

# From “Promising Controversies” to Negotiated Practices: A Research Synthesis of Plurilingual Pedagogy in Global Contexts

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*To better understand the factors facilitating or impeding the translation of “promising controversies” (Taylor & Snoddon, 2013, p. 439) of plurilingualism theory into meaningful practices, this article presents a synthesis of 30 empirical studies on plurilingual pedagogy as enacted and experienced by educators and learners in various global K–12 and postsecondary contexts. Informed by plurilingualism (Coste et al., 1997/2009; Council of Europe, 2020), this synthesis forefronts the key contributions of plurilingual pedagogy as it fosters: (a) students’ development of plurilingual (and pluri-/intercultural) competence, (b) evolution of language beliefs towards a positive orientation to plurality and hybridity, (c) affirmation of student and teacher identity and promotion of agency, and (d) language and literacy development. The perceived challenges, however, are related to the nature and practical issues of designing and implementing plurilingual pedagogy in the classroom which are interconnected with institutional policies and ideological discourses. The results illuminate the up-to-date progress as well as hurdles of promoting plurilingual pedagogies across different contexts and provide important implications for multiple stakeholders involved in pre-service teacher education, in-service professional development, curriculum improvement, and language policy making in Canada and other multicultural and multilingual societies and communities.*

*Afin de mieux comprendre les facteurs facilitant ou entravant la traduction de « controverses prometteuses » (Taylor & Snoddon, 2013, p. 439) de la théorie du plurilinguisme en pratiques significatives, cet article présente une synthèse de 30 études empiriques sur la pédagogie plurilingue telle qu’adoptée et vécue par des éducateurs chevronnés et des apprenants dans divers contextes mondiaux de la maternelle à la 12e année et postsecondaires. Informée par le plurilinguisme (Coste et al., 1997/2009; Conseil de l’Europe, 2020), cette synthèse met en avant les contributions clés de la pédagogie plurilingue puisqu’elle favorise: (a) le développement des compétences plurilingues (et inter-/pluriculturelles) des étudiants, (b) l’évolution des croyances langagières vers une orientation positive envers la pluralité et l’hybridité, (c) l’affirmation de l’identité de l’étudiant et de*

*l'enseignant ainsi que la promotion de l'autonomie et (d) le développement de la langue et de la littératie. Cependant, les défis perçus sont liés à la nature et aux problèmes pratiques de concevoir et de mettre en place une pédagogie plurilingue dans la salle de classe, ce qui rejoignent les politiques institutionnelles et les discours idéologiques. Les résultats mettent en lumière les progrès actualisés ainsi que les obstacles liés à la promotion du plurilinguisme dans différents contextes et fournissent des implications importantes pour les multiples parties prenantes impliquées dans le pré-service de la formation initiale des enseignants, ainsi que l'élaboration des politiques linguistiques au Canada et dans d'autres sociétés et communautés multilingues et multiculturelles.*

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Keywords: plurilingualism, plurilingual pedagogy, mediation, language awareness, ideology, plurilingual and pluricultural competence

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## 1. Background

Many social landscapes are experiencing increasing levels of linguistic and cultural diversity due to transnational mobility, globalization, and digitalization (Kubota, 2016; Piccardo, 2013). These changes have led to the emergence of a “multilingual turn” (Conteh & Meier, 2014; May, 2014), along with an array of notions, including heteroglossia (Bakhtin, 1981; Blackledge & Creese, 2014), multicompetence (Cook & Li, 2016), multilingualism (Cenoz, 2013; Cummins, 2009), metrolingualism (Pennycook & Otsuji, 2015), translanguaging (García, 2009; García & Li, 2014; Li, 2018; Williams, 1994), and plurilingualism (Coste et al., 1997/2009; Council of Europe, 1997, 2001, 2020; Lüdi & Py, 2009; Piccardo, 2018). Among these notions, plurilingualism and translanguaging have gained increasing prominence in recent literature (see brief explanation in Section 2 below). Plurilingualism, the focus of the present study, refers to “a process of dynamic, creative ‘linguaging’ across the boundaries of language varieties” and a theory “underlying this process as well as to the relevant language policy aim and related methodological approach” (Piccardo, 2019, p. 184). Plurilingualism validates the long existing social phenomenon of flexible language use as documented in many parts of the world (see Canagarajah, 2009) and challenges the “orthodoxy of purity and separation” (Piccardo & North, 2020, p. 291). It embraces the holistic, dynamic and integrationist nature of the linguistic repertoire of plurilingual individuals regardless of proficiency levels within and across languages, opening up new spaces for connecting social realities and language teaching and learning in the classroom.

In their thought-provoking contribution, Taylor and Snoddon (2013) highlight the way in which plurilingualism brings “promising controversies” (p. 439) which “can offer us both explanatory power and moments of freedom”

(p. 440) in an era characterized by superdiversity. They point out the need for conceptual distinctions between related terms (e.g., plurilingualism vs. multilingualism) and a critical consideration of whether plurilingualism can perpetuate unequal power relations between languages (e.g., between English and endangered languages), linguistic and social hierarchies, and particularly, how plurilingualism can challenge normative conventions of academic English especially in high stakes writing and assessment. These questions have inspired scholarly debates in recent years (e.g., Flores, 2013; Kubota, 2016; Marshall & Moore, 2018; Piccardo et al., 2021), which have in turn contributed to more nuanced understandings of plurilingualism.

Since its original conceptualization in the Common European Framework of Reference for languages (CEFR) (Council of Europe, 2001), plurilingualism as a theory has been developed by a number of researchers (e.g., Beacco & Byram, 2007; Beacco et al. 2016; Candelier et al., 2012; Coste, 2014; Galante, 2019; Lüdi & Py, 2009; Piccardo, 2018) which has informed policies and practices in various contexts worldwide (e.g., Choi & Ollerhead, 2018; Lau & van Viegen, 2020). In fact, plurilingualism-inspired pedagogy has been advanced to promote the active representation and recognition of different languages including their varieties/dialects and registers and cultures in the learning environment. These pedagogical approaches strategically encourage the use of languages other than the medium of instruction as effective tools for teaching and learning and promote language awareness and intercultural<sup>1</sup> understandings. Building on different studies, Piccardo and Puzos Capron (2015) highlight that, in plurilingual education, the learner is seen holistically, with their auto-biographic paths, pluralistic language and cultural backgrounds, and emotional and subjective experience. These are positive developments as plurilingualism moves away from monolingual and native speakerism discourses. However, how plurilingualism is translated into classroom instructional practices varies greatly across contexts (e.g., Choi & Ollerhead, 2018; Piccardo et al., 2021).

A representative example in the European context is offered by the Framework of Reference for Pluralistic Approaches to Languages and Cultures (FREPA) (Candelier et al., 2012). With the overall objective to benefit from potential synergies of language integration, FREPA presents four pluralistic approaches: (a) *Éveil aux langues* (Awakening to languages), (b) Intercomprehension between related languages, (c) Integrated didactic approaches to different languages studied, and (d) Intercultural approach. The awakening to languages approach aims to expose learners (especially young children) to language and cultural diversity in order to promote positive attitudes towards languages, cultures, language learning, and speakers of other language and cultural backgrounds. Intercomprehension focuses on

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<sup>1</sup> The terms “intercultural” and “pluricultural” are used interchangeably in this paper as both terms are used in the research studies included.

language awareness and involves languages belonging to the same language family (e.g., Spanish and French) with a systematic attention to receptive skills. The integrated didactic approaches, on the other hand, use the first language (L1) or the language of schooling as a springboard for learning a new foreign language and subsequently use these languages for learning another additional language. Students benefit from bidirectional transfer among these languages (Forlot, 2009; Roulet, 1980). Finally, the intercultural approach provides learners with systematic intercultural training to help develop their ability to make cross-cultural comparisons, evaluate critically, and apply this knowledge to become successful intercultural speakers (Byram, 2003, 2010; Zarate et al., 2003).

