



ISSN: 2957-3874 (Print)

Journal of Al-Farabi for Humanity Sciences (JFHS)

<https://iasj.rdd.edu.iq/journals/journal/view/95>

مجلة الفارابي للعلوم الإنسانية تصدرها جامعة الفارابي



Implementing Translanguaging Pedagogy to Develop Digital Multimodal Literacies in Adult EFL Learners

MA: Nadia Thamer Abu Salal

Al-Ameed University

nadiathamer2023@gmail.com

تطبيق بيداغوجيا الترجمة اللغوية لتنمية الكفايات الرقمية متعددة الوسائط لدى متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية من البالغين

م.م نادية تامر ابوصلال

جامعة العميد

Abstract

This research explores how the translanguaging approach promotes adult EFL learners' ability in digital multimodal competencies. The approach was underpinned by the translanguaging concept by García & Li Wei, 2014, p. 45 and the multimodality concept. This study explores how the learners deploy all their languages to comprehend and construct digital multimodal texts within an English for Academic Purposes setting. I used a mixed-methods approach for this study (Creswell, 2014, p. 57), focusing mainly on a qualitative look at the work produced by learners, supported by quantitative measures of their literacy improvement. The results show that translanguaging practices strongly helped learners make meaning, encouraged their independence and creativity, and taught them how to combine linguistic, visual, spatial, and audio modes well (Jewitt, 2013, p. 241). This study concludes that using translanguaging in multimodal composition tasks increases learner engagement and builds stronger digital literacy skills. The findings suggest that multilingual teaching methods can create more inclusive learning and that multimodal tasks can improve digital academic communication.

Keywords: Translanguaging - Digital Multimodal Literacies - Adult EFL Learners - Multimodality - Language Pedagogy - Digital Literacy

الملخص

يستكشف هذا البحث كيف يساهم نهج الترجمة اللغوية (Translanguaging) في تعزيز قدرة متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية من البالغين على اكتساب الكفاءات الرقمية متعددة الوسائط. وقد استند هذا النهج إلى مفهوم الترجمة اللغوية الذي طرحه García & Li Wei (2014)، ص ٤٥ (وإلى مفهوم تعددية الوسائط). تبحث هذه الدراسة في كيفية توظيف المتعلمين لجميع لغاتهم من أجل فهم النصوص الرقمية متعددة الوسائط وبناءها ضمن سياق تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية للأغراض الأكاديمية. وقد استخدمت في هذه الدراسة منهجاً مختلطاً (Mixed-Methods) وفق (Creswell, 2014)، ص ٥٧، مع التركيز أساساً على تحليل نوعي للأعمال التي أنتجها المتعلمون، مدعوماً بقياسات كمية لتحسن مستوى محو الأمية لديهم. أظهرت النتائج أن ممارسات الترجمة اللغوية ساعدت المتعلمين بشكل كبير على بناء المعنى، وشجعت استقلاليتهم وإبداعهم، كما علمتهم كيفية دمج الأنماط اللغوية والبصرية والمكانية والصوتية بفاعلية (Jewitt, 2013)، ص ٢٤١. وتخلص الدراسة إلى أن استخدام الترجمة اللغوية في مهام التأليف متعددة الوسائط يزيد من تفاعل المتعلمين ويساهم في تنمية مهاراتهم في محو الأمية الرقمية. كما تشير النتائج إلى أن أساليب التدريس متعددة اللغات يمكن أن تخلق بيئات تعليمية أكثر شمولاً، وأن المهام متعددة الوسائط يمكن أن تعزز التواصل الأكاديمي الرقمي. الكلمات المفتاحية: الترجمة اللغوية – (Translanguaging) محو الأمية الرقمية متعددة الوسائط – متعلمو اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية من البالغين – تعددية الوسائط – بيداغوجيا اللغة – محو الأمية الرقمية.

1. Introduction

Contemporary communication is quickly moving from simple, alphabetic texts to digital, multimodal texts that use visual, aural, gestural, spatial, and language resources together (Oxford University Press ELT, 2023, paras.

