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Article

Translanguaging as a Pedagogical Investment: A Poststructural Perspective on Identity Development

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Abstract
This study reports a longitudinal ethnographic study exploring how two pairs of co-teachers negotiated their professional identities and repositioned themselves in relation to evolving pedagogical translanguaging practices in a bilingual preschool setting in Türkiye. Drawing on Darvin and Norton's (2015) Model of Investment, the article argues that the teacher identity is shaped by various factors, including their language ideologies, the power dynamics within the classroom, and their investment in translanguaging pedagogy. More specifically, identity development of teachers is examined in relation to how the pedagogical operation of translanguaging creates a new classroom pedagogy and how this newly-emerged pedagogy repositions teachers' identity. The participants included two homeroom teachers and two English teachers sharing the same classrooms. They took part in a professional development (PD) program comprising mentoring, coursework, and regular collaborative meetings to shape their understanding of bilingual education (BE), and enable them to implement collaborative planning and teaching guided by translanguaging pedagogy. Using data from in-depth interviews, the researcher's in-field observations, and teacher reflections, the study revealed the teachers gradually developed more dynamic professional identities as they engaged in pedagogical translanguaging practices. Through the shared responsibility in planning and instruction, the Turkish-speaking homeroom teachers, initially positioned as assistants, developed greater authority, autonomy, and visibility in the classrooms. Meanwhile, the English teachers started to view their role as more collaborative rather than being the sole authority figure. The study concludes that translanguaging-based PD fostered a shift from subject-matter roles to bilingual teacher identities and offers implications for teacher education programs.

Keywords
Teacher identity, investment, translanguaging, bilingual education, poststructural approach

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1 Introduction

Translanguaging, which has taken a growing interest in recent academic discussion with the need for more flexible approaches, acknowledges the existence of various linguistic resources and aims to utilize learners' entire linguistic repertoire to make meaning as a teaching pedagogy (García, Johnson, & Seltzer, 2017). Research in different monolingual and multilingual preschool settings has identified various benefits of translanguaging: fostering language development, metalinguistic awareness, creativity, language-based agency of children, and supporting their multilingual identity development (Bengochea & Gort, 2022; Dikilitaş, Bahrami, & Erbakan, 2023; Kirsch, 2020). In such studies, translanguaging was employed in different ways, including dialogic activities, socio-dramatic plays, code-switching, strategic translation, and bilingual recasting (e.g., Aleksić & Bebic-Crestany, 2023; Bauer, Presiado & Colomer, 2017; Becker & Knoll, 2021; Sembiante, Bengochea, & Gort, 2022). To ensure the effectiveness of these activities, teachers take on various roles within bilingual classroom settings, such as the role of translanguaging facilitator (Dikilitaş & Mumford, 2020). They also engage in specific instructional models, including co-teaching, co-modeling, or coordinated pedagogy, which refers to the collaboration between two or more teachers to foster students' understanding in a single classroom (Roth, Tobin, Zimmermann, Bryant, & Davis, 2002). Although the studies on bilingual language teacher education stress the importance of co-teaching instruction in translanguaging and its effective components (Perry & Stewart, 2005; Pontier & Gort, 2016), studies focusing on the relationship between co-teachers employing translanguaging - either in an early education or at higher levels- remain limited (e.g., Dikilitaş & Öztüfekçi, 2024; Dillon & Gallagher, 2019; Pontier & Gort, 2016). Also, virtually no studies specifically paid attention to how employing this specific pedagogy collaboratively redefines the roles and the classroom positions of co-teachers, which, in turn, contributes to their professional identity development. To address this issue, our longitudinal ethnographic study investigates two (n=2) homeroom teachers and two (n=2) English language teachers who negotiated their roles, constructed knowledge, and navigated power dynamics within new classroom discourse during and after a PD program designed by translanguaging pedagogy in a bilingual preschool where Turkish and English coexist as a medium of instruction.

Teacher identity development in this paper is positioned in relation to how the pedagogical operation of translanguaging creates a new classroom discourse and how this newly-emerged discourse reshapes power dynamics between the co-teachers. In this sense, the study theorizes identity formation from a poststructural perspective, which conceptualizes identity as a multiple and dynamic construct (Weedon, 1997; Foucault, 1980). Also, a poststructural account of teacher identity emphasizes the discursive experiences playing a constructive role in teacher self. Identity formation, we argue here, is not about discontinuity; instead, it is in the form of constantly "becoming" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). As discursive practices change, so do the identities (Britzman, 1994). Grounded in poststructuralist view, the Model of Investment proposed by Darvin and Norton (2015) offers a valuable framework to get a better insight on how the identity development of these co-teachers is reconstructed and renegotiated as they gain new position in their professional communities. By incorporating three components of this model-ideology, capital, and identity, we explore how teachers invest in their language practices during this in-service teacher training program.

