose L1 is Lithuanian, Latvian, Russian, Danish or Dutch. Five of the respondents are female, and three are male. Purposeful criterion and maximum variation sampling were applied: individuals who (a) had completed the IB DP in the last 1–2 years; (b) had studied at least four subjects in English; (c) were able to reflect on translanguaging episodes in specific learning/assessment situations. According to Malterud et al. (2016), the sample size was based on the principle of information power – a homogeneous population, a clear research focus, and rich narratives allowed analytical saturation to be achieved with $n=8$.

Data collection method. Semi-structured interviews (45–75 min.) were conducted remotely or in person. The interview guidelines consisted of blocks on: (1) typical EMI tasks and language strategies; (2) translanguaging episodes (planning, clarifying concepts, collaboration); (3) emotional/identity experiences; (4) the impact of assessment and institutional rules. Interviews were recorded, transcribed verbatim, and anonymized; summaries of field notes and reflective memos were prepared after each interview.

Data analysis (IPA steps)

The analysis was performed in accordance with IPA procedures by Smith et al. (2009):

1. **Reading and initial marking** – several cycles with emic, conceptual, and linguistic notes.
2. Formulation of experiential statements for each case.
3. Clustering of themes at the idiographic level – connections, contrasts, metaphors, chronology.
4. **Transitional idiographic shift** – from one case to others, while preserving the uniqueness of the cases.
5. **Cross-case synthesis** – construction of superordinate themes (cognitive, emotional, identity, institutional, ideological, evaluative) and modeling of their interactions. For transparency, maintain **data-analysis–interpretation** traceability paths: citation marks (R1–R8), code/theme maps, decision log.

Reliability and quality of the study

Guided by the Standards for Reporting Qualitative Research- SRQR by O'Brien et al. (2014) and Consolidated Criteria for Reporting Qualitative Research- COREQ by Tong's et al. (2007) guidelines.

- Credibility: topic summaries were presented to participants (member checking), and a negative case procedure was performed.
- Dependability: an audit trail was created (interview threads, coding book versions, memos, decision log); partial repeated recoding.
- Confirmability: researcher reflexivity protocol, co-author/peer debriefing, triangulation of quotations with analytical statements.

Researcher positionality and reflexivity

The researcher has experience with EMI/IB programmes; this closeness to the field position provides access to practical nuances but raises the risk of halo effect. The risk is mitigated by reflexive memos, explicitly stated expectations prior to analysis, peer debriefing, and feedback from participants on the accuracy of interpretations.

Ethics and data protection

The study was approved by the ethics committee; all participants provided informed consent. The data is stored in an encrypted repository; identifiers have been replaced with pseudonyms; quotes have been edited only minimally to preserve semantic integrity (without "smoothing" the style).

Limitations

The sample size and sector specificity (IB DP) limit the statistical generalization of the results but allow for a deep reconstruction of experience structures. There is possible bias in recollections (retrospectivity) and self-selection effect; compensation methods include saturation, negative cases, and traceability.

3. Research Results

The analysis of the interview data highlighted six main strands of experience that reveal the significance of multilingualism at the cognitive, emotional, identity, institutional policy, assessment and ideological tensions levels (see Table 1).

