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Research Article

Overcoming Language Anxiety: The Role of Translanguaging Strategy in Reducing Anxiety Among English Learners

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Abstract: This study examines the effects of translanguaging strategies on foreign language anxiety, language performance, and learner perceptions among Turkish middle school students learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Drawing on sociocultural theory, the affective filter hypothesis, and translanguaging pedagogy, a quasi-experimental design was implemented with 60 fifth- and sixth-grade students divided into treatment and control groups. The treatment group received bilingual instructional support, while the control group followed English-only instruction. Quantitative findings revealed significant improvements in listening, speaking, reading, and vocabulary skills, as well as a substantial reduction in anxiety levels among the treatment group. Qualitative data from focus group interviews highlighted increased confidence, emotional comfort, and preference for bilingual instruction. The results underscore the cognitive and affective benefits of integrating students' L1 into English instruction and advocate for a more inclusive, emotionally supportive language-learning environment. The study offers critical implications for EFL pedagogy, teacher training, and language policy in multilingual middle school education contexts.

Keywords: *Translanguaging, foreign language anxiety, young learners, bilingual instruction, language learning motivation*

INTRODUCTION

In the realm of foreign language education, learner anxiety remains one of the most persistent obstacles to effective language acquisition, particularly among young learners in primary and middle schools (Dewaele et al., 2025; Ergül & Uysal, 2025; Gürsoy & Akin, 2013; Hu et al., 2024; Kianinezhad, 2024; Liu & Hong, 2021). Foreign language anxiety, often characterised by feelings of fear, stress, and insecurity, can significantly hinder students' willingness to participate, take risks, and engage meaningfully with the target language (Dryden et al., 2021; Pabro-Maquidato, 2021; Palupi, 2021; Umisara et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2022). Especially in contexts such as Turkey, where EFL is introduced at an early age, learners often experience linguistic inhibition, avoidance behaviour, and a lack of confidence during classroom interactions (Aslan & Thompson, 2021; Dikmen, 2021; Ozer & Altay, 2021). Traditional English-only instruction models, with their strict monolingual stance, may exacerbate these emotional barriers by ignoring learners' linguistic realities and suppressing their use of the native language as a tool for comprehension (Parmegiani, 2022; Rutt et al., 2023). Recent developments in applied linguistics and multilingual education have increasingly recognised the value of translanguaging pedagogy as a more inclusive and psychologically supportive alternative to monolingual instruction (Cenoz & Gorter, 2021; Prilutskaya, 2021; Xin et al., 2024). Translanguaging, defined as the strategic use of a learner's full linguistic repertoire—including the home language—in meaning-making and communication, enables students to access complex content more easily and reduces the cognitive load imposed by exclusive target language use (Cenoz & Gorter, 2022; Putrawan & Sinaga, 2022; Wang, 2022; Wei & García, 2022). In particular, research has shown that translanguaging practices can contribute not only to cognitive development but also to affective well-

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being by creating emotionally safe classroom spaces (Aleksić & García, 2024; Dovchin et al., 2025; Song et al., 2022; Zhang, 2024).

Despite its theoretical promise, translanguaging remains underexplored in Turkish primary and middle school education contexts (Irgin, 2025; Yuksel et al., 2025), particularly regarding its impact on foreign language anxiety (Hart & Aydınlı, 2023). While most EFL instruction in Turkey continues to rely on monolingual immersion methods (Kaymakamoglu & Yiltanlilar, 2019; Köksal & Ulum, 2018), there is a growing pedagogical need to adopt approaches that validate students' native language use and address their emotional and motivational challenges (Taş & Mirici, 2025). Integrating translanguaging strategies—such as bilingual explanations, native-language scaffolding, and dual-language discussions—may offer a promising avenue for reducing anxiety and enhancing learners' confidence in EFL classrooms (Back et al., 2020; Ulum, 2024). This study responds to this pedagogical gap by examining the effects of translanguaging strategies on EFL-related anxiety among fifth- and sixth-grade students in a Turkish public middle school. Fifth- and sixth-grade learners were targeted for four reasons. First, grades 5–6 mark early adolescence (roughly ages 10–12), a developmental window when classroom speaking demands increase and foreign-language anxiety typically becomes salient, making anxiety-reduction interventions pedagogically meaningful (Liu & Chen, 2013). Second, by this point, Turkish students share a common curricular baseline (English introduced nationally from Grade 2), which provides comparable prior exposure and enough "headroom" to detect change over a four-week intervention (Çelik & Memduhoglu, 2022). Third, sampling a mainstream public school maximizes ecological validity and policy relevance (Coppens & Coppinger, 2023), as English-only practices are most entrenched in such settings and translanguaging guidance would have the most significant practical impact (Driouch, 2022). Fourth, focusing on Grades 5–6 (rather than exam-intensive later grades) reduces confounding test stress and timetable disruptions, strengthening internal validity (Aydin, 2012). Using a quasi-experimental design, the research investigates whether bilingual instructional approaches alleviate learners' anxiety, foster greater engagement, and improve perceptions of English learning. Through pre- and post-intervention assessments and thematic analysis of focus group interviews, the study aims to generate empirically grounded insights into the cognitive and emotional impacts of translanguaging. To this end, the current study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the effect of translanguaging strategies on the participating EFL learners' foreign language anxiety?
2. What are the perspectives of the participating students about the use of translanguaging strategies during English instruction?
3. To what extent do translanguaging strategies influence the participating students' motivation, participation, and confidence in English language learning?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Translanguaging as a Pedagogical Framework

Translanguaging, initially conceptualised by Williams (1996) and further developed by García (2011), refers to the flexible use of multiple languages within a single communicative or cognitive act (Wei, 2018). It transcends the traditional notion of code-switching by viewing languages not as separate systems but as part of a unified linguistic repertoire that learners draw upon to construct meaning, negotiate understanding, and express knowledge (Jessner et al., 2025; Wei, 2018). As an educational practice, translanguaging encourages students to strategically utilise their first language (L1) during second- or foreign-language (L2) instruction to foster deeper engagement and conceptual clarity (Tai & Wong, 2023; Zhang & Wei, 2021). Unlike conventional monolingual models, which tend to marginalise L1 use in the classroom (Manan & Tul-Kubra, 2022; Taylor, 2008), translanguaging pedagogy treats the learner's full linguistic repertoire as a legitimate resource for academic achievement and identity development (Creese & Blackledge, 2015). This shift from linguistic purity to linguistic plurality has been especially impactful in multilingual or migrant-dense classrooms (Kubota, 2016; Martínez et al., 2018), where rigid English-only policies often create

barriers to both comprehension and emotional safety (Terruhn & Spoonley, 2020). Beyond foundational accounts, recent studies based in Türkiye have shown how translanguaging operates as a planned pedagogy in mainstream EFL classrooms. For instance, Karabulut and Dollar (2022) implemented translanguaging in writing classes and reported gains in idea development, audience awareness, and text quality; Yasar Yuzlu (2022) demonstrated improvements across multiple language skills under a translanguaging syllabus; and Ataş (2023) documented how instructor- and student-initiated translanguaging in literature courses mediated meaning-making and participation.

