



# Translanguaging as a way to fostering EFL learners' criticality in a hybrid course design

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## ABSTRACT

This case study examines the growth of criticality in three English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners through a hybrid course design which involves a translanguaging space for the development of reading and listening skills. Throughout the course, the learners were encouraged to deal with multimodal materials presented both in Turkish and English in line with translanguaging pedagogy. They were guided to use their full linguistic repertoire in digitally enriched translanguaging space and critically analyze the reading materials in group discussions and reflective writing activities. An exploratory approach is adopted, based upon a series of interviews with EFL learners, observations of their contributions to face-to-face debate lessons, and their reflective papers. All three learners developed criticality to varying degrees. Having discussed the significance of translanguaging in the development of criticality, we introduce implications for the relationship between criticality, translanguaging, and technology for fostering criticality of EFL learners. Then, we present pedagogical implications for teachers and teacher educators as to how fuller understanding and deep learning can be engendered in asynchronous sessions, and how *digitality* (digitally-enriched criticality) can be fostered by a hybrid translanguaging space. Implications from these findings may be used to inform classroom pedagogy.

## 1. Introduction

Among 21st-century skills, criticality is a core component of learning skills facilitating creativity in K-12 contexts both for emergent bilinguals and expert bilinguals (Garcia & Wei, 2014). As conceptualized by Freire (1972), criticality refers to questioning the *why* or debating the *how* rather than filling students with knowledge and facts they have to memorize. Discussions and debates hold the potential to develop critical thinking (CT) (Wood & Miller, 2014) which is the first step towards criticality (Banegas & Villacañas de Castro, 2016). Catalyzed by CT-induced deliberation, criticality thus entails making inquiries about prevailing ELT practices and assumptions by asking such questions as *why English-only policy* and *how to foster interculturality*.

Due to the monoglossic view (Bakhtin, 1981) and rote instructional methods, students in Turkey are likely to develop uncritical acceptance of texts with submissive deference to the ideas and language forms posed by native speakers of English. It engenders a vicious circle in which they receive all kinds of information and later regurgitate the same orally or in writing. They are thus conventionally not challenged to think critically (Altinyelken, Çayır, & Agirdag, 2015). This presents a worrisome picture particularly

*Abbreviations:* CT, Critical Thinking; EFL, English as a Foreign Language; ELT, English Language Teaching; LMS, Learning Management System.

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if the dynamic view of languages (Garcia, 2009) is adopted as students should be enabled “read the word and the world” (Freire & Macedo, 1987) more critically and make assessments through a critical prism by utilizing their whole semiotic and cognitive resources (Wei, 2018). Learning Management Systems (LMS) have the potential to create a process of constructivist learning in dynamic bilingualism-adopted environments; nonetheless, such learning which is not connatural in technology entails a facilitator and a series of interconnected tasks that involve the social dimension of learning. This study focuses on the role of hybrid course designs in fostering criticality in EFL learners through translanguaging. Three crucial aspects of the educational context which are the concern of this study reverberate an innovative approach in fostering emergent bilinguals’ criticality in dynamic bilingualism-oriented contexts.

- Hybrid nature course, in which asynchronous lessons are endorsed with a fewer number of face-to-face lessons (See Mumford & Dikilitaş, 2020).
- Criticality as the course content in teaching EFL learners as emergent bilinguals, i.e., students were expected to shift from a subservient stance to a critical stance with higher order thinking skills (Garcia & Wei, 2014).
- A student-centered teaching style in which each lesson was responsive to students’ needs and interests, for instance, by pinpointing specific topics to analyze, encouraging criticality, and refining focus points (Garcia, Johnson, & Seltzer, 2017).

These aspects arguably reverberate a context providing pivotal insights into the interplay between hybrid course design, translanguaging, and criticality. Despite many studies on critical pedagogy in English Language Teaching (ELT), ELT “fails to make central the most fundamental pedagogical questions regarding student empowerment” (Pennycook, 1990, p. 304). In this study, the target is to contribute in the context of fostering translanguaging-induced criticality in ELT in a hybrid course design.

The integration of technology in language learning and teaching has altered the chances for fostering criticality, with the prospects to broaden chances for enhancing critical thinking skills and sense of agency by enabling students to rethink their original understanding of the world (Freire, 2005), demolishing culture of silence in which students’ voices are not included (Freire & Macedo, 2003; Monchinski, 2008). Translanguaging pedagogy holds the potential to strengthen this technologically-created space for criticality by encouraging students to utilize their full linguistic repertoire in that they can shuttle between the languages (Tai & Wei, 2021). It is, therefore, significant to understand how a translanguaging pedagogy-driven hybrid course – which refers to the process of asynchronous reading, writing, and discussing English content with either language supported by face-to-face interactional debate - affects EFL students’ criticality, which also is an underexplored area of research since there is a lack of studies exploring the effectiveness of hybrid instruction at a K-12 context (Dixon, Christison, Dixon, & Palmer, 2021) and investigating the role of translanguaging spaces where learners can use and communicate their full linguistic repertoire - i.e. first language (Turkish, in this case) and the emergent language (English as the foreign language) in language learning and development of criticality. To address these gaps, we sought insights into the following two research questions: a) *How does a translanguaging pedagogy-driven hybrid course enable EFL students to enact criticality?* b) *What factors influence their criticality development?*

### 1.1. Criticality, translanguaging, and educational technology

Criticality is about transformation by learning to combine knowledge and be self-aware and aware of the world around affecting actions (Freire, 1972). Although criticality and CT are used interchangeably, CT is among the factors influencing criticality development in addition to self-criticism, cross-cultural and cross-linguistic language programs (Brumfit, Myles, Mitchell, Johnston, & Ford, 2005), learner autonomy and self-reflection (Barnett, 1997), development of linguistic competence (Pavlenko, 2001). Barnett (1997) indicates that criticality comprises “critical thinking, analytical reasoning, critical self-reflection, and critical action” (p.6).