Another two exemplary approaches that have been developed are *comparans nos langues* (comparing our languages) (Auger, 2004) and critical cross-cultural awareness (Nieto, 2010). The former focuses on crosslinguistic comparisons among different languages existing in the repertoire of students at different linguistic levels (phonological, morphological, syntactic, and pragmatic). The latter emphasizes that students should trace their plurilingual and pluricultural trajectories and explore and appreciate the values, beliefs, and traditions of other cultural groups. Further, recommendations have been made to help instructors design and improve pedagogical practices. Larsen-Freeman and Todeva (2021), for instance, encourage plurilingual instructors to take an agentive role and show maximum adaptability based on the contextual factors such as ethnolinguistic demography, policy orientations, curriculum planning, and assessment culture.

Despite these meaningful efforts to connect theory with practice, there have been no systematic investigations conducted to date to offer a rigorous synopsis of the empirical value of plurilingual pedagogy. With the dual objectives to address this knowledge gap and to better understand the factors facilitating/impeding the translation of plurilingualism theory into meaningful practices in different contexts, this study addressed two questions: *How is plurilingual pedagogy being enacted in teaching and learning practices in classroom settings?* and *What are the benefits and challenges of plurilingual pedagogy as perceived by educators and students?* Below we explain our theoretical framework and research design of the project. We then present the key findings based on empirical interventions and discuss plurilingual pedagogy as an emergent, entangled, and enacted practice continuum. We conclude the paper with its contributions to the fields of applied linguistics and TESOL and recommendations for future research.

## **2. Plurilingualism and its Key Constructs: Plurilingual and Pluricultural Competence, Agency, and Mediation**

In this section we explain our rationale for choosing plurilingualism over translanguaging and present the key constructs of plurilingualism:

plurilingual and pluri-/intercultural competence, social agent (agency), and mediation.

The conceptual similarities and differences between the related terms have been discussed and made the object of debate in scholarly publications (García et al., 2015; García & Otheguy, 2020; Marshall, 2021; Marshall & Moore, 2018; Piccardo & North, 2020; Vallejo & Dooly, 2020). As Marshall and Moore (2018) acknowledge, many linguisticisms have “overlaps and nuanced differences” and “each term has its own particular focus, history, contexts, and ideological connections, as well as proponents and detractors” (p. 19). This debate has recently focused on similarities and differences of plurilingualism and translanguaging. While it is not always easy to follow as the terms continue to evolve over time, what seems to be important for the scope of this article is that

research in both plurilingualism and translanguaging share the aim of overcoming conceptualizations of “languages” as discrete systems with clear boundaries, and endeavour to move towards the acknowledgement of dynamic and multimodal “linguaging” practices. (Vallejo & Dooly, 2019, p. 7)

We agree with Marshall (2021) that the similarities between the two terms are greater than the differences; some perceived differences may be due to lack of access to a broad body of non-English literature on plurilingualism. In this article, we view translanguaging as a pedagogical practice within the overarching theory of plurilingualism and prefer adopting the term “plurilingualism” over “translanguaging” for three main reasons: First, driven by our focus on pedagogy in this study, we view both terms in a complementary rather than exclusive light, especially when it comes to teaching approaches and activities. In fact, plurilingual pedagogy frequently includes translanguaging in addition to other pluralistic approaches (e.g., intercomprehension and intercultural approach). Second, plurilingualism, with its embedded construct of plurilingual and pluricultural competence (PPC) (which we elaborate on below), encompasses an explicit and equal emphasis on the cultural dimension (pluriculturality) which is essential to language pedagogy. Third, in contrast to translanguaging which seems to be primarily adopted in bilingual contexts (where in addition to the language of schooling there is one predominant minority or heritage language involved), plurilingualism has been used in various contexts with a high degree of linguistic and cultural diversity, thus enabling us to synthesize a wide range of relevant studies.

The notion of plurilingualism is informed by several interrelated key constructs, particularly: plurilingual and pluri-/intercultural competence, agency (with the user/learner seen as a social agent), and mediation. PPC refers to “the ability to use languages for the purposes of communication and to take part in intercultural interaction, where a person, viewed as a

social agent, has proficiency, of varying degrees, in several languages and experience of several cultures” (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 168). It emphasizes the plurilingual and pluricultural aspects of competence as two faces of “a single entity, albeit complex and heterogeneous” (Coste et al., 1997/2009, p. 16), shifting pluriculturality from a peripheral position to an equally central status as the linguistic dimension. The interwovenness between language and culture suggested by CEFR’s recent PPC descriptors (Council of Europe, 2020) has been examined in empirical research (Galante, 2019; Galante & dela Cruz, 2021). For instance, Galante (2020) examines the reliability and validity of a PPC scale based on the new CEFR descriptors by implementing the instrument with 379 plurilingual speakers in Canada (Toronto and Montréal). The results suggest that the linguistic and cultural dimension of PPC are interrelated and inseparable, which validates the uni-dimensionality of the PPC construct.

The notion of social agent is also core to plurilingualism: language users/learners are seen as social agents who strategically manage the imbalance in their linguistic competences in the course of their life trajectory (Coste et al., 1997/2009). Agency can be perceived as “action potential mediated by social, interactional, cultural, institutional and other contextual factors” (van Lier, 2008, p. 171). Agency also “requires the potential for choice, selection, initiative or decision” (Piccardo, 2017, p. 4). Essentially, plurilingualism embraces unbalance, change, and creativity and seeks to challenge normative ways of thinking, all of which requires agency (Piccardo, 2017). Being positioned as legitimate participants in the discourses of superdiversity (Vertovec, 2007), plurilingual social agents perceive affordances as invitations to act. In the language classroom, both teachers and students serve as agents (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006), (co)constructing meaning and mediating communication within and across languages and cultures. The plurilingual disposition “requires from the social agent the ability to constantly mediate in order to connect and communicate, to convey ideas and information effectively and to (co)construct new meaning with others” (Piccardo, in press). This highlights the mediational nature of plurilingualism as it incorporates the cognitive and social dimension of interaction and emphasizes the co-construction of meaning and facilitation of communication. Mediation occurs at linguistic, conceptual, social, and cultural levels in meaningful real-life oriented tasks. The CEFR Companion Volume captures this complexity with an array of descriptors for different aspects of mediation grouped under the headings: *mediating a text*, *mediating concepts* and *mediating communication* (see Council of Europe, 2020 for more details).

Finally, plurilingualism is an expanding notion. It builds on the notions of multicompetence (Cook, 1991, 1992) and repertoire (Busch, 2017; Gumperz, 1982; Lüdi & Py, 2009), and emphasizes multimodality at both verbal and nonverbal levels (Lüdi, 2021). It values the idea of linguistic and cultural trajectories (Beacco et al., 2016) and is increasingly informed by complex



dynamic system theories (Larsen-Freeman & Todeva, 2021; Stotz & Cardoso, 2021) embracing a dynamic and fluid perception of language use and learning. Being plurilingual involves a never-ending process of development of the repertoire as the plurilingual's linguistic and cultural experience broadens over time (Blommaert & Backus, 2013; Blommaert & Rampton, 2011; Busch, 2017). In a nutshell, plurilingualism serves as an appropriate explanatory theory to understand the dynamic, mediated, and heterogeneous nature of language use as reported in the synthesis of research.