Superordinate theme	Subordinate themes/ emerging themes	Respondent quotes
1. Cognitive function of multilingualism	<p>Translanguaging as a strategy for understanding academic content/ Cross-linguistic mapping (L1→L2* mapping of terms/tasks)</p> <p>L1 planning and L2 articulation (thinking in your native language, writing/speaking in English)</p> <p>Repertoire of methods across STEM vs. humanities</p>	<p>"When I didn't understand a concept, I first looked for the Lithuanian or Russian equivalent - only then could I calmly explain it in English." (R7)</p> <p>"In maths, my friends and I would discuss the problems in Danish, then try to write the answers in English." (R3)</p> <p>"Physics terms were always easier when I checked what they meant in my language." (R5) "It's very different to know English on paper and know how to analyse in English." (R2)</p>
2. Emotional support and community	<p>Use of mother tongue as a source of psychological comfort/ L1 as a "network" of social support during the transition period</p> <p>L1 as a risk reduction mechanism (courage to ask questions, to try)</p> <p>Strengthening group identity through language</p>	<p>"If we could explain things to each other in our own language, we felt stronger as a group, more confident to ask questions." (R2)</p> <p>"It was scary in the first months, but Lithuanian friends and a common language saved me from isolation." (R1) "We would push each other to study... everyone came together because of a common goal." (R2)</p>
3. Strengthening of identity and linguistic capital	<p>Combining bilingualism and cultural identity/ Glocal identity: local language + global academic English</p> <p>L1/L2 synergy as a "combination" of writing style and thinking</p>	<p>"I can be both Lithuanian and a citizen of the world - both languages are alive and equal." (R1)</p> <p>"Translanguaging allowed me to keep in touch with Latvia even when I was learning English." (R6)</p> <p>"The Dutch logic helped me with my writing, and the English language</p>

Superordinate theme	Subordinate themes/ emerging themes	Respondent quotes
	L1 support as a means of maintaining transnational narrative identity	"gave me a broader perspective." (R5)
4. Influence of institutional policy	<p>Differences between supportive and restrictive environments/ English-only norms vs. language flexibility regimes</p> <p>Structured language support (Language Lab, English B, pre-IB)</p> <p>Multilingual events and policy enactment in schools</p>	<p>"In some places, teachers were encouraged to explain concepts in their own language, while in others it was forbidden to use anything other than English." (R7)</p> <p>"Our school used to organise multilingual events - then I felt really part of the community." (R5)</p> <p>"The school were pretty adamant on people actually speaking English... no translating tutors." (R3)</p> <p>"English B... small class size... the teacher would help with writing for other subjects." (R8)</p> <p>"Pre-IB prepared us for citations... and how you study; everything is written down on paper." (R3)</p>
5. Resistance to translanguaging and monolingual ideology	<p>Monolinguistic ideologies and stereotypes/ "Too many languages will confuse people"—narratives of deficit</p> <p>L1 as a "threat" to progress in English</p> <p>Norms of "purity" (monolingualism) in assessment</p>	<p>"There are teachers who are still afraid that too many languages will mess with students' heads." (R6)</p> <p>"There were opinions that if you speak Lithuanian too often, it only hinders the development of English." (R1)</p> <p>"The school... adamant on people actually speaking English." (R3)</p>
6. Language-mediated assessment	<p>Misinterpretation risk; time-on-language costs/ Semantic nuances errors (effectiveness vs. efficiency)</p> <p>Time spent on "formulation," not just "thought"</p> <p>Early tasks as a space for "polishing"</p>	<p>"I misread... 'effectiveness' as 'efficiency' and ended up missing the point." (R6)</p> <p>"I ran out of time because I had to stop and think about phrasing too often." (R3)</p> <p>"I had a tough time writing coherently... I asked friends to read over my stuff." (R2)</p>

Superordinate theme	Subordinate themes/ emerging themes	Respondent quotes

*Table 1. The role of multilingualism in the IB/EMI context (by the authors)***L1→L2 – from L1 (native/first language) to L2 (second/foreign language)*

An analysis of the experiences of eight IBDP graduates (see Table 1) revealed a construction of meaning in which personal struggles with academic English are intertwined with identity re/creation and the framework of institutional policy. R1, R5, and R8 testify to cognitive multilingualism as a spontaneous, student-initiated strategy: bilingual cards, personal glossaries, phrase banks, cycles of "thinking aloud" in L1 and retelling in L2 ("...explaining topics out loud in Latvian first, then... in English," R5; "I translate it into my native language in my mind... then write it out in English," R8). This shows the importance of intra-mental interlingual mediation, where L1 is not a competitor to L2, but a cognitive tool for constructing meaning.

R2 and R7 emphasize the lack of emotional security ("intimidated me") and the cushioning role of the community (dormitory, classmates) ("...someone... can explain in more simple terms", R2) in their early adaptation. These experiences reveal that linguistic challenges are not only linguistic; they are socially distributed and cushioned by micro-support practices.