Criticality which is intertwined with CT (Banegas & Villacañas de Castro, 2016) is also linked with critical pedagogy seeking teachers’ and their students’ empowerment (Freire, 1972). Criticality builds on CT which means “a complex process of deliberation which involves a wide range of skills and attitudes for deciding what to believe or do” (Cottrell, 2005, p.2) and also “questioning not only assumptions of others, but also questioning your own assumptions” (Barnet & Bedau, 2011, p.4).

Criticality also entails CT by which one thinks, pinpoints problems, searches for related information, and makes decisions to solve problems by reflecting and questioning (Bean, 2011). Criticality thus has three tenets: a) *emancipation* which implies changing one’s reality and embracing another reality (Freire, 1972), and b) *praxis* which denotes “action and reflection” (Freire, 1985, p.154-155) to “humanize” the world (Freire, 1985, p. 70) through transformation, c) *culture* which signifies the ability to evaluate and rationalize based upon the context in which an individual exists. CT is a cognitive strategy consisting of six skills: interpretation, analysis, evaluation, induction, inference, and deduction (Facione, 2007; Watson & Glaser, 2002). Thus, CT is composed of a set of skills which can be taught and applied (Hammersley-Fletcher & Hanley, 2016). To foster these skills, authenticity, learner-centered instruction, and meeting learner needs are essential (Yang, Chuang, Li, & Tseng, 2013) to trigger student interaction, assign active roles to students, and provide students with a warm atmosphere and sufficient time to think (Yeh, 2004). Particularly when students are required to think critically in an EFL class, these needs may be more explicit (Yang & Chou, 2008) since CT includes elements – i.e., learning how to reflect, question, and discuss their understanding – which lead to criticality. Eventually, CT can be fostered through opportunities for peer reaction and a process-based approach (Tishman, Jay, & Perkins, 1993). Few studies investigating the relationship between CT and ELT focused on teachers’ roles (Ghaemi & Taherian, 2011) and students’ foreign language skills (Fahim, Bagherkazemi, & Alemi, 2010).

Through criticality, the artificial chasm between target versus mother tongue languages is broken, which enables both the learner and the teacher to transform by focusing upon the teaching and learning process on meaning-making (Creese & Blackledge, 2015; Garcia, 2009). Translanguaging which refers to “a pedagogical practice where students were asked to alternate between languages for

the purposes of receptive or productive use” (Garcia & Wei, 2015, p. 20), enables students to construct and perpetually change their sociocultural identities and values as they interact with their historical and current conditions critically (Wei, 2011). Thus, translanguaging is likely to endorse and trigger “new configurations of language practices as well as new subjectivities, understandings and social structures” (Hua, Wei, & Lyons, 2017, p.412) by establishing positions which are both oppositional to, and encompassing of, institutional values (Creese & Blackledge, 2010).

Even though pedagogical implications of incorporating translanguaging into teaching and learning situations have been presented in face-to-face education contexts: a) improving students’ cognitive and literacy abilities (Palmer, Martinez, Mateus, & Henderson, 2014), b) the flexibility of the mind (Sayer, 2013), c) interpersonal benefits (McMillan & Rivers, 2011), d) developing foreign language skills (Yuzlu & Dikilitaş, 2022), students seem to be enjoying these benefits of translanguaging through technology (Oliver & Nguyen, 2017). Eady, Herrington, and Jones (2010) note that students find the technology useful, they show a quick rate of uptake and there is a concurrent development in their literacy learning because technology offers them a translanguaging space in which they can shuttle between the languages to digest and process information. Beyond these academic benefits, the overall purpose of the current study is to examine whether, and if so how, translanguaging practices foster criticality of EFL students in a hybrid course because criticality is also about generating a more equal classroom context in which the students and teachers co-work to design a curriculum or approach constructed together (Freire, 1972).

To date, most translanguaging studies have been limited to face-to-face educational contexts (Garcia, 2011) or exploring translanguaging practices within online tools (Oliver & Nguyen, 2017; Tai & Wei, 2021). Therefore, we chose for the current study a hybrid course design managed through CANVAS since it subsumes a variety of multimedia content, ideal for language learning and enhancing learner motivation, as well as various features for implementing models of individualized instruction. It also enables students to overcome the physical and time constraints of a typical classroom, engendering an opportunity for an individualized and adaptive learning experience (Meurant, 2010). Thus, this hybrid course aims at encouraging students to express themselves freely and take risks within a safe space where systematic translanguaging activities are embedded.

Little is known about the translanguaging-induced criticality of those who are emergent bilinguals in an EFL context, nor in particular as hybrid course-takers, as is the case in the current study. Therefore, the current study seeks to explore translanguaging in a very different context with a different focus from the existing body of research. It explores the potential of extending translanguaging pedagogy into a hybrid course design that builds on the affordances of the technology for stimulating criticality in a hybrid course for Turkish EFL learners who have consistently been reported to struggle to attain the criticality necessary for the classroom and beyond (Altinyelken et al., 2015).