### 3. Research Design

Research syntheses are part of a longer tradition of research reviews and rigorous syntheses can be valuable contributions to the literature as they help readers gain in-depth understandings about important research topics and hold the potential for further research directions (Norris & Ortega, 2006). In this section, we outline our research methodology by explaining how we searched and found relevant literature, decided to include/exclude manuscripts, and gathered, coded, and analyzed data.

#### *Literature Search*

Initial searches were conducted on Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts (LLBA), and ProQuest Dissertations and Theses. Google, Google Scholar, and the University of Toronto library database were also utilized. Search terms included “plurilingual pedagogy/ies”, “plurilingual instruction”, “plurilingual teaching”, and “plurilingual approach”. Manuscripts were assessed based on inclusion/exclusion criteria (outlined below) and searching continued until results were saturated and no new relevant manuscripts emerged. After initial manuscripts were located via searching, their reference lists were reviewed to find further resources that met the study's inclusion/exclusion criteria.

#### *Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria*

Plurilingual pedagogy is a vast research area with contributions from many contexts, in many languages, and across different publication types, which made study selection a highly complex process. The first key inclusion criterion was that all included manuscripts needed to be empirical studies. A large amount of plurilingual work that involves descriptions of classroom practices (e.g., Pujol-Ferran et al., 2016) or researcher perspectives (e.g., Li, 2017) were left out. While this synthesis focused on plurilingual pedagogy, at times researchers who investigate plurilingual pedagogy may use other related terminology (e.g., translanguaging) within a single project/paper; in this case, these studies were still included. Furthermore, only peer-reviewed academic journal articles and theses (master's and PhD) were included.

Despite our initial intention to include books/book chapters, we elected to remove them to maintain consistency as institutional libraries were closed during the COVID-19 pandemic and digital copies of books were not always available.

Additionally, all papers and theses needed to be in English for three main reasons: First, including manuscripts only in English allowed a more focused synthesis. Plurilingualism emerged from the European context and much research has been published in non-English languages, but we were precisely interested in the trends in English language literature as plurilingualism expands to new contexts beyond Europe. Second, we were bound by our own linguistic capabilities. While it was possible to include literature from other languages, we feared some studies would be left out because of this. Thus, instead of having some languages but not others, we opted for the more focused synthesis on studies written in English only. Third and connected to this point was the challenge to properly assess studies in different languages. While we were able to synthesize studies in certain languages, it was unrealistic for us to read through journals and theses across all languages in which plurilingual pedagogy research has been published. This could create quality issues with the synthesis if we are not interpreting studies properly due our own linguistic limitations. We acknowledge the valuable research on plurilingual pedagogy in other languages (e.g., Arismendi, 2011; Carinhas et al., 2020; Degache et al., 2007; Garbarino, 2015; Maynard & Armand, 2016; Moore et al., 2020), and that the restriction of the synthesis to papers in English is a limitation of our study which we will return to later.

Studies were excluded if they did not meet the above inclusion criteria. At times, there was overlap between papers as some theses had been converted to academic articles. Journal articles were used primarily over theses to avoid duplication of data, but theses were consulted to fill in gaps in information in the related articles if needed. Besides, while some studies mentioned plurilingualism or plurilingual perspectives, they were excluded if they did not primarily focus on plurilingual pedagogy.

### *Corpus of Studies*

After the extensive search process and assessment of manuscripts against our inclusion/exclusion criteria, a total of 30 publications are included in this synthesis (see Appendix 1 for an overview of papers,  $n = 24$ ; and theses,  $n = 6$ ). As mentioned, to avoid overlap or repetition of studies reported in articles and theses (some articles were developed from theses), we only listed them once and under the category of Paper. The majority of the studies ( $n = 26$ ) were published between 2010 and 2020. There was a peak of publications in 2019 and 2020 ( $n = 11$ ), suggesting a significant increase of interest in and proliferation of empirical studies of plurilingual pedagogy in the last decade. We acknowledge that, despite the extensive searches conducted, it is still



possible that some manuscripts were not found; this is compounded by the varying terminology used in the field and the lengthy publication process as some studies likely emerged after we finished searching in July of 2020.

### *Coding and Analysis*

Extracting data, or coding, was an iterative process. To begin, we reviewed two studies and generated initial categories that were agreed upon. We then divided the studies among us and coded them individually. Later, we discussed our coding during weekly virtual meetings to ensure consistency. Any ambiguous items or disagreements were discussed until a consensus was reached. In these discussions, further categories were added if needed and previously reviewed manuscripts were reviewed again to fill in this newly needed information.

The first section of coding focused on the identification of studies, coding for study year, report type, study type (intervention or non-intervention), target language, and researcher involvement (e.g., if the researcher is the instructor or observant of the intervention). Then, studies were coded for their theoretical orientations and definitions of plurilingualism and/or plurilingual pedagogy. The study context was also coded in terms of country/region, institution type, program type, and (un)official language policy of the country/institution. Participant information was coded next, including detailed information about teachers, administrators, and students. For teachers, their background information (e.g., gender, experience, L1 etc.) was noted whenever possible as was their plurilingual pedagogy training (if any). When appropriate, similar data were collected about school administrators. We also gathered student background information and area(s) of subject or discipline. Methodological information was collected, focusing on data collection methods and analysis procedures. Finally, results were coded across three foci: teacher results (e.g., teacher perspectives on plurilingual pedagogy), student results (e.g., factors pertaining to student learning), and context or non-human results (i.e., any results pertaining to materials, virtual spaces, or other relevant results *not* focused on human participants).

Our data analysis relied on the principles of constructivist grounded theory (e.g., Charmaz, 2011). We followed an iterative process: starting from initial “open coding” which involves broad exploration of the data and the identification of elements to code (Cohen et al., 2011), followed by “axial coding” which seeks to find links between categories, and finally, to “selective coding” where the researchers seek a “core code” or a “storyline” that integrates the categories together (Cohen et al., 2011). Contrary to traditional grounded theory that seeks neutral objectivism, constructivist grounded theory acknowledges that it is not always possible to do so (Charmaz, 2011): while rigorous analysis is conducted, subjectivities are present as it is difficult to approach a topic (especially a research synthesis) with absolutely no prior

knowledge (Charmaz, 2011). That being said, we reduced subjectivity by having a research team comprised of three members (Chen, Piccardo, and Shalizar) working in the field of plurilingualism and one member (Karas) who had not conducted research on plurilingual pedagogy until this synthesis so that we had balanced perspectives from both “inside” and “outside” of the domain of inquiry (Charmaz, 2011) during the coding/analysis process.

## 4. Results

To respond to the first question (*How is plurilingual pedagogy being enacted in teaching and learning practices in classroom settings?*), we present findings from four aspects: (1) definitions of plurilingual pedagogy; (2) implementation of various plurilingual and pluricultural activities/tasks; (3) educational sectors where plurilingual pedagogy has been implemented; and (4) geographical locations of plurilingual initiatives. Grounded in these findings, we proceed to answer the second question (*What are the benefits as well as challenges of plurilingual pedagogy as perceived by educators and students?*) by presenting (5) major benefits and challenges of plurilingual pedagogy from educator and student perspectives.

