

Female Students' Perception of the Use of (Trans)languaging within English Literature Classrooms at King Khalid University

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Abstract

The recent research paper peruses the perception of female students of drama on the use of translanguaging within English classrooms at King Khalid university. The uppermost aim of this study is to scrutinize the perceptions of translanguaging by undergraduate female students of English literature (drama) as a major. The study's central question is how female drama students perceive translanguaging in their English literature classroom. Moreover, The critical significance of this research paper is how female drama students perceive the use of translanguaging for the first second language (L2) learning. The results of this study are expected to fill the knowledge gap about how the students perceive the use of the first language (L1) in English literature classrooms in Arabs contexts in general and in King Khalid University's contexts in particular. Female students' perceptions of drama were scrutinized by using a Likert-type questionnaire of thirteen items which were assayed quantitatively utilizing descriptive data. The participants of the study were twenty-five female students of drama majoring in English language and pursuing their undergraduate program at King Khalid university. The paramount results of the probe indicated that responses of female students of English drama to the statements in the questionnaire were mixed and echoed both positive and negative about using the first language and the second language in an English literature classroom. Moreover, female students' perceptions of the application of (L1) in classes of English drama were generally good on the use of both the first language and the second language. The study revealed that the use of the English language is advantageous and can help enhance English fours skills, English proficiency, and understanding of the drama. Their views are more optimistic about using (L2) than using (L1). Also, they perceived that they would learn more successfully in English drama classes if translanguaging practice was utilized by a professor of English drama which means that the application of translanguaging within English drama classrooms is a practical and sound strategy that benefits female students of drama to boost their English fluency, generate insights, comprehend the content, and delve deeper into the subject matter of English drama.

Keywords: Classrooms, King Khalid University, perception, Saudi female students of English drama, Translanguaging

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Introduction

The term "translanguaging" was first employed by a Welsh teacher from Wales in late 1984 to explain the process of teaching multilingual pupils (Alzabidi, & Al-Ahdal, 2022, García & Lin, 2017). His pupils struggled with using their language skills to better understand both Welsh and English. Integral bilinguals were made due to the integration of Welsh and English languages through the learning stage (Yuvayapan, 2019, García & Kleyn, 2016). Baker, (2011) defines translanguaging as the process of creating sense, shaping experiences, and obtaining awareness and understanding by means of using two tongues. Also, the term translanguaging was described as a speaker's full linguistic register (Giannelli, 2006, García & Kleyn, 2016), switching between languages and learners' use of their repertoires as an integral system (García & Li, 2014). In opposition to codeswitching, translanguaging includes the entire lexicon, not just one word (Alqahtani, 2022; García & Li, 2014; Otheguy et al., 2015).

Canagarajah (2011) called the term "translanguaging" a neologism while indicating that what has brought scholarly interest and academic concerns to consolidate around translanguaging is the appearing awareness of multilingual communication (as quoted in Alqahtani, 2022). The understanding of the efficaciousness of translanguaging in second or foreign language learning is just starting its increasing disconnection from ideological and socio-political extent. Given its leaving from the norm, translanguaging, as a teaching tool and education tool might emerge as a dangerous premise in the language classroom, but with its confirmed communicative proportion as in social spaces (Tsokalidou, 2017), its use in the learning process value attempt. Linguistic variety is appreciated compared to the L2 area of learning several decades earlier, and conventional approaches to language perception are under matter (Alqahtani, 2022, Garcia & Seltzer, 2016).

Multilingualism and translanguaging have been examined by several researchers. Charamba, (2020) explored how multilingual students' authentic use of their multiple languages in a science classroom in Viljoensdrift, South Africa. There has been ample scope of studies carried out by some researchers in the field referring to translanguaging and all have verified it to be a valuable teaching tool that can be utilized in the process of teaching multilingual students globally. The studies revealed that translanguaging could be employed to break the general concept of monolingual bias to eliminate the drawbacks it imposes on multilingual students.

The main central question of this research paper is the perceptions of drama students on the use of translanguaging in English literature classes. The results of this study are expected to fill the knowledge gap about how the students perceive the use of L1 in English literature classrooms in Arabs contexts in general and in King Khalid University's contexts in particular.

