Translingual Dialogic Webbing in Korean ELT

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This case study with 12 Korean high school emergent bilinguals (K-emergent bilinguals) illustrates how the pedagogical concept of translingual dialogic webbing can be conceptualized based on theories of dialogism and translanguaging. Through a concrete case of classroom activities using a picturebook, *the Rough Patch*, this article shows how the pedagogical concept of translingual dialogic webbing can be conceptualized and materialized in Korean high school English language teaching classrooms (Korean ELT). K-emergent bilinguals' translingual classroom discussions as well as translingual and multimodal written responses revealed that translingual dialogic webbing could help K-emergent bilinguals draw on their available meaning making resources, including Korean, English, semiotic modes, cultural knowledge, and experiences, to navigate and construct more nuanced meanings with creativity and critical insights across time and space. By bridging translanguaging and dialogism, this study addresses the critical need for linguistic inclusivity and adaptability in Korean ELT, while embracing students' diverse ideas, creativity, and the multilingual and multimodal realities of today.

Key words: translanguaging, dialogism, children's and young adult literature, Korean ELT

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1. Introduction

Translanguaging approaches in English Language Teaching (ELT)—the fluid and strategic blending of students' home languages, English, and multimodal resources (García & Li, 2014)—reflect contemporary multilingual realities shaped by globalized flows of "people, information, goods, and texts across different national contexts" (García, 2019, p. 629). Such approaches can enhance the development of students' bilingual repertoires by integrating their home languages with evolving English proficiency (Anderson, 2024; Li, 2021), fostering a supportive environment for students to communicate effectively instead of using English only (Escobar & Dillard-Paltrineri, 2015; Zhang, 2021). In addition, incorporating dialogic approaches, such as encouraging diverse student responses, further enriches classroom interactions by embracing students' creative ideas and perspectives (Bakhtin, 1981; Fecho & Botzakis, 2007).

However, Korean high school English Language Teaching (henceforth Korean ELT), rooted in monologic, teacher-centered grammar instruction (Ahn, 2011; Shin, 2012), often maintains rigid boundaries between L1 (Korean) and L2 (English), reinforcing deficit-based views of language learning and native speakerism (Ahn, Kim, & Lee, 2020; Jee, 2016). Such approaches overlook students' growth as emergent bilinguals who can articulate diverse ideas and share intimate stories through dialogic translanguaging classroom practices, becoming resourceful meaning makers with expanding Korean-English repertoires. That is, Korean ELT should foster spaces where students can share thoughts and feelings without fear of making mistakes or errors in achieving native-like English. By strategically integrating Korean, this approach promotes the idea of English as a work in progress and supports students in becoming emergent bilinguals (Yeom, 2021a, 2021b).

Studies argue that integrating emergent bilinguals' home languages—linguistic features associated with their socially constructed first language—should become central to ELT, recognizing bilingualism as its ultimate goal (Anderson, 2024; García, 2019; Turnbull, 2019). In this context, reimagining Korean ELT as an interconnected development of bilingual repertoires is essential to harness the meaning making potential of Korean high school emergent bilinguals (henceforth K-emergent bilinguals). From such asset-based perspectives, K-emergent bilinguals can skillfully dialogue with and interweave Korean, English, multimodal resources, and their knowledge and intimate stories to construct ideas through interactive translingual classroom activities—a pedagogical approach that I conceptualize as translingual dialogic webbing.

To leverage the potential of translingual dialogic webbing, picturebook [1] written in

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[1] In this article, "picturebook" will be used as a compound noun, instead of "picture book," to reflect the integrated nature and the complex dynamics between words and pictures (Lewis, 2001; Nikolajeva & Scott, 2006; Serafini, 2013).

English (henceforth picturebooks) can foster critical thinking (Miller, 2013), and encourage thoughtful and emotionally resonant engagement with the world (Lazar, 2015) such as topics like love and grief. Also, picturebooks can offer various affordances for the multimodal analysis of complex meanings when integrated with translingual discussions (Yeom, 2018, 2021b). In this regard, this study demonstrates how translingual dialogic webbing can be conceptualized and implemented in Korean ELT via the concrete case of classroom activities using a picturebook. The selected picturebook is the award-winning *Rough Patch* (Lies, 2018), a poignant story of a grieving fox, Evan, who transforms his garden of sorrow into a place of healing and renewal after the loss of his beloved dog.