### 4.1 Definitions of Plurilingual Pedagogy

Definitions were not always clearly provided in the empirical literature. Half of the publications ( $n = 15$ ) provide an explicit definition of plurilingual pedagogy. Among them, plurilingual pedagogy was defined in its association with intercomprehension (see de Lucena et al., 2008), interconnectedness between plurilingual competence and intercultural competence (see López-Gopar, 2009), translanguaging and other language use patterns that actively draw on the dynamic, holistic, and heterogeneous nature of languages (see Abiria et al., 2013; Crutchfield, 2016; Gutierrez, 2016; Taylor, 2015; Van Viegen & Zappa-Hollman, 2020).

Conceptual clarifications were also constructed: some studies distinguished between plurilingualism and translanguaging (e.g., Galante, 2019), and others made clarification regarding the use of plurilingualism and multilingualism (e.g., Marshall, 2020). For instance, Galante (2019) argues that both plurilingualism and translanguaging reject monolingual ideologies, emphasize the fluid and dynamic nature of language use, and consider individuals’ own repertoires, yet may differ in their application contexts with different foci (e.g., translanguaging has been typically applied in bi-/multilingual contexts where instructors and students often share a common linguistic repertoire). Galante also suggests that plurilingualism differs from translanguaging in that plurilingualism embraces the interconnection between language and culture through the paired notion of pluriculturalism (Coste et al., 2009), recognizes individuals’ partial competence across and

within languages (Council of Europe, 2001), and draws on students' full repertoire which includes language and cultural knowledge that is not necessarily shared by their instructors or peers.

As for the distinctions between multilingualism and plurilingualism, Marshall (2020) points out that they are often used interchangeably, because the term plurilingualism has not been adopted by all scholars writing in English—some of whom prefer to modulate the term multilingualism with adjectives such as “holistic” and “dynamic” to describe the same phenomenon (see Piccardo & North, 2020). Thus, despite a wide array of theoretical concepts being proposed, the terms manifest themselves more or less the same when they are translated into pedagogical practices which we present next.

#### *4.2 Implementation of Various Plurilingual and Pluricultural Activities/Tasks*

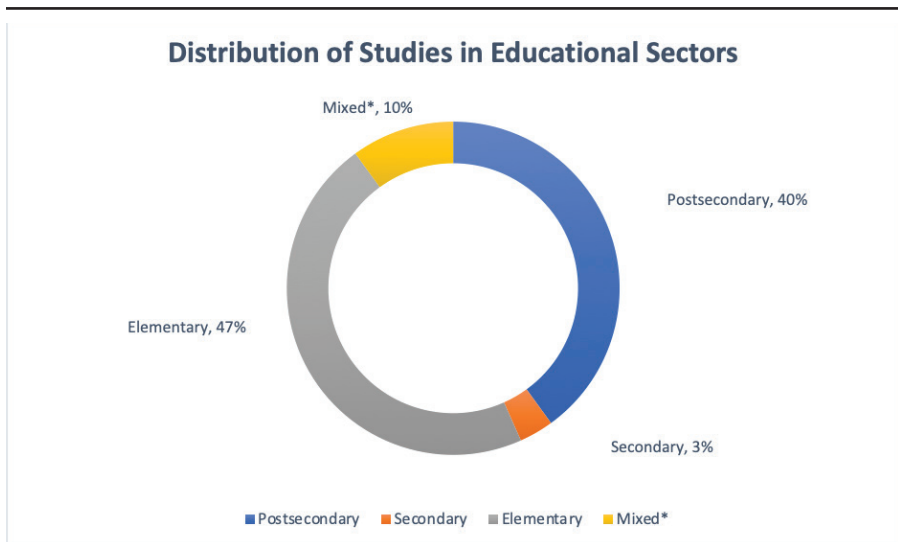
Instructors implement plurilingual pedagogy through the use of various plurilingual and pluricultural activities/tasks during which students individually or collaboratively draw on a range of plurilingual and multimodal resources and engage in hybrid language practices that integrate languages (e.g., translanguaging, translation) and other semiotic resources, which often lead to the creative production of artefacts (e.g., identity texts in Cummins & Early, 2010). Exemplary activities include, but are not limited to: (a) guessing words and grammar rules of an unknown language (Portuguese) and reading a picture book in an unknown language (Malay) (Oyama & Yamamoto, 2020); (b) reflexive drawing, such as the My Plurilingual Identity task (Galante, 2019) and sequential reflexive drawing activity (Prasad, 2018); (c) language portfolio (Downing, 2012); and (d) scenarios (Alvarez & Pérez-Cavana, 2015) or cases (e.g., analysis of a case of engineering failure in Van Viegen & Zappa-Hollman, 2020).

Advocacy for plurality and hybridity is a key feature throughout the activities which promote students' development in intercomprehension and language awareness, often accomplished through elements afforded by translanguaging and multimodality. That is, in the learning process, language practices that involve students' L1 and other languages in addition to the target language are specifically valued: students frequently use L1 (e.g., Ull & Agost, 2020), translanguaging (e.g., Galante, 2019; Gutierrez, 2016; Llanes & Cots, 2020) and translation (e.g., Dooly & Vallejo, 2020; Lotherington et al., 2019; Prasad, 2015) to make meaning, seek clarifications, learn and deepen their understanding of new concepts, and develop relationships with other members in the classroom. Teachers also employ multilingual and multimodal resources such as digital books and dual language books as pedagogical tools (e.g., Abiria et al., 2013; Gallego-Balsa & Cots, 2019; Prasad, 2014).

### 4.3 Educational Sectors Where Plurilingual Pedagogy has Been Implemented

As captured in Figure 1, the studies ( $N = 30$ ) were distributed across all educational sectors. Elementary education is the most common educational sector, followed by postsecondary. In contrast, studies in secondary educational contexts are rare in this body of existing literature. There are three studies that involved participants from both elementary and secondary settings (categorized as “mixed”) but only one study (Taylor, 2015) focused entirely on secondary education.

Figure 1  
Distribution of Studies in Educational Sectors

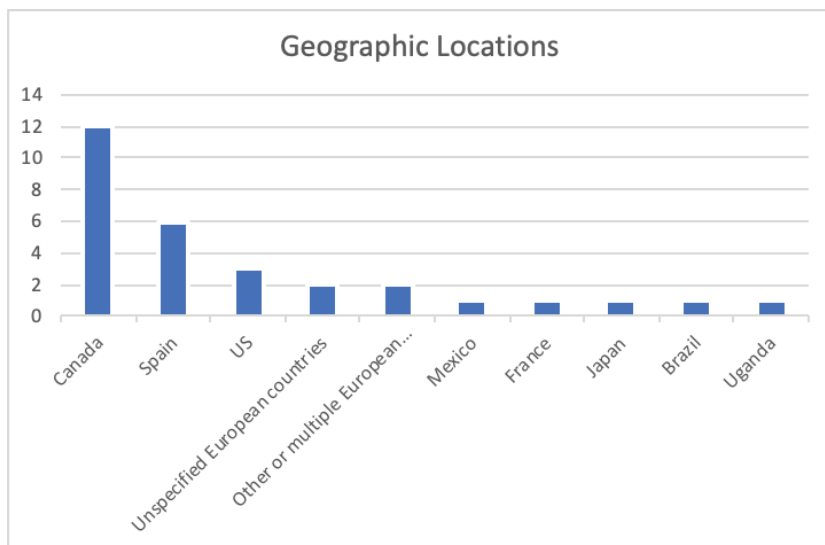


*\*Note. The “mixed” category comprises studies with participants from both elementary and secondary sectors.*

### 4.4 The Geographical Locations of Plurilingual Initiatives

As shown in Figure 2, the majority of the studies were conducted in North America,  $n = 16$  (including Canada,  $n = 12$ ; United States,  $n = 3$ ; Mexico,  $n = 1$ ) and Europe,  $n = 11$  (including Spain,  $n = 6$ ; France,  $n = 1$ ; other or multiple European countries,  $n = 2$ ; unspecified European countries,  $n = 2$ ). Only three studies were conducted in other regions: Brazil ( $n = 1$ ), Japan ( $n = 1$ ), and Uganda ( $n = 1$ ).