The objective of the recent study is to scrutinize the perceptions of translanguaging by undergraduate female students of English literature (drama) as a major. The researchers applied research data to find out how participants perceive the common practice of translanguaging, for English language learning, socio-cultural values, and sociolinguistic purposes, that is within university education. In the succeeding sections, the two researchers survey scholarly articles, books, and other sources concerning translanguaging, then present and discuss the results of their recent study.

To achieve the research objectives specified in the recent research, the following questions were raised:

QR1 How do female students of drama perceive translanguaging in their English literature classroom?

QR2 How do female students of drama perceive the use of translanguaging for L2 learning?

QR3: How do L1 (Arabic language), and L2 (English) interact with each other in the EFL classroom at King Khalid University context?

QR4 How does translanguaging improve drama female students' understanding of the subject matter of the play, for example, William Shakespeare' Macbeth?

Review of Literature

Etymology of the Term Translanguaging

The etymology of the term *translanguaging* is derived from the Welsh word “trawsieithu.” The term originated by Williams and Whittal in 1996. Lewis, Jones, Baker, 2012, p. 643) point out that translanguaging was first derived from the Welsh word “Trawsieithu” in Welsh schools to explain the pedagogical procedure where learners systematically make a transition from one language to another for particular reasons, for example reading in Second Language (L2) and discuss the text in First Language (L1), or listening to L1 and writing in L2 or another.

Translanguaging as a Concept

Velasco and García (2014) noted that the term [translanguaging] emphasizes the susceptible and significant actions through which bilinguals choose characteristics in their language repertory to convey correctly. From this standpoint, the language practices being learned by emergent bilinguals are in practical interrelatedness with other language practices and form an integral system.

Therefore, translanguaging enables the learner to have input with a language and make an output with another language (Alzahrani, 2019). Anderson (2017) pointed out that: “translanguaging, and ‘translingualism,’ shows the flexible use of several languages as a resource that exceeds traditional understandings of different languages”. Fittingly, these two terms highlight the softening of lines between named languages and are based on the concept that incipient bilinguals constantly use their thorough linguistic repertoires to make meaning (Pacheco, & Miller, 2016). Translanguaging defined by Garcia & Li (2014): “is to educate all learners, regardless of their language practices, to maximize the meaning-making, creativity, and criticality of their educational experience” (pp. 370–371)

Sayer (2013) considered that translanguaging is better grasped as a descriptive name for bilingual practices of discourse that learners and teachers use for both educational and non-educational goals. The inclusion of translanguaging practices has been proposed to offer a scaffolding method for instruction (García & Sylvan, 2011). Canagarajah (2011) defined translanguaging as “the ability of multilingual speakers to shuttle between languages, treating the diverse languages that form their repertoire as an integrated system” (p. 401.) This clarification not only alludes to switching between two languages but, it comprises the systematic employment of two languages in a particular language teaching activity.

The Prominent Role of Translanguaging Practice in Second Language Learning

Translanguaging plays a crucial role in second language acquisition and helps language learners improve their bi-lingual personalities. It also favors teachers in several ways, e.g., translanguaging benefits teachers in enhancing students’ knowledge and cognate awareness by employing the whole repertoire of learners' native language. Translanguaging also benefits learners by creating a secure and safe environment in which their identities are appreciated and valued (Cenoz, J., Leonet, O., & Gorter, 2021, Khan, Nazir, & Khalid; 2021).

Translanguaging practice also has been revealed to be beneficial for particular (L2) learning, for instance, by allowing cross-linguistic transfer, fostering collaborative language learning, and assisting learners in improving more critical thinking of language and culture. (Burton & Rajendram, 2019).