This study particularly examines how translingual classroom activities can help K-emergent bilinguals collaboratively and individually navigate intricate meaning of love and grief embedded in texts and images. To this aim, this study is guided by the following question: In what ways can translingual dialogic webbing support K-emergent bilinguals explore intricate meanings within the texts and images of the selected picturebook?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Teaching Practices in Korean ELT and the Role of Translanguaging

Korean ELT appears to be constrained by dual monolingualism, treating Korean and English as two separate repertoires. This monoglossic approach pressures emergent bilinguals to conform to idealized monolingual norms, such as speaking like natives without grammatical errors, limiting integrative use of linguistic and semiotic resources (García, 2009). K-emergent bilinguals adeptly intermix languages and semiotic modes as digitally fluent individuals (Yoon, Jeong, & Kim, 2019) as often seen in their social media posts. However, K-emergent bilinguals and even English teachers often conform to idealized monolingual norms, as reflected in native/nonnative binaries (Ahn et al., 2020). Such monolingual norms may be partly attributed to Korea's monolingual social and academic environment (Ahn, 2011), thereby reinforcing a monolingual mindset and limiting translingual classroom practices. That is, in Korean ELT, thinking and expressing in English is often treated as a static, compartmentalized skill to be mastered, rather than as a *process* of flexible meaning making [emphasis added].

In an environment rooted in idealized monolingualism, English is not seen as a language in development, thereby positioning emergent bilinguals as remedial learners with limited English proficiency (Flores & Schissel, 2014). In this context, changing perspectives based on translanguaging can help reimagine and transform Korean ELT practices to be more welcoming and inclusive for K-emergent bilinguals (see Anderson, 2024; Zhang, 2021),

particularly those at the early stages of bilingualism. Translanguaging holds potential for integration into Korean ELT, as English teachers and K-emergent bilinguals often integrate Korean linguistic resources to interpret English texts, including College Scholastic Ability Test (CSAT) questions and official English textbooks. This aligns with a weaker form of translanguaging (see Baker, 2011), where receptive practices in English combine with productive practices in Korean. Such teaching practices require a higher level of cognitive processing, where emergent bilinguals must integrate and adapt to new information while moving between two languages (Turnbull, 2019). Here, Korean is recognized as a valuable resource that can be integrated with English, fostering the development of emergent bilingualism and encouraging students to share diverse ideas through translanguaging practices, such as during discussions of literature written in English.

2.2. Using Children's and Young Adult Literature Written in English in ELT

If tailored to emergent bilinguals' level of bilingual development, children's and young adult literature written in English (henceforth CYAL) offers significant benefits by stimulating English development, enhancing critical thinking, and expanding cultural knowledge (Bland, 2013; Hall, 2005). While navigating between their home languages and English, emergent bilinguals are able to engage with CYAL as creative language users. That is, emergent bilinguals can draw on their contextual and cultural knowledge (Datta, 2007; Erickson, 2003; Yeom, 2021a), thereby moving ELT beyond mere grammar instruction with decontextualized language (Macleroy, 2013). In this regard, Cummins (2001) asserts that "a diet of engaging books works much better than a diet of worksheets and drills in developing reading comprehension and academic language" (p. 87).

Considering that actively integrating students' home languages into English development can further their language and literacy development (Treffers-Daller, 2024), it could be argued that leveraging students' home languages can play a crucial role in fostering their engagement with CYAL. For example, although translanguaging is not explicitly mentioned, studies show that integrating students' home languages reaps benefits in articulating their profound interpretations and emotions (Early & Marshall, 2008; Yeom, 2018, 2019). While navigating between languages and cultures, emergent bilinguals can interpret English and the cultural context presented in a text through the lens of their home languages and cultural experiences, generating profound and critical insights about their evolving world (Yeom, 2021a).