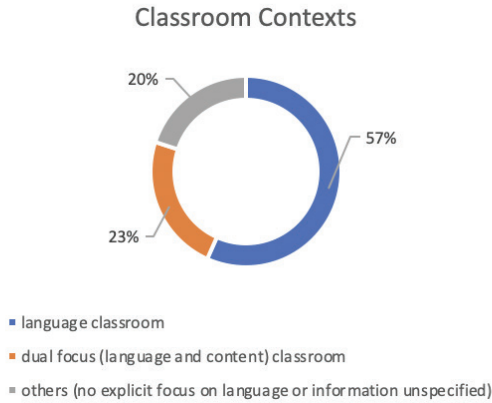
Figure 2  
Geographic Locations of Studies



Regarding the classroom contexts (see Figure 3), the majority (57%,  $n = 17$ ) were language classrooms where the target language (e.g., English, French, Catalan) comprises the subject of teaching and learning. About a quarter of the studies (23%,  $n = 7$ ) were conducted in classroom settings with dual focus on language and subject/content such as Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) (see Nambisan, 2014) and French immersion (see Taylor, 2015). In addition to K–12 classroom settings, 20% of the studies ( $n = 6$ ) were conducted in other contexts such as university courses (see Oyama & Yamamoto, 2020; Starkey-Perret & Narcy-Combes, 2017) and professional development workshop (see Dooly & Vallejo, 2020).

Figure 3  
Classroom Contexts

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#### *4.5 Benefits and Challenges of Plurilingual Pedagogy from Educator and Student Perspectives*

The corpus included studies conducted by using different research methods: quantitative ( $n = 2$ , i.e., Llanes & Cots, 2020; Ull & Agost, 2020); mixed methods ( $n = 4$ , i.e., Corcoll, 2013; Nambisan, 2014; Galante, 2019; Gutierrez, 2016); and qualitative ( $n = 24$ , the remaining body of the corpus). The data collection comprises interviews, questionnaire surveys, classroom observations, student work samples and artefacts, informal discussions, reflections, diaries, photographs, document analyses, and language tests. As seen in Figure 4, while the two overarching themes (benefits and challenges of plurilingual pedagogy, as below) in this part were driven by our main research question, the sub-themes were developed in an emergent manner in our iterative analysis, with special attention given to the potential differences (or mismatches) between teacher and student data (or perspectives).



Figure 4.  
Summary of Reported Benefits and Challenges of Plurilingual Interventions

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#### Benefits

- Plurilingual (and pluricultural) competence and language awareness
- Change of language beliefs or perceptions
- Affirmation of student identity and increased agency and motivation
- Improvement of language development

#### Challenges

- Pedagogical challenges (e.g., insufficient clarity of instruction, lack of support)
- Institutional discourses and ideologies (e.g., official policies, monolingual ideology)

#### 4.5.1 Benefits of Plurilingual Pedagogy

The main benefits of plurilingual pedagogy are often consistent between teacher and student data in terms of four interrelated areas (see Figure 4), with the most significant being an increase of students' language awareness and plurilingual (and pluri-/intercultural) competence. The second notable change is the evolution of language beliefs/attitudes/perceptions towards a positive orientation to language plurality and hybridity. Empirical evidence also supports positive effects on affirmed student identity, increased agency and language learning motivation, and suggests the (sometimes inconclusive) improvement of students' language development (in quantitative terms).

##### *(a) Plurilingual (and Pluricultural) Competence and Language Awareness*

Half of the studies ( $n = 15$ ) reported participants' (teachers and/or students) appreciation of the value of plurilingual instruction on the development of students' language awareness and plurilingual (and pluri-/intercultural) competence, especially intercomprehension competence or strategies at metalinguistic levels (Álvarez & Pérez-Cavana, 2015; Corcoll, 2013; de Lucena et al., 2008; Downing, 2012; Fidler, 2006; Galante, 2019; Galante et al., 2020; Gallego-Balsa & Cots, 2019; Lotherington et al., 2019; Oyama & Yamamoto, 2020; Prasad, 2014, 2018; Rocafort, 2019).

In terms of teachers' perspectives, in Fidler's (2006) study for example, instructors reported that the language awareness activities implemented in the classroom accelerated elementary students' learning of other languages (e.g., Romany, Serbian, Bosnian) as they were able to recognize elements in unfamiliar languages and become aware of the similarities and differences in language structure between different named languages. Likewise, in de Lucena et al.'s (2008) study, instructors observed that elementary students became more competent in comparing and dealing with new verbal data in the Romance languages family (e.g., French, Italian, Spanish). These views are echoed in other studies such as Álvarez and Pérez-Cavana (2015)

where university students and teachers reported overall positive perceptions of the usefulness of plurilingual scenario tasks for developing students' communicative competence, language awareness, and self-confidence in multilingual contexts. The increase of plurilingual awareness also occurred with a pre-service teacher in Rocafort's (2019) case study in which the student teacher remarked on how plurilingual and multimodal narrative reflections helped her articulate plurilingual ideas and understand the principles of plurilingual education.

Another major benefit frequently acknowledged by students was an increase in metalinguistic or plurilingual awareness (Álvarez & Pérez-Cavana, 2015; Corcoll, 2013; Downing, 2012; Galante, 2019; Gallego-Balsa & Cots, 2019; Lotherington et al., 2019; Oyama & Yamamoto, 2020; Prasad, 2014, 2018). For instance, Downing (2012) reported that the online plurilingual training helped university students develop intercomprehension strategies by using prior knowledge, lexical transparency, and analogy and comparison between different languages. In a multisite study (English and French schools in Canada and France), Prasad (2014) found that by using different colours and body metaphors to express diverse linguistic identities, students achieved a deeper awareness and new ways of reflection on their relationship with various languages and cultures. Fidler (2006) claimed that students developed a more advanced understanding of the nature and function of language by going beyond the morphographic and phonological aspects of language and starting to pay more attention to meaning and communication instead. In Oyama and Yamamoto's (2020) study in a Japanese university, even a short-term plurilingual approach could help students not only develop strategies for finding similarities and differences between languages and using exterior resources but also become more aware of the various language learning methods and their own capacity for approaching other languages. These findings shed light on the interconnectedness of the multiple facets of the benefits of plurilingual pedagogy.

#### *(b) Change of Language Beliefs or Perceptions*

The development of plurilingual awareness appears to be closely tied with evolving language beliefs. While many studies acknowledged the role of ideology in general, six studies focused on the change or evolution of language beliefs, attitudes, or perceptions from teachers, student teachers, or students (Álvarez & Pérez-Cavana, 2015; Dooly & Vallejo, 2020; Galante et al., 2020; Oyama & Yamamoto, 2020; Prasad, 2018; Rocafort, 2019).