Translanguaging and Reading and Writing Skills

The utilization of the L1 in second language learning is not a new concept; in Content Language and Integrated Learning (CLIL), students are encouraged to take advantage of the L1 in the early phases of acquiring a new language (Navés, 2009, Moody, Chowdhury, & Eslami, 2019). The two skills of reading and writing are usually taught in the L1, in an exertion to transfer literacy skills levels from one language to another (Cummins, 2000). What makes translanguaging divergent is its capability to equalize the playground between monolinguals and bilinguals. In traditional classes, monolinguals are capable of utilizing all of their language abilities to manifest the knowledge. At the same time, bilinguals are compelled to repress half, putting them at a real disadvantage. Translanguaging can improve this because when bilinguals are authorized to employ all the characteristics in their linguistic repertoire, they are more easily able to express complicated thoughts, give adequate explanations, convince disputes, and so on. Therefore, indicating their full capabilities (García & Lin, 2017). In their colossal work, García, et al. (2017) supposed that there are four main goals of translanguaging: First: to help learners as they occupy with; obscure texts for example in the recent study, the complex story of Shakespeare's Macbeth. Secondly: to offer an opportunity for learners to employ language to assess, apprehend, collect, integrate, and analyze information utilizing text-based evidence, as well as work collaboratively to induce and explicate information; Thirdly: to generate an environment where learners challenge linguistic hierarchies; and fourthly to enable all learners to feel like prized members and valued part of the classroom community, allowing them to employ all of their resources to take part perfectly in-class activities (García, Johnson, Seltzer, 2017).

In translingual reading and writing, languages come in contiguity with each other to create new senses and syntax (Canagarajah, 2016). Learners who participate in translingual writing activities can evolve their strategies to employ their complete linguistic repertoire in the most linguistically efficient manner (Canagarajah, 2011). Canagarajah states that translingual writing results in critical thinking about how the writer employs language per diem and allows the writers to improve to discuss meanings within their writings, comprising learners from various language settings (Canagarajah, 2016).

Previous Studies

There are few studies probing students' perceptions of the use of translanguaging in English classrooms in general and in English literature in particular classrooms. Hence, the recent study is an exceptional and novel study that inquires about drama students' perceptions of the use of translanguaging in English literature classrooms in tertiary education. Al-Ahdal (2020) studied the effectiveness of translanguaging in a little context with Saudi school pupils who are emerging bilinguals. A perceptions questionnaire was managed for twelve schools' EFL teachers in Qassim. Province, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to evaluate their perspective on translanguaging in English classrooms. The study revealed that the Saudi teachers' perspective on the use of translanguaging in EFL classrooms as a practice is good and they are in pursuit of better bilingual techniques in the classrooms of English as a Foreign Language.

Canagarajah, (2011) has carried out a study on the use of translanguaging in the classroom as a rising issue for research and teaching. The findings of the study showed that the use

translanguaging in the school is effective and productive. Zhang and Jocuns, (2022) studied a survey on when and how translanguaging appears in Chinese private college students' English reading practice. The results of the study show that: a) reading utilizing translanguaging rather than English means teaching is typical in teaching and reading practices among private college students in China.

Moody, Chowdhury, and Eslami, (2019) studied the perceptions of college graduates in universities outside of the USA on translanguaging. The findings of the study indicated that the views of college graduates about translanguaging are highly positive, especially in social contexts and L2 learning. Rivera and Mazak, (2017) have conducted a study to analyze student perceptions of translanguaging. It is a case study of a Puerto Rican University Classroom. The study revealed that a specific group of students has apathetic to a positive perspective on classroom translanguaging. A large number of autonomous responses may imply students are neutral to translanguaging pedagogy or that these students are restricted to work within a setting where translanguaging occurs many times.

Reni and Khazana, (2021) conducted a study on the perspectives of Indonesian undergraduates on translanguaging. The findings of the research showed that translanguaging generally has a positive response in four different targets as a practice, for learning the language, for social usage, and in a university setting.

Puspitasari and Yumarnamto, (2020) carried out a study on the utilization of Indonesian (L1) in an English class at degree programs in an Indonesian university. The findings of this study show that L1 could be a potential source for learning English but when the L1 was overworked in the lecture room, the opportunities for learning and experiencing the target language decreased, limiting their academic prospects and options and bringing about negative attitudes toward the learners.

Alzabidi, and Al-Ahdal, (2022) studied perceptions of Saudi upper-secondary learners towards using translanguaging in English classrooms. Results showed that some Saudi students still favor an integrated approach to second language acquisition. Lopez-Hevia and Ruiz-Perez, (2021), investigated Spanish students' attitudes toward translanguaging practices in their writing class. Results showed that the students of writing could better concentrate on the thrust they want to express without linguistic force that drives them to employ one language only. Moreover, pairing writing students with collaborative writing improves their general writing progress. Findings from the last draft cogitate that students tend not to reflect translanguaging in their final draft

Carvalho (2018) examined Eastern Michigan University students' perspectives on using native language in community-based English programs as foreign language classrooms. The main results of this research show that students use their native language regardless of their fluency in English and the absence of encouragement by teachers. Furthermore, students think about specific native language practices for instance rendering words and making notes) can foster them to learn English. Generally, the results propose that the critical use of the first language has the prospective to merit community-based learners across different levels of competence by promoting their foreign language acquisition along with corroborating their personality as multilingual and multicultural people.

