

Researcher

Gayoung Choi
University of Nebraska-Lincoln, USA

Title of Project

AI-Mediated Translanguaging in South Korean Elementary
EFL Classrooms: A Mixed-Methods Study of Vocabulary
Acquisition and Learner Motivation

Research Supervisor

Prof. Jenelle Reeves
University of Nebraska-Lincoln, USA

**TIRF Research Topics Investigated**

Teaching Second and Foreign Languages to Young Learners
Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Supported by

Duolingo & TIRF

Bio

Gayoung Choi is a doctoral candidate in Educational Studies at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln. Her research interests include translanguaging, language learning motivation, and AI-mediated language learning. Her dissertation uses mixed methods to investigate how AI-mediated translanguaging can support vocabulary learning and motivation among young learners in South Korean elementary English classrooms.

Project Summary

This dissertation examines the transformative potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI)-mediated translanguaging in South Korean elementary English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms. Specifically, it investigates how generative AI can support the integration of students' linguistic, cultural, and multimodal repertoires into English learning and how these practices may enhance vocabulary development and learner motivation among young learners. This study addresses persistent concerns in EFL contexts, where vocabulary instruction often relies on decontextualized memorization, monolingual instructional approaches, and standards-based learning practices that may contribute to student disengagement. Grounded in translanguaging theory, this research reframes English from a detached, high-stakes subject into a meaningful resource for communication and learner agency. Using a mixed-methods research design, the study draws upon multi-dimensional data collected during a 10-week translanguaging-based vocabulary intervention conducted in a Korean public elementary school. Quantitative data include pre- and post-lexical assessments using the Vocabulary Knowledge Scale (VKS) and motivation surveys based on the L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS). To capture longitudinal changes in learner participation, the study also employs a Motigraph throughout the intervention.

Qualitative data involve classroom observations, focus-group interviews, and student-produced artifacts. These data sources are triangulated to examine how a technology-integrated



The International Research Foundation
for English Language Education

multilingual approach shapes students' meaning-making processes and motivation in EFL contexts. The findings aim to provide actionable insights for educational practices that honor linguistic diversity and foster learner agency in digitally supported learning environments, contributing to ongoing discussions surrounding multilingual pedagogies and equitable English education while offering practical implications for incorporating emerging technologies into elementary EFL classrooms.