2 Literature Review

This section reviews the relevant literature on language teacher identity and the Model of Investment as the theoretical lens of the study.

2.1 Teacher identity

In the last few decades, teacher identity has received considerable attention from various scholars in educational research (e.g., Dikilitaş & Mumford, 2023; Steadman, Kayi-Aydar, & Vogel, 2018; Yazan, 2017). In general, teacher identity refers to "how teachers learn to teach, how they teach, and who they are as individuals and professionals" (Varghese, 2008, p.287). According to Mockler (2011), it is the way how teachers view and understand themselves both individually and collectively. Despite growing interest, teacher identity remains a complex construct. As Kumaravadivelu (2012) states, "there is very little consensus among scholars about what really constitutes identity, or how it is actually formed and reformed" (p.56). To further conceptualize this complexity, Varghese, Johnston, and Johnston (2005) suggest that teacher identity is shaped by the interplay of different factors, including professional, cultural, political, and individual dynamics. Because of its dynamic nature and its uniqueness across different contexts, many aspects of teacher identity still remain unexplored. In most studies, teacher identity is described as a dynamic construction, involving a non-linear and unstable process (e.g., Kanno & Stuart, 2011; Zembylas, 2003). However, in this evolving and iterative understanding of identity, teachers are not perceived as "a doer" anymore (Freeman, 2002, p.5); instead, they are portrayed as "agentic social subjects" (Cross, 2018, p.2). As Darvin and Norton (2016) argue, identity reflects "possibilities of the future" rather than a fixed state (p. 25).

To date, teacher identity, specifically language teacher identity, has been explored in relation to a vast range of topics from various theoretical perspectives. A great number of studies on language teacher identity explore linguistic identities, which focuses on how non-native teachers construct or reconstruct identities across different educational settings (e.g., Kayi-Aydar, 2017; Wollf & De Costa, 2017). For instance, in the study of Rodriguez and Cho (2011), language teachers resisted the native-nonnative speaker dichotomy and rejected being labeled as "nonnative" or "minority", challenging existing norms, which contributes to the construction of their professional identities. In addition to in-service teachers, a body of research also investigates identity development among novice teachers or pre-service teacher candidates participating especially TESOL programs (e.g., Kanno & Stuart, 2011; Steadman, Kayı-Aydar, & Vogel, 2018). These studies often draw on situated learning theory, suggesting that language teacher identity development is not only shaped by individual factors but also constructed through participation in social practices.

Studies on language teacher identity demonstrate diversity both in research topics that they addressed and theoretical frameworks they employed. They have generally been investigated by three major frameworks so far which are sociocultural perspectives (e.g.,Wertsch, 1991), Community of Practice (CoP) framework (Lave & Wenger, 1991), and poststructural paradigm (e.g., Norton, 2010). Using a sociocultural approach, for example, Velez-Rendon (2010) examined language teacher candidate's identity development through biographical and contextual factors. While most studies in this group focused on the cross-cultural identity development of language teachers (e.g., Ajayi, 2011; Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2013), other scholars examined "identities in-practice" with CoP framework. More recently, language teacher identity studies have been discussed within the perspective of poststructuralist approach, which refers to "understood broadly as an attempt to investigate and to theorize the role of language in construction and reproduction of social relations, and the role of social dynamics in the process of additional language learning and use" (Pavlenko, 2003, p.282). This area of research mainly addressed the relations between language teacher identity and emotions (e.g., Kocabaş-Gedik & Ortaçtepe-Hart, 2020; Wollf & De Costa, 2017), language teacher identity and agency (e.g., Kayi-Aydar, 2018; Miller, Morgan, & Medina, 2017). Taken together, these theories provide theoretical underpinnings to teacher identity development and are not mutually exclusive (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). While the poststructuralist perspective often draws on sociocultural understandings of teacher identity, it extends them by focusing on power, ideology, and discourse in our study.

With the paradigm shift from monolingual orientation to heteroglossic language orientation in bilingual education (BE), many scholars developed an interest in theorizing translanguaging and its effect on teacher identity especially in multilingual contexts (e.g., Kayi-Aydar & Green-Eneix, 2019; Kirsch, 2020). However, relatively fewer studies have explored the interplay between its pedagogical realizations and teacher identity development particularly in monolingual contexts where students are emergent bilingual (e.g., Dikilitaş & Bahrami, 2022; Dikilitaş, & Mumford, 2020). In this sense, this study aims to contribute to the growing body of literature by examining how in-service co-teachers in a monolingual setting negotiate their professional identities while engaging with translanguaging pedagogy from a poststructuralist stance.