## 1.2. Theoretical approach to criticality through translanguaging prism

Criticality can be enacted by addressing multiculturalism and interculturalism (Norton & Toohey, 2004). Translanguaging pedagogy involving criticality enables bilinguals to utilize their entire linguistic repertoire under different circumstances requiring criticality (Wei, 2011) by moving away from monolingual principles (Howatt, 1984). And crucially, it questions the ownership, learning, use, and instruction by removing the boundaries between the named languages (Garcia, 2009). This relationship between translanguaging and criticality is crucial in this study. Principally, the instructional design of translanguaging provides students with opportunities to build background on a unit topic (*explorar*), engage critically with the unit topic (*evaluar*), redesign and have a new understanding of the topic (*imaginar*), work collaboratively for getting feedback on ideas (*presentar*), and put the new understanding into use with the final design (*implementar*) (Garcia et al., 2017) so that they can explore topics in depth by utilizing their whole linguistic repertoire. Translanguaging as speakers’ instinct holds the potential to create a *translanguaging space* in which speakers can incorporate “different dimensions of their personal history, experience, and environment, their attitude, belief and ideology, their cognitive and physical capacity into coordinated and meaningful performance” (Wei, 2011, p. 1223). Thus, a translanguaging space is, “transformative in nature” (Hua et al., 2017, p. 412) since students are engaged in constructing knowledge by going beyond the named languages (Otheguy & Garcia, 2019), which might scaffold the process of the development of criticality. In contrast to the dominant model of teaching (Freire, 1972), students are thus regarded as critical thinkers instead of passive learners (Hooks, 1994). Garcia and Leiva (2014) note that language-minoritized students develop their CT skills thanks to a translanguaging space with higher order thinking questions by which they could bring their funds of knowledge to the foreground and use their whole linguistic repertoire. Garcia, Flores, and Woodley (2012) also indicate that a translanguaging space in which students could discuss interracial marriages by utilizing their entire linguistic repertoire led them to self-reflect and elaborate on ideas, which ended up with a high level of critical consciousness. All these findings lend evidence to the fact that translanguaging space might trigger criticality as “one cannot push or break boundaries without being critical” (Garcia & Wei, 2014, p. 67).

This process is supported by a flexible mindful teacher who adopts a facilitative role (Garcia, 2009) and becomes a translanguaging facilitator (Dikilitaş & Mumford, 2020). While other studies have addressed these issues, a more explicit focus is needed on the impact of a translanguaging space created in a hybrid mode on EFL learners’ criticality.

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1. Research design

An exploratory approach is taken to explore students’ experiences and learning chances since, as far as we are aware, no research has striven to explore *how a translanguaging pedagogy-driven hybrid course enables EFL students in a K-12 context to enact criticality by*

providing digitally-enriched translanguaging space on an LMS. Due to the unpredictable and idiosyncratic nature of student learning (Morrison, 2008; Wells, 2000), we decided to adopt a multi-case study approach (Stake, 2006), dwelling on a small sample of EFL learners we could explore in-depth cross-case comparison to delineate “present relationships ... among variables in a given situation and [accounting] for changes occurring in those relationships over time” (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007, p. 205). Case studies are appropriate to explore complex changes over time, particularly with 3–5 cases in-depth (Creswell, 2013). This study draws on three case studies, each representing a student and providing up to 14 h of data (nine interviews and twelve lesson observations) combined with reflective journals and reflective papers. This amount of data is in line with Stern’s (2007) argument that small sample size could be enough to reach saturation in the data, which emphasizes depth rather than breadth. Moreover, it is possible to consider this research as a comparative case study, which is especially suited to analyzing commonalities and differences across cases (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014) by following an emergent design and noting interconnected relationships (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017). These characteristics are likely to shed light on the complexity of the process leading to criticality in a hybrid course design.

## 2.2. Participants

The first author invited six students who were extraordinarily engaged in classes and involved in intercultural communication via the school’s Erasmus Projects. Three of them accepted and formed a self-selected group, providing a convenience sample. Demographic and other background information is provided in the case studies per se.

## 2.3. Course design

The course design is shown in Table 1 (see Table 2).

Throughout the asynchronous sessions, students were required to do various activities targeting different CT skills: a) inference: discriminating among degrees of truth or falsity of inference based on given data, b) deduction: determining whether certain conclusions necessarily emerge from information in given statements, c) interpretation: deciding whether generalizations based upon the given data are warranted, d) evaluation: distinguishing between strong as well as relevant arguments from weak or irrelevant ones, (Watson & Glaser, 2002), e) induction: warranting an argument’s conclusion by the assumed truth of its premises, f) analysis: determining significance and detecting possible inferential relationships (Facione, 2007).

In line with the translanguaging instructional design, reading and listening activities (2h per week) were conducted in asynchronous sessions to *explorar* and *evaluar* topics on CANVAS and discussions (1h per week) were conducted to prompt students to *imaginar* in asynchronous sessions. Students carried out presentations during debates (1h per week) in face-to-face sessions so that they had opportunities to *presentar* and *implementar*. Students were allowed to use all their linguistic repertoires – i.e., Turkish and English in online sessions for reading, listening, and discussions in line with *translanguaging corriente*. They made presentations and conducted debates in English in face-to-face sessions. The teacher facilitated translanguaging by providing bilingual reading materials, listening stations in L1, and accessing and building on background information with higher order thinking questions. The students could also benefit from others’ ideas in asynchronous discussion sessions and conduct small group work before their individual conference in face-to-face debate sessions. In line with Garcia’s (2009) model allowing flexible use of bilingual resources *within skills*, students could

**Table 1**  
Conceptual framework aiming at linking essential learning components.

Essential Learning Components	Theory-based principles	Application to research-design
Authenticity	Authentic language learning (Garcia & Wei, 2014; Yang, 2002)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Authentic multimedia materials based on themes applicable to student experiences</li> <li>Incorporating online discussions for authentic interactions in a translanguaging space</li> </ul>
	Discussions and debates for CT (Garcia et al., 2017)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Designing asynchronous online discussion and face-to-face debate activities</li> <li>Providing opportunities for students to share their thoughts and opinions by making necessary shifts in line with translanguaging <i>corriente</i></li> </ul>
	Linking language and thought (Kennedy et al., 1991; Garcia, 2009)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrating translanguaging space with CT instruction</li> <li>Creating online activities which simultaneously foster CT and meaning-making</li> </ul>
Student-centredness	Social constructivism (An, 2006; Wei, 2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilizing collaborative learning activities including discussions and debates</li> <li>Scaffolding learning process through online learning tasks</li> </ul>
	CT instruction through bilingual resources and direct instruction- run discussion (Garcia, 2009; Yang & Chou, 2008)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creating weekly practice modules aiming at specific CT skills</li> <li>Presenting in-class modeling and discussion of CT by using whole linguistic repertoire</li> </ul>
Diverse needs and abilities of students	Individualized instruction (Garcia et al., 2017; Novak, 2010)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing materials in line with students’ needs and bilingualism</li> <li>Providing individual feedback</li> </ul>
	Online learning (Garcia et al., 2017; Meurant, 2010)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Designing a virtual learning environment which best works for carrying out the objectives mentioned above.</li> </ul>

**Table 2**

Table 2 displays the study process with weekly content and translanguaging-driven activities.