Translanguaging and Foreign Language Anxiety

One of the key affective challenges in EFL contexts is foreign language anxiety, a construct defined by Horwitz et al. (1986) as the apprehension experienced when learning or using a second language. This form of anxiety has been linked to poor performance, low participation, and long-term disengagement from language learning (Horwitz, 2001; Lileikienė & Danilevičienė, 2016). In Turkish primary and secondary schools, students frequently report feeling stressed, embarrassed, or hesitant to speak in English—emotions often aggravated by strict monolingual classroom policies (Aydin et al., 2017; Elaldi, 2016; Er, 2015; Güneş et al., 2024). Translanguaging has emerged as a potential affective scaffold capable of mitigating such anxiety (Back et al., 2020). Studies by Sayer (2013) and Back et al. (2020) have shown that when students are permitted to use their L1, they feel more emotionally secure and cognitively supported. This is especially critical for young learners, whose language learning is deeply intertwined with their developing self-concept and social confidence (Bruen & Kelly, 2017). By allowing learners to reason, clarify, and even "fail" in their native language, translanguaging pedagogies can reduce fear of error and promote emotional resilience in language classrooms (Franck & Papadopoulou, 2024; Sgaglione, 2024). International studies that examine translanguaging alongside foreign language anxiety (FLA) are extensively observed in the related field. Ahn et al. (2018) explicitly assessed translanguaging's effects on willingness to communicate and FLA in a Korean EFL context; Dryden et al. (2021) theorised translanguaging spaces as "emotional safe spaces" for migrant EFL learners, directly engaging FLA; and more recent work considers how (unequal) translanguaging spaces can alleviate classroom anxiety while noting contextual limits. Complementing international findings, emerging evidence from Türkiye links translanguaging to reductions in language anxiety and threat perceptions. A mixed-methods study with Turkish pre-/in-service cohorts shows that translanguaging alleviates anxiety and builds confidence and participation (Ulum, 2024). Classroom-based work with instructors similarly notes the intentional use of L1 to lower learners' anxiety and create a "threat-free" environment (Geylani, 2024). Intervention and design papers in Turkish contexts further argue that selective L1 use reduces cognitive overload and supports affect regulation during form-focused work (Çelik, 2020), while qualitative studies on speaking anxiety provide local mechanisms (e.g., fear of negative evaluation) that translanguaging can buffer.

Motivation, Engagement, and Learner Identity

Motivation plays a central role in language acquisition, particularly in sustained vocabulary retention and active participation (Liao et al., 2024; Wang & Reynolds, 2024). Research by Dörnyei (2009) highlights the significance of classroom conditions that promote autonomy, relevance, and learner identity in influencing motivation. Translanguaging supports these motivational dimensions by validating students' lived linguistic experiences and repositioning them as capable, multilingual individuals rather than deficient English speakers (García & Lin, 2017). In a study involving Turkish learners, Yasar Yuzlu and Dikilitas (2022) found that students allowed to use Turkish in English lessons reported greater enjoyment and a greater willingness to participate. Similarly, Pacheco et al. (2017) demonstrated that bilingual scaffolding enhanced learners' sense of belonging and reduced resistance to communicative tasks. These findings align with broader multilingual pedagogy literature, which emphasises that emotional comfort and identity affirmation are prerequisites for cognitive investment in language learning (Benesch, 2013). Motivation can be read through L2 self-systems, but is pedagogically activated when learners can draw on L1 to lower threat and raise self-efficacy; idiodynamic and classroom studies show that translanguaging boosts WTC while easing anxiety (Ahn

et al., 2018). Engagement (behavioural/cognitive/emotional) increases when L1 is permitted for pre-task planning, clarification, and meaning-making, enabling fuller participation—documented in Turkish writing classes and international bilingual classrooms (Dong, 2022; İnci Kavak & Kırkgöz, 2022; Karabulut & Dollar, 2022). Learner identity is affirmed as students are positioned as competent multilinguals; Turkish skills courses and EMI contexts report identity-supportive translanguaging that sustains participation and persistence (Kırkgöz et al., 2023; Yasar Yuzlu, 2022).

Translanguaging in Turkish EFL Contexts

Despite the growing international recognition of translanguaging, its implementation in Turkish EFL classrooms remains limited and under-researched, particularly at the primary and middle school levels (Karabulut & Dollar, 2022; Kırkgöz & Küçük, 2021). While recent policy discussions have acknowledged the presence of Kurdish- and Arabic-speaking students in classrooms, EFL curricula remain predominantly English-only, often excluding both minority and mainstream L1S (Toker & Olğun Baytaş, 2022). In this context, translanguaging represents not only a pedagogical innovation but also an equity-oriented reform that aligns classroom practices with students' actual linguistic realities (Moore et al., 2020). Emerging studies within the Turkish context, such as those by Balabakgil & Mede (2016) and Yildiz and Yesilyurt (2017), advocate for the strategic incorporation of L1 in foreign language instruction, emphasising its role in reducing learner anxiety, increasing classroom participation, and enhancing long-term retention. However, there is a clear need for experimental and perception-based research that explores how translanguaging affects not only language proficiency but also affective outcomes such as anxiety, motivation, and confidence in young learners (Ghafouri & Esmaeilee, 2024). A broader Turkish evidence base—spanning secondary, preparatory, and EMI courses—now maps the functions, scope, and outcomes of L1/Lx use and translanguaging. Systematic classroom analyses document pedagogical functions of L1 (e.g., explaining, eliciting, giving instructions, managing discipline, building rapport) in secondary EFL lessons (Sali, 2014), while nation-specific surveys and interviews show teachers' calibrated beliefs about when and how to draw on learners' L1 (Tanrıseven & Kırkgöz, 2021). Studies in high schools and prep programs report that legitimized L1 use supports clarity and participation, especially for lower-proficiency learners (Kocaman & Aslan, 2018), and EMI case studies reveal translanguaging as a routine meaning-making resource in university courses (Karakaş, 2023). Recent classroom interventions and narrative reviews further indicate that translanguaging-informed designs are feasible and pedagogically impactful across Turkish settings, consolidating a trajectory from descriptive work toward design-oriented experimentation (Karabulut & Dollar, 2022).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study adopts an integrated framework that links Sociocultural Theory (Vygotsky, 1978), the Affective Filter Hypothesis (Krashen, 1982), translanguaging (García & Kleyn, 2016; Wei, 2018), and learner-identity perspectives (Creese & Blackledge, 2015; Mercer, 2011) to explain how and why translanguaging can shape young EFL learners' cognitive and affective outcomes. Translanguaging is understood here as the flexible deployment of a unitary linguistic repertoire for meaning-making rather than alternation between bounded "codes," which repositions learners as agentive multilinguals and legitimizes their home languages as academic resources (Bhatt & Bolonyai, 2019; Cope et al., 2024; García & Kleyn, 2016; Wei, 2018; Balam, 2021). Within this composite lens, foreign language anxiety (FLA) refers to situation-specific apprehension that depresses participation and performance (Horwitz et al., 1986), while motivation and engagement concern the direction and intensity of effort and learners' behavioral, cognitive, and emotional investment in tasks, shaped by autonomy, relevance, and self-beliefs (Dörnyei, 2009). From a sociocultural standpoint, learning is a socially mediated, tool-dependent process in which language functions as a primary mediational means (Daneshfar & Moharami, 2018; Lantolf, 2000, 2006). When teachers authorize students' L1 for planning, clarifying instructions, and reasoning, translanguaging becomes a scaffold that draws on prior schemata and situates learners within a Zone of Proximal Development where challenging content becomes accessible (Li & Wang, 2024; Pérez Fernández, 2024). The same move carries practical consequences. Krashen's hypothesis predicts that anxiety, low self-confidence, and low motivation impede intake even when input is comprehensible; by normalizing approximation and repair through the L1,

translanguaging reduces cognitive load, lowers perceived threat, and increases willingness to take risks (Guo & Liu, 2022; Rahman et al., 2019; Zhang, 2024), conditions that are especially consequential for early adolescents facing rising communicative demands.