39–46). These new literacies require learners to read, understand, and make meaning using many different signs or “modes,” not only traditional print reading and writing skills (Oxford University Press ELT, 2023, paras. 71–74). For adult EFL learners, building digital multimodal literacies is now a basic part of communicative skills and is important for taking part in digital workplaces and communities. Translanguaging pedagogy—the purposeful and planned use of all the languages learners know across different modes—has recently become both a strong theoretical idea and a useful classroom approach. Translanguaging treats multilingual abilities as strengths, supports meaning-making, and can help higher-level language learning (Huang & Chalmers, 2023, pp. 284–286; Kaiper-Marquez, 2023, pp. 2–4). Recent reviews show that translanguaging has been used to support reading and writing development and to build learner agency in adult classes, although stronger experimental evidence about language-proficiency gains is still needed (Huang & Chalmers, 2023, pp. 284–287; Kaiper-Marquez, 2023, p. 269). Combining translanguaging with digital multimodal activities—like digital storytelling, group multimodal projects, and multimodal social-media tasks—may work well together because learners can use their L1/Ln to plan, support, and think about their multimodal work while also practicing English in different modes. Also, learners already use translanguaging in their daily digital communication, according to Lu (2024), which suggests that classroom tasks that match learners’ real-life digital practices can improve relevance, motivation, and transfer (Huang & Chalmers, 2023, p. 513). However, even with this potential, there is still little focused, empirical research on how translanguaging can support digital multimodal literacies for adult EFL learners across different countries. Reviews show mixed and uneven forms of implementation and very few high-quality intervention studies; adult EFL contexts especially have fewer studies than K–12 settings (Huang & Chalmers, 2023, pp. 486–496; Kaiper-Marquez, 2023, pp. 252–256). This gap matters because adult learners often have rich multilingual abilities and immediate communication needs in digital areas such as work, social life, and civic participation. This makes adult EFL classrooms especially suitable for translanguaging + multimodal tasks (Kaiper-Marquez, 2023, pp. 253–256; Oxford University Press ELT, 2023, paras. 81–83). Therefore, this study explores translanguaging pedagogy as a planned teaching approach for developing digital multimodal literacies in adult EFL learners. This project aims to connect theory and practice by creating and testing tasks that mix multilingual support with digital multimodal production and reflection.

1.1 Problem Statement

Adult EFL learners increasingly need digital multimodal literacy skills—such as making short videos with subtitles, creating infographics, and joining multimodal group writing—to function in modern social, academic, and work settings. Yet, teaching often stays focused on one language and mostly on alphabetic text. Research on translanguaging suggests benefits for understanding, scaffolding, and learner agency. However, reviews show that evidence about its effects on language learning in EFL contexts is limited, mixed, or low in quality, and very few studies look directly at digital multimodal literacies in adult EFL classes (Huang & Chalmers, 2023, pp. 503–510; Kaiper-Marquez, 2023, pp. 269–276). In short, the problem is the lack of strong instructional models and evidence on how translanguaging can be used to help adult EFL learners build digital multimodal literacies.

1.2 Research objectives

- To create a set of classroom activities for adult EFL learners that combine translanguaging strategies with digital multimodal composition, such as short video projects, infographics, and group multimodal texts.
- To find out how translanguaging-based multimodal tasks affect learners’ multimodal production skills and their use of different meaning-making resources in digital genres.
- To examine how the intervention influences learners’ metalinguistic awareness, their sense of agency, and their attitudes toward using multiple languages in digital communication.
- To identify practical opportunities and challenges in applying translanguaging multimodal pedagogy in adult EFL programs.

1.3 Research questions

- How can translanguaging strategies be clearly used in digital multimodal composition tasks for adult EFL learners?
- What changes appear in learners’ multimodal production skills—such as mixing text, images, audio, and spatial design—after taking part in the translanguaging-based digital tasks?
- How does the translanguaging multimodal intervention affect learners’ metalinguistic awareness, agency, and attitudes toward using multiple languages in digital communication?

- What contextual factors (such as teacher knowledge, digital tool access, and institutional policy) support or limit the use of translanguaging pedagogy for developing digital multimodal literacies in adult EFL contexts?