Week	Module	Theme	Translanguaging-driven activities	Targeted CT skill
1	Interviews			
2	R&L Di&De	Entertainment	Selecting music to listen to by analyzing local and foreign genres	Inference, Deduction, Analysis
3	R&L Di&De	Entertainment	Analyzing the arguments and biases of an interview with a woman wrestler	Deduction, Induction, Analysis
4	R&L Di&De	Future	Talking about possible technological advances	Induction, Analysis, Interpretation
5	R&L Di&De	Future	Proposing a solution to environmental problems	Analysis, Deduction, Evaluation
6	R&L Di&De	Health	Food and drink advertisements and evaluating their assumptions	Analysis, Deduction
7	Interviews			
8	R&L Di&De	Culture	Shopping and explaining the analogies	Analysis, Deduction, Evaluation
9	R&L Di&De	Human Rights	Refugee camps and expressing and explaining one's stance	Analysis, Induction, Evaluation
10	R&L Di&De	Friendship	Explaining one's stance on a climber's decision	Evaluation, Analysis, Induction
11	R&L Di&De	Friendship	Discussing social networking	Evaluation, Deduction, Induction
12	Interviews			

R: Reading L: Listening Di: Discussion De: Debate.

enjoy materials converted into bilingual mode – part of them in L1 and the rest in L2 - and utilize their full linguistic repertoire while reading, listening, writing, and speaking. The teacher, as well as students, made linguistic shifts during debates as suggested in the *translanguaging corriente* (Garcia et al., 2017).

#### 2.4. Data collection procedures

We gathered the data over the fall semester, September 2021–January 2022. The first author recorded face-to-face lessons (conducted at school), and viewed these, making notes of criticality and certain exchanges in minute-by-minute observation protocols when deemed to foster criticality. We did not transcribe the lessons verbatim owing to the time factor, but transcribed the minute-by-minute observation protocols. The first author conducted three interviews having different focuses with each student in a semi-structured manner, one before the training, one during the training, and one after the training. Students' first language, Turkish, was utilized in all the interviews to put them at ease. At the beginning of the interviews, the first author elucidated the objective of the interviews, attained written consent, and gave a guarantee of anonymity. The interviews, each lasting 20–30 min, were recorded and transcribed. The students handed in reflective papers every three weeks (3rd, 6th, 9th, and 12th week).

#### 2.5. Data analysis

After transcription, the transcripts were read by the researchers. Data were subsequently coded using MAXQDA. Open coding was employed to analyze the data. The process followed a repetitive pattern of reading and re-reading the data carefully. Necessary changes were conducted as the analysis progressed if necessary. As far as possible, the students' own words were utilized while forming the profiles, to render the true meanings and intents of the students (Seidman, 2006, p. 119). Constructed from three data sources: interviews, participant observations, and documents, a thick description of the cases (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) are provided. The reflective papers the participants produced every three weeks and the reflective journal the first author kept were the documents used for analysis. We built the cases by utilizing data from the three sources adopting a deductive as well as inductive approach; the data were analysed from the conceptual prism (i.e., factors affecting criticality). We presented the resulting case studies in chronological order to stress the course of the development of criticality, generating three 'stories' (Stake, 2010, p. 197) of the students' criticality development, to grant an emerging theoretical understanding of the development of criticality. Each case representing a student has an emergent design (Creswell, 2013), which illustrates differences and similarities in terms of the potential effects of translanguaging-driven hybrid course design and its changing effect over time. The case studies were also member-checked with each participant who confirmed their cases.

#### 2.6. Trustworthiness

As the first author has an emic stance, it is of importance to address and deal with the researcher bias to ensure four criteria suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985) for trustworthiness: a) the *credibility* of a research study which signifies confidence in the truth of the findings, b) *transferability* which denotes that findings have applicability in other settings, c) *dependability* which shows that findings are consistent and could be repeated, d) *confirmability* which demonstrates the neutrality or the degree to which findings are

shaped by the respondents and not researcher bias or motivation. Lincoln and Guba (1985) also describe a series of techniques to achieve the criteria: prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation, peer debriefing, negative case analysis, referential adequacy, member-checking for *credibility*; thick descriptions for *transferability*; inquiry audit for *dependability*; confirmability audit, audit trail, triangulation, reflexivity for *confirmability*. To overcome the challenge caused by the first author's position as an insider and provide the trustworthiness as well as the credibility of the current study, we utilized data triangulation, peer debriefing, and member-checking strategies to ensure the reliability of the findings. The data collection and analysis process was also audited by the second author who has an etic stance.

### 3. Findings

We present the cases below. The reflective papers, the interviews, and the recordings of face-to-face sessions represent information to create a picture of each participant's development of criticality. Having explicated the purpose of the research, we received informed consent verbally at the beginning of the interviews.

#### 3.1. Azra

Azra is a 15-year-old girl who has been learning English for 10 years. She completed her primary and secondary school education in a private school with 10 h a week English course. Her English level is B1 according to the English Level Test conducted at the very beginning of the academic year. Her high school, a well-known state school in the city, is Turkish medium. She has never been abroad. After having learnt the course and signed up on LMS CANVAS, she turned out to be an impassioned participant. Just before the course, Azra engaged in a short conversation with her teacher in which she seemed quite motivated and excited because it would never be possible for her to find such an opportunity that could develop her English fluency just like native speakers. In reply, the teacher asked her "Why not develop whole linguistic repertoire? How can you develop all your linguistic repertoire to make meaning?" This short dialog was the beginning of mindset transformation, leading to deep learning (Yuzlu & Dikilitas, 2022) through the online mediation of the teacher, a translanguaging facilitator (Mumford & Dikilitas, 2020), which became noticeable as the study progressed. There is evidence that deep learning took place by utilizing the whole linguistic repertoire online. Early in the course, Azra wrote the following contributions in her reflective paper: "I think that going from one text to another freely without time constraint on CANVAS is a big advantage to understand the topic in depth." As the course progressed, she started to develop a critical stance by going beyond mere comprehension and fluency in English, stating in the second interview: "Moving along the different texts and discussing on CANVAS led me to question the underlying reasons for things." Later, Azra seemed to become even more critical, stating in her reflective paper:

I had been just focused on improving my English speaking skills or accent rather than using the information to question the message and think about it by the time I took part in this course. Even in the face-to-face debate, I should maybe contribute to the discussion by raising questions. Instead of just giving reactions to provide the correct answer.