2.2 Theoretical framework

The Model of Investment proposed by Darvin and Norton (2015) offers a macro-level framework for exploring identity, emphasizing the dynamic interplay of three constructs: ideology, capital, and identity. While ideologies are referred as "dominant ways of thinking that organize and stabilize societies" (p.4), this study specifically focuses on the language ideologies of the participating teachers, their beliefs about bilingualism, and how they operationalize BE in their school context. As another complementing construct within the Model of Investment, capital draws on Bourdieu's (1986) power and resources, and takes different forms such as cultural, economic, social, symbolic, and linguistic capital. This poststructuralist framework suggests that the value of these capitals is not "monolithic", but "layered" and "complex" (Darvin & Norton, 2015; 43). As the value of the teachers' symbolic and linguistic capitals is positioned by the prevailing and emerging ideological structures, integrating this aspect into examination of the teachers' identity construction provides a powerful analytical lens in this study. According to Darvin and Norton (2014), identity is in the form of a "continual site of struggle, as language learners navigate through different contexts of power" (p.57). In this line, the present study analyzes how the co-teachers' power dynamics change by investing their bilingual teacher capital during the PD program. This process of investing their bilingual teacher capital reshapes not only the classroom power dynamics between co-teachers, but also their professional identities. As the framework suggests, teacher identity in this study is conceptualized as "a site of struggle" by negotiating individual and institutional ideologies. Thus, this model illuminates how the teachers navigate and challenge dominant ideologies, increasing their capital not only to redefine their positions in the classrooms, but also to reshape who they are—and who they can become—as professionals. In this context, investment is understood as "a process contingent on the negotiation of identity, power, and legitimacy" (Darvin & Norton, 2017, p.3), highlighting how professional growth and positioning are closely tied to broader ideological and structural forces.

3 Methodology

The research, investigating the impact of translanguaging-driven PD program on co-teachers' identity development in a bilingual pre-school context in Türkiye, adopts an ethnographic research design in which "the researcher describes and interprets the shared and learned patterns of values, behaviors, beliefs, and language of a culture-sharing group" (Harris, 1968, p. 90). The approach of ethnography in this study involves the first author's prolonged engagement in the field and making long-term observations of the school culture such as the implementation of BE practices, dynamics of professional and linguistic exchanges among co-teachers in the classrooms, and the ideology of the institution that has shaped and impacted teachers' pedagogical practices. Also, the study is characterized by the interactional, inductive, and iterative nature of ethnographic methodology. In line with the aims of this ethnographic study, the following research questions guided us:

RQ1: What key factors shape homeroom and English teachers' identity positioning before the PD program in a bilingual preschool?

RQ2: How does the PD program reshape the teachers' identity development?

3.1 Context of the study

Despite including some minoritized languages, Türkiye is a politically monolingual country where English is generally taught as an additional language with a system of monoglossic language ideologies (Yüzlü & Dikilitaş, 2022). The bilingual preschool we explored in this research is located in a northern coastal city of Türkiye that is mainly monolingual and monocultural. The school, one of the two bilingual preschools in the city, is the most prestigious fee-based preschool and has been implementing this pedagogy since it opened in 2010. The ultimate aim of the preschool is to equip the monolingual Turkish-speaking children with English as a second language at an early age, and to develop emergent bilingual speakers who can fluently speak both Turkish and English. As for the language policy, the preschool adopts one teacher-one language policy with an English teacher and a homeroom teacher who are both present in each classroom all day and follow predefined language roles during the course of the instruction. The school has eight classrooms, divided among three age groups: year 3-4, year 4-5 and year 5-6.

The training program started in the summer of 2023 with field-observations and document analysis by the first author, who also acted as the teacher trainer in this study. After three months of in-field observations, twelve teachers (N=12) including six Turkish-speaking EFL teachers and six Turkish-speaking homeroom teachers participated in the in-service teacher training program, designed as a curriculum-embedded program by the first and second author collaboratively. The sessions were organized as transformative continuing professional development (CPD), characterized by being contextual, reflective, collaborative, dialogic, needs-oriented, and dynamic/emergent (Kennedy, 2005; Morrison, 2018). The INSET training proceeded with the pre-training phase, during which the first author observed lessons, conducted in-field observations, analyzed documents, and had casual conversations with teachers to learn more about the school's existing BE model. This stage helped us understand the school context and to conduct a needs analysis for a tailored training program. Following the pre-training phase, the implementation stage comprised of seven modules, comprising both theoretical and practical sessions. The theoretical modules focused on key concepts such as bilingualism, cognition, and translanguaging pedagogy, aiming to build a solid conceptual foundation for participants. Practical modules included collaborative lesson planning designed by both English and homeroom teachers, micro-teaching sessions, and modelling, enabling in-service teachers to apply translanguaging strategies in their authentic classroom contexts. The program also featured activity design and storytelling workshops to strengthen hands-on application. Finally, a reflective session was held to evaluate the overall training process and promote critical engagement with the content.