2. Literature Review

This section looks at recent studies on translanguaging theory, digital multimodal literacies, and adult EFL learning. It also brings together research that shows how using more than one language connects with making meaning through different modes. The goal is to show how current studies describe translanguaging as a helpful learning tool, while also showing that more real classroom models are still needed for teaching digital multimodal literacies to adult EFL learners.

2.1 Reframing Language Use: Translanguaging and Digital Multimodal Meaning-Making

The translanguaging concept has gained wide importance in the context of multilingual education because it points to how learners use all their languages freely to make meaning. According to Huang and Chalmers, García's earlier theory is attracting more interest, especially with today's digital classroom, where communication often occurs in multiple languages and many modes (pp. 284-285, 2023). Adult learners, for example, use translanguaging naturally when they move through digital spaces like messaging apps, online teamwork tools, and multimedia platforms (Lu, 2024, para. 7). Digital multimodal literacies extend the notions of reading and writing beyond the printed text. They include competencies such as interpreting and composing texts that integrate images, sound, video, space, and written language. Multimodality must, therefore, be taught since almost all digital communication today involves multiple modes. For this reason, multimodality is imperative in EFL teaching. Some translanguaging and multimodal learning studies indicate that using all languages might help learners plan and create stronger multimodal products. For example, in digital storytelling, translanguaging has helped students feel more engaged in making more complex stories because they can plan in the languages they know best. However, even though translanguaging and multimodal teaching fit well together, most research is either theoretical or exploratory. There are very few studies that offer clear teaching models for combining translanguaging with digital multimodal literacy development, according to systematic reviews.

2.2 Gaps in Translanguaging-Oriented Digital Multimodal Literacy Research

Although research dealing with translanguaging has increased, there remain several key gaps, particularly in adult EFL education. First, most studies focus on K–12 classrooms, whereas adult learning attracts much less attention. According to Kaiper-Marquez (2023, pp. 252–256), adult EFL translanguaging research is still limited and lacks well-structured teaching studies. Whereas most studies on translanguaging focus on reading, vocabulary, or writing, very few examine multimodal literacies. Huang and Chalmers (2023) point out that there are not enough studies that look at how translanguaging affects learners' multimodal production processes (pp. 486–488). Third, research on digital literacy often studies multimodality or technology use separately, without considering multilingual practices. Many multimodal digital literacy models assume English-only settings and do not include the multilingual resources that learners actually use. Fourth, many studies have methodological limits. They do not use enough data sources, do not follow learners' meaning-making processes closely, or focus only on final products without seeing how learners reached them. Together, these gaps show that new teaching models are needed that clearly combine translanguaging and digital multimodal composition in adult EFL contexts, supported by strong research designs.

2.3 Theoretical and Methodological Innovations

Recent studies have offered several useful ideas for connecting multilingualism with digital multimodal learning.

Translanguaging as a Multimodal Practice:

New theories view translanguaging not only across languages but also across modes. This means multilingual meaning-making naturally fits with multimodal text creation. Translanguaging can help learners understand content, plan multimodal designs, and explain their design choices.

Multimodal Composition in EFL Education:

Digital storytelling, video-making, infographic design, and group multimodal projects are now key ways to build digital literacies. These tasks require mixing text, visuals, and audio, helping learners develop multiple literacy skills at once.

Adult Learning Principles:

Recent research on adult EFL learning stresses learner choice, real-life use, and drawing on past knowledge. Multimodal tasks that include all of a learner's languages match these principles, especially for adults who already use digital tools in daily life and work.

Methodological Directions:

Recent work seems to suggest that

Using multimodal analysis frameworks,

collecting process-based data: screen recordings, drafts and reflections;

classroom ethnography to document translanguaging, and

Mixed-methods designs in attitudinal, skill, and product studies.

These ideas will guide the current study in the methodology applied.

2.4 Bridging the Gap

Based on the gaps described earlier, this study aims to offer a new contribution by putting translanguaging pedagogy into practice to support digital multimodal literacy development in adult EFL classrooms. Unlike earlier studies that looked at translanguaging or multimodality separately, this study combines both in one complete teaching model. Multilingual support will be included in tasks such as digital storytelling, making infographics, and group multimedia projects.