Incorporating picturebooks into ELT, in particular, can create opportunities for emergent bilinguals to engage in translanguaging and dialogic activities. Picturebooks offer various affordances for English language learning (Mourão, 2015). As a multimodal narrative, which relies on the interplay of texts and images (Nikolajeva & Scott, 2006), emergent bilinguals

can engage with both the visual and verbal components of picturebooks, drawing on their knowledge of English, home languages, and other semiotic modes (Mourão, 2016). Through critical visual analysis, students can deepen their understanding and critical appreciation of visual images (Arizpe, Colomer, & Martínez-Roldán, 2015). Picturebooks can be misunderstood as being too simplistic for high school emergent bilinguals due to their simple format and language. However, picturebooks can also be used for teenagers and adult emergent bilinguals to inspire engagement with the world and humanity (Lazar, 2015), such as friendship, love, loss, grief, and resilience. With their sophisticated and mature themes, picturebooks, along with engaging illustrations, can serve as a platform for critical thinking and discussions, particularly for older emergent bilinguals whose bilingualism is in its early stages (Sun, 2015).

Combined with classroom activities that integrate translanguaging and dialogic practices, where teachers facilitate students' classroom conversations through visual analysis, translingual discussions, and translingual multimodal writing, emergent bilinguals can engage in fluid, dynamic, and co-constructed communication through a picturebook (Yeom, 2021b). More detailed theoretical explanations will help illuminate how emergent bilinguals draw on their linguistic repertoires to make meaning while engaging in dialogic interactions, a topic that will be further elaborated in the next section.

3. Conceptual Framework

3.1. Dialogism

Dialogism explains how humans make meaning of the world by responding to and being shaped by social contexts, including families, friends, cultures, ideologies, and political environment, among many others (Bakhtin, 1981). As dialogic beings, individuals continue to transact with their ever-changing environments and cultures (Clifton & Fecho, 2018). Engaging with cultural and linguistic diversity alongside the centralizing forces of societal norms, humans express their thoughts and feelings both outwardly and inwardly (Bakhtin, 1981). Human ideas do not exist as discrete elements but continually merge and remerge with one another in alignment with societal norms. That is, meaning making processes are half personal and half social.

During meaning making, individual humans engage in dialogue with past and present experiences, as well as diverse ideas and perspectives, which are dynamically interwoven with various forms of consciousness in society, forming dialogized heteroglossia, often embodied through language practices. For example, in a group discussion, a student may offer an opinion in response to differing viewpoints from others, all shaped by their learning

and experiences within the society they inhabit. These ideas intermingle, evolving into new forms of understanding, represented through language practices.

An important tenet of dialogism, both as a theory of meaning making as well as a theory of language, is heteroglossia, which is the diversity within and between languages. Heteroglossia, by extension, explains the coexistence of diverse norms, ideas, perspectives, and cultures, all of which are dynamically intertwined and blended into new forms of knowledge, ideas, and cultures within society working in in tandem with centralizing forces of societal norms (Bakhtin, 1981). In this regard, heteroglossia could be summarized as "the simultaneous use of different kinds of forms or signs, and the tensions and conflicts among those signs, on the socio historical associations they carry with them" (Bailey, 2012, p. 504).

From a dialogic perspective, language practices should be viewed as ever-evolving dialogized heteroglossia, encompassing diverse values and cultures at personal, interpersonal, and societal levels, both within a single language (e.g., blending different dialects) and across multiple named languages (e.g., intermixing two languages). Heteroglossia highlights the dynamic nature of communication and its implications for language teaching in today's diverse, transnational, and digitally interconnected world, emphasizing hybrid, multimodal practices as individuals cross linguistic and semiotic boundaries. Dialogism and its tenet of heteroglossia inspires us to view language practices as fluid and interconnected, even in the context of language learning such as ELT. However, more detailed theoretical explanations, such as translanguaging, are needed to understand how emergent bilinguals navigate their expanding and evolving linguistic repertoires.