3.2 Participants

In our study, we rely on the data taken from two pairs of language and homeroom teachers out of six pairs. A non-probability purposive sampling was followed, and a criterion sampling strategy was utilized (Creswell, 2007) for participant selection. In this sense, the selected teachers were expected to meet certain criteria, including having prior experience and perspectives related to bilingual teaching, but without any previous formal training in translanguaging pedagogy. The decision was intentional, as it allowed us to explore how in-service teachers negotiate their professional identities while engaging with translanguaging pedagogy for the first time in a structured way. Beyond these general criteria, the selection of these two particular teacher pairs was mainly for the indications in their data that they were in the process of professional transformation. These changes were evident both in the semi-

structured interviews data, lesson observations, and their reflections. Their experience of identity construction shaped through the program was particularly valuable for the purpose of our study. Lastly, the participants were informed about the overall objectives of the research and were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. The demographic information of the participating teachers is presented below:

Table 1
Profiles of the Participants

	Pseudonyms	**Gender**	**Educational Background**	**Teaching Profession**	**Bilingual Teaching Experience**	**Total Teaching Experience**
PAIR 1	Selen	F	Russian Language and Literature	English Teacher	2 yrs	2 yrs
	İlim	F	Child Development	Preschool Teacher	5 yrs	5 yrs
PAIR 2	Esma	F	English Language Teaching	English Teacher	1,5 yrs	1,5 yrs
	Melek	F	Child Development	Preschool Teacher	2 yrs	3,5 yrs

3.3 Data collection and analysis

We collected our data set through semi-structured interviews, participants' and the researcher's reflective notes, and in-field observations. We conducted three semi-structured interviews with the participants at different stages, each serving a specific purpose: a pre-training interview, a mid-training interview, and a post-training interview. The interview protocols were constructed by Patton's (2002) six types of questions to ensure a comprehensive exploration: experience and behavior, opinion and values, feeling, knowledge, sensory, and background/demographic. While the pre-training interviews were mainly to understand the teachers' pedagogical and practical knowledge better and to explore their existing language ideologies, the subsequent interviews primarily aimed to examine how the training changed their perspectives about preschool BE and to the development and negotiation of their professional identities. In addition to the interviews, the researcher, also the first author, kept in-field reflective notes since the pre-training phase, which is recommended by most qualitative research methodologies as a way to supplement data and offer rich context for analysis (Creswell, 2007; Patton, 2002). The teachers were asked to keep reflective notes and records after training modules and the lessons. Throughout the research, a total of six lessons observations were carried out, amounting to approximately 180 minutes in total, for teacher pairs. We prepared a lesson observation form in accordance with the key principles of BE (Baker, 2001), including the key aspects such as Bilingual Model, Co-teaching Model, Language Policy, Time Allocation, and Course Materials and Activities.

We analyzed the data through thematic inductive analysis, letting themes emerge from the data rather than pre-defined themes (Hatch, 2002). After the data was transcribed verbatim, it was constantly revisited to identify emerging categories and refine existing ones (Merriam, 2002). This approach makes the analysis process iterative rather than a linear, allowing us to engage the data at different stages. The coding process of the data includes the first cycle and second cycle coding system suggested by Saldaña and Omasta (2018). While the first cycle was more in the way of breaking down and comparing the data, the second cycle coding was conducted in a more analytical manner to get more inferential insights from the data (Kvale & Brinkman, 2009).

3.4 Researcher positionality

A researcher generally serves the primary research instrument in qualitative studies, especially in ethnographic studies. This provided flexibility for us in adopting the training program, observing teachers' identity development closely, and making thick descriptions (Merriam, 2002). However, researcher's familiarity with the context and the participants sometimes introduces bias, especially in the interpretation process (DeLyser, 2001). To prevent this bias, while the first author holds an emic perspective and serves as a participant observer by establishing strong relations with the teachers (Patton, 2002), the second author adopts an etic perspective with his analytical distance, a more objective interpretation of the data, and reflexive analysis (Saldaña, 2016). This collaborative data analysis process was conducted as a form of peer debriefing, which has enhanced the credibility of the interpretations.