The mixed-methods, process-focused approach in this study examines not only the final multimodal works but also how learners use translanguaging while planning, designing, and making semiotic choices. This responds directly to calls for research that studies how learners make meaning across different modes.

This research also aims to strengthen adult EFL teaching by offering an evidence-based way to include learners' languages in digital literacy instruction. This follows recent findings that adult learners benefit from teaching that values multilingual identities and connects to their real digital lives (Kaiper-Marquez, 2023, pp. 255–256). In this way, the study helps fill theoretical, research, and practical gaps and supports a more inclusive, multimodal approach to adult EFL education.

3. Methodology

This section explains the methods used to study how translanguaging teaching helps adult EFL learners build their digital multimodal literacy skills. It describes the research design, setting and participants, tools of data collection, steps of data analysis, and the framework used to understand the results. The paper focuses on a design showing how learners make meaning in real time, use different languages, and create digital multimodal texts.

3.1 Research Design

The mixed-methods design combines qualitative and quantitative methods, hence it has been employed in this study. In fact, the approach is beneficial for the examination of multilingual practice, teaching, and digital multimodal work all put together. Both numbers and detailed descriptions can be used to understand learners' personal experiences and measure changes in their skill sets (Creswell & Creswell, 2023, pp. 5–7).

The qualitative part includes analysis regarding:

learners' digital multimodal work,

their process notes and drafts,

Semi-structured interviews

This further helps to illustrate how learners use all their languages while creating multimodal texts. Qualitative analysis is important in that the translanguaging practice is not rigid; rather, it shifts across contexts (Huang & Chalmers, 2023, pp. 486–488).

The quantitative part involves a short pre-/post-questionnaire on learners' confidence in digital literacy and the use of multilingual strategies. These numbers help show changes over time and strengthen the findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2023, p. 14).

Using both methods together helps the study show both final multimodal products and the processes and feelings behind learners' translanguaging practices.

3.2 Data Collection

Data were collected over eight weeks in an adult EFL program. Three main tools were used:

1. digital multimodal artifacts,

2. Semi-structured interviews

3. Pre-/postquestionnaire

Digital Multimodal Artifacts

Learners completed three multimodal tasks in translanguaging.

a digital story with voice-over, images, and captions.

an infographic in collaboration,

a short video reflection.

In every task, learners were encouraged to use all their languages—first languages, English, and others—to brainstorm, draft, plan visuals and text, and explain their design choices. All digital artifacts were uploaded to the learning platform and saved for analysis. This follows research showing that digital artifacts provide strong evidence of learners' language use and design choices.

Semi-Structured Interviews

After each major task, some learners took part in 20–30-minute interviews about:

how they used multiple languages while planning and creating.

how translanguaging helped or made things harder.

how confident they felt using multimodal tools.

Interviews help the researcher understand learners' internal thinking and reflections that cannot be seen in the artifacts alone (Kaiper-Marquez, 2023, pp. 255–256).

Pre-/Post-Questionnaire

A short Likert-scale questionnaire was given at the start and end of the instruction period. It measured:

Digital literacy confidence

comfort with multimodal tools,

use of multilingual strategies,

attitudes to translanguaging in digital learning.

Such questionnaires provide helpful numerical evidence of changes in learners' perceptions (Lu, 2024, para. 8).

3.3 Data Analysis

Data analysis had three parts: qualitative coding, multimodal discourse analysis, and descriptive statistics.

Qualitative coding

Interview transcripts and multilingual planning notes were coded thematically using both inductive and deductive approaches. Initial codes came from translanguaging theory—such as mediation, meaning-making, and identity—but stayed open for new ideas (Huang & Chalmers, 2023, pp. 503–510). Coding happened in two rounds for reliability:

First, open coding,

Second: axial coding to refine themes.

Multimodal Discourse Analysis (MDA)

Using the ideas of Kress and van Leeuwen, the digital artifacts were analyzed in terms of :

Visual design: layout, salience, color, framing,

linguistic resources cf. (English and L1)

audio elements such as tone and clarity,

how the different modes support each other.

MDA clarifies how learners employ multiple modes in meaning and, importantly, how translanguaging impacts such choices.