She started to become self-aware and question the *how*. This unveils a greater depth in criticality triggered by translanguaging (Garcia & Wei, 2014) by moving away from rote learning to deep learning. In the second interview, she acknowledges the benefits of the hybrid course:

I am happy to have joined this course. I have learnt to use the information in Turkish and English in order to think about it and make links between things and more importantly question things. Before our face-to-face debates, I had enough time to think again and again, discuss preliminary things first online and fine-tune my thoughts based on my friends' comments.

This quote also indicates that she comprehended knowledge on LMS by reading, listening and discussing it followed by reflection during the in-class debate to embody the *why*. This flipped learning was facilitated by the shuttling between the two different modes of communication, which is characterised as transcontextualisation, even of criticality. This shows emergence of criticality initiated by digitally-enriched translanguaging space, and clear evidence of *interactional translanguaging space* (Ho & Tai, 2021).

Azra furthered her understanding of the significance of the hybrid course in her final reflective paper, she wrote:

The use of materials on CANVAS was very effective and thought-provoking and the interaction on discussion parts enabled me to see different points of me and approach the topic from these views, too. For that, I made extra research, surfed on the net more and used Google translation for some parts. Thus, I could come to face-to-face debate in a well-informed manner, which led me to discuss topics in-depth and raised genuine interest in our discussion topic to further explore it.

By pinpointing problems and searching for related information, she began to become aware of the world around her and embraced another reality with reflection, showing bottom-up engagements in critical use of digital tools (Prinsloo, 2022). This also shows a growing awareness of criticality and use of online materials creating *performative translanguaging space* (Ho & Tai, 2021).

Azra's remarkable development seems partially due to her smooth adaption to the online part, LMS CANVAS of the hybrid course, especially her participation in discussions. Delineating the online discussion, she states:

It's very useful. I can externalize my initial thoughts and build on them later on so that I can move along my thoughts and ideas. Additionally, I have a chance to see my friends' opinion. I mean the common and different parts, which makes me revisit my thoughts.

Azra also demonstrated that she has begun to adopt a far more critical stance, stating in the interview:

I have learnt not only to look at topics from different points of view and use both Turkish and English effectively but also to look at myself from different points of view and see the strong and weak sides of mine.

In addition, she highlights the role of the audio-visual materials on LMS CANVAS, stating: “*Videos and slides helped me a lot to comprehend the topic. I could think about the topic in depth after watching the videos and reading audio-added slides by pausing and rewinding when necessary.*” She was able to self-regulate her learning process. Her predilection for visual elements is visible in her face-to-face debate materials including images, graphics, and music. She is able to reflect on her previous thoughts before the course, stating towards the end of the course:

*It made me more open-minded to using both Turkish as well as English and online learning platforms. Beforehand, I used to regard using Turkish as a weak side. Also, I used to think that online learning means just listening to the teacher and getting bored.*

Azra achieved linguistic emancipation through learning to benefit from her whole linguistic repertoire by moving away from the only-L2 approach before the course and build on digitally-enhanced translanguaging space, stating in the interview towards the end of the course:

*I think there should be Turkish visual and audio materials too and such an online platform provides more time and flexibility to process information. Further, I began to be aware of the use of Turkish, which enabled me to make links between different and similar points in our culture and foreign culture. I also think that there is a possibility that LMS CANVAS could also be integrated into regular English classes.*

In her final reflective paper, Azra states: “*I used to think I could improve my English just listening to and talking only in English. Yet I can see that I improved it by using Turkish even on an online platform CANVAS*”. Thus, her initial monoglossic attitude and desire for fluency showing her submissive deference to the L2-dominant language practice at schools, which was symbiotically related to her own mindset, i.e. symbiotic relatedness, turned into favoring for heteroglossic stance, which also led her to a realization that criticality is a key element. Finally, she expressed her happiness with the hybrid course and read her case as part of the member-checking process and expressed that it gave her a clearer sense of her own progress.

### 3.2. Serdar

Serdar is a 15-year-old boy who has been learning English for 10 years. He completed his primary and secondary school education in a state school with 4 h a week English course. His English level is B1 according to the English Level Test conducted at the very beginning of the academic year. His high school, a well-known state school in the city, is Turkish medium. He has never been abroad. He became the most enthusiastic participant in the group in that he created an account on CANVAS just after having learnt about the online component of the course. He has previous experience of learning English online, and he reports an interest in technology and English. Serdar’s predilection seemed to be aligned with the course design, and in the interview, he stated that “*Computers and English are key parts of my life. I spend time on computer searching for information mostly and I look for opportunities to improve my English on different websites.*” Thus, with the integration of English course into an LMS, and possibly owing to personal inclinations, he can fulfill all the tasks on LMS CANVAS.