4 Findings

This section presents the findings for the first and second research questions subsequently. The findings focused especially on the deep and lightning interviews with the teachers and their reflective notes. For the first research question, which explores the factors shaping teachers' existing professional identities, three main categories emerged: conceptual, ideological, and pedagogical. In our study, conceptual factors refer to how participants cognitively define and understand key terms such as "bilingualism" or "early bilingual education" — for instance, whether they see bilingualism as two separate linguistic systems or as an integrated process. On the other hand, ideological factors reflect teachers' underlying beliefs and assumptions about how BE should be implemented in practice, often shaped by institutional norms, social capitals, or their previous experiences. Finally, pedagogical factors concern the ways in which actual teaching practices and school structures influence how teachers position themselves professionally. The findings relating to these emerging categories are presented in the following sub-sections:

4.1 Conceptual factors positioning teachers' professional-self

Our analysis indicated that these teachers' conceptualization of the early bilingualism played as one of the key factors in shaping their professional positioning within the bilingual preschool setting. They viewed two languages at separate systems which should be taught independently. İlim described this process:

> I believe that children who acquire two languages or more mentally divide them into two parts in their brains. First, they can learn a vocabulary in their mother tongue. And then, they begin to make associations with English (pre-training interview data).

Similarly, Melek expressed a comparable view on bilingualism as involving distinct language systems. She likened early bilingualism to "two distinct roads which go different directions," emphasizing her belief that children's cognitive processing keeps the two languages apart. The data from Selen and Esma also indicate that this separation-based conceptualization shaped their roles as an English teacher in the classrooms. Both teachers approach language teaching in a bilingual context as follows:

> In English hours, I insist on creating a space where English-only pedagogy dominates. I expect children to respond in English. My co-teacher doesn't involve in the English tasks, but helps me with the classroom management. Students know very well that they should speak English with me in English time and they speak Turkish with their homeroom teacher in Turkish time (Selen, pre-training interview data).
>
> For the brain of a bilingual child, we can say that there are two parts. One is for child's mother tongue and the other one is for his target language. As homeroom and English teachers, we

> are like this brain in the same classroom. I am supposed to teach English in my class time, and homeroom teacher fulfills her responsibility in her Turkish time (Esma, pre-training interview data).

These narratives collectively reveal that clear division of linguistic domains led to distinct, subject-specific roles rather than a collaborative bilingual teaching identity. Consequently, teachers maintained rigid boundaries between both languages and teaching responsibilities. This conceptual separation not only shaped their self-positioning but also deeply influenced their language ideologies, reinforcing monolingual beliefs that limited their openness to translanguaging practices.

4.2 Ideological factors positioning teachers' professional-self

Data also demonstrated that teachers' professional-selves were not solely shaped by their way of conceptualization but also by some ideological factors, such as adherence to monolingual language ideologies. This was evident in their initial resistance to translanguaging practices, often grounded in the belief that teaching multiple languages at the same time would confuse children rather than foster their language development. İlim's reflections on this belief, for example, demonstrates how her teacher identity became aligned more with disciplinary boundaries than with a holistic and flexible identities of bilingual teachers:

> At first, I was very uncomfortable with the idea of homeroom teacher's using Turkish to support English teaching because I thought that it would slow down their language learning process or it would cause an ambiguity (post-training interview data).

This comment reflects Ilim's initial alignment with monolingual ideology, viewing children's mother tongue as a barrier rather than a resource in English language development. Her discomfort suggests an internalization of traditional language hierarchies, where English is prioritized over students' home language. This monolingual ideological stance was also evident in Esma's reflections, and she explained how translanguaging challenged her traditional understanding of language teaching:

> I was always told and taught that using only English is the best way to teach English. That's why the idea of collaborating homeroom teacher in English lessons sounded chaotic for me at first. I couldn't image it (post-training interview data).

Lastly, Selen defined her role through 'English-only' ideology as follows: "I really believe that each teacher should stick to their own language. Otherwise, children may get confused and can't learn English properly" (pre-training interview data).

The findings point out that both homeroom teachers and language teachers' separate language ideologies led them to adopt language-specific roles, and position them as subject teacher identity rather than collaborative bilingual teacher. This role division not only limited cross-linguistic collaboration but also hindered the emergence of a shared bilingual teacher identity. As a result, their professional positioning remained confined within rigid disciplinary boundaries, preventing them from fully internalizing their collective linguistic and pedagogical resources.