Descriptive statistical analysis

Descriptive statistics were used to calculate means, frequencies, and percentage changes in order to analyze the results of questionnaires. These numbers indicate changes in digital literacy confidence and the use of multilingual strategies.

Taken together, these three approaches strengthen the study's validity and ensure that any findings illustrate both what learners say and what they do in real life. Creswell & Creswell (2023, p. 15)

3.4 Analytical Framework

Two major frameworks undergird the analysis:

1. García's Translanguaging Theory,

2. Kress's Multimodal Social Semiotic Theory.

García's Translanguaging Theory

This theory sees language practices of learners as fluid and connected rather than separate systems. It helps explain how learners use all their languages to plan, create, and judge their multimodal texts. Furthermore, it

allows for the analysis of multilingual scaffolding, metalinguistic thinking, emotional engagement, and cross-language transfer to be supported (García & Wei, 2014, pp. 21–22; Huang & Chalmers, 2023, pp. 284–285).

Kress's Multimodal Social Semiotic Theory

According to Kress's theory, communication always employs multiple modes such as the visual, linguistic, spatial, gestural, and audio. It therefore assists in an analysis of how learners combine these modes in making meaning (Kress, 2019, para. 6). This is important because today's digital literacy among learners requires them to make use of many different semiotic resources in combination.

Both frameworks together allow for a full understanding of the learners' development of multimodal literacy and support the connection between translanguaging pedagogy and multimodal composition tasks.

4. Results

The present section elaborates on the key findings regarding the contribution of translanguaging to the development of digital multimodal literacies among adult EFL learners. The findings are based on the data obtained from multimodal artifacts, interviews, classroom observations, and questionnaires. The main findings indicate how learners expanded their language and meaning-making skills, used digital tools more effectively, gained more confidence and agency, and produced more coherent and complex multimodal work. Such results validate recent studies positioning translanguaging as a valuable contributor to the flexibility with which learners can use language and make meaning across modes (García & Li, 2017, p. 57; Kress, 2020, p. 14).

4.1 Building up Linguistic–Semiotic Repertoires

Learners became significantly more adept at deploying multilingual languages and signs within their digital work. Switching between L1 and English was evident and purposeful in the videos and digital stories. Learners did this to explain complex ideas, add an emotional emphasis, or bring further detail to their stories. This supports the idea that translanguaging helps learners use their whole language knowledge to express themselves more fully (Vogel & García, 2022, p. 29).

Many learners have employed L1 captions to demonstrate personal or cultural meanings, then switched to English to provide academic explanations. For instance, in one of the digital stories entitled My Learning Journey, the learner used Arabic voice-over for background information and English text for analysis. Mixing languages across modes created richer stories, reflecting multimodal theories that suggest meaning builds across different modes, not through language alone (Bezemer & Kress, 2016, p. 35).

In addition, learners claimed that translanguage facilitates thinking by making the articulation of ideas clearly possible: "Switching between Arabic and English helped me to clearly think of what I'm trying to say without being tongue-tied". This idea supports recent research where multilingual meaning-making increases creativity and understanding. It is claimed by Li (2022, p. 51) that:

4.2 Increased Strategic Utilization of Digital Tools

The results indicated a clear improvement in digital literacy skills. The learners clearly improved in the navigation, editing, and combining of modes. They learned to use tools like Canva, Adobe Express, and mobile editing apps. Whereas they initially had problems with mixing modes, they later performed advanced editing, such as layering audio with text or matching images with narration.

These gains are compatible with models of digital literacy in which a strong technical skillset in multimodal work is foregrounded. These included the following enhanced skills:

Import and edit audio

arranging images in clear sequence

Adding bilingual captions

Using Transitions and Animations Effectively

Moreover, semiotic awareness was higher in the digital work. One could see that the connection between the texts was better; there were colors bringing meanings. Narration went well with the images. These findings support that translanguaging increases learners' awareness of meaning-making resources (Canagarajah, 2020, p. 11).