3.2. Translanguaging

Translanguaging was initially defined as the "planned and systematic use of two languages for teaching and learning inside the same lesson" (Lewis, Jones, & Baker, 2012, p. 643). This is also referred to as a weaker form of translanguaging, where receptive language skills are utilized in one language while productive skills are expressed in the other, requiring a high level of advanced cognitive abilities to process the subject matter in both languages (Baker, 2011). This approach recognizes the competence of emergent bilinguals as agentive meaning makers, traversing between the softened boundaries between national languages while still acknowledging their distinct existence (Turnbull, 2019).

Translanguaging recently has gained prominence as a framework emphasizing bilinguals' dynamic and fluid use of linguistic repertoires for communication (García, 2009; García & Li, 2014). It describes the *process and act of assembling* meaning making resources (Pennycook, 2007, 2017) [emphasis added], blending material, cognitive, and cultural elements to dynamically construct meaning (Li, 2018). This strand of translanguaging considers languages to be discrete social constructs of society, such as national or named

languages (García, 2019). Such stronger form of translanguaging regards humans' linguistic resources as an integrated repertoire and rejects fixed language boundaries (Li, 2021).

Translanguaging in ELT refers to emergent bilinguals' strategic use of their available linguistic resources, including their home languages, to achieve learning objectives in English classes (Illman & Pietilä, 2018). Teachers can blend a stronger and weaker form of translanguaging (Anderson, 2024). Such flexible approach can allow students to fluidly move between languages to support their cognitive and communicative needs, fostering a more inclusive and dynamic classroom environment for emergent bilinguals (Zhang, 2021) as well as engaging in more effective and articulate communication in English classes (Escobar & Dillard-Paltrineri, 2015).

Translanguaging emphasizes emergent bilinguals' integrated, creative practices as beneficial (García, 2009) such as intermixing home languages and English to express ideas or leveraging knowledge of home languages to process information written in English. It differs from code-switching, which draws clear boundaries between first language (L1) and second language or target language (L2), framing L1 influence as interference in acquiring L2 (Hornberger & Link, 2012). Translanguaging in ELT, therefore, challenges the idea of becoming two monolinguals, and instead promotes the development of one emergent bilingual who traverses between the softened linguistic boundaries.

3.3. The Pedagogical Concept of Translingual Dialogic Webbing

Few ELT studies explore translanguaging from dialogic perspectives, highlighting the need to conceptualize how emergent bilinguals interweave and dialogue across meaning making repertoires. Translingual dialogic webbing refers to the dynamic and evolving ways in which emergent bilinguals engage dialogically across languages, semiotic modes, cultures, as well as experiential, spatial, and temporal landscapes, all of which are interwoven into the process of creating a shifting web both within and between individuals. In this process, emergent bilinguals and teachers become weaver of meanings, with teachers serving as facilitators who model translanguaging practices (e.g., intermixing Korean and English) and facilitate collaborative idea building. That is, teachers play a crucial role in inspiring, motivating, and connecting students' ideas while actively encouraging translanguaging.

This pedagogical approach assumes that emergent bilinguals can interweave their full linguistic repertoires to express themselves, regardless of language boundaries, affirming and validating their right to make strategic linguistic choices that reflect their identities and experiences. Each individual continuously interconnects threads within themselves and with others. The threads here refer to each individual's meaning making repertoires. Each individual's meaning making practices represent a node within a larger, dynamic web of interactions. The connections between these nodes—the threads—symbolize the continuous

interplay of languages, cultures, perspectives, experiences, and memories, all of which are in constant flux. The threads become intertwined and entangled, as well as untangled and re-intertwined, continually forming an ever-evolving web in motion.

The metaphor of the "web" is dynamic, reflecting a constantly shifting dialogized heteroglossia in which new voices, languages, and perspectives are woven and entangled into ongoing conversations such as students' group discussions. These interactions occur with, within, and in tension with, social contexts (e.g., classrooms) and societal norms (e.g., school regulations). Moreover, the process of webbing extends beyond interpersonal interactions. Even when individuals construct meaning alone, they engage in a dialogic process by reflecting on past and present experiences and drawing on language and cultural understandings. These understandings are both shaped by and actively shape the surrounding social environment. For example, a K-emergent bilingual might read a history passage written in English while connecting it to his/her past experiences and prior learning from history classes at school. This student might interpret the passage through the lens of his/her Korean linguistic and cultural repertoires.