The narratives of R1, R4, and R6 show a shift in expression from "translating in my head" to "thinking in English"; along with a change in symbolic linguistic capital and self-awareness ("I got rid of my accent... some things I know only in English", R4; "you could express yourself better in English", R6). Thus, English becomes not only instrumental but also symbolic – it is associated with academic competence and prestige.

Finally, R3 and R6 testify to the impact of institutional gateways ("pre-IB," selection thresholds, English-only provisions) on experiences: in one place, micro-translanguaging (teachers' explanations in Danish after English presentation) is tolerated, while elsewhere the English-only policy is emphasized ("adamant on people actually speaking English"). This creates different local ecologies, ranging from linguistically empowering to mono-linguistically normative.

The second theme relates to translanguaging as a source of emotional support and communion. The native language acts as an emotional buffer—it reduces social risk and linguistic anxiety, accelerates "integration" into the community, which is especially important in the first few months. As perceived self-efficacy increases, students gradually "break free" from L1 support as they gain L2 confidence and social capital.

It responds to the sociocultural logic of learning by Vygotsky (1978) and Cummins et al. (2015), where social interaction and emotional security are prerequisites for cognitive progress; it is consistent with asset-based pedagogy, which treats L1 as a resource rather than an obstacle.

Such experiences illustrate the role of translanguaging as a psychosocial resource, creating a sense of security, togetherness and mutual support, especially during the transition period when culture shock or linguistic isolation is experienced. This is in line with the affective function of translanguaging highlighted by Creese and Blackledge (2015), which is to enhance students' social integration and motivation.

The third theme - identity building and multiple reflection - emerged as an opportunity to be multilingual and multicultural at the same time. Translanguaging does not weaken but rather constructs a hybrid identity: L1 preserves biographical integrity, while L2 opens up global epistemic access. Thus, identity becomes polyphonic (Bakhtinian logic of dialogue), and academic voices become multilingual. This directly responds to García & Li's (2014) thesis on translanguaging as an agent of identity and Bourdieu's (1991) idea of linguistic capital: English (L2) as symbolic capital, L1 as cultural capital; the connection enables social mobility.

The fourth theme is the influence of institutional politics and the possibilities and limits of translanguaging. Institutional "micro-regimes" (policy-in-practice) modulate the availability of translation practices: from "English-only" to structured support (Language Lab, English B, pre-IB). Not only individual abilities, but also the environment (school policy, resources) determine both linguistic progress and well-being. This is consistent with Dafouz & Smit's ROAD-MAPPING (2016): Language Management, Agents, Practices & Processes; additionally with Macaro's (2018) recommendations on systemic language support EMI.

The fifth theme is cultural and ideological resistances. Monolingual ideologies act as a normative threshold that limits the "legitimacy" of translanguaging. This creates strategies of "quiet retreat": students translinguise "behind the scenes" but publicly adhere to the requirements of English "purity." The paradox: unofficial translinguisation practices and official monolingual norms coexist. This corresponds to Bourdieu's logic of symbolic power (the dominant language shapes the norm of "correct practices") and MacSwan's (2020) critique of deficit paradigms; Poza (2017) proposes translanguaging as an anti-hegemonic practice.

The sixth theme is the language mediated assessment frictions. In assessment, L2 processing time (time-on-language) sometimes overshadows cognitive content: semantic nuances errors and time pressure begin to act as a "hidden curriculum." Early tasks, clear rubrics, and linguistic scaffolding mitigate this risk. Cummins (2015) claims CALP training is necessary to

prevent assessment from becoming a language barrier test and emphasizes language-content integration in assessment; Macaro (2018) talks about systematic language support in EMI.