4.3 Pedagogical factors positioning teachers' professional-self

In addition to conceptual and ideological factors, findings indicate that pedagogical implementation of BE directly influences how teachers position themselves in daily bilingual practice. The BE of the preschool was structured around a language separation model, directly impacts how teachers construct and often limit their professional selves in a bilingual classroom setting. For example, in the following extract, Esma was certain about how a BE should be with her references to her institution's established pedagogical norms:

> Engaging in various activities in two languages within the same classroom is known as BE. For instance, while I teach colors and shapes in my English class, the preschool teacher handles classroom management, or material support, throughout the course. (pre-training interview data).

Similarly, Melek reflects a clear division of linguistic and instructional roles based on the school's pedagogical structure:

> When it's English Time, I take a step back because it's my partner's turn to lead the class. The same applies during Turkish Time—my partner gives me space to take the lead. However, this doesn't mean we don't support each other. We stay together in the classroom throughout the day. For instance, I help manage the class so my partner can teach effectively (pre-training interview data).

Although Melek supports her partner's teaching logistically (e.g., managing the classroom), she doesn't mention any collaborative language planning or content delivery during English sessions. This suggests that her becoming of bilingual teacher was constrained by the school's prevailing pedagogy. The researcher also depicts the pre-school's bilingual organization as follows:

> The first meeting began at 9 a.m. with six preschool teachers and the school principal, who facilitated the session. Teachers brought the Turkish syllabus and notes to reflect on the previous term and suggest improvements for the next. Over two hours, with short breaks, the discussion focused solely on revising the Turkish syllabus week by week. No mention was made of collaborating with English teachers to support BE (the researcher's field notes).

With the second research question, the study examined how homeroom teachers and English teachers developed shifting identities within a bilingual pre-school context after and during the translanguaging-driven PD program. Below, we present our data in support of this question:

4.4 Developing translingual/bilingual professional identity

One of the key findings relating to how teachers' professional identities repositioned through their engagement with translanguaging pedagogy is the teachers' shift to a translingual or bilingual stance. The most salient area that teachers developed a bilingual teacher identity was evident in participants' descriptions of their roles as teachers in the past and present. Especially homeroom teachers who initially took passive roles in English lessons reentered the instructional space with Turkish, taking on active pedagogical roles, which in turn, validated their linguistic expertise. Melek and İlim reflected on this shift:

> My role in English lessons as a preschool teacher has changed significantly. In the past, my involvement was mostly limited to providing materials—asking things like, "Should I bring the paper and scissors?" or "Should I turn on the TV?". I wasn't really part of the instructional or academic side of the lesson. But now, things are different. Since we plan and follow a joint program, I understand the lesson content and take a more active role (Melek, post-training interview data).

Melek's emphasis on taking a more active role was evident in her classroom practices including instructional design and delivery of content. According to the first author's in-field reflective notes, during a unit on feelings, Melek began by reading a picture book in Turkish and created a discussion about the emotions of the characters. Her co-teacher, on the other hand, introduced the related vocabulary in English, which was scaffolded by Melek's gestures to reinforce meaning. In the follow-up activities, both teachers facilitated a meaningful and authentic conversation by prompting the children to express their feelings using both languages. This kind of bilingual scaffolding exemplified Melek's shift from a passive supporter to an active pedagogical agent in English lessons who helped co-construct knowledge

and guide students in making meaningful cross-linguistic connections. Similarly, İlim's reflective notes portray the same shift:

> During English Time, I used to feel more like an assistant than a real teacher—mainly responsible for keeping the children quiet and organized, not actually teaching. As children already know Turkish, they are expected to learn English. So, we, as homeroom teachers, always avoid speaking Turkish in English lessons. But with the new pedagogical approach, I now feel genuinely involved as a teacher in English lessons. This shift has also boosted my status in the eyes of the children. I'm no longer just a homeroom teacher working in a bilingual preschool; I see myself as a bilingual teacher as well. "I am here" by this pedagogy. I am not anyone for just bringing pencil case. Sometimes we joke with each other in the way that I am also a teacher in the English lessons (İlim's reflective notes).

Her co-teacher Selen expresses her ideological shift from a mono-oriented teaching model, including monolingual instruction, mono-course design, and sole teacher authority, toward a more collaborative and dialogic approach:

> As an English teacher, I initially perceived my role as the primary language expert, responsible for maintaining strict English-only spaces in the classroom. I gradually moved away from this stance. Instead of viewing the use of Turkish as interference, I understand that children's mother tongue can serve as a valuable resource that could support their English learning (Selen, post-training interview).