Before the course, he stated that he wanted to be as fluent as native speakers. Interestingly, he also expressed his ideas about English learning very directly, as if one of the supporters of the unitary view of languages posited by translanguaging by stating: “*I think there should be a place for Turkish in English classes too so that we can better use the information and also personally I feel more comfortable and express myself better in English.*” He based his thoughts on his previous experiences in primary and secondary schools by expressing:

*One of our English teachers at primary school talked only in English and asked us all the time to speak English. We tried to do so but mostly we were silent all year long. However, one of our English teachers at secondary school allowed us to use Turkish when we needed to use it, which made us more interested and talkative in English.*

Towards the middle of the course, Serdar started to focus on meaning-making rather than just improving his English fluency. His reflective paper emphasizes the role of knowledge construction process leading to criticality:

*Going into the essence of the topic in Turkish and English enabled me to question how and why and I could make my mind clearer after our face-to-face debates ... our discussions on LMS CANVAS were helpful to think about the topic again and again, which enabled me to ask new questions and discuss them in depth later in our face-to-face debates.*

Serdar’s evaluation of the hybrid course and translanguaging practices can be seen as emergence of criticality fostered by digitally-enriched translanguaging space on CANVAS. In the interview, he argues that the regular English classes should embody Turkish and also an online learning management system to enjoy linguistic emancipation and transcontextualising respectively.

Serdar: We have studied three topics so far; I have not only learnt better but also could develop arguments and justify them.

Interviewer: How did you feel when you saw Turkish materials?

Serdar: Surprised but in a positive sense. They were helpful because they enabled me to see the Turkish side, our side, and my side on the topic. Actually, I learnt more about Turkey and Turkish culture, too. English was helpful for the foreign side. Being

able to mix them for processing information made me feel proud of myself because I could not only understand but also think about the topic in detail and ask questions to myself and my friends and you, too.

Interviewer: What do you think about LMS CANVAS?

Serdar: I think it was great for me to learn such a system. I had more time to learn and think about the topic and discuss it. I was not limited to classroom hours. I could also make research on the Internet for more. I could deepen my understanding.

Interviewer: How has it helped you to improve your understanding?

Serdar: I could use both Turkish and English materials and discuss the topic by using both languages, it was kind of breaking chains. After learning the topic in a real sense, I could even imagine the topic for myself, my life, my country, and even the world and I could go beyond showing understanding of the topic. So, I experience I could have a discussion in a real sense. I mean I could ask questions for underlying reasons and possible outcomes and their possible results even in English.

He could reflect and combine knowledge without time constraints and linguistic barriers by searching for related information in the initial stages – i.e. *explorar* and *evaluar* - of the translanguaging instructional cycle. Thus, he could question the *how* and *why* since he could enjoy digitally-enriched translanguaging space to *imaginar* and *implementar* the constructed knowledge in the initial stages of translanguaging instructional design (Garcia et al., 2017). Therefore, he sees integrating LMSs into translanguaging space as a catalyst for processing and digesting information (Baker, 2011). It seemed to enable him to “read the word and the world” (Freire & Macedo, 1987) more critically and make assessments through a critical prism. One notable statement from the interview is that he seems to have adopted a more critical stance towards his English learning process, stating: “I used to think that I would use English to talk to English people, but now I think that English is not just for talking to English people, to learn about the whole world and talk about myself, too.” This is also evident in his reflective paper, which concludes:

The most significant thing that I have learnt in this course is to use the information to question and re-think. I also learned that languages are tools for our aims. As long as we use them, we can make a difference.

The course has been successful in revealing that the purposeful and strategic use of whole linguistic repertoire on LMS CANVAS, i.e. linguistic emancipation could lead to the development of CT. His emerging criticality meant that technology had a high utility value in his knowledge construction. In his final interview, he expressed:

*If the hybrid course with Turkish/ English materials can be disseminated, students can not only improve their English but also go beyond text comprehension with technology. I used both in this course and I learned better. Learning has been easier and more effective than ever before. More importantly, I decided to be a vlogger in order to get to know and present the similarities and differences in cultures. I will use both Turkish and English.*

The quote shows his ability to evaluate his context thanks to transcontextualising and produce solutions by reflecting. Thus, there is evidence of digitally-enriched translanguaging space for developing criticality and creativity alike.

### 3.3. Cannur

Cannur is a 15-year-old girl. She has been learning English for 10 years. She completed her primary and secondary school education at a private school with 10 h a week. She has never been abroad. She also reports having spent efforts on learning English through such media as music, films, websites, and TV. Unlike the other two cases, Cannur strongly supported the dominant monoglossic view suggesting English-only policy. In her first interview before the course, she states:

Throughout my education, I have been exposed to English and we have been forced to use only English. Our teachers always spoke in English even if they could understand and speak Turkish. I think it is the correct way. I could improve my English thanks to this. I believe only English should be used in English classes even for the ones whose English proficiency is low.

This seems to show a desire to apply English-only policy in the course, as well as her entrenched monoglossic view. Towards the middle of the course, Cannur started to evaluate her translanguaging experience in her reflective paper: “I used to think using Turkish is a deficiency particularly in English classes. There seems to be a room for Turkish to learn and use information in firsthand. I began to learn how to combine the information in different languages.”

In the interview, Cannur’s focus on the evaluation of her translanguaging experience continues:

In the past, I always used English before discussing things in English. However, reading texts in Turkish or watching videos in Turkish ended up being a more interesting experience than I would have imagined because I could see the opposite or similar view in the Turkish context. It was kind of enlightening for me, too. I felt like I learnt more and could discuss not just for showing fluency but questioning the reasons and results.

This reveals a strong impact of her translanguaging experience on criticality which was triggered by shuttling between the languages (Canagarajah, 2011) and removing the barriers between the languages (Garcia, 2009) to focus on meaning. She, therefore, begins to appreciate the role of linguistic emancipation.

Albeit the obvious influences of her monoglossic view-driven educational background, i.e. symbiotic relatedness, she seems to be inclined to new learning:



Although my English lessons enabled me to understand English and express myself in English, those lessons didn't teach me how to think in-depth and how to use information to question things, even the ones we take for granted at all. Discovering things whether it be in Turkish or English and then analyzing what you have discovered, thinking about them again for a longer time than a class hour and discussing on CANVAS, and finally coming to face-to-face debate with established information and wider scope was great.