Phenomenologically, participants' experiences show a transition from "survival through L1" to "self-governance through L2", which takes place along three overlapping trajectories:

1. Cognitive trajectory. In the initial phase, L1 acts as a constructive "noise filter"—terms are "anchored" in the native language, arguments are planned in L1, until the ability to automatically generate CALP L2 emerges. This is the economics of switching from L1 to L2.
2. Emotional-social trajectory. L1 acts as a community zone, reducing isolation, increasing the courage to take risks, ask questions, and make mistakes. When switching to L2, confidence becomes internalized, and L1 becomes an optional (no longer mandatory) resource.
3. Identity-institutional trajectory. Where institutions provide legal linguistic "licensing" (Language Lab, English B, pre-IB; multilingual events), translanguaging shifts from "secret" to legitimized practice, and glocal identity is strengthened. Where "English-only" prevails, hidden translanguaging and resistance narratives remain.

These trajectories reinforce a hybrid academic habitus by Bourdieu (1991): L2 as symbolic capital, L1 as cultural-cognitive capital; their conversion takes place through translanguaging, claim García & Li (2014), and scaffolding by Vygotsky (1978) and policy regimes by Dafouz & Smit (2016) determine how effective and fair this conversion will be.

The analysis of these six themes suggests that translanguaging in IB/EMI settings plays a multifaceted role: it is a cognitive learning strategy, an emotional support mechanism, an identity-building tool, a vector for social inclusion, and at the same time a field of ideological and political struggles. These functions are not isolated but intertwined and mutually reinforcing.

The evidence suggests that translanguaging practices can be successfully integrated into education if institutions provide a supportive linguistic assistance and teacher preparation, and that there is social justice in multilingual learning environments.

4. Discussion

Linguistic risk is particularly evident in STEM subjects: one unfamiliar term results in a loss of points (R1), while semantic pairs (effectiveness/efficiency, R5) can steer the answer in a different direction. In the humanities, discursive literacy TOK (Theory of Knowledge) comes to the fore – here, precision of formulation and argumentative clichés (R5 phrase banks) are required. Both poles demonstrate the importance of CALP

(Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency); Cummins (2015) claims that BICS (Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills) is not sufficient for academic success.

Translanguaging operates on three levels: cognitive (L1 as a semantic framework), metalinguistic (conscious creation of vocabulary and connections) and affective (reducing anxiety, community). Macaro (2018) asserts that respondents demonstrate both planned (glossaries, phrase lists) and emergent (self-explanation in L1, bilingual discussions) practices – these are consistent with the logic of CLIL (content-language integration) even in an EMI mode where language objectives are not formally specified.

Institutional diversity (pre-IB, English B, teachers' micro-translanguaging) is consistent with the ROAD-MAPPING approach: research by Dafouz & Smit (2016) shows that the effectiveness of EMI depends on the interaction of roles, governance, agents, and practice. Where the 'English only' rule is enforced and support is minimised, students more often talk about self-monitoring and informal peer support (R2, R7); where a multilingual repertoire is recognized (even at the micro level), experiences become more equal and more ecological.

Identity dynamics – from "returning" to an English-speaking environment (R3) to "thinking in English" (R1) and mastery of the academic register (R5) – show the capitalisation of linguistic capital, claims Bourdieu (1991), and the transition from language as a barrier to language as a resource assert Cummins et al. (2015) and García & Li (2014).

Hence, most respondents described translanguaging as a necessary cognitive underpinning. This topic reveals that translation is not just "code switching," but a cognitive strategy that students use to manage the processing load: they "unpack" complex content in their native language (L1) and then transfer the production and articulation for evaluation to English (L2). In STEM fields, the term "labelling" in L1 (physics, chemistry, mathematics concepts) prevails, while in the humanities, it is the planning of argumentation structures in L1 and formal articulation in L2. In this way, translanguaging acts as a "metalinguistic support", strengthening semantic accuracy and reducing the risk of errors.

Vygotsky (1978) argues that this is closely related to his concept of mediation and Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) – L1 acts as a cognitive tool that allows one to "set up scaffolding" before moving on to L2; with Cummins' (2015) BICS/CALP distinction—academic language (CALP) requires metalinguistic actions; with García & Li's (2014) translanguaging, where linguistic repertoire acts as a unified system rather than separate "codes".