By the end of the program, İlim and her teaching partner Selen had reached a point where they could co-construct flexible lesson plans in which neither language dominated the other. Their teaching became more balanced and integrated, allowing both Turkish and English to be used purposefully. For example, during jointly performed drama telling activities, they co-act stories in which they not only model bilingual language use but also encourage children to participate in discussions, ask questions, and engage in critical thinking. These pedagogical adjustments reshaped their self-perceptions as legitimate bilingual teachers. They started to view language as a flexible tool that could be deliberately employed to promote understanding and participation, rather than establishing strict divisions between "Turkish time" and "English time", which aligns them more closely with translingual teaching ideologies.

4.5 Developing empowered professional identity

In mid and post-training interview data, the participants consistently referred to the equal distribution of responsibility, shared instructional space, and joint lesson planning. This indicates a growing sense of awareness towards the power of co-teaching strategies, which supported their development of empowered teacher identity grounded in collaboration. When asked to describe what bilingual teaching feels like through a metaphor, Melek and Selen offered insightful comparisons:

> Our main goal is to maintain balance in teaching two languages, and co-teachers are like two sides of a scale. Both should contribute equally when teaching the same theme or content, and this shared responsibility makes me feel more confident and appreciative (Melek, mid-training interview data).
>
> I see co-teachers in BE tion as two arms—when both are used together, the process becomes more effective and manageable. Relying on only one makes everything more difficult and less efficient (Selen, post-training interview data).

Esma's following account highlights how co-teaching reduced the isolation often felt in traditional teaching models and allowed her to share both cognitive and emotional responsibilities with her partner.

This collaborative model in instruction created a space where both teachers' professional voice could be heard and valued equally.

> Teaching alone means shouldering all the responsibilities, which can be quite stressful. You have to plan the activities and manage the time on your own. In contrast, teaching alongside someone who understands the children and classroom dynamics as well as you do makes everything more manageable. You combine your expertise, creativity, and perspectives, creating a more effective and collaborative teaching experience (Esma, post-interview data).

5 Discussion

This study focuses on two pairs of co-teachers' professional identity development as they completed a PD program on BE and translanguaging pedagogy. The findings are discussed through the lens of Darvin and Norton's (2015) Model of Investment, which considers *identity, ideology*, and *capital* as interconnected components shaping identity development.

The findings demonstrate that in-service English and homeroom teachers' engagement with translanguaging pedagogy significantly influenced their evolving professional identities. Firstly, the findings illustrate how multiple factors may shape teachers' professional identity development (Dikilitaş & Bahrami, 2022; Steadman, Kayi-Aydar, & Vogel, 2018; Yazan, 2017). The study reveals that the teachers' initial distance from translanguaging pedagogy stems from their deeply rooted monolithic language ideologies. For example, the English teachers, Selen and Esma, expressed their concerns about joint and collaborative teaching design as it would be confusing for children. They also mentioned that they had previously attempted such as a pedagogy for a short time but found it ineffective. Their negative past experience stemmed from the insufficient pedagogical capital and a lack of formal teacher training in translanguaging practices, which limited their investment in adopting and sustaining collaborative, heteroglossic teaching approaches. However, as discussed in Model of Investment, *ideology* should not be evaluated as a static worldview. Instead, it represents a dynamic and multifaceted space where beliefs, actions, and institutional structures intersect—and at times, come into conflict (Darvin & Norton, 2015). The teachers' involvement in a context-specific translanguaging-oriented training program, along with their access to pedagogical *capital* such as co-teaching pedagogy, collaborative lesson plan activities, and joint syllabus design shaped their bilingual teaching capacity to implement more flexible, inclusive, and context-responsive bilingual classroom practices. In line with this process, the findings of the present study reveal a transformation in teachers' language ideologies and conceptualization of bilingualism from monolithic perspectives to heteroglossic language ideologies. The study also shows that this transformation played a key role in enabling teachers to reposition their professional identities. As the teachers invested in their bilingual teacher capital, they began to recognize their own linguistic and pedagogical resources as assets rather than limitations. To illustrate, Melek demonstrated critical awareness in her self-positioning as a "bilingual teacher" who could draw on children's first language and culture to support English learning, rather than identifying solely as a "homeroom teacher". This point aligns with the view that addressing language ideologies and challenging traditional monoglossic perspectives within teacher education programs are crucial both for fostering a more inclusive classroom atmosphere and for creating a more critical understanding of teacher identity (Dimitrieska, 2023; Potts & Schmid, 2022). Similarly, in his autoethnographic study, Yang (2025) illustrates how his identity development is powered by his recognition of the value of his Chinese language and culture in teaching. Initially adhering to an English-dominant stance, he gradually came to view his bilingual and bicultural background as a source of pedagogical strength.