As reported by Rocafort (2019), the plurilingual approach (multimodal narrative reflection) used with the student teacher over the period of 2 years helped transform the student's language beliefs "to move away from the idea that languages have to be mastered, to a more fluid notion that learning languages is about the development of a plurilingual repertoire" (p. 40). Galante et al. (2020) also elaborated on language teachers' monolingual and

monocultural mindset being challenged through their involvement in a plurilingual intervention in a Canadian English for academic purposes (EAP) program. As a result, the instructors believed that plurilingual instruction was more effective than monolingual approaches in engaging students in using their holistic repertoire and promoting student agency.

Similarly, Dooly and Vallejo's (2020) study provides insights from primary and secondary teachers who had a deepened understanding of the nature of language and language education after participating in a plurilingual pedagogy workshop. However, it is not uncommon that teachers and students have mixed feelings towards plurilingualism. In Marshall's (2020) investigation in a Canadian university, the instructors demonstrated mixed attitudes ranging "from actively discouraging such usage to tolerating and/or welcoming plurilingualism" (p. 153), which were influenced by institutional discourses permeated with a deficient framing of plurilingual students (which we discuss later in the section of challenges), highlighting an important issue—student identity—which we turn to next.

### *(c) Affirmation of Student Identity and Increased Agency and Motivation*

Plurilingual instruction had a positive influence on students' interest, self-esteem and motivation in language learning, along with an engaging and safe classroom atmosphere. For instance, Álvarez and Pérez-Cavana (2015) reported that plurilingual scenario tasks helped foster university students' self-confidence in plurilingual and multicultural contexts. Similar results were found in Corcoll's (2013) study in a different context (an English class in an elementary school in Spain) where the plurilingual intervention had a positive impact on aspects related to students' motivation, self-esteem, and classroom atmosphere.

Affirmation of students' plurilingual identities and negotiation of power relations are at the core of plurilingual instruction in terms of promoting engaging and inclusive participation. For example, in Prasad's (2013) study in a French international school in Toronto, while teachers acknowledged the extra amount of time and effort spent to prepare plurilingual activities, they had less work during the implementation of the activities and acted mostly as facilitators, which resulted in increased student agency. Similarly, teachers in Galante et al.'s (2020) research appraised the agentive power of role reversal (students became teachers) which empowered students in terms of showing pride and engaging in learning in a safe space. Teacher perspectives from other studies also confirmed the importance of power dynamics and identity affirmation in language learning (Álvarez & Pérez-Cavana, 2015; Galante, 2019; López-Gopar, 2009; Prasad, 2018; Stille & Cummins, 2013). Galante (2019) argued that "plurilingual instruction enhances EAP students' sense of their plurilingual identities, from the recognition of the multiple languages and cultures within their repertoires to their creative representations of their linguistic and cultural resources" (p. 24). Indeed, as Álvarez and Pérez-Cavana

(2015) claimed, students became more aware of their plurilingual identities and the different power dynamics in multilingual contexts (where power relationships between two multilingual speakers are more equal compared to contexts involving monolingual and multilingual speakers), which enhanced a sense of belonging (to one or more cultures), empowerment, and liberation.

#### *(d) Improvement of Language Development or Communicative Competence*

Whether plurilingual instruction significantly increases students' language development remains in question due to the mixed results from the studies. While teachers acknowledged the positive scaffolding function of using students' home languages which contributed to students' language and literacy learning (see Stille & Cummins, 2013), the results from students' tests or questionnaires conducted after plurilingual interventions were varied, ranging from the treatment group performing better than the control group to little or no significant difference in language performance between the two groups. Yet there was no clear disadvantage either. On the one hand, there is evidence that plurilingual approaches did yield positive results in language development as measured by exams/tests. For instance, according to Ull and Agost (2020), after the experiment (i.e., including students' L1 in teaching grammar in two primary public schools in Spain and Norway), the treatment groups tended to perform better than their counterparts (the ones who received monolingual instruction) in the grammar exam. On the other hand, data from other studies (e.g., Corcoll, 2013; Llanes & Cots, 2020) revealed few or no significant variations of test results between the treatment group and control group. Corcoll (2013) reported that the elementary students who participated in a series of plurilingual activities did not perform significantly better or worse than their counterparts who learned in an English-only environment. In Llanes and Cots' (2020) study which involved university students from a Business English course, sales pitch and business letters were used as instruments to measure students' English as a foreign language (EFL) oral and written language development in terms of fluency, lexical complexity, and grammatical complexity and accuracy. The researchers concluded that the overall results between the two groups were comparable, although the treatment group performed better in the subscales of written lexical complexity and communicative competence which were subjectively assessed by examiners (Llanes & Cots, 2020).

#### *4.5.2 Challenges Related to Implementing Plurilingual Pedagogy*

Our findings suggest that reported challenges related to designing and implementing plurilingual pedagogy are not about questioning the value of plurilingual pedagogy itself but rather, about concerns attributed to participants' unfamiliarity with the approach and the constraints associated with institutional policies and discourses. Below we elaborate on the two interwoven aspects of challenges respectively.

### *(a) Pedagogical Challenges*

While teachers and students generally welcomed (or at least are not against) plurilingual approaches, students' main concerns resided in the clarity of instruction and assessment, whereas teachers' dilemma and concerns mainly emerged from their unfamiliarity with the theoretical framework underlying plurilingualism and lack of support related to implementing plurilingual pedagogy in the classroom.

A number of studies provide evidence to teachers' perceptions of the various challenges of plurilingual instruction (Álvarez & Pérez-Cavana, 2015; Crutchfield, 2016; Dooly & Vallejo, 2020; Nambisan, 2014; Prasad, 2009; Schwab-Berger, 2015). Among these studies, Dooly and Vallejo (2020) provided a representative snapshot of teacher perceptions in a workshop on plurilingual pedagogy. While teachers were willing to or showed open-mindedness about implementing plurilingual activities, they reported struggles with new theoretical frameworks, concerns regarding students' lack of exposure to the target (foreign) language, feelings of anxiety and unpreparedness regarding using a broader spectrum of semiotic resources such as new forms of expression, and a sense of insecurity when facing "ever-widening and seemingly ambiguous language learning objectives" (p. 93). This raises new questions such as how to prepare teaching and learning materials, support students' use of different resources, and assess plurilingual and multimodal output.

Some of these views are resonated by Crutchfield's (2016) study which involved 23 participants (a mix of students, teachers, and administrators) in a college in Hawaii: some teachers were worried about the difficulty in evaluating whether their students had met the teaching and learning goals. Schwab-Berger's (2015) study suggested that, while the teacher manual was helpful and followed by the teachers who implemented plurilingual instruction in various grades (Grade 3–9), teachers needed more time for a better conceptualization of the methodology and collaboration with colleagues. Further, Nambisan (2014) pointed out a divide between teacher attitude and practice in both mainstream and dual language programs in the United States: while many teachers in their study believed in more inclusive and flexible language use, only less than half of them implemented plurilingual approaches in the classroom. Additionally, university teachers and students in Álvarez and Pérez-Cavana's (2015) project shared their concern of the increased amount of work and time required for conducting scenario tasks, and the need for more time for teachers to develop familiarity with the theoretical framework and assessment criteria. The students, in particular, made several suggestions for improving scenario tasks such as simplifying task instructions, making the template less complex using plain language, translating scenarios into different languages, and revising the assessment scheme. These perceptions point to an urgent need for creative

and supportive means to use plurilingualism theory to inform practices which in turn reshape the evolution of theory.

