

The Implementation of Translanguaging in Learning and Its Implications for Elementary School Students' Attitude toward Learning: A Systematic Literature Review

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Article History

accepted 1/2/2026

approved 1/3/2026

published 31/3/2026

Abstract

Linguistic diversity in multilingual classrooms poses significant challenges when students' home languages are excluded from instructional practices, often leading to reduced participation and lower learning motivation. This study aims to examine the implementation of translanguaging in learning and its implications for elementary school students' attitudes toward learning through a Systematic Literature Review (SLR). The results indicate that translanguaging not only supports students' cognitive comprehension but also positively affects affective aspects of learning, including the enhancement of self-confidence, active engagement, and learning comfort, as well as contributing to the creation of inclusive and equitable classroom environments. However, several studies emphasize that proportional implementation is essential to ensure that the use of students' home languages does not reduce adequate exposure to the target language. It can be concluded that translanguaging is a relevant and strategic pedagogical approach in multilingual elementary education for fostering positive learning attitudes and empowering students to participate more actively in the learning process.

Keywords: *translanguaging, learning attitudes, elementary education, multilingual classroom*

Abstrak

Keberagaman bahasa di kelas multibahasa kerap menjadi tantangan serius ketika bahasa ibu siswa tidak diakomodasi dalam praktik pembelajaran, yang berdampak pada rendahnya partisipasi dan motivasi belajar siswa. Penelitian ini bertujuan mengkaji implementasi translanguaging dalam pembelajaran serta implikasinya terhadap sikap belajar siswa sekolah dasar melalui metode *Systematic Literature Review* (SLR). Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa translanguaging tidak hanya mendukung pemahaman kognitif siswa, tetapi juga memberikan dampak positif pada aspek afektif pembelajaran, meliputi peningkatan kepercayaan diri, keterlibatan aktif, dan kenyamanan belajar, serta berkontribusi pada pembentukan lingkungan kelas yang inklusif dan setara. Namun, beberapa penelitian menekankan bahwa penerapan yang proporsional sangat diperlukan agar penggunaan bahasa ibu siswa tidak mengurangi paparan yang memadai terhadap bahasa target. Dapat disimpulkan bahwa translanguaging merupakan pendekatan pedagogis yang relevan dan strategis dalam pendidikan dasar multibahasa untuk membangun sikap belajar positif dan memberdayakan siswa agar dapat berpartisipasi lebih aktif dalam proses pembelajaran.

Kata kunci: translanguaging, sikap belajar, sekolah dasar, kelas multibahasa



INTRODUCTION

Linguistic diversity is an inseparable reality in the world of education, particularly in the context of elementary schools within multilingual societies. In many countries, including Indonesia, students often use more than one language in their daily lives, such as their mother tongue, the national language, and foreign languages. However, classroom teaching practices frequently remain rigidly oriented toward a single language of instruction, thereby overlooking the linguistic potential that students possess. (García & Wei, 2014).

One approach that has been developing in multilingual education is translanguaging, which refers to the practice of dynamically using students' entire linguistic repertoires to construct meaning, understand concepts, and participate in learning. (García & Kleyn, 2016). Unlike traditional bilingual approaches that strictly separate languages, translanguaging views language as an integrated system that can be used flexibly according to learners' communicative and cognitive needs.

Recent studies indicate that translanguaging not only affects cognitive aspects but also influences affective dimensions, including students' attitudes toward learning. Learning attitude encompasses students' feelings, beliefs, and behavioral tendencies toward the learning process, which play an important role in engagement, motivation, and academic success (Mega dkk., 2014). Students who hold positive attitudes toward learning tend to be more active, confident, and persistent in facing academic challenges. Recent studies indicate that translanguaging can positively influence students' attitudes toward learning. Poza (2022) demonstrates that the use of translanguaging helps students feel that their linguistic identities are acknowledged, thereby increasing their willingness to participate. Seltzer, & Collins, (2022) also report that translanguaging creates more inclusive classroom environments and encourages students' affective engagement. However, other studies have found concerns that translanguaging may reduce exposure to the target language if it is not managed proportionally (Kuncoroningtyas dkk., 2025; Raja dkk., 2022).

In the context of elementary schools, the formation of learning attitudes is particularly crucial, as this stage represents an early period of children's academic and affective development. Therefore, instructional approaches that are able to create a sense of safety, inclusivity, and connection with students' linguistic identities are highly needed. Translanguaging is viewed as one potential strategy to address these needs (Mazak & Carroll, 2020).

Although research on translanguaging has continued to grow, studies that specifically synthesize empirical findings on its implications for elementary school students' learning attitudes remain limited. Therefore, this study aims to conduct a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) of recent research on the implementation of translanguaging in learning and its impact on elementary school students' attitudes toward learning. The findings of this review are expected to provide a comprehensive overview, strengthen the theoretical foundation, and serve as a reference for the development of pedagogical practices as well as future research.