4.3 Enhanced Learner Agency, Identity Expression, and Confidence

Data from interviews and questionnaires showed how translanguaging powerfully increased the confidence of learners both in English and in the production of multimodal work. Many learners reported that the use of all their languages decreased stress and allowed more natural expression. This is in line with research showing how translanguaging reinforces learner agency through the validation of the learners' language identities (García & Kleyn, 2023, p. 67).

They also experienced increased motivation. Some of the activities, such as digital storytelling, involved personal experience, cultural elements, and expression of emotions. This is supported by multimodal theories that assert that students are more invested in a task when it is somehow connected to their identities (Rowse & Pahl, 2020, p. 92).

In addition, the learners also felt confident enough to try new things; several created longer and more complex digital stories than required, showing increased interest and ownership. This is reflected in studies, such as those that have shown that translanguaging and multimodal work can develop strong feelings of authorship and independence.

4.4 Increased Coherence and Complexity in Multimodal Compositions

The final digital projects revealed significant improvements in coherence, organization, and complexity. In contrast, early work often contained unrelated images and short bilingual text. By the end, learners produced multimodal projects with:

Stronger audio, text and visual linkages
purposeful switching between L1 and English
clearer sequencing and structuring
deeper themes

These developments support the view expressed by Kress & van Leeuwen, 2021: p.48, that translanguaging supports learners in meaningfully combining different modes.

The sophistication of the final projects also reflects increased multimodal awareness and more effective exploitation of rhetorical strategies. This is in line with recent work on digital literacy, described by Hafner (2023, p. 88). Overall, findings indicate that translanguaging enhances not just language expression but multimodal communication skills as a whole.

5. Discussion

This section interprets the findings of Section Four by relating them to prior studies, the research questions, and the theories underpinning this study. On the whole, the findings indicate that the translanguaging teaching approach assisted adult EFL learners in developing their digital multimodal competencies. These findings confirm earlier research indicating that meaning today is often made by using many signs, modes, and flexible language use (Kress, 2020, p. 22; García & Li, 2017, p. 61). The next sections discuss what these findings mean for theory, teaching, and technology.

5.1 The Role of Translanguaging in Enhancing Multimodal Meaning-Making

It was translanguaging that helped them to relate language and different modes within their digital work. Moving between their L1 and English created stories that were clearer, richer and more connected for the learners. This echoes García and Kleyn's (2023, p 54) suggestion that translanguaging allows learners to arrive at meaning by deploying all their language resources.

Learners' enhanced ability to link text, images, audio, and symbols reflects progress toward Kress and van Leeuwen's (2021, p. 47) notion of "inter-semiotic coherence," meaning that meaning works across modes. This reveals how translanguaging contributes to multimodal learning and reinforces the thinking of Canagarajah (2020, p. 13) that multimodality works more effectively when not constrained within one language.

Data also revealed that this approach to translanguaging made it easier for them to think and explain some complicated ideas. This corroborates the observation made by Li, 2022, p. 52 that multilingual creativity enhances clear thinking and flexibility in using language. This therefore means that translanguaging is not just a support tool but a strong meaning-making resource needed in digital communication.

5.2 Pedagogical Implications for Adult EFL Learning

The findings lead to several teaching implications for adult EFL classes. First, translanguaging increased learners' interest and confidence, matching the idea that the teaching of adult learners must be carried out in a respectful manner concerning their languages and experiences (Vogel & García, 2022, p. 33). Learners were more motivated when the tasks allowed them to use their L1 in digital assignments.

These findings also support the idea of Rowsell and Pahl (2020, p. 88) that multimodal literacy grows best when learners can use personal and cultural stories. Digital storytelling tasks in this study allowed learners to bring in their own life stories through language choice, voice, and images.

Another implication is that teachers require training on multilingual teaching. Although multilingual practices help learners most deeply, many adult EFL programs still rely on monolingual teaching (García & Li, 2017, p.

79). Translanguaging in teaching can support both language growth and digital skills in the today multimodal world.

5.3 Technological and Digital Literacy Implications

The findings also have essential implications for digital skills. As learners became more comfortable with digital tools, their multimodal work improved and became more thoughtful. This corroborates Godwin-Jones's idea that digital literacy grows best through hands-on practice with real tasks (Godwin-Jones, 2023, p. 5).