*(b) Institutional Discourses and Ideology*

The aforementioned dilemmas, ambivalence, and challenges shared by teachers and students at the classroom level are inevitably and intricately influenced by broader institutional and societal discourses embedded in official policies and prevailing ideologies, as could be observed in several studies (Crutchfield, 2016; Galante et al., 2020; Marshall, 2020; Prasad, 2009; Taylor, 2015).

Undeniably, monolingual ideologies are deeply rooted in social structures. The French-only ideology (as presented in Prasad, 2009) and English-only ideology (Galante et al., 2020; Marshall, 2020) are two illustrative examples among other studies. In Marshall's (2020) research within the context of Canadian higher education, instructors' varied perceptions and pedagogical responses were framed by dominant institutional discourses that make a negative association of students' plurilingualism to inadequacy and falling standards rather than resources and assets, along with the tension between the plurilingual learning process and the monolingual assessment standards. Taylor (2015) reported an IT-enabled plurilingual initiative introduced to a high school French immersion program in Ontario, Canada, and found that whether teachers chose to be "conformists" or "mavericks" to monolingual norms was not simply an individual matter but one that was tied to multilayered roadblocks in educational structures. For example, students did not appreciate the initiative primarily due to the obligatory nature of the course itself. This cautions us of the importance of recognizing and addressing "the challenges and constraints that teachers sometimes face, and the unexpected pathways they may take (pathways at odds with their expectations, assumptions, and teaching goals), even when invested in pedagogical change" (Taylor, 2015, p. 525).

A couple of studies shed light on the challenges from sociocultural and sociohistorical perspectives. For instance, Starkey-Perret and Narcy-Combes (2017) argued that whether students appreciated the plurilingual program was a complex question to answer and their results showed that many students liked some components (e.g., the intercultural dimension) yet disliked others (e.g., teacher mediation, teamwork). They suggested that the students' preference for individual work could be partly explained in terms of the influence of individualistic (Hofstede, 2001) and diffusive culture (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2004) in France. From a sociohistorical perspective, Crutchfield (2016) further warranted the social consequences of English hegemony and the othering, discrimination, and marginalization of speakers of other languages or non-standard English varieties. For example, even for college instructors who are supportive of using students' Pidgin (a common language spoken among Hawaiian locals) for learning purposes, "it



was difficult to affirm both languages equally because of strong ideological messages that English is more legitimate than Pidgin” (p. 171). That is, Pidgin was framed as an obstacle to students’ future jobs and relationships, as opposed to English as a more legitimate language for academic studies and professional jobs. All these findings reveal the interconnectedness of a wide array of societal, institutional, and individual factors that are at play in educational initiatives and plurilingual pedagogy is no exception.

## 5. Discussion

Based on the findings, plurilingual pedagogy has manifested itself as an emerging, evolving, and expansive approach with several interconnected key tenets. First, informed by plurilingualism (Coste et al., 2009; Council of Europe, 2020), plurilingual pedagogy has been enacted as a boundary-crossing approach. Plurilingualism as a paradigmatic move towards plurality and hybridity has been infused and embedded into pedagogical instruction and activities. Our first category of benefits (*Plurilingual competence and language awareness*) provides convincing evidence as to how plurilingual instruction may foster students’ PPC and language awareness, especially at metalinguistic levels. These findings are consistent with the broader literature that investigates different forms of discourse and pedagogy that cross language boundaries and celebrate hybridity in personal trajectories and identities in various contexts and languages (e.g., Canagarajah, 2013; Cenoz & Gorter, 2011; García & Li, 2014; Jørgensen et al., 2011; Meier & Conteh, 2014; Otsuji & Pennycook, 2010).

Next, plurilingual pedagogy is growing as an action-oriented approach that resists imposed monolingual discourses and co-constructs meanings and communications from the bottom up. Scholars have called for a nonlinear vision of plurilingual education and action-oriented classroom practices (Bourguignon, 2010; Piccardo & North, 2019). As shown in our second category of benefits (*Change of language beliefs or perceptions*), viewing plurilingual individuals as legitimate language users and social agents was a fundamental principle, which contributed to empowering students and teachers alike, and further, enriching the ongoing theoretical development of a more expanded, fluid, and holistic notion of repertoire.

This naturally leads to our third argument—plurilingual pedagogy keeps the learner, and especially who the learner is, at its core. It embraces agency and learners’ multifaceted identities, acknowledges their existing repertoire and skills, draws on these elements as resources in the classroom, which can lead to positive affective results for students. As suggested in the third category of benefits (*Affirmation of student identity and increased agency and motivation*), plurilingual activities and strategies help create a safe and engaging learning environment and improve students’ interest, self-esteem and motivation in language learning, all being important dimensions

of learning which have not been given enough attention in traditional methodologies. As suggested in the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001, 2020), language learning should be remodelled from a nonlinear perspective to connect communication modes (reception, production, interaction, and mediation) to language (linguistic, sociolinguistic, and pragmatic) and general competences (e.g., world knowledge, interculturality, *savoir-être*) in a spiralling development towards a higher proficiency level. With mediation being identified as a central component in language education, and the notion of social agent being forefronted to capture the socially situated nature of human interactions, plurilingual pedagogy challenges and expands the “four skills” model, taking into account different yet interrelated dimensions of language learning (e.g., cognitive, affective, sociocultural) in an ecological system.

Furthermore, plurilingual pedagogy should be considered as a long-term developmental and individualized approach. The last category of benefits (*Improvement of language development*) corresponds to the broader literature with the mixed results regarding the learning outcomes on language proficiency tests. Grounded in the premise that language use/learning is a nonlinear and semiotic activity, mediation plays a crucial role in this process to acknowledge the social dimension of interaction, especially in co-constructing meaning between/among the participants of communication and structuring learning through language during complex tasks (Piccardo, 2012). However, existing assessment tools developed with monolingual standards may fail to account for the mediational dimension or other developmental and less visible dimensions of language learning (which plurilingual pedagogy strives to incorporate).

Therefore, we call into question the appropriateness of assessment instruments regarding issues including, but not limited to: (a) short-term or long-term intervention and effect (e.g., To what extent are the instruments meaningful in terms of measuring the long-term impact of plurilingual instruction in learners’ unique learning trajectories rather than short-term proficiency improvement?); (b) limited or expanded definitions of repertoire (e.g., To what extent can instruments assess the other dimensions, such as social interaction, than cognition, of language learning?); and (c) interindividual variation and intraindividual variance (e.g., To what extent do the averages that allow for statistical generalization at the group level tell us about individuals each carrying unique learning trajectory and needing differentiated support?). Essentially, conventional assessments reflect social and institutional expectations predominantly framed by monolingualism, but plurilingualism-informed evaluation of learning progress is endowed with contextually embedded agency with regards to a combination of contextual elements (e.g., spatial, temporal or spatiotemporal, cultural, material, structural, social), which requires a distinctively different operationalization of assessment.