This shows a clear understanding of the need to be able to use full linguistic repertoire in a virtual environment before getting into action as an autonomous language user. However, a major factor that limits Cannur's learning seems to be her ingrained monoglossic view:

*I think I force myself to write in English on CANVAS even if I know I can use Turkish. I do not know I feel kind of I am not doing the right thing. On the other hand, I notice that I use Turkish even while I am analyzing the text in English.*

This shows the conflict between the culture she was born into and educated in, as well as *translanguaging corriente* inherent even in emergent bilinguals (Garcia et al., 2017) and it can be noticed as in Cannur's case, which is also in line with translanguaging instinct (Wei, 2018). It also highlights symbiotic relatedness and thus suggests that translanguaging pedagogy can be a discursive process for students just like teachers (Liu, Lo, & Lin, 2020) as she shuttles between monoglossic and unitary view of languages and stays hesitant to use her full linguistic repertoire. Yet, online environment can play a facilitating role in promoting translanguaging space for deeper learning as Cannur indicated in her final reflective paper:

*I feel more comfortable when I use Turkish and English online ... because it is just a convenient platform to use both to search for something or brainstorm ... I feel myself in a searching area not in English class. It makes me feel that I am not violating rules.*

This attitude suggests that online environment presents a relaxing and encouraging setting for Cannur to use her full linguistic repertoire. In the final interview, Cannur states:

*CANVAS was like a kitchen in which I cooked the meal with Turkish and English ingredients and face-to-face debate was a dining room in which we tasted the food and expressed our likes or dislikes and thought in detail about better ones or the ones we had already eaten.*

Cannur's reflection on the interdependence of online and face-to-face sessions for constructing knowledge, i.e. transcontextualising suggests the direct connection between digitally-enriched translanguaging space and criticality. Cannur seems to have enjoyed using technology while going beyond languages as a knowledge construction tool for herself. Yet, she seems to be more concerned about English proficiency rather than criticality: "It was great to question things and come up with solutions and arguments. But I believe we cannot change things. Changes occur top-down. That's why, my priority should be to improve my English proficiency". Even though her assessment suggests criticality, it focuses on contextual aspects, and she does not feel strong enough to make a change at a macro level, which also evinces symbiotic relatedness. Finally, improving English proficiency seems to be a dominant factor in her outlook.

#### 4. Discussion

This study sought to explore the way EFL learners at a high school develop criticality in a translanguaging pedagogy-driven hybrid course. The findings revealed that such a course enabled learners to develop criticality in different aspects, i.e., *linguistic emancipation*, *transcontextualising*, and *symbiotic relatedness* in line with three tenets of criticality, i.e., *emancipation*, *praxis*, and *culture* (Freire, 1972, 1985). Linguistic emancipation – i.e., removing linguistic barriers to use the whole linguistic repertoire - shows learners' favourable reactions to utilizing full linguistic repertoire in that they moved away from their own monoglossic chasm and embraced heteroglossic reality (Freire, 1972) by conducting critical self-reflection (Barnett, 1997). They thus became empowered not only to question their monolingual assumptions (Barnet & Bedau, 2011) but also to decide what to believe or do (Cottrell, 2005) after having learnt to combine knowledge by using the existing evidence (Creese & Blackledge, 2015) through their full linguistic repertoire (Garcia & Wei, 2014). It thus reveals translanguaging as a catalyst in self-reflection (Barnett, 1997) and self-criticism (Brumfit et al., 2005) contributing to criticality. Uniquely, this study provides empirical evidence for translanguaging-induced criticality in contrast to a large amount of translanguaging-focused research remaining disconnected from criticality (Poza, 2017). In this regard, Azra moved away from an uncritical acceptance of English-only policy in language education, through her translanguaging-driven hybrid course and thought-instigating questions of the teacher, and the multimodal elements of the course to a far more sophisticated view of language learning and learning context. As for Serdar, he displays a drastic change by questioning both others' and his own assumptions (Barnet & Bedau, 2011).

This change - critical being - comes from a critical space which fosters rigorous, critical self-reflection, in a striving to decipher the type of person he wants to be in the world. This reflection also yokes together in dialog with action to "name the world" (Freire, 1972, p. 61). As critical reflection becomes integral to the creative process, Serdar's criticality ended up starting a Vlog focusing on similar and different points in cultures both in English and Turkish. It aligns with Hamman's (2018) call to provide students with a critical translanguaging space where they can enjoy the nature of bilingualism. Learners could also digest information (Baker, 2011) by benefitting from a virtual environment through reflection before action in face-to-face debate, i.e. transcontextualising by which they linked the advantages of a self-paced, autonomous learning environment without time constraints with those of face-to-face debates. After the learners had discussed their ideas in the asynchronous sessions by using their full linguistic repertoire, the teacher provided individualized feedback and posed higher-order thinking questions in line with the suggestions of McLoughlin and Luca (2000). In so doing, the digitally-enhanced translanguaging space provided on LMS CANVAS, therefore, fostered criticality by enabling learners to

explore the topics in depth without linguistic and contextual barriers. That is, learners could enjoy translanguaging *corriente* (Garcia et al., 2017) in expanded critical translanguaging space (Hamman, 2018). This nexus yielded positive results in terms of integrating criticality into the classroom (An, 2006; Bean, 2011; Marin & Halpern, 2011) and resonated with those of Garcia et al., 2012; Garcia & Leiva, 2014. Furthermore, open-mindedness, CT disposition (Yang et al., 2013), seems to have been augmented by this translanguaging-driven hybrid course possibly due to the virtual learning environment in which learners were provided with several authentic opportunities for sharing and discussing opinions, perspectives, and experiences in interaction with their peers by using their full linguistic repertoire. Symbiotic relatedness comes also into play in the case of Cannur. Although she demonstrates a critical awareness, she stays hesitant about her capacity to challenge certain norms, expectations, and ways of thinking. It aligns with another tenet of criticality, culture (Freire, 1972). She showed the ability to evaluate the context which she was born into and raised in. This also presents challenges of introducing criticality, particularly in a context in which it is neglected (Altinyelken et al., 2015). Three cases thus followed different trajectories in uptake of criticality.