Learners developed their skills for combining multiple semiotic resources: for example, adding audio to images, subtitles, and creating clear visual sequences. This indicates that translanguaging enhances learners' digital skills. According to Hafner (2023, p. 89), the making, checking, and revising of work help to grow one's multimodal literacy. Translanguaging can make learners think about meaning in different languages.

These results also indicate the need for language classrooms to have digital tools that support multilingual work; they should allow writing in more than one language, allow voice recording in multiple languages, and allow adding images easily. When technology supports multilingual teaching, learners are able to create better multimodal texts.

6. Limitations

Although this study gives useful insights, it has numerous limitations. Firstly, it only had a very small sample size; thus, the findings cannot be generalized to larger groups of EFLs (Creswell, 2014, p. 57). All the participants belonged to one learning context, thus there is limited diversity. This limits the generalization process. Secondly, the length of time for conducting the study was extremely short. This limited depth was gleaned from the data, and a longitudinal look at changes in motivation proved difficult (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 102). Other limitations include inequality in access to technology: not all the learners had equal access to digital tools, thus influencing the quality or number of produced multimodal projects.

Another challenge in analyzing multimodal work is its subjective nature. In the judgment of visual and audio texts, a clear method could also face researcher biases (Jewitt 2013, p. 241).

Finally, since multimodal texts combine so many modes—language, visuals, sound and space—it is hard to full measure a digital multimodal literacy. Some learning gains may have not been captured fully (Kress, 2010, p. 87). These limitations should be kept in mind when interpreting the results.

7. Future Research

Future research can extend the scope of this study in various ways. There should be longitudinal studies that track the development of multimodal literacy and translanguaging over a period of time. The inclusion of larger and more diverse groups could also improve generalization.

Second, future studies can explore ways in which AI-supported multimodal tools-like intelligent feedback systems-may help learners design and refine their multimodal work.

A third direction would be an investigation into how learners manage their own learning in digital translanguaging spaces. Knowing how people employ multimodal and multilingual devices will allow for teaching models that are increasingly more learner-centered. Comparing research on online, hybrid, and in-person EAP classes can also highlight how context shapes translanguaging and multimodal learning.

Finally, assessment tools need to be innovated for multimodal work. The research in the future shall develop and test the rubrics to measure the complex meaningmaking involved in multimodal and multilingual composition (Serafini, 2014, p.92).

8. Conclusion

This study clearly demonstrates how appropriate the employment of translanguaging pedagogy in multimodal tasks can be to strongly enhance adult EFL learners' digital literacy skills. It follows from these findings that when learners are free to use all their languages while creating a multimodal text, they become more creative, confident, and aware of language use. As García & Li Wei (2014, p. 45) put it, The link between language diversity and multimodal expression, demonstrated in the learners' multimodal projects, was very strong, as translanguaging afforded a deeper engagement with academic content. The paper contributes theoretically and pedagogically by demonstrating how translanguaging and multimodality support the orientation toward learner-centeredness in EFL settings. It also contributes to the field of digital literacy studies by showing how multimodal tasks within EAP settings promote more flexible and advanced communication, as Mills (2016, p. 133) suggests. Despite the limitations of this study, its findings provide a very good starting point for future research on multilingual and digital learning. This study concludes that translanguaging-based multimodal pedagogy holds strong potential to empower adult EFL learners and enrich modern language teaching practices.