Supporting prior research on how distributed expertise (Brown & Campione, 1996) and coordinated pedagogy (Pontier & Gort, 2016) contribute to teacher identity construction, the present study further illustrates how "professional empowerment" (Edwards & Burns, 2016, p.174) experienced through peer

support among the co-teachers, scaffolded support from the first author, and encouraging support from the school administration can serve as a catalyst for this developmental process (Dikilitaş & Bahrami, 2022; Dikilitaş & Öztüfekçi, 2024; Kirsch, 2020; Pontier & Riera, 2022). Each of these elements functioned as a form of *cultural capital*, enabling teachers to build mutual confidence, and leading to a meaningful transformation in how they positioned themselves within the bilingual classroom context. Multiple levels of interaction, including micro-individual and meso-instituttional, contributed this professional growth of the teachers. Along with the teachers' developing co-teaching strategies during the training, the supportive stance of the school administration at the meso-institutional level provided the structural and emotional space for teachers to practice translanguaging pedagogy in their classrooms. For example, Selen, an English teacher who initially held the idea that maximum exposure to English was essential and that the use of children's L1 should be minimized, had an opportunity to strengthen her teaching pedagogy through the use of translanguaging and to challenge her traditional bilingual teaching strategy. Such an agentive effort in our study was partly result of the administration allowing flexibility in teachers' in-class pedagogies. This shift exemplifies how access to institutional and collaborative support as forms of *cultural capital* can foster agency and identity renegotiation in BE settings. This finding resonates with Zhang and Dikilitaş's (2025) study, where the participating teacher initially perceived GenAI as peripheral to their teaching practice. However, with institutional scaffolding and opportunities for critical reflection provided by teacher educators, the novice teacher could invest in GenAI-enhanced pedagogy, which contributed significantly to his professional identity development.

Finally, the study points out that identity negotiation and teacher learning are two interrelated process, shaping each other during PD program (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011; Morgan, 2004). Teachers' engagement with this new bilingual pedagogy and reflection on their evolving roles contributed to their gradual development of a translingual teacher identity. This poststructural conceptualization of teacher learning suggests that teachers have agency to *invest* in their identity development by trying, questioning, navigating, and sometimes resisting (Norton, 2017). In our study, participants initially distance from translanguaging pedagogy at early bilingual education was gradually replaced by increased acceptance and engagement as they experienced its practical benefits, which contributed to their becoming of translingual teachers with this awakening (Kanno & Norton, 2003). This shift supports the claim that ideology of practice is not fixed but can be reshaped through agency, collaboration, and external support (Darvin, 2018).

6 Conclusion and Implications

Our study explored the factors shaping the professional identities of two homeroom teachers' and two English language teachers' in a bilingual preschool setting, how their understandings of BE expanded, and how this evolving understanding contributed to the identity development and shifts. In line with Ruohotie-Lyhty (2013), we argue that "educating teachers is not merely a question of introducing new ideas and concepts, but of understanding their former beliefs about profession" (p.127). In our study, exploring the teachers' existing ideologies and bilingual pedagogies enabled us to figure out the factors initially hindered their identity development. Drawing on poststructuralist point of view, this study highlighted that identity is not a fixed trait but a becoming process (Zembylas, 2003) shaped by investment in bilingual teaching capital, shifting power dynamics in classrooms, and emerging ideological positioning (De Costa & Norton, 2017; Kayi-Aydar, 2018).

The study provides some implications for teacher educators, PD program designers, and school administrators. As language teachers navigate the complexities of multilingual and bilingual classrooms, it is essential for teacher educators and PD programs to recognize and legitimize translanguaging pedagogy as one of the core elements of language teacher preparation. First, PDs should move beyond theoretical discussions and include practical, context-specific translanguaging activities such as co-

teaching strategies and joint lesson planning to incorporate this pedagogy. Second, teacher educators should model concrete examples of translanguaging in action to enable teachers to visualize and internalize how such practices can be integrated into their lessons. Moreover, while such programs usually focus on enhancing pedagogical knowledge and classroom practices, it is equally important to include some structured reflective sessions on teacher identity where teachers critically examine their evolving professional selves. In addition, educators should encourage teachers to challenge their monolingual language ideologies and experience flexible language use in the classrooms as professional identity development and adopting new pedagogies need time, practice, and sustained engagement. Importantly, the role of school leadership should not be ignored. For sustainable change to occur, school administrators must actively support and encourage teachers in adopting innovative practices like translanguaging. This includes fostering a supportive school culture where taking pedagogical risks is not only permitted but also encouraged. Without such institutional support, as observed in this study, the teachers may continue to perceive translanguaging as a confusing pedagogy, rather than a legitimate pedagogical approach for the language development at early childhood education.

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