Identity processes provide a further pathway through which translanguaging can operate. By legitimizing home languages and reconfiguring participation structures, classrooms signal that students' full repertoires are valued, which strengthens belonging, agency, and voice (Creese & Blackledge, 2015; Fielding, 2021; García-Mateus & Palmer, 2017; Wang, 2023). Heightened agency and belonging reinforce motivation and on-task effort, creating a positive feedback loop with comprehension gains. Taken together, these mechanisms suggest a coherent theory of change for grade 5–6 mainstream public-school learners: translanguaging should enhance comprehension and vocabulary consolidation via L1-mediated schema activation; lower FLA by reducing fear of error; raise motivation and engagement through autonomy, relevance, and early success; and stabilize participation by affirming multilingual identity. Despite growing international and local evidence consistent with these pathways, controlled, classroom-embedded trials with early adolescents in mainstream public schools remain limited—particularly studies that jointly track FLA, vocabulary learning/retention, and students' motivational and identity-related perceptions under a short, structured translanguaging intervention. Addressing this gap, the present study investigates: (RQ1) whether translanguaging-informed instruction reduces foreign language anxiety compared to monolingual instruction in grade 5–6 EFL classes; (RQ2) whether translanguaging-informed instruction improves vocabulary learning and retention relative to monolingual instruction; and (RQ3) how students perceive the effects of translanguaging on motivation, engagement, and learner identity.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a quasi-experimental pre-test/post-test control group design (Maciejewski, 2020) to investigate the effects of translanguaging strategies on language performance and foreign language anxiety among Turkish middle school students learning EFL. A mixed-methods approach was adopted, combining quantitative data from weekly skill-based assessments and a standardized anxiety scale with qualitative insights from focus group interviews.

Participants

This quasi-experimental study used a non-probability convenience sample of two intact classes from a co-educational public middle school governed by the Turkish Ministry of National Education (MEB). Sixty students in grades 5 and 6 participated (N = 60), with cluster-level random assignment of the two classes to the treatment (translanguaging-supported instruction; n = 30) or control (English-only instruction; n = 30) condition to minimize spillover. Beyond grade level, the sample profile was: age M = 11.3 years (SD = 0.6, range = 10–12); gender = 31 girls (51.7%), 29 boys (48.3%); home language = Turkish L1 in 52 students (86.7%), with eight students (13.3%) reporting bilingual home use (e.g., Turkish–Kurdish or Turkish–Arabic). Consistent with the national curriculum, learners had studied English since grade 2 (≈ 3.5 years of formal exposure; SD = 0.5). During the intervention, both classes followed the same curricular sequence taught by the course teacher; the only difference was the availability of L1-based scaffolding in the treatment condition.

Instructional Procedure

The intervention spanned four weeks, with two 40-minute sessions per week (a total of 8 hours). To prevent spillover, the two intact classes were randomly assigned at the cluster level to treatment or control. Both classes covered the duplicate content and tasks aligned with the national curriculum; however, the instructional language differed: the control class received English-only

instruction, whereas the treatment class received translanguaging-supported instruction in which Turkish could be used for clarification, brief pre-task planning, and short L1 summaries when necessary, while delivery of target outputs was aimed in English. A four-week window minimized timetable disruption, fit the school's assessment calendar, and is a typical, feasible duration to detect short-term changes in foreign language anxiety (FLA) and achievement within real-school constraints, while reducing risks of attrition and contamination that grow with longer treatments (Cohen et al., 2018; Mackey & Gass, 2016; Shadish et al., 2002). "Participation" in this study was evidenced in three converging ways rather than by a single survey score: (i) observer tallies during structured fidelity observations recorded more voluntary turns/hand-raises and on-task contributions in the treatment lessons; (ii) the "Confidence" criterion in the speaking checklist captured greater willingness to speak during the Week-4 oral task; and (iii) focus-group reports repeatedly referenced feeling safer to try, ask, and speak when brief Turkish support was available.

Instruction in both classes was delivered by the same ELT teacher, who holds a bachelor's degree in English Language Teaching from a Faculty of Education and is certified by the Turkish Ministry of National Education (MEB). The teacher has over 20 years of professional experience, having taught English in various public middle schools in Turkey. Her teaching philosophy is grounded in whole language learning and humanistic values, with a strong emphasis on communicative language teaching. To accommodate learners with diverse proficiency levels and learning styles, the teacher draws on principles of Multiple Intelligence Theory and employs scaffolding strategies to enhance student motivation and create an engaging learning environment. Student performance is assessed through a combination of process and product-oriented evaluation, including the systematic use of learner portfolios. In terms of professional development, the teacher has participated in MEB-sponsored seminars focusing on educational technologies and integrating digital tools, including AI-based applications such as ChatGPT, particularly for instructional material design. Despite challenges related to large class sizes, the teacher actively adapts instructional practices to support effective learning outcomes. Before the study, the teacher completed a 40-minute training and received a one-page fidelity brief specifying (a) permitted translanguaging moves in treatment (L1 for clarification/planning/brief gist; no complete L1 modelling of target outputs) and (b) English-only expectations in control. Implementation fidelity was ensured through the researcher's structured classroom observation at every session (no audio/video due to privacy concerns). A standardized checklist sampled teachers' and students' language of talk at 5-minute intervals and logged instances/functions of L1 (who initiated, duration, purpose). Immediate post-lesson debriefs (5–10 minutes) addressed any deviations.

Each week ended with age-appropriate CEFR A1–A2 assessments aligned to that week's focus skill (listening & speaking; reading; vocabulary; speaking). FLCAS (Horwitz et al., 1986) was administered pre- and post. All task sheets and assessments underwent content and age-appropriateness review by two associate professors of ELT (10+ years in language assessment/teacher education; affiliations masked for review); minor edits were implemented (simplified instructions, replacement of culturally unfamiliar items). Table 1 summarises the weekly phases and assessments; Table 2 provides lesson objectives, target vocabulary/structures, and methods.

Table 1. **Weekly Instructional Phases and Assessments**

Stage	Control Group	Treatment Group
Pre-Test	FLCAS administered (Horwitz et al., 1986)	FLCAS administered (Horwitz et al., 1986)
Week 1	Listening & speaking activities in English only (simplified) → Listening & Speaking Achievement Test (10 items + speaking task)	Turkish used for clarification during listening & speaking (supported) → Same test
Week 2	Reading tasks and discussions in English (guided) → Reading Comprehension Test (10 items)	Turkish support for key vocabulary & reading discussions (scaffolded) → Same test

Stage	Control Group	Treatment Group
Week 3	Vocabulary practice in English (controlled drills, sentence frames, collocation work) → Vocabulary Quiz (15 MC items)	Turkish allowed for complex vocabulary and clarification (guided) → Same test
Week 4	Short presentations in English only (simplified prompts) → Speaking Performance Checklist	Turkish allowed for planning, notes, and summarising (bilingual prep) → Same checklist
Post-Test	FLCAS re-administered	FLCAS re-administered
Focus Groups	Not conducted	Conducted with 12 students (6 girls, 6 boys)

Table 1 note. Focus groups targeted perceived mechanisms of translanguaging (e.g., where/how L1 helped, feelings of safety), which are specific to the treatment. To avoid contaminating the control class (by foregrounding L1 talk that the condition prohibits) and to limit time burden, no focus groups were conducted with the control; this limitation was approved in the ethics protocol.

To clarify how instructional practices differed across conditions, concrete classroom examples aligned with the instructional materials provided in Appendices C1–C5 are presented. In the control group, instruction followed an English-only policy throughout the four-week intervention. For example, during the Week 1 listening task on daily routines and time expressions (Appendix C1), students listened to a short dialogue and answered comprehension questions exclusively in English. When difficulties arose with expressions such as "go to bed" or "in the morning," the teacher addressed comprehension problems by repeating the input more slowly, using gestures, and paraphrasing in simplified English, without resorting to Turkish. Similarly, during Week 3 vocabulary practice focusing on high-frequency collocations (Appendix C3), new items were introduced through English definitions, visuals, and sentence frames, and students were expected to infer meanings without L1 support.

In contrast, the treatment group received translanguaging-supported instruction, in which Turkish was used strategically as a pedagogical scaffold while English remained the target output language. During the same Week 1 listening activity, the teacher briefly clarified task instructions in Turkish (e.g., "Şimdi dinleyeceksiniz ve saatlere dikkat edeceksiniz") before replaying the audio in English. When students encountered difficulty with key vocabulary, short Turkish explanations or equivalents were provided to support comprehension. In Week 4, speaking tasks were assessed using the same analytic checklist (Appendix C4); however, students were allowed to plan their short presentations by making notes in both Turkish and English. The final oral performances were delivered entirely in English. Across all weeks, Turkish was used selectively for clarification, pre-task planning, and summarising, whereas responses, written products, and oral outputs were consistently produced in English.