In addressing the second research questions, three factors leading to the development of criticality emerge: (a) translanguaging pedagogy, b) LMS CANVAS, c) intersection of both for criticality.

#### a) Translanguaging Pedagogy

As the learners themselves are key in the promoting of their own criticality, there are three cases who start from a similar position, the desire to have native-like competence. Yet, their journeys inward triggered by translanguaging pedagogy vary, which is consistent with the saying “*caminante, no hay camino, se hace camino al andar*” (Traveler, there is no path, paths are made by walking). Therefore, it led learners to show different reactions to utilizing whole linguistic repertoire, building on one of the criticality-engendering factors – i.e. development of linguistic competence (Pavlenko, 2001). A clear example of this is the difference between Serdar and Cannur. While Serdar adopts and adapts to utilize whole linguistic repertoire immediately, Cannur keeps feeling guilty while using her whole linguistic repertoire and tends to shy away from it due to her ingrained monoglossic views despite experiencing translanguaging pedagogy-induced deep learning and criticality. It resonates with Garcia and Sylvan’s (2011) call to encourage ‘plurilingualism from the students up’ (p. 397).

#### b) LMS CANVAS

Owing to their basic computer literacy and previous experience in online learning during COVID-19 outbreak, all the learners did not experience any difficulties in signing up for accounts and navigating on CANVAS. They could complete all the tasks on time and self-monitor their learning process. Yet, their starting points were different. Although Cannur who has already been engaged in various media including websites, the online component of the course, LMS CANVAS had negative connotations for her at the very beginning, which transformed into positive connotations at the end, Serdar, due to his particular interest in technology, was the most enthusiastic about LMS CANVAS and added multimodal materials. Azra also adapted to LMS CANVAS easily and used it effectively. Thus, LMS CANVAS could further translanguaging space (Wei, 2011) by enabling them to experiment with language without time and context constraints.

#### c) Intersection of Translanguaging pedagogy and LMS CANVAS for criticality Improvement in CT, namely analysis, inference, evaluation, induction, and deduction was noted after the course, which might be due to the direct CT instruction (Marin & Halpern, 2011; Yang et al., 2013) as direct and explicit instruction and practices were provided for each skill. In addition to the explicit instruction directed at each CT skill, translanguaging pedagogy and hybrid course design were employed in order for learners to develop criticality. Translanguaging and hybrid design of the course operated in fluid spaces leading to linguistic emancipation and transcontextualising, i.e., removing linguistic and contextual barriers.

In this regard, this study is likely to shed light on the *digitality – combining the affordances of an LMS with meaning-making process in translanguaging space, thus engendering digitally-enriched criticality* - of translanguaging space in the light of orchestration of different modalities (Zhu, Li, & Jankowicz-Pytel, 2020) in addition to providing interactional and performative translanguaging space on online platforms (Ho & Tai, 2021). By doubling the advantage of utilizing their full linguistic and semiotic resources with hybrid education’s benefits including self-paced, ubiquitous learning environment without time constraints, learners at a high school could deepen their learning, which fostered their criticality. By bearing out the cross-linguistic and cross-cultural role of language programs in instilling criticality (Brumfit et al., 2005), this study evinces the EFL learners’ development of criticality by exploring the interplay between translanguaging pedagogy and an LMS in a Turkish K-12 context.

## 5. Conclusion and implications

Throughout this study, we have highlighted a crucial message: EFL learners’ criticality should be on the agenda of EFL teaching and learning process. Based upon lessons learned from the findings, it is possible to suggest that EFL learners at a K-12 context developed criticality by benefitting from digitally-enriched translanguaging space, ending up with *digitality*. Thus, this study provided new vistas for high school foreign language teaching by weaving together translanguaging and an LMS, fostering criticality. We suggest that policymakers and EFL teachers who had to conduct technologically driven adaptations during the COVID-19 pandemic (Wong, Pompeo-Fargnoli, & Harriott, 2022) should consider integrating translanguaging pedagogy with bilingual online materials into a

hybrid course with explicit CT skills instruction during the pandemic and at other times as the study demonstrates expressing thoughts in two languages flexibly and interchangeably has the potential to nurture mental development of students since they opt for the stronger language when they want to express ideas which are difficult to in the weaker language. In English-only classes, students are constrained to express deeper thoughts due to their low proficiency, which leads them to give up expressing their thoughts, arguing, debating, and questioning, which causes debilitation of mental processes. It is noteworthy that translanguaging mediates criticality by building on CT during which students can enjoy exercising freedom of choice to articulate nuances of meaning which requires the use of very specific idioms and words. Learners could also have an opportunity to develop CT which is among 21st-century skills and go beyond it by self-reflecting and self-criticizing thanks to expanded critical translanguaging space. Besides, the study offers implications for researchers desiring to go beyond *second language acquisition* and embrace '*additional language development*' as suggested by Anderson (2022, p. 4), who argued for grounding studies in the *trans turn*-driven paradigmatic change appropriate for today's multilingual and multimodal world. Therefore, researchers need to consider the changing nature of language learning where students are omnipresent and experience ubiquitous learning. They might also embrace the multilingual learning in multimodal contexts where they have opportunities to experience languaging for multiple purposes, which offers ample evidence for the development of criticality. Lastly, they need to create knowledge regarding critical language learning as a dynamic (transcontextualizing) and adaptive (linguistic emancipation) process.

The small number of participants is one of the limitations in this study. The sample foregrounded the division among one rigid monoglossic and one relatively open-minded monoglossic view-oriented and one unitary view-oriented high school student. Future research could target students having different attitudes to the LMSs. It also underlies the complex relations between criticality, translanguaging, and the mode of language teaching. Further research is necessary to explore how far reactions of students at K-12 contexts to innovative EFL courses can be accommodated.

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No Conflict of Interest.

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