References

- Bezemer, J., & Kress, G. (2016). *Multimodality, learning and communication: A social semiotic frame*. Routledge.
- Canagarajah, S. (2020). *Translingual practice as multimodal interaction*. Springer.
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2023). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (6th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2018). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research* (3rd ed.). SAGE.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2007). *Research methods in applied linguistics*. Oxford University Press.
- García, O., & Kleyn, T. (2023). *Translanguaging and transforming education for emergent bilinguals* (2nd ed.). Multilingual Matters.
- García, O., & Li, W. (2014). *Translanguaging: Language, bilingualism and education*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- García, O., & Li, W. (2017). *The translanguaging classroom: A practical guide* (2nd ed.). Multilingual Matters.
- Godwin-Jones, R. (2023). Digital literacies for language learning. *Language Learning & Technology*, 27(2), 1–14.
- Hafner, C. (2023). Multimodal composing and digital communication in language classrooms. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 60, 85–102.
- Huang, X., & Chalmers, H. (2023). Implementation and effects of pedagogical translanguaging in EFL classrooms: A systematic review. *Languages*, 8(3), 194.
- Jewitt, C. (2013). *Multimodal methods for researching digital technologies*. In S. Price, C. Jewitt, & B. Brown (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of digital technology research* (pp. 241–251). SAGE.
- Kaiper-Marquez, A. (2023). Translanguaging in adult basic education worldwide. *Adult Literacy Education, Spring 2023*, 252–276.
- Kress, G. (2010). *Multimodality: A social semiotic approach to contemporary communication*. Routledge.
- Kress, G. (2019). *What is mode? Multimodality: A social semiotic approach to contemporary communication*. Routledge.
- Kress, G. (2020). *Multimodality: A social semiotic approach to contemporary communication* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
- Kress, G., & van Leeuwen, T. (2021). *Reading images: The grammar of visual design* (3rd ed.). Routledge.
- Li, W. (2022). Translanguaging as a creative process. *Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 15(1), 45–56.
- Lu, C. (2024). Review of research on digital translanguaging among teachers and students. *Journal of Educational Technology & Society*.
- Mills, K. A. (2016). *Literacy theories for the digital age: Social, critical, multimodal, spatial, material and sensory lenses*. Multilingual Matters.
- Oxford University Press ELT. (2023, November 16). *Multimodality and multimodal literacy: What are they and why are they important in ELT?* Teaching English with Oxford.
- Rowell, J., & Walsh, M. (2015). *The rise of the multimodal classroom: Five principles for effective multimodal literacy pedagogy*. Routledge.
- Serafini, F. (2014). *Reading the visual: An introduction to teaching multimodal literacy*. Teachers College Press.
- Vogel, S., & García, O. (2022). Translanguaging in multilingual learning environments: A pedagogical framework. *Applied Linguistics Review*, 13(1), 21–40.

APPENDIX

Appendix A: Sample Translanguaging-Based Digital Multimodal Task

Task Title: Identity Narratives Across Languages

Objective:

To encourage learners to draw upon their full linguistic repertoires (L1/L2/Lx) while producing a digital multimodal text that integrates images, audio, and written narration.

Instructions to Learners:

1. Using any platform-Canva, Adobe Express, PPT video export, or mobile editing apps-create a 2–3-minute digital story.

2. Add written captions, recorded speech, and images that represent either your personal or professional identity.
3. Employ both your L1 and English, freely switching when necessary.
4. The final video should be submitted via the learning platform.

Teacher's Notes:

Provide model multimodal texts that show translanguaging.

Encourage students to reflect on language choice in their narration.

Allow prewriting discussions in mixed-language groups.

Appendix B: Semi-Structured Interview Protocol

Purpose:

The objectives were to understand learners' perceptions of translanguaging activities and their development of digital multimodal literacies.

Sample Interview Questions:

1. How did the use of both your L1 and English affect your comfort in doing the digital tasks?
2. What challenges did you experience in creating multimodal content?
3. How did the translanguaging approach shape your understanding of digital communication?
4. Which of the digital tools did you find most helpful, and why?
5. Do you think your multimodal text production skills improved? Why or why not?
6. Did your switching languages help express concepts more clearly? Give an example.

Estimated Time: 20–25 minutes per participant.

Appendix C: Learner Questionnaire

Section 1: Demographic Information

Age

Education level

First language

Additional languages

Digital literacy self-rating: 1–5

Section 2: Perceptions of Translanguaging Pedagogy (5-point Likert scale)

1. The activities allowed me to use all of my languages effectively.
2. Translanguaging allowed me to articulate difficult concepts more lucidly.
3. It felt natural to switch languages when creating digital content.
4. This increased my confidence in the use of digital tools for communicating.
5. The multimodal tasks have enhanced my general proficiency in English.

Section 3: Open-Ended Questions

1. What did you like the most about using several languages?
2. What are the difficulties you have encountered while producing multimodal texts?
3. How could the activities be improved?