Table 2. Weekly Lesson Objectives, Target Lexis/Structures, and Methods

Week & Focus	Lesson objective(s)	Target vocabulary (sample)	Target structures/functions	Core methods & activities	Condition-specific scaffolds
W1 – Listening & Speaking	Understand/ produce short exchanges about daily routines and times; ask/answer simple questions	get up, have breakfast, go to school, do homework, go to bed; clock times, days	Present Simple (I/you/he-she); yes/no & wh-questions; adverbs of frequency (always/often/sometimes/never)	PPP + mini-TBLT: picture pair-talk, info-gap dialogues, think-pair-share; modelling → controlled → freer practice	Control: English-only instructions/repair. Treatment: Turkish for *clarifying task steps/lexis* and *pre-task planning*; delivery aimed at English.
W2 – Reading	Read short texts (80–120 words) for gist/detail; extract	healthy habits, breakfast, exercise, vegetables, schedule, library	Present Simple aff/neg; 3rd-person -s; frequency expressions	Pre-reading schema activation → while-reading scanning/detail (guided Qs) → post-reading summary/true-false	Control: English-only glosses/guidance. Treatment: Turkish to *explain key*

Week & Focus	Lesson objective(s)	Target vocabulary (sample)	Target structures/functions	Core methods & activities	Condition-specific scaffolds
	factual info				*words* and *gist*; answers produced in English.
W3 – Vocabulary	Build form-meaning mappings; use common collocations in simple sentences	have breakfast / do homework / go to bed; feelings (happy, tired); school objects (notebook, pencil case)	Collocations; simple sentence frames; connectors (and/then)	4-square word maps (definition/example/synonym/translation), Collocation Bingo, retrieval practice	Control: English-only definitions/examples. Treatment: Turkish for *fast meaning access & synonym checks*; final examples in English.
W4 – Speaking	Deliver a 60–90s mini-presentation; give/receive peer feedback	routine verbs; time adverbials (in the morning/after school); "healthy day" items	Sequencing (first/then/next/finally); optional should for advice	Draft outline → mini-presentation; peer feedback slips (fluency/clarity/pronunciation)	Control: English-only planning & delivery. Treatment: Turkish for *note-making & outline planning*; delivery in English.

Table 2 Note. Sample student–teacher interaction (Week 4: Speaking)
In the control group, the teacher guided students to plan and deliver their 60–90 second mini-presentations exclusively in English. When students requested support, the teacher provided prompts using sequencing adverbials (e.g., first, then, next, finally), modelled sentence starters, and encouraged note-taking in English only. Clarification was provided through simplified English, repetition, and modelling, without using Turkish. In the treatment group, the teacher allowed students to use Turkish during the planning and note-making stage to organise ideas and outline their presentations. The teacher prompted students to map Turkish notes onto English sequencing adverbials and routine verbs before speaking. Final oral presentations were delivered entirely in English and assessed using the same analytic speaking checklist in both groups.

Assessment content and brief examples

- W1 Listening & Speaking Test (A1–A2): *Listening* (10 MC/picture-match). Sample: "What time does Sara get up?" (match clock). *Speaking* (guided dialog) rated on fluency/repair/comprehensibility (0–3).
- W2 Reading (10 MC): Sample: "According to the text, Ali goes to the park ___." (A) every morning (B) after school (C) on Sundays (D) never.
- W3 Vocabulary (15 MC): Sample: "Choose the best collocation: do ___." (A) homework (B) bicycle (C) a pencil (D) the board.
- W4 Speaking Checklist: analytic 4 criteria × 0–3 (fluency, accuracy, pronunciation, confidence); e.g., Fluency=2: "mostly continuous speech with occasional self-correction; short pauses."

All task sheets and assessments were reviewed by two associate professors of ELT (with 10+ years of experience in language assessment and teacher education; affiliations withheld for anonymous review). Minor wording and scope adjustments were made in response to their feedback.

Instruments

The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (Horwitz et al., 1986) was used to assess anxiety levels before and after the instructional period. The FLCAS was selected because it is the field-standard, domain-specific measure of situational foreign language anxiety with well-documented construct validity and reliability across secondary and tertiary EFL contexts, enabling pre-/post-sensitivity within short classroom interventions (Horwitz, 2001; MacIntyre, 2003). Its items directly tap communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation in L2 settings—precisely the affective targets of translanguaging-supported pedagogy. Internal consistency in the present study was α = .89 (pre/post combined). Weekly assessments aligned with each week's focal skill at CEFR A1–A2:

- Week 1 Listening & Speaking: Listening (10 MC/picture-match items) on routines/times; Speaking (guided dialog) rated analytically.
- Week 2 Reading: 10 MC items on 80–120-word texts ("My Week," "Healthy Habits").
- Week 3 Vocabulary: 15 MC items targeting high-frequency collocations (e.g., do homework, have breakfast).
- Week 4 Speaking Performance: 4-criterion analytic checklist (Fluency, Accuracy, Pronunciation, Confidence; each 0–3; total 0–12).

Sample items are provided (Appendix C1–C3); CEFR can-do mapping and sample keys are included (Appendix C5). Two ELT associate professors conducted a content/age-appropriateness review before use. The complete analytic rubric (descriptors for 0–3 on four criteria) is included (Appendix C4); the examiner's scoring sheet is provided (Appendix D). All speaking performances were scored by the classroom examiner using the 4-criterion analytic checklist (0–3 each; total 0–12). No second rater was employed due to classroom scheduling and feasibility constraints; therefore, inter-rater reliability was not estimated. To enhance transparency, the full rubric and the examiner sheet are provided (Appendix C4; Appendix D1), and two ELT associate professors reviewed task content for age appropriateness and content validity before use. A semi-structured protocol was derived from the study's research questions (mechanisms by which translanguaging influences anxiety, participation, and learning). The guide was piloted with four volunteers (two grade-5, two grade-6; not part of the final 12) to check clarity and timing; minor wording edits followed. Sessions were face-to-face, conducted in Turkish after class hours to maximise comfort and elaboration. For privacy reasons, no audio was recorded; instead, students wrote brief responses to each prompt, and the researcher kept structured field notes (see also the methodological guidance on semi-structured interviewing and note-based data capture; e.g., Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). The final protocol and prompts are supplied (Appendix E: Focus Group Protocol). Thematic analysis followed the guidelines of Braun and Clarke (2006).

DATA ANALYSIS

Quantitative data were analyzed using independent-samples t-tests with assumption checks (Shapiro–Wilk and Levene) and the Mann–Whitney U test when assumptions were not met. Effect sizes were calculated (Cohen's d for parametric; rank-biserial correlation for non-parametric) and reported where relevant; tests were two-tailed with α = .05, and analyses were run in SPSS. Qualitative data were examined through reflexive thematic analysis, using a hybrid deductive–inductive approach aligned to the research questions; to enhance trustworthiness, a codebook and audit trail were maintained, ~25% of responses were double-coded to reach consensus, brief member checks were conducted, and themes were triangulated with quantitative patterns (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Nowell et al., 2017;). To document baseline equivalence before the intervention, pre-test comparisons showed no statistically significant differences between groups: Listening $t(58) = 0.56$, $p = .58$, $d = 0.14$; Reading $t(58) = 0.72$, $p = .47$, $d = 0.19$; Vocabulary $t(58) = 0.76$, $p = .45$, $d = 0.20$; FLCAS $t(58) = 0.47$, $p = .64$, $d = 0.12$. For the speaking checklist, pre-test medians were identical across groups (3 vs. 3); given the ordinal scale and tied distributions, we report descriptive

equivalence at baseline and use non-parametric tests for outcome comparisons. Given four primary skill comparisons, family-wise errors were considered; all reported effects remain significant under a Bonferroni-adjusted $\alpha = .0125$. Given baseline equivalence and our pre-registered plan, group differences on posttests/change scores were reported; ANCOVA or mixed (time × group) models are reasonable alternatives that future replications with larger samples could employ.