Finally, the negotiated and entangled nature of plurilingual pedagogy has become even more prominent in the findings regarding pedagogical and institutional challenges which expose various structural bias, problems, and monolingual and/or hegemonic ideologies and discourses embedded in the educational structures (pedagogy, curriculum, policy, and assessment), leading to instructor's dilemmas, ambivalence, and discrepancy between their beliefs (in theory) and practices (in reality), yet all these in turn reveal plurilingual pedagogy's great potential to disturb, co-construct, and reconfigure schooling. If scholars and practitioners are to connect the theory-praxis gap involving multiple stakeholders to make meaningful changes in education, we must take proactive steps to move from conceptualizing plurilingualism as "promising controversies" to negotiated practices where agency plays a crucial role. In many studies, this tension existed between teachers and their environment and the (in)formal policies towards plurilingualism within different contexts. While teachers can exert agency and influence their own environment, the influence of the (monolingual) environment may overtake their desire to enact plurilingual pedagogy in some instances and contexts. Furthermore, teachers' "historical trajectories" (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006, p. 143), among other aspects, must be considered. Teachers who have been educated with monolingual norms in their language teacher education may feel uncomfortable or unable to implement plurilingual pedagogy. Therefore, professional development opportunities should be combined with perceptual and policy shifts among key stakeholders to enhance teachers' willingness and ability to enact plurilingual pedagogy.

## **6. Limitations of This Study and Possible Future Directions for Research**

The major limitation of our synthesis is that the inclusion criteria could have excluded a substantial number of studies. This is particularly the case with books and book chapters as they constitute an increasing proportion of the available literature. The fact that only articles/theses written in English and articles published in peer-reviewed journals were considered greatly limited the scope of this study. We acknowledge that including studies reported in English only may unintentionally reproduce a cultural hierarchy and power relation in academia that can silence quality research conducted outside the inner circle of countries where English is used as a native/first language (Kachru, 1985). Nonetheless, we consider focusing on studies written in English a valuable and timely response to the growing interest in plurilingualism theory and practices beyond the non-English speaking literature, in addition to the purpose of helping guarantee the quality of the synthesis. Besides, while English was used as the reporting language in the studies, the language being taught or the language of instruction was not always English. This could be seen, for instance, in Fidler's (2006)

study where no language was identified as the target language but multiple languages such as Romany, Serbian, and Bosnian were taught to develop students' language awareness.

This synthesis contributes to a deepened understanding of language users' fluid, flexible maneuvers of their holistic plurilingual repertoires and depicts an overview of up-to-date research literature contextualized in different classroom settings in and beyond Canada. Both the benefits and challenges validate the multifaceted value of plurilingual instruction and highlight the nature of plurilingualism as negotiated and entangled pedagogy between students and teachers, between human and contextual factors, between classrooms and institutions and broader societies. The findings shed light on the primary achievements as well as hurdles experienced by instructors and students in plurilingual initiatives across various contexts, which will provide a valuable frame of reference to support current and future plurilingualism-informed initiatives.

For future research, systematic reviews are needed of studies conducted in different educational contexts published in languages other than English, and in the outer or expanding circle (Kachru, 1985) of users of English. We also call for scholarly contributions that add greater clarity for the evolving definitions of terms, and transparency in reporting research design (e.g., how rubrics were used to assign scores in questionnaires and tests). Also needed are more expansive conceptualization of plurilingualism and informed practices that investigate the link and entangled nature between human agency and its equally important environments in relation to language use and language development, more explorations and experiments of plurilingual assessment measures which embed dynamic, dialogic, and multifaceted dimensions of language development. Finally, more collaborations are desired between researchers and teachers with greater focus on teacher self-efficacy which is key to the development of teacher agency. The most transformational effects of plurilingual pedagogy, ultimately, are its qualitative effects on human beings in their ecological relationships to the environment by allowing them to draw on their rich semiotic repertoire and spatiotemporal affordances.

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## Appendix 1

### Overview of Papers and Theses Included in Synthesis (in alphabetic order)

<b>Papers (n = 24)</b>	<b>Thesis (n = 6)</b>
Abiria, D. M., Early, M., & Kendrick, M. (2013)	Crutchfield, A. (2016)
Álvarez, I. & Pérez-Cavana, M. L. (2015)	Gutierrez, L. (2016)
Corcoll, C. (2013)	López-Gopar, M. E. (2009)
de Lucena, C. A., Steffen, G. T., & Vieira, J. R. (2008)	Nambisan, K. A. (2014)
Dooly, M. & Vallejo, C. (2020)	Prasad, G. (2009)
Downing, R. H. (2012)	Schwab-Berger, S. R. (2015)
Fidler, S. (2006)	
Galante, A. (2019)	
Galante, A., Okubo, K., Cole, C., Elkader, N. A., Carozza, N., Wilkinson, C., & Vasic, J. (2020)	
Gallego-Balsa, L. & Cots, J. M. (2019)	
Llanes, À. & Cots, J. M. (2020)	
Lotherington, H., Tan, S., O'Halloran, K., Wignell, P., & Schmitt, A. (2019)	
Marshall, S. (2020)	

Oyama, M. & Yamamoto, S. (2020)

Prasad, G. (2013)

Prasad, G. (2014)

Prasad, G. (2015)

Prasad, G. (2018)

Rocafort, M. C. (2019)

Starkey-Perret, R. & Narcy-Combes, M. F. (2017)

Stille, S. & Cummins, J. (2013)

Taylor, S. K. (2015)

Ull, A. C. & Agost, R. (2020)

Van Viegen, S. & Zappa-Hollman, S. (2020)



*Appendix 2*  
*Overview of Geographic Locations of Studies*

<b>Author/Year</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Province or City (if applicable)</b>
Crutchfield, 2016	North America	United States	Hawaii
Galante, 2019	North America	Canada	Toronto
Galante et al., 2020	North America	Canada	Toronto
Gutierrez, 2016	North America	United States	n/a
Lotherington et al., 2019	North America	Canada	Toronto
Marshall, 2020	North America	Canada	n/a
Nambisan, 2014	North America	United States	n/a
Prasad, 2009	North America	Canada	Toronto
Prasad, 2013	North America	Canada	Toronto
Prasad, 2014	North America; Europe*	Canada; France*	n/a
Prasad, 2015	North America	Canada	n/a
Prasad, 2018	North America; Europe*	Canada; France*	Toronto; Montpellier
Stille & Cummins, 2013	North America	Canada	Toronto

Taylor, 2015	North America	Canada	Ontario
Van Viegen & Zappa-Hollman, 2020	North America	Canada	n/a
Álvarez & Pérez-Cavana, 2015	Europe	n/a (unspecified)	n/a
Corcoll, 2013	Europe	Spain	Barcelona
Dooly & Vallejo, 2020	Europe	Spain	Barcelona
Downing, 2012	Europe	n/a (unspecified)	n/a
Fidler, 2006	Europe	Slovene	n/a
Gallego-Balsa & Cots, 2019	Europe	Spain	n/a
Llanes & Cots, 2020	Europe	Spain	Catalonia
Rocafort, 2019	Europe	Spain	Barcelona
Schwab-Berger, 2015	Europe	Switzerland	n/a
Starkey-Perret & Narcy-Combes, 2017	Europe	France	n/a
Ull & Agost, 2020	Europe	Spain; Norway*	n/a
López-Gopar, 2009	South America	Mexico	n/a

de Lucena et al., 2008	South America	Brazil	n/a
Oyama & Yamamoto, 2020	Asia	Japan	n/a
Abiria et al., 2013	East Africa	Uganda	n/a

*\*Note. These multisite studies are listed only once. For instance, Prasad (2014) and Prasad (2018) are multisite studies which involved both Canada and France but are listed under Canada only as the main location.*