To conclude the above-mentioned previous investigations, build the basis for information on translanguaging and how it was viewed by students of drama. In the context of Arab colleges of languages, the studies on perceptions of translanguaging which compassed the cases inside and outside the lecture room are still seldom conducted. However, studies in translanguaging have

increased in English as a second language, and how it has been perceived by the learners of Saudi Universities needs further studies both in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and in inclusive international contexts. Hence, the recent study is among the first to investigate the perception of university students of English drama on the use of translanguaging within English literature classrooms, particularly in the context of King Khalid University.

Methods

A quantitative research method was adopted by the two researchers to investigate the perception of students of drama on the use of translanguaging within English literature classrooms at King Khalid University.

Participants

About twenty-five female students of English drama at the Department of English, Dhahran al-Janoub female *students* campus, King Khalid University during the summer semester 2020 joined this study at their discretion. These students were selected randomly. They were asked to answer a questionnaire of 13 items. The participants were bilingual as they spoke Arabic as the mother tongue or first language (L1) and English as the second language (L2).

Study Variables

The independent variable included in this study was practicing translanguaging within synchronous and non-synchronous lectures and in-person English drama classes. The dependent variable included in this study consisted of the perception of students of drama on the use of translanguaging within English literature classrooms.

Research Instruments

To gather the data from the recent study, the two researchers used a questionnaire of 13 statements designed and prepared by them. Moreover, the questionnaire was composed of two sections: Section one dealt with perceptions of students of drama on the use of (L1) in an English literature classroom, and section two is devoted to perceptions of students of drama on the use of (L2) in an English literature classroom. The questionnaire demanded the participants to manifest their agreement to each item in a four Likert-type questionnaire: agree, strongly, agree disagree, and strongly disagree.

To test the validity of the current questionnaire, the questionnaire was checked first by seven expert faculty members from King Khalid University and Jazan University. They were asked to review the instrument for content and face validity. To improve the validity of the instrument, the instrument was pilot tested with a group of 10 students of drama from the same university. The changes in the questionnaire were made by the two researchers based on the recommendations of five professors from the university.

Table 1. *Reliability Statistics of the questionnaire*

Sections	Items numbers	Cronbach's α for each dimension
1. Female Students' perception of the use of (L1) in English literature(drama) classroom	1-8	0.89
2. Female Students' perception of the use of (L2) in English literature(drama) classroom.	9-13	0.87

As seen in table one, the value of Cronbach's α for each item was high (0.87- 0.89). The general alpha reliability coefficients for the perceptions of female students of drama on the use of translanguaging within English literature classrooms at King Khalid University.

Table 2. Perception of students of drama on the use of (L1) in an English literature classroom(N:25)

No	Statements	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Section 1: Perceptions of Students of Drama on the use of (L1) in an English literature classroom		n%	n%	n%	n%
Positive statements related to the use of (L1) in an English literature classroom					
1	I would feel more pleasant learning the "Play Macbeth" when a university professor of English drama used (L1) while teaching us the play.	1.8%	6.63%	13.73%	3.57%
2	I would feel more confident when a university professor of English drama used (L1) in explaining complicated dramatic literary terms.	1.2%	2.4%	16.83%	5.61%
3	I had better knowledge when a university professor of English drama rendered the play's story and new dramatic literary terms into Arabic.	2.55%	3.57%	12.24%	7.14%
4	When a university professor of English drama used (L1)I could comprehend and grasp the drama course better	1.2%	5.10%	11.22%	8.16%
Negative statements related to the use of (L1) in English literature(drama) classroom					
5	When a university professor of English drama used Arabic in the class, it diminished my opportunity of hearing and used English in the actual context	2.4%	7.65%	10.71%	5.10%``
6	The more I used Arabic in the English drama class more I became unwilling to understand conversations in English with my colleagues.	4.14%	4.14%	12.24 %	4.8%
7	Using L1 in the English drama class made me undervalue the significance of using English	4.8%	9.18%	8.67%	3.57%
8	I would feel discomfited when a university professor of English drama engaged in translanguaging during English drama class.	2.3%	1.4%	1.3%	1.5%