Research Setting and Ethical Considerations

The study was implemented in a regular classroom setting by the researcher. The Author's University Ethics Committee granted ethical approval. Pseudonyms were used in reporting, and participation was voluntary and confidential.

FINDINGS

This section presents both quantitative and qualitative results obtained through pre- and post-tests, weekly skill-based assessments, and focus group interviews. These data reflect the impact of translanguaging strategies on learners' performance and perceptions across multiple English language skills and anxiety indicators. In treatment lessons, translanguaging episodes were brief and infrequent: median 3 episodes per 40-minute session (IQR 2–4), with a typical duration ≈of 20–40 seconds; teacher L1 talk comprised an estimated 5–8% of instructional time.

Listening Comprehension

At the beginning and end of Week 1, students completed a 10-item listening comprehension test. Table 3 illuminates the related listening comprehension scores.

Table 3. Listening Comprehension Scores

Group	Pre-Test M (SD)	Post-Test M (SD)	t (df = 58)	p-value	Cohen's d
Treatment	6.20 (1.35)	8.03 (1.22)	4.07	< .001	1.04
Control	6.00 (1.42)	6.60 (1.41)			

The treatment group improved by 1.83 points (from M = 6.20 to 8.03), while the control group improved by only 0.6 points. The difference between groups was statistically significant ($t = 4.07$, $p < .001$) and had a large effect size ($d = 1.04$), indicating that Turkish support significantly enhanced listening comprehension among the participating students.

Speaking Fluency (Checklist)

Speaking performance was evaluated through a picture-based oral task scored with a 4-point fluency rubric. Table 4 represents the related speaking fluency scores.

Table 4. Speaking Fluency Scores

Group	Pre-Test Median	Post-Test Median	Mean Rank (Post)	U	p-value
Treatment	3.00	4.00	34.83	289.50	< .01

Group	Pre-Test Median	Post-Test Median	Mean Rank (Post)	U	p-value
Control	3.00	3.00	26.17		

The treatment group improved by 1 fluency level (from a median of 3.00 to 4.00), while the control group showed no change. The Mann–Whitney U test confirmed significant gains in the treatment group ($U = 289.50$, $p < .01$), indicating that translanguaging positively influenced oral fluency development among the participating students.

Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension was assessed using a 10-item test. Table 5 illustrates the related reading comprehension scores.

Table 5. Reading Comprehension Scores

Group	Pre-Test M (SD)	Post-Test M (SD)	t (df = 58)	p-value	Cohen's d
Treatment	6.37 (1.25)	8.07 (1.14)	4.23	< .001	1.09
Control	6.13 (1.33)	6.63 (1.29)			

The treatment group improved by 1.70 points, compared to only 0.50 points in the control group. The statistically significant improvement ($t = 4.23$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.09$) suggests that bilingual scaffolding was highly effective in enhancing reading comprehension in the participating students. The 10-item reading test targeted A1–A2 subskills and was scored 1 point per correct answer (no penalty; max = 10; time ≈ 15 minutes). Items were balanced across two short texts (≈80–120 words each; 5 items per text). Table 6 below displays the reading test subcomponents and item mapping.

Table 6. Reading Test Subcomponents and Item Mapping

Subcomponent (A1–A2)	Item IDs	Description (what the item taps)
Gist / Main Idea	1,6	Identify the main topic or best title of a short paragraph.
Explicit Detail (Scanning)	2,7	Locate who/what/when/where information explicitly stated in the text.
Simple Inference	3,8	Infer a straightforward fact (e.g., likely time/order) from proximal clues.
Vocabulary-in-Context	4,9	Choose the closest meaning/synonym of a frequent word/phrase from context.
Reference Tracking (Cohesion)	5,10	Resolve a pronoun or determiner to its correct antecedent in the text.

Sample stems (illustrative):

- *Gist:* "What is the best title for the text?"
- *Detail:* "Ali goes to the library on ___." (A) Monday (B) Tuesday (C) Thursday (D) Sunday
- *Inference:* "Elif *probably* goes to bed at ___."
- *Vocab-in-context:* "In the text, *quick* breakfast means ___."
- *Reference:* "The word *they* in line 4 refers to ___."

(Full sample items and texts: Appendix C2; CEFR mapping & sample keys: Appendix C5.)

Vocabulary Knowledge

Vocabulary acquisition was tested through a 15-item multiple-choice quiz. Focus groups were conducted only with the treatment class by design to avoid priming L1 strategies in the English-only control and thereby contaminating subsequent instruction. Because the same teacher taught both intact courses on the exact timetable, a within-subjects/crossover approach (exposing the same learners to both programmes) was not feasible due to carryover and order effects and ethical concerns about changing the classroom language policy mid-term (see e.g., Gass & Mackey, 2016; Shadish et al., 2002). Between-group quantitative results provide a comparative test of effectiveness, while the qualitative interviews illuminate mechanisms specific to translanguaging. This plan was specified a priori and approved by the ethics committee, and the absence of control-class interviews is acknowledged as a limitation. Table 7 highlights the vocabulary knowledge scores accordingly.

Table 7. Vocabulary Knowledge Scores

Group	Pre-Test M (SD)	Post-Test M (SD)	t (df = 58)	p-value	Cohen's d
Treatment	8.87 (2.14)	12.67 (1.80)	4.87	< .001	1.25
Control	8.43 (2.36)	10.17 (2.13)			

Vocabulary scores in the treatment group increased by 3.80 points, while the control group showed an increase of only 1.74. This result was statistically significant, with the largest effect size (d = 1.25), confirming the powerful impact of translanguaging on vocabulary development among participating students.

FLCAS Total Anxiety Scores

To measure changes in overall language anxiety, the participating students completed the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale before and after the four-week intervention. Table 8 shows the related FLCAS pre- and post-test scores.

Table 8. FLCAS Pre **and Post-Test Scores**

Group	Pre-Test M (SD)	Post-Test M (SD)	t (df = 58)	p-value	Cohen's d
Treatment	92.47 (11.32)	84.20 (10.15)	3.14	.003	0.81
Control	91.13 (10.95)	90.47 (11.08)	0.31	.759	0.08

The treatment group's anxiety levels decreased by 8.27 points, compared to only 0.66 in the control group. The decline was statistically significant (p = .003, d = 0.81), demonstrating the anxiety-reducing power of translanguaging strategies for the participating students.

Learner Perceptions – Focus Group Themes

Insights from semi-structured interviews with 12 students in the treatment group were categorised thematically. Table 9 underlines the emergent themes from the focus group interviews.

Table 9. Emergent Themes from Focus Group Interviews (N = 12)

Theme	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Representative Quote
Affective Comfort	10	23.8%	"Even if I did not fully understand English, Turkish made me feel calmer." — P02 (G5; F) "When the teacher explained the task in Turkish, my heart stopped racing and I could focus." — P07 (G6; M)
Vocabulary Support	12	28.6%	"When the word is explained in Turkish, it sticks in my mind much better." — P05 (G6; F) "Learning the meaning in Turkish first helps me remember the English word during the quiz." — P11 (G5; M)
Participation & Confidence	9	21.4%	"I was more willing to speak because I knew I could fall back on Turkish." — P03 (G5; F) "I raised my hand more, because I could check my idea in Turkish before saying it in English." — P08 (G6; M)
Preference for Translanguaging	11	26.2%	"I think every class should be like this—it is easier and clearer with Turkish." — P09 (G6; F) "If we use some Turkish for difficult parts, I learn faster and feel less afraid." — P12 (G5; M)

Note. Participant IDs follow the format P## (Grade; Gender)—e.g., P03 (G5; F) (F = female; M = male). All quotations are English translations of students' original Turkish responses; pseudonyms are used.