METHOD

This study employed a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) following the PRISMA (*Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses*) framework. Data were collected through a systematic search on Google Scholar, ERIC, and Scopus using keywords such as "translanguaging", "learning attitudes", "elementary school", and "multilingual classroom". The search was conducted from February to April 2025. Articles were selected based on the following inclusion criteria: (1) studies discussing translanguaging in educational contexts; (2) articles reporting findings on students' affective aspects; (3) published in peer-reviewed journals between 2014 and

2025; and (4) written in English or Indonesian. Articles that were irrelevant or non-empirical were excluded. A total of 20 articles met the criteria and were selected for analysis. Data were thematically analyzed and synthesized in the form of a summary table and narrative discussion.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 presents a summary of the research findings analyzed in this systematic literature review, including the research contexts, forms of translanguaging implementation, and their implications for students' attitudes toward learning.

Table 1. Summary of Studies on Translanguaging Implementation and Its Implications for Students' Learning Attitudes

No	Author(s) & Year	Context / Participants	Forms of Translanguaging Implementation	Implications for Students' Learning Attitude
1	García & Wei, (2014)	Theoretical framework, multilingual education	Use of students' full linguistic repertoire in instruction	Promotes a sense of security and positive attitudes toward learning
2	García, & (Otheguy, 2021)	Multilingual classrooms	Flexible language use in classroom interaction	Increases participation and student engagement
3	Wei (2022)	Multilingual education contexts	Translanguaging as a reflective pedagogical practice	Creates inclusive environments and positive learning attitudes
4	Li & Lin (2023)	Bilingual elementary school	Mother tongue for concept explanation, target language for key terms	Improves self-confidence and learning comfort
5	Seltzer, & Collins, (2022)	Elementary education	Multilingual discussions and collaborative group work	Enhances students' active engagement
6	Poza (2022)	Multilingual classrooms	Integration of translanguaging with culturally sustaining pedagogy	Students feel valued, increasing confidence and participation

7	Fadila et al (2024)	Indonesian EFL classrooms	Teachers combine Indonesian and English in instruction	Positive student perceptions and higher classroom participation
8	Putrawan (2022)	EFL classroom	Use of first language for clarification and explanation	Reduces anxiety and increases willingness to ask questions
9	Raja et al (2022)	Indonesian EFL classes	Code-switching and translanguaging during discussion	Improves comprehension but raises concern about reduced target language exposure
10	Kuncoroningtyas et al (2025)	EFL university students (pedagogical implications)	Translanguaging in presentations and discussions	Enhances confidence and willingness to communicate
11	Lestari et al (2025)	English learning in Indonesian schools	Bilingual materials and multilingual interaction	Increases learning motivation and comfort
12	Arisandi et al (2025)	Language education	Local language used as a bridge for understanding concepts	Students become more active and less afraid of making mistakes
13	Maule Heryanti & Samsi (2023)	Literature review	Various classroom translanguaging strategies	Overall positive impact on students' learning attitudes
14	Rasmin (2023)	EFL classroom	Mixing languages in questioning and explanation	Students feel more comfortable and supported
15	Styati & Irawati, (2023)	Writing class	Translanguaging in brainstorming and revision stages	Improves confidence and positive

				attitudes toward writing tasks
16	Vilamor (2025)	English language teaching	Translanguaging as a primary instructional strategy	Encourages open participation and positive learning attitudes
17	Kamila et al (2025)	Bilingual elementary school	Use of two languages in classroom instruction	Increases engagement and reduces student passivity
18	Cenoz & Gorter (2020)	Multilingual education	Pedagogy based on translanguaging principles	Creates inclusive, supportive, and equitable learning environments
19	Mega et al (2014)	Educational psychology	Theoretical framework on learning attitudes and emotions	Positive attitudes linked to higher engagement and academic success
20	García & Kleyn (2016)	Multilingual education	Daily classroom translanguaging practices	Enhances students' sense of belonging and positive learning orientation

Table 1 shows that translanguaging is implemented in various educational contexts, including bilingual elementary schools, EFL classrooms, and multilingual educational settings. These findings are discussed through the lens of key theoretical frameworks in this field. García and Wei (2014) define translanguaging as the dynamic use of a learner's full linguistic repertoire to make meaning and construct knowledge, transcending traditional boundaries between named languages. This view positions translanguaging not as code-switching, but as an integrated and fluid linguistic practice that reflects the natural cognitive processes of multilingual individuals. Furthermore, Mega et al. (2014) highlight that positive emotions and attitudes in learning are pivotal antecedents of academic engagement and achievement. Together, these frameworks provide the theoretical basis for understanding how translanguaging, as a pedagogical strategy, may shape students' affective disposition toward learning. The most dominant forms of implementation include the use of students' first language as a scaffold for conceptual understanding, multilingual classroom discussions, the use of bilingual materials, and the application of translanguaging in collaborative activities and writing. This pattern indicates that translanguaging is not positioned as a sporadic practice, but

rather as a pedagogical strategy integrated into everyday teaching and learning processes.