Table 3. Perception of students of drama on the use of L2 in an English literature class (N:25)

No	Items	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
<u>Section 2:</u> Perceptions of Students of Drama on the use of (L2) in an English literature classroom		n%	n%	n%	n%
9	I had better knowledge when a university professor of English drama used (L2) in explaining complicated dramatic literary terms.	1.2%	5.16%	12.24%	6.18%
10	When a university professor of English drama used (L2) frequently, I partook better in conversation, debate, and discussion in the classroom.	1.2 %	7.65%	10.71%	6.12%
11	When a university professor of English drama used “L 2 only” in the class, it would impugn me to enhance my four skills of English.	0.6%	1.8%	10.71%	12.62%
12	I favored a university professor of English drama who used “second language only” in the class so that I could boost my fluency in English.	0.6%	5.16%	13.26%	5.16%
13	I favored using (L2) in class despite the fact that I could not speak English quickly, so I could better raise my fluency in English.	0.6%	4.8%	10.20%	10.71%

Data Analysis

Analysis of the gathered data from the given questionnaire assisted the two researchers in coming to a general conclusion about the positive or negative perception of students of drama on the use of translanguaging within English literature classrooms at King Khalid University. A total of 25 female students of English drama completed the survey. The two researchers applied descriptive statistics to compute the percentages of each Likert-type item in the questionnaire.

Findings and Discussions

After checking the reliability and validity of the questionnaire, the findings of each section of the questionnaire have been discussed carefully. The first section of the research questionnaire comprised eight items that were developed to probe the perceptions of students of drama on the use of the first language (Arabic language) in English literature (drama) classrooms. The second section of the study questionnaire consisted of five items that were improved to probe the perceptions of female students of drama on the use of the second language (English language) in an English literature classroom.

All in all, the perception of female students of drama of all four items related to the use of the first language (Arabic language) in an English literature classroom was positive (Table two). The statement ‘I would feel more pleasant learning the "Play Macbeth" when a university professor of English Drama used (L1) during teaching us the play’, received varied responses. The respondents perceived that they would feel more pleasant learning when (L1) was used during

teaching English drama (Play of Macbeth) for example, as 13.73% agreed and 3.57% strongly agreed. In response to the statement, 'I would feel more confident when a university professor of English Drama used (L1) in explaining complicated dramatic literary terms'. The respondents perceived that they would feel more confident when (L1) was used by university professors of English drama in explaining complicated dramatic literary terms as 16.83% agreed, and 5.61% strongly agreed. This finding on respondents' view of using (L1) in explaining complicated dramatic literary terms during the English drama class could be understood as a strong assent of translanguaging practice by university professors of English drama. In response to the statement, 'I had better understanding when a university professor of English drama translated the play's story and new dramatic literary terms into Arabic'. The participants perceived that they had better knowledge when a university professor of English drama rendered the story of the play and new dramatic literary terms into Arabic as 12.24% agreed and 7.14% strongly agreed. This finding on respondents' positive view on using (L1) in rendering the play's story and new dramatic literary terms into Arabic can construe as evidence of accepting translanguaging practice by students of English drama. In response to the statement, 'when a university professor of English drama used the first language(Arabic language)I could comprehend and grasp the drama course better. The female students of drama perceived their comprehension and apprehension of the drama course(Play Macbeth) improved better-as11.22 % agreed and 8.16% strongly agreed.

In response to the statement 'When a university professor of English drama used Arabic in the class, it diminished my opportunity of hearing and use English in the actual context', the participants' views were negative as 2.4% disagreed and 7.65% strongly disagreed. This can be seen as a slight disagreement toward translanguaging practice by university professors of English drama. In response to the statement, 'The more I used Arabic in the English drama class I became more unwilling to understand conversations in English with my colleagues, the participants' views were negative as 4.14% disagreed and 4.14% strongly disagreed. This finding on respondents' negative view on using Arabic in English classes by students of English drama indicated that there is weak disagreement toward translanguaging practice by students of English drama.