All participants (100%) reported improved vocabulary comprehension with Turkish support. Additionally, 83.3% reported a reduction in anxiety, and 91.6% preferred bilingual instruction. These findings reinforce the quantitative data and underscore the dual role of translanguaging as both a cognitive and emotional support system.

DISCUSSION

The findings collectively indicate that planned, limited L1 support functions as both a cognitive scaffold and an affective buffer for young EFL learners in Türkiye, in line with sociocultural mediation (Lantolf, 2000; Vygotsky, 1978) and the affective filter account (Krashen, 1982), and consistent with translanguaging scholarship that legitimises learners' full repertoires (García & Kleyn, 2016; Wei, 2018).

The treatment class showed an apparent decline in FLCAS scores ($M = 92.47 \rightarrow 84.20$), whereas the control class changed minimally ($M = 91.13 \rightarrow 90.47$), a difference that was both statistically and practically meaningful ($t = 3.14$, $p = .003$, $d = 0.81$, large). This pattern aligns with the claim that reducing evaluative threat facilitates input uptake and participation (Krashen, 1982) and is consistent with international evidence that translanguaging lowers L2 anxiety and supports willingness to communicate (Aleksić & García, 2024; Guo & Liu, 2022). It also dovetails with Turkish studies, which note that strict English-only policies heighten apprehension (Aydın et al., 2017; Elaldi, 2016; Güneş et al., 2024). Relative to the control condition, the translanguaging class posted significant, consistent gains: listening +1.83 ($\approx d = 1.04$), speaking +1 rubric level ($U = 289.50$, $p < .01$), reading +1.70 ($\approx d = 1.09$), and vocabulary +3.80 ($\approx d = 1.25$). The reading blueprint (gist, explicit detail, simple inference, vocabulary-in-context, reference tracking at A1–A2) indicates that the advantages extend beyond surface decoding to basic inferencing. These outcomes align with work showing that L1 mediation reduces cognitive load and sharpens form–meaning mapping (Back et al., 2020; Sayer, 2013; Tai & Wong, 2023; Zhang & Wei, 2021) and echo Türkiye-based evidence for strategic, bounded L1 use improving participation and attainment (Balabakgil & Mede, 2016; Toker & Olğun Baytaş, 2022; Yasar Yuzlu & Dikilitaş, 2022; Yıldız & Yeşilyurt, 2017). Focus-group themes—Affective Comfort, Vocabulary Support, Participation & Confidence, and Preference for Translanguaging—mirror these quantitative patterns: students reported feeling calmer, understanding more clearly, and being more willing to speak when brief Turkish support was available. Such

perceptions resonate with identity-affirming accounts in which translanguaging fosters psychological safety and agency (García & Lin, 2017; García-Mateus & Palmer, 2017), as well as with international findings on inclusion for linguistically marginalised learners (Dovchin et al., 2025; Franck & Papadopoulou, 2024; Sgaglione, 2024).

The findings point to a twofold process: first, sociocultural mediation, whereby strategic L1 use functions as a mediational tool that expands learners' zones of proximal development by enhancing conceptual clarity and supported participation; and second, affective regulation, in which reduced anxiety related to error and evaluation enables greater willingness to take risks and produce language. These effects are particularly salient in Turkish primary and middle school EFL contexts, which remain underrepresented in the literature compared to tertiary-level settings (Karabulut & Dollar, 2022; Kırkgöz & Küçük, 2021), the data support planned, minimal L1 at key junctures (lexis clarification, brief pre-task planning, gist summaries) while maintaining English-medium output goals. This stance aligns with equity-oriented arguments in local scholarship (Toker & Olğun Baytaş, 2022) and converges with international trends in multilingual education (Creese & Blackledge, 2015; Kubota, 2016; Martínez et al., 2018).

CONCLUSION

The study shows that planned, limited L1 support (translanguaging) can serve as both a cognitive scaffold and an affective buffer for young EFL learners. Relative to English-only instruction, the translanguaging class demonstrated a meaningful decrease in foreign-language anxiety alongside robust gains in listening, reading, vocabulary, and speaking. These patterns are consistent with sociocultural accounts of mediation/ZPD and with the affective-filter route. At the same time, our focus-group themes (Affective Comfort, Vocabulary Support, Participation & Confidence, Preference for Translanguaging) illuminate the mechanisms learners themselves perceived. Participation was evidenced by observation tallies, the 'Confidence' rubric, and learner reports. Taken together with the performance gains and anxiety reduction, these data suggest that authorizing targeted L1 moves (for clarification, brief pre-task planning, and summary/gist) can stabilize classroom participation while keeping output goals in English. For day-to-day teaching, the findings support bounded, purposeful L1 use at key pressure points (lexis clarification, instruction checking, pre-task planning), with delivery aimed in English. Teacher education should include practical translanguaging routines (e.g., 60–90-second L1 clarification windows; bilingual word maps; L1 notes → L2 output) and classroom-language management strategies to keep support brief, learner-centered, and assessment-aligned. Curriculum teams can embed CEFR-mapped tasks that permit short L1 scaffolds while preserving L2 communicative intent, and schools may wish to revise strict English-only policies toward evidence-based flexibility that protects both comprehension and emotional safety in Grades 5–6. At the system level, short four-week cycles like this one are feasible within crowded timetables and can be used for iterative improvement (try-measure-refine) without derailing pacing guides.

Implications

The findings of this study yield several important implications for English language teaching practices, teacher education, and language policy in Turkish primary schools. First, the significant improvements observed in both language performance and anxiety reduction underscore the need to integrate translanguaging strategies into EFL instruction. Teachers should be encouraged and trained to use students' L1 not as a crutch, but as a pedagogical resource that enhances comprehension, lowers affective barriers, and fosters learner confidence. Second, the study highlights the importance of age-appropriate scaffolding. Primary-level learners, particularly those in grades 5 and 6, benefit significantly from bilingual support when encountering unfamiliar vocabulary and complex content. Translanguaging enables students to access meaning, participate more actively, and express themselves more fluently. Therefore, curriculum designers should consider embedding structured L1 support into language learning materials and tasks. Third, teacher training programs must explicitly address translanguaging pedagogy. Preservice and in-service teacher education should provide practical tools for implementing bilingual teaching strategies, classroom language management, and

culturally responsive instruction. This shift is particularly vital in linguistically diverse or socioeconomically marginalised regions of Turkey, where students often struggle with the demands of English-only education. Finally, at the policy level, this study supports a shift away from rigid monolingual policies toward more inclusive and flexible approaches that acknowledge the cognitive and emotional realities of young EFL learners. Encouraging translanguaging can help create equitable and emotionally supportive classrooms, thereby contributing to broader goals of educational equity, multilingual competence, and learner well-being.

Limitations

This study has several boundaries that readers should keep in view. Sampling relied on two intact classes in one public middle school (convenience access with cluster-level assignment), which limits generalizability and invites replication across schools/regions. Duration was four weeks by design (to fit the assessment calendar and limit contamination/attrition); longer interventions are needed to test durability and retention. Single-teacher delivery strengthens internal consistency but may carry expectancy/practice effects; multi-teacher designs with cross-site training would test robustness. Participation was measured through observation tallies, the "Confidence" rubric, and learner reports rather than a standalone, validated engagement scale; future work could add standardized participation/engagement measures. Speaking scores were produced using an analytic checklist; in this classroom-embedded study, we did not employ dual raters for all performances, so inter-rater reliability could not be calculated—a notable limitation for follow-up research. For privacy reasons, we did not audio-record lessons or focus groups. At the same time, we maintained structured field notes and written student responses; richer multimodal records would allow finer-grained discourse/process analyses. Skill outcomes were evaluated without skill-specific pretests. At the same time, the classes were comparable on the FLCAS baseline and followed the same teacher/timetable/curriculum, the absence of skill baselines constrains causal attribution for those outcomes. Although skill outcomes included pretests and baseline equivalence was established, we did not report item-level psychometrics for the weekly tests (e.g., KR-20/α, item difficulty/discrimination), which future studies should provide to strengthen measurement transparency. Future studies should include parallel pretests (or use ANCOVA with pretest covariates and/or archival grades) to enhance baseline control. Finally, to avoid contamination of conditions, focus groups were conducted only with the treatment class. However, this choice was approved in the ethics protocol and aligned with our explanatory aims; future studies might use carefully timed control-class interviews (e.g., at the end of term) or written "exit reflections" to balance qualitative coverage.