These experiences show a consistent movement between languages, which reduces cognitive load and allows for a more solid acquisition of

academic concepts. Such practices are in line with the insights of García and Li (2014) and Lewis et al. (2012) that translanguaging mobilises the entire linguistic repertoire as a unified system, enhancing both content understanding and metalinguistic reflection (see Fig.1). The L1→L2 translanguaging cycle observed across cases: L1 conceptual anchoring → bridging (L1/L2) → L2 academic articulation → cross-linguistic reflection. The cycle reduces semantic loss and supports CALP development in high-stakes tasks.

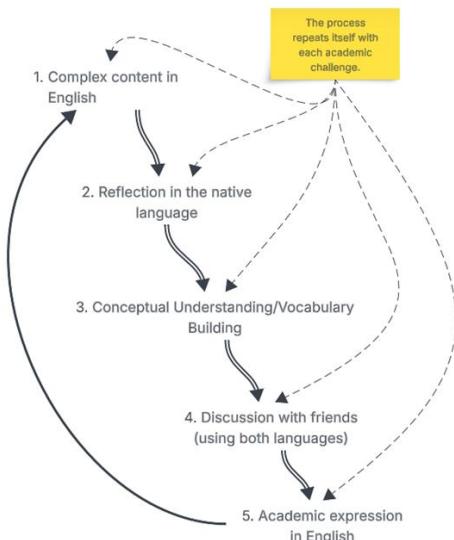


Figure 1. *Translanguaging Cycle in an EMI Lesson (by the authors)*

The results of this phenomenological study confirm that translanguaging in the context of EMI/IB DP is a multifaceted, dynamic and essential strategy for learning and social integration. Recent research by Lee (2022) and Tian & Shepard-Carey (2023) confirm that translanguaging goes beyond the linguistic aspect and becomes a powerful tool that allows learners to move through cognitive, emotional, cultural, and identity-forming stages. The results of this study show that in the context of EMI/IB DP, the active use of the entire linguistic repertoire not only improves the acquisition of academic content but also strengthens cultural and social identity, especially in the case of first-generation migrants and minority language users. Cenoz & Gorter (2020) and Lee & Canagarajah (2022) assert that institutional support and open language policies increase confidence, academic progress, and social cohesion, while monolingual ideologies limit the quality of learning and cause additional stress (see Fig.2). Figure 2 shows that translanguaging in the context of EMI is not an isolated linguistic technique, but it is a holistic process that combines cognitive support (deepening understanding), emotional

security, identity reinforcement, social inclusion, language-mediated assessment, and dependence on the institutional environment. This also proves that translanguaging can be understood as a bridge between language conflict and educational security if institutions create favourable conditions for its application (functions of translanguaging in IB DP EMI, integrating cognitive support, affective security, identity work, social inclusion, and language-mediated assessment within varying policy ecologies.)

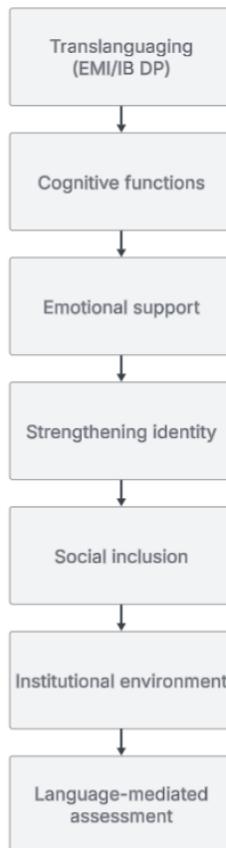


Figure 2. *Model of Translanguaging Functions in EMI/IB DP (by the authors)*

A debatable aspect is the limits of translanguaging. Participants confirmed that even in advanced IB schools there are stereotypes, administrative or even exam system barriers that limit the potential of translanguaging. It would be useful to develop recommendations or methodological guidelines to enable and promote translanguaging not only as a support but also as a full-fledged learning strategy (see Fig.3). Figure 3 shows that teacher training is a key factor in the successful implementation of EMI. Firstly, it contains methodological materials that ensure the appropriate delivery of educational content, and reflective assessment that helps students

and teachers to continuously improve their linguistic and academic skills; secondly, language policy, which defines the relationship between the native language and English, and cultural events that strengthen community spirit and recognition of multilingualism. Thus, the figure emphasizes that teacher competence, methodological support, clear language policy, and cultural initiatives are interrelated elements that together create conditions for educational security and the inclusion of multilingualism in the IB DP environment.