1. Translanguaging and the Enhancement of Students' Self-Confidence

One of the most consistent findings in the table is the improvement of students' self-confidence. Studies by Poza, Li and Lin, and Arisandi show that when students' first language is recognized as a legitimate part of the learning process, they no longer feel linguistically marginalized. They become more willing to express their opinions, ask questions, and participate in classroom discussions. This aligns with the affective perspective in educational psychology, which emphasizes that a sense of security and social acceptance is a primary prerequisite for the emergence of positive learning attitudes. In other words, translanguaging functions as an affective mechanism that reduces language anxiety and enhances students' academic self-efficacy.

2. Active Engagement and Participation in Learning

The findings presented in the table also indicate that translanguaging encourages students' active engagement. Studies by Seltzer and Collins, García and Otheguy, and Wijayanti demonstrate that multilingual discussions and group work that allow the use of more than one language make students more cognitively and socially involved. Linguistic barriers that previously limited student participation are reduced, enabling students to focus on conceptual understanding rather than merely on linguistic form. From a pedagogical perspective, this strengthens the argument that translanguaging contributes to student-centered learning, in which interaction, dialogue, and meaning-making are at the core of the learning process.

3. Learning Comfort and the Reduction of Academic Anxiety

Several studies in the table (Putrawan; Rasmin; Lestari et al.) emphasize that translanguaging creates learning comfort. Students do not feel pressured by the exclusive use of the target language, particularly in foreign language learning contexts. Linguistically flexible classroom environments allow students to process information through the language they master most, thereby minimizing cognitive and affective load. Theoretically, this condition supports the view that positive emotions in learning, such as comfort and a sense of safety, are correlated with more favorable learning attitudes, higher engagement, and greater persistence in completing academic tasks.

4. Translanguaging as an Inclusive Pedagogical Practice

The table also shows that translanguaging plays a role in building inclusive and equitable learning environments. Wei, Cenoz and Gorter, as well as García and Kleyn, emphasize that translanguaging is not only related to language strategies but also to the recognition of students' linguistic identities. By integrating students' languages into instruction, teachers implicitly affirm their social and cultural backgrounds. In the context of elementary education, this practice is particularly important because students are in the early phase of academic identity formation. Inclusive learning experiences at this stage have the potential to shape positive attitudes toward school and learning in the long term.

5. Critical Dimension: Balancing the First Language and the Target Language

Although most findings indicate positive effects, the table also highlights critical concerns. Studies by Raja et al. and Kuncoroningtyas et al. show that some students and educators worry about the possibility of reduced exposure to the target language if translanguaging is used excessively. This suggests that translanguaging is not a substitute for target language learning, but rather a supportive strategy that must be managed proportionally. Therefore, the success of translanguaging is largely determined by teachers' pedagogical competence in balancing the use of the first language and the target language. Teachers need to design activities that still

provide opportunities for target language practice while utilizing other languages as cognitive and affective scaffolds.

6. Implications for Learning Attitudes as an Affective Factor

When linked to learning attitude theory (Mega et al.), the findings in the table indicate that translanguaging contributes to the formation of positive learning attitudes through three main pathways: (1) increased self-confidence, (2) enhanced engagement and participation, and (3) the creation of a comfortable and inclusive learning environment. These three aspects are key indicators of constructive learning attitudes. Therefore, translanguaging not only affects students' understanding of subject matter but also shapes their affective dispositions toward learning, which in turn may influence long-term academic success.

7. Relevance for Elementary Education

In the context of elementary education, these findings have significant implications. Elementary school represents a fundamental phase in the development of students' learning attitudes, motivation, and academic identity. The translanguaging approach, as summarized in the table, demonstrates strong potential to create learning experiences that are more humane, responsive to diversity, and empowering for students. Thus, translanguaging should be viewed not merely as a language strategy, but as a pedagogical approach that supports holistic educational goals: developing academic competence while simultaneously fostering positive learning attitudes.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the Systematic Literature Review summarized in the table and analyzed in the discussion section, it can be concluded that translanguaging is an effective pedagogical approach in multilingual learning contexts, particularly at the elementary school level. The implementation of translanguaging through the use of students' first language as a scaffold for understanding, multilingual classroom discussions, and the use of bilingual materials has been shown not only to support students' cognitive comprehension but also to have a significant positive impact on the affective aspects of learning.

The main findings indicate that translanguaging contributes to increased student self-confidence, encourages active engagement and participation in learning, and creates a sense of comfort and safety in the classroom environment. In addition, this approach plays an important role in building an inclusive learning atmosphere by acknowledging and valuing students' linguistic diversity. Through these mechanisms, translanguaging has been shown to foster more positive learning attitudes, which are a key factor in long-term academic success.

Nevertheless, this review also reveals critical concerns regarding the potential reduction of exposure to the target language if translanguaging is not implemented proportionally. Therefore, the application of translanguaging must be accompanied by careful pedagogical planning to ensure that a balance between the use of the first language and the target language is maintained.

Overall, translanguaging can be regarded as a relevant and strategic approach in multilingual elementary education. This approach is not only oriented toward language proficiency, but also toward the development of positive learning attitudes, student engagement, and the strengthening of academic identity. Future research is recommended to empirically examine the relationship between translanguaging and learning attitudes through experimental designs or longitudinal studies, so that its contribution to educational practice can be more comprehensively demonstrated.

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