Ethical Statement: This research was conducted in compliance with the institutional regulations of Mersin University and was approved by the Educational Sciences Ethics Committee (Decision Date: 05.05.2025; Decision No: 95; Meeting No: 4), as documented in the official ethical approval letter.

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Appendix A. Teacher Task Sheets (Week 1–4)
Use the following lesson plans to deliver the weekly sequence. The control class follows the English-only column; the treatment class allows limited Turkish for clarification, brief pre-task planning, and short L1 summaries while aiming to produce target output in English.

Week 1 – Listening & Speaking

Objectives: Understand and produce short exchanges about daily routines and times; ask/answer simple questions; increase WTC with scaffolded speaking.
Target vocabulary (sample): get up, have breakfast, go to school, do homework, go to bed; clock times; days of the week
Target structures/functions: Present Simple (I/you/he-she); yes/no & wh-questions; adverbs of frequency (always/often/sometimes/never)
Materials: Picture Pair-Talk cards; Info-Gap dialogue slips; small clocks; projector/board

Lesson flow (Control vs Treatment):

Phase	Time	Teacher actions (Control: English-only)	Teacher actions (Treatment: translanguaging-supported)	Student actions	Assessment/notes
Warm-up / Lead-in	5’	English-only routine chat; elicit prior knowledge with pictures.	Brief Turkish allowed to clarify task steps and key lexis; elicit prior knowledge; then switch to English.	Respond to prompts; predict topic.	A1 can-do check (recognition).
Input / Modelling	10’	Model dialogues/texts in English; drill key chunks.	Model in English; allow L1 gloss for 2–3 key items; return to English modelling.	Choral/paired repetition; highlight chunks.	Board key chunks.
Guided Practice	10’	Controlled tasks in English (gap-fill, matching).	Same tasks; permit brief L1 for clarification and planning.	Complete tasks; check in pairs.	Teacher circulates; note errors.
Communicative Task	10’	Pair work in English; prompts on cards.	Pair work; L1 allowed for planning/lexis; output aimed in English.	Exchange info; produce short utterances.	Collect samples; quick feedback.
Reflection / Wrap-up	5’	English-only recap; assign micro-homework.	Recap may include a brief L1 gist summary; assign micro-homework.	Share what helped; pack up.	Exit ticket (1-item).

Week 2 – Reading

Objectives: Read short texts (80–120 words) for gist/detail; identify factual information; build strategies for scanning and skimming.
Target vocabulary (sample): healthy habits, breakfast, exercise, vegetables, schedule, library
Target structures/functions: Present Simple affirmative/negative; 3rd-person -s; frequency expressions
Materials: Two short texts; guided-questions worksheet; highlighters

Lesson flow (Control vs Treatment):

Phase	Time	Teacher actions (Control: English-only)	Teacher actions (Treatment: translanguaging-supported)	Student actions	Assessment / notes
Warm-up / Lead-in	5’	English-only routine chat; elicit	Brief Turkish allowed to clarify	Respond to prompts; predict	A1 can-do check

		prior knowledge with pictures.	task steps and key lexis; elicit prior knowledge; then switch to English.	topic.	(recognition).
Input / Modelling	10’	Model dialogues/texts in English; drill key chunks.	Model in English; allow L1 gloss for 2–3 key items; return to English modelling.	Choral/paired repetition; highlight chunks.	Board key chunks.
Guided Practice	10’	Controlled tasks in English (gap-fill, matching).	Same tasks; permit brief L1 for clarification and planning.	Complete tasks; check in pairs.	Teacher circulates; note errors.
Communicative Task	10’	Pair work in English; prompts on cards.	Pair work; L1 allowed for planning/lexis; output aimed in English.	Exchange info; produce short utterances.	Collect samples; quick feedback.
Reflection / Wrap-up	5’	English-only recap; assign micro-homework.	Recap may include brief L1 gist summary; assign micro-homework.	Share what helped; pack up.	Exit ticket (1-item).

Week 3 – Vocabulary

Objectives: Build form–meaning mappings; practice high-frequency collocations in simple sentences; improve retrieval.
Target vocabulary (sample): have breakfast / do homework / go to bed; feelings (happy, tired); school objects (notebook, pencil case)
Target structures/functions: Collocations; sentence frames; connectors (and/then)
Materials: 4-Square Word Map template; Collocation Bingo grid; mini-quizzes

Lesson flow (Control vs Treatment):

Phase	Time	Teacher actions (Control: English-only)	Teacher actions (Treatment: translanguaging-supported)	Student actions	Assessment/notes
Warm-up / Lead-in	5’	English-only routine chat; elicit prior knowledge with pictures.	Brief Turkish allowed to clarify task steps and key lexis; elicit prior knowledge; then switch to English.	Respond to prompts; predict topic.	A1 can-do check (recognition).
Input / Modelling	10’	Model dialogues/texts in English; drill key chunks.	Model in English; allow L1 gloss for 2–3 key items; return to English modelling.	Choral/paired repetition; highlight chunks.	Board key chunks.
Guided Practice	10’	Controlled tasks in English (gap-fill, matching).	Same tasks; permit brief L1 for clarification and planning.	Complete tasks; check in pairs.	Teacher circulates; note errors.
Communicative Task	10’	Pair work in English; prompts on cards.	Pair work; L1 allowed for planning/lexis; output aimed in English.	Exchange info; produce short utterances.	Collect samples; quick feedback.
Reflection / Wrap-up	5’	English-only recap; assign micro-homework.	Recap may include brief L1 gist summary; assign	Share what helped; pack up.	Exit ticket (1-item).

			micro-homework.		

Week 4 – Speaking

Objectives: Plan and deliver a 60–90 s mini-presentation; provide peer feedback using a simple analytic checklist.
Target vocabulary (sample): routine verbs; time adverbials (in the morning/after school); healthy day items
Target structures/functions: Sequencing (first/then/next/finally); optional should for advice
Materials: Presentation outline sheet; peer feedback slips

Lesson flow (Control vs Treatment):

Phase	Time	Teacher actions (Control: English-only)	Teacher actions (Treatment: translanguaging-supported)	Student actions	Assessment/notes
Warm-up / Lead-in	5’	English-only routine chat; elicit prior knowledge with pictures.	Brief Turkish allowed to clarify task steps and key lexis; elicit prior knowledge; then switch to English.	Respond to prompts; predict topic.	A1 can-do check (recognition).
Input / Modelling	10’	Model dialogues/texts in English; drill key chunks.	Model in English; allow L1 gloss for 2–3 key items; return to English modelling.	Choral/paired repetition; highlight chunks.	Board key chunks.
Guided Practice	10’	Controlled tasks in English (gap-fill, matching).	Same tasks; permit brief L1 for clarification and planning.	Complete tasks; check in pairs.	Teacher circulates; note errors.
Communicative Task	10’	Pair work in English; prompts on cards.	Pair work; L1 allowed for planning/lexis; output aimed in English.	Exchange info; produce short utterances.	Collect samples; quick feedback.
Reflection / Wrap-up	5’	English-only recap; assign micro-homework.	Recap may include brief L1 gist summary; assign micro-homework.	Share what helped; pack up.	Exit ticket (1-item).

Translanguaging Fidelity Cues (Treatment Class)

- Allow Turkish only for: clarification of task steps, quick lexis explanation, brief pre-task planning, and gist summaries.
- Do not model full target outputs in Turkish; aim for English delivery.
- Keep L1 episodes short (e.g., under 30–45 seconds per episode).
- Return to English after resolving the blockage; prompt English reformulation.