In responses to the statement 'using (L1) in the English classroom made me undervalue the significance of using English', the participants' views were negative as 4.8% disagreed and 9.18% strongly disagreed. This finding on the participants' perception can be interpreted as a weak disagreement on translanguaging practice carried out by students of English drama. In response to the statement, 'I would feel discomfited when a university professor of English drama engaged in translanguaging during English drama classes. The respondents' views were negative as 2.3% disagreed and 1.4% strongly disagreed. The respondents perceived they would feel frustrated when a university professor of English drama engaged in translanguaging during English drama class'. This finding on the participants' perception can be interpreted as a minor disagreement in translanguaging during English drama classes conducted by a university professor of English drama.

Table three displays the perception of students of drama on the use of (L2) in an English literature class. Generally, the respondents' perception of all five items associated with the help of using (L2) in an English literature classroom was positive (Table three). In response to the statement, 'I had better knowledge when a university professor of English Drama used (L2) in explaining complicated dramatic literary terms'. The respondents perceived that they had better knowledge when a university professor of English drama used (L2) in explaining complicated dramatic literary terms as 12.24% agreed, and 6.18% strongly agreed. This finding can be

interpreted that there is strong agreement toward using (L2) by students of English drama. In response to the statement, 'When a university professor of English drama used (L2) frequently, I partook better in conversation, debate, and discussion in the classroom'. The respondents' views were positive as 12.24% agreed, and 6.18% strongly agreed because they perceived that they partook better in conversation, debate, and discussions When a university professor of English drama used (L2) frequently. This finding shows good agreement toward using (L2) frequently in English drama classes because the learners reap great benefits from it. For example participating better in conversation, debate, and discussion inside and outside the classroom. In response to the statement, 'When a university professor of English drama used "second language only" in the class, it would impugn me to enhance my four skills of English(reading. The respondents' views were positive as 10.71% agreed and 12.62% strongly agreed about this statement because they perceived that their four skills were enhanced when a university professor of English Drama used "second language only" in the class. This finding shows that there is excellent agreement toward using (L2) in English drama classes because the learners benefit greatly from it. For example, their English four skills were increased. In response to the statement, 'I favored a university professor of English Drama who used "second language only" in the class, so that I could boost my fluency in English.' The respondents' views were positive as 13.26% agreed and 5.16% strongly agreed about this statement because they perceived that their fluency in English was enhanced. After all, a university professor of English drama used (L2) only in class. This finding shows that there is excellent agreement toward using (L2) only in English drama classes because the learners benefit greatly from it. For example, their English fluency in English was improved. In response to the statement, 'I favored using (L2) in class despite the fact I could not speak English quickly; so I could better raise my fluency in English'. The respondents' views were positive as 10.20% agreed and 10.71% strongly agreed. They perceived they could better boost their fluency in English regardless they could not speak English quickly. This finding indicates excellent and perfect agreement toward preferring using (L2) to promote the respondents' fluency in English.

Conclusion

There were three purposes of the recent study to collect the views of female students of English drama on the use of translanguaging within English literature classrooms at King Khalid University. The responses of drama female students to the statements in the questionnaire reflect both positive and negative about using the first language(Arabic language) and the second language(English language)in English literature classrooms. Perceptions of female drama students on the use of L1 in English drama classes were overall positive on the use of both the Arabic and English languages. These results are in line with previous studies on the use of L1 in L2 classrooms. The study showed that the use of a second language (English language) is advantageous and can help enhance English four skills, English proficiency, and understanding of drama among female students of drama. However, female students of drama had a negative standpoint if translanguaging shows a university professor's lack of mastery of either L1 or L2. To Conclude, the views of female students of drama are more positive about using L2 than using L1. Also, they perceived that they would learn more successfully in English drama classes if translanguaging practice was utilized by a professor of English drama.

Implications of the Recent Study

The results of this study cannot be identical for all students of English drama because of the number of respondents. However, since they teach different students of drama and work in other universities in various provinces of Saudi Arabia, the two researchers would propose that the findings may give sound agreements about the perceptions in Saudi Universities in general and King Khalid university in particular towards translanguaging. To conclude, further investigations can be carried out to evaluate the short-term and long-term impact of translanguaging activities on high school and university students' academic achievement and performance

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