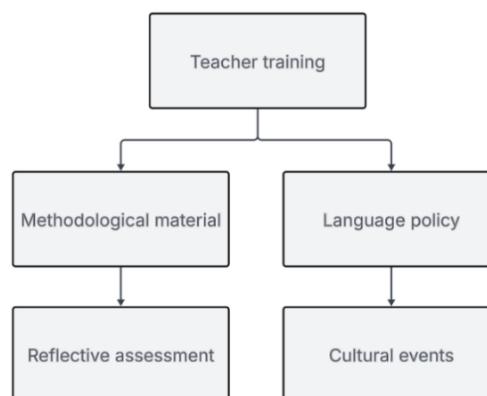


Figure 3. *Institutional Support Elements for Multilingualism (by the authors)*

This points to the need to review the assessment system, train educators and educate the community about the benefits of translanguaging and the potential for inclusion.

Contribution of the study: this study contributes to the international panorama of translanguaging research by providing original phenomenological data from an EMI context representing different linguistic, cultural and social identities. The study paves the way for a deeper analysis of not only the linguistic but also the psychosocial dimension of translanguaging.

In summary, multilingualism in IB/EMI educational settings is not only an effective linguistic strategy, but also a tool for social inclusion, identity building, community, agency and educational equity. To fully realise this potential, a coherent institutional policy, active teacher training, flexible assessment and a whole community focused on the value of cultural and linguistic diversity are essential.

5. Conclusion

Based on the discussion, the following general findings can be drawn: translanguaging in the context of EMI/IB DP is a multidimensional, dynamic

process that is essential for learning and social integration, transcending the linguistic level and affecting cognitive, emotional, cultural, and identity-forming aspects. Active use of the entire linguistic repertoire of students improves the assimilation of academic content and strengthens cultural and social identity, especially for first-generation migrants and minority language users. Success is determined by the institutional context: open language policies, clear methodological guidelines, and targeted professional development for teachers increase self-confidence, academic progress, and community spirit, while monolingual ideologies undermine the quality of learning and increase stress. Translanguaging functions as a holistic mechanism that combines cognitive support (deep understanding), emotional security, identity reinforcement, social inclusion, and language-mediated assessment; when favourable conditions are created, it becomes a bridge between "linguistic tension" and "educational security." At the same time, limiting factors have been identified: stereotypes and barriers in administrative and examination systems reduce the potential of translanguaging. In summary, multilingualism in IB/EMI educational environments is not only an effective linguistic strategy, but also a tool for social inclusion, identity building, community building, agency, and educational justice. To fully realize this potential, it is necessary to have a consistent institutional language policy, active professional development for teachers, flexible assessment, and a community that consciously cherishes the value of cultural and linguistic diversity.

Limitations of the study. The study was conducted with a limited number of graduates, so the results provide an in-depth but not broad perspective. They reveal experiences but cannot be directly generalized to all IB DP schools. Graduates completed the IB DP in different countries (e.g., Lithuania, Denmark, Latvia, Sri Lanka), but the study does not cover all regions, especially Latin America or Africa, where EMI challenges may be different. Therefore, the results are more suitable for understanding the experiences of international schools rather than the scope of the entire EMI phenomenon. Furthermore, the retrospective recall issues, self-selection bias, focus on "successful" graduates, and absence of classroom observation could be added to the list of limitations as well. In the future research directions could include examining translanguaging through classroom observation, including students who struggled or left the program, analyzing assessment to understand linguistic barriers, as well as conducting comparative studies.

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