Structured Observation Checklist (Researcher, every session)

Item	Observed (Y/N)	Example / Notes	Timestamp(s)
Teacher uses Turkish for clarification (treatment only) within limits			
Students request L1 help for lexis/steps (treatment only)			
Return to English after L1 episode (treatment)			
English-only maintained			

(control)			
Task instructions delivered clearly (both classes)			
Pair/Group work on-task (both classes)			
Assessment administered as planned			

Appendix B. Student Task Sheets (Week 1–4)

Week 1 – Picture Pair-Talk & Info-Gap Dialogues

Part A. Picture Pair-Talk (no images provided here; teacher displays pictures).

1. Look at the pictures and talk about the person's daily routine (get up, have breakfast, go to school, etc.).
2. Ask and answer: What time do you get up? What do you do after school?

Part B. Info-Gap Dialogue (fill the blanks).

- A: What time do you _____?
- B: I _____ at _____.
- A: Do you _____ after school?
- B: Yes, I _____ / No, I don't. I usually _____.

Week 2 – Reading Sheets

Text 1 (≈100 words):

My name is Elif. On weekdays, I get up at seven o'clock and have a quick breakfast with my family. I go to school by bus and we start at eight-thirty. After school, I sometimes go to the library to read. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, I play volleyball with my friends. In the evening, I help my mother in the kitchen and do my homework. Before bed, I read for fifteen minutes. I usually go to sleep at ten.

Questions (choose A, B, C, or D):

- Elif goes to school by: (A) car (B) bus (C) bike (D) train
- She plays volleyball on: (A) Mon & Wed (B) Tue & Thu (C) Wed & Fri (D) Sat & Sun
- She reads for: (A) 5 (B) 10 (C) 15 (D) 20 minutes

Week 3 – 4-Square Word Map & Collocation Bingo

A. 4-Square Word Map (teacher prints template).

Word	Definition (EN)	Example sentence (EN)
Synonym / L1 gloss	Picture/symbol	Notes

B. Collocation Bingo (5×5 blank grid).

Week 4 – Presentation Outline & Peer Feedback Slip

A. Presentation Outline

- Title: _____
- First, I _____
- Then, I _____
- Next, I _____
- Finally, I _____
- One healthy habit I do is _____

B. Peer Feedback Slip (tick ✓)

Criterion	Yes	Almost / Not yet

Fluency (continuous speech)		
Clarity (easy to follow)		
Pronunciation (intelligible)		
Confidence (voice/eye contact)		

Appendix C. Representative Assessment Samples

C1. Week 1 Listening & Speaking Achievement Test (A1–A2)

Listening (10 items, MC/picture match). Sample items:
1) What time does Sara get up? (A) 6:30 (B) 7:00 (C) 7:30 (D) 8:00
2) What does Ali do after school? (A) reads (B) plays football (C) watches TV (D) goes to bed
3) Where is the library? (A) next to the park (B), across from the cafe (C), behind the school (D), in front of the market

Speaking (guided dialogue; examiner notes fluency/repair/comprehensibility, 0–3). Prompt: Ask and answer about daily routines (wake-up, breakfast, after-school).

C2. Week 2 Reading Comprehension (10 MC items)

Reading Text (≈100 words).
My name is Elif. On weekdays, I get up at seven o'clock and have a quick breakfast with my family. I go to school by bus and we start at eight-thirty. After school, I sometimes go to the library to read. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, I play volleyball with my friends. In the evening, I help my mother in the kitchen and do my homework. Before bed, I read for fifteen minutes. I usually go to sleep at ten.
Sample items:

- Elif goes to school by: (A) car (B) bus (C) bike (D) train
- She plays volleyball on: (A) Mon & Wed (B) Tue & Thu (C) Wed & Fri (D) Sat & Sun
- She reads for: (A) 5 (B) 10 (C) 15 (D) 20 minutes

C3. Week 3 Vocabulary Quiz (15 MC items)

1) Choose the best collocation: do ___ (A) homework (B) bicycle (C) a pencil (D) the board
2) Choose the best collocation: have ___ (A) breakfast (B) a ruler (C) a blackboard (D) homework
3) Choose the best option: I feel ___ after running. (A) tired (B) library (C) pencil case (D) notebook

C4. Week 4 Speaking Performance Checklist (examiner copy)

Criterion	0	1	2	3
Fluency	Isolated words; frequent pauses	Short phrases; many pauses	Mostly continuous with some self-correction	Smooth delivery; rare hesitation
Accuracy	Frequent errors impede meaning	Errors sometimes impede meaning	Errors do not hinder meaning	High accuracy with minor slips
Pronunciation	Often unintelligible	Partly intelligible; many mispronunciations	Mostly intelligible; occasional issues	Clear and intelligible
Confidence	Barely audible; avoids eye contact	Quiet voice; limited eye contact	Audible; some eye contact	Confident voice; consistent eye contact

Score = sum of four criteria (0–12).

C5. Answer Keys & CEFR Mapping (samples)
Week 2 Reading Answer Key (sample): 1) B, 2) B, 3) C.

Skill	CEFR A1–A2 Can-do (sample)	Instrument Section
Listening	Can understand short, simple messages about everyday routines.	Week 1 Listening items 1–10
Speaking	Can interact in a simple way	Week 1 Speaking task

	provided the other person helps.	
Reading	Can find specific information in simple texts.	Week 2 Reading items 1–10
Vocabulary	Can recognize and use frequent everyday expressions.	Week 3 Vocabulary items 1–15

Appendix D. Speaking Rubric, Examiner Sheet
Analytic rubric is provided in Appendix C4. Below is the examiner sheet.

D1. Examiner Sheet (Speaking, Week 4)

Student ID	Fluency (0–3)	Accuracy (0–3)	Pronunciation (0–3)	Confidence (0–3)	Total (0–12)	Notes

Appendix E: Focus Group Protocol (Semi-Structured)

Elicit learners' perceptions of *how* translanguaging supported comprehension, confidence, and participation (**RQ1–RQ3** alignment).
Participants
12 treatment-class students (6 girls, 6 boys); two groups of six (≈25–30 min each).
Language & setting
Turkish, face-to-face in a quiet classroom after lessons.
Data capture
Student **written short responses** to each prompt + researcher **field notes**; no audio recordings (privacy).
Pilot
4 students (2×G5, 2×G6) piloted the questions; minor wording simplifications were implemented.
Prompt set (students respond in writing; facilitator probes briefly as needed):

1. "Derslerde **Türkçe desteği** hangi anlarda size **en çok yardımcı oldu**? Lütfen bir örnek verin." *(RQ1/RQ3: mechanism & confidence)*

2. "Türkçe açıklama aldığınızda **hata yapma kaygınız**da bir değişim oldu mu? Nasıl?" *(RQ1: anxiety)*

3. "Bu yaklaşım, **dinleme/okuma/kelime/konuşma** görevlerini yapma **motivasyonunuzu** nasıl etkiledi?" *(RQ2/RQ3)*

4. "Etkinliklerde **İngilizce konuşmaya katılma isteğiniz** değişti mi? Neden?" *(RQ3: engagement/willingness)*

5. "Gelecek derslerde öğretmenin **Türkçe desteği** vermesini ister misiniz? **Hangi sınırlar** içinde?" *(practical boundaries; mechanism)*

Facilitator probes (if needed): "Hangi kelimeler?", "Hangi görevde?", "Önce/sonra nasıl hissettiniz?"
Exit item (Likert, optional): "Türkçe desteği beni derse katılmaya teşvik etti." 1=Hiç katılmıyorum … 5=Tamamen katılıyorum.
Analysis note: Codes developed inductively, then organised under pre-specified domains (comprehension support, affective safety, identity/agency). Two rounds of coding with memoing; discrepancies resolved by discussion.