Classroom activities based on translingual dialogic webbing ultimately aim to create a more inviting space for emergent bilinguals to share their creative and critical ideas without fearing mistakes while attempting to speak native-like English. In teaching practices that employ translingual dialogic webbing, there are no barriers between Korean and English as separate national languages, which often leads to native/nonnative binaries. Most importantly, classrooms that incorporate translingual dialogic webbing can foster a dialogic space for raising questions, authoring responses, and encouraging various viewpoints (see Fecho & Botzakis, 2007)—an essential yet often missing element in many Korean ELT classrooms. The following methodology section demonstrate how to implement this concept by planning classroom activities centered on reading and discussing a picturebook, as well as engaging students in creative work.

4. Methodology

4.1. Description of Participants

This research project was conducted with three classes of 10th-grade K-emergent bilinguals in Spring 2024 at the local high school where I work as an English teacher. However, this article particularly focuses on the sessions that were conducted in one case of 10th-grade class for practical reasons, which consisted of 12 emergent bilinguals at the beginning stage of English proficiency speaking Korean as their home language. The participating K-emergent bilinguals were attentive and friendly students, creating a

cooperative classroom environment with their teachers and a vibrant atmosphere filled with diverse opinions. The individual worksheets were collected and classroom conversations were audio-recorded after receiving the consents from the students and their parents. Pseudonyms are used in this article for ethical considerations.

An important aspect to note here is that the students were accustomed to the mixed use of languages in my English classes, as I often combined Korean and English, and encouraged them to choose the language modes that can best express their ideas. As a bilingual fluent in Korean and English, I always used Korean, English, or a mix of both when asking questions and sharing my own ideas during classroom discussions. In this way, I intended to convey the message that moving between and intermixing languages is a natural part of language learning and bilingual development. Most importantly, my English classes are structured around student-centered group activities, where I serve as a facilitator rather than merely transmitting grammatical knowledge.

4.2. Data Collection

This case study focuses on reading and conversing about the picturebook, *The Rough Patch* (Lies, 2018), over five 50-minute sessions held from July 8 to July 17, 2024, following the final exam of the Spring semester during which time we (meaning students and I) did not need to follow the official curriculum using the official textbook. For five consecutive sessions, we sat in a circle to facilitate smoother classroom conversations and the sharing of individual creative works. In the first session, K-emergent bilinguals engaged in a teacher-led read-aloud of the entire book. And then they individually translated each textual component using the worksheet I provided. In the following two sessions, K-emergent bilinguals participated in classroom discussions, sharing their ideas on the textual and visual components of the picturebook, with my facilitation as their English teacher. During these sessions, we co-translated the texts to uncover culturally and situationally nuanced meanings, and analyzed the visuals in relation to the texts. In the fourth session, each emergent bilingual produced individual creative work based on our discussions and their own understanding of the picturebook. This included creating a new scene for the picturebook, writing a letter to the main character, crafting an alternative ending, or designing a new cover for the book, with students selecting one of these options. In the final session, the K-emergent bilinguals shared their work with their classmates.

All sessions were audio-recorded with consent from both students and their parents, obtained prior to the start of the research. I transcribed each classroom conversation manually, because the conversations included both Korean and English, which current transcription software cannot accurately handle in a translingual context. I uploaded transcripts to Atlas.ti for data analysis. Additional data sets include students' translingual

and multimodal worksheets as well as my translingual (Korean-English) observation notes. The aforementioned processes are summarized in Table 1.

TABLE 1

Summary of the Research

Context	High school in a metropolitan city in Korea
Focal participants	One class of 10th grade high school K-emergent bilinguals (12 participants)
Chosen Picturebook	The Rough Patch (Lies, 2018)
Procedure	1st session: Teacher's read aloud of the entire picturebook, individual translation activities 2nd & 3rd sessions: Translingual and multimodal classroom conversations 4th session: Crafting creative work on the picturebook 5th session: Sharing individual creative work with class members
Collected Data	5 transcripts from each session, 12 students' translation worksheet and creative works, observation notes written after each session

4.3. Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using primary coding and pattern coding (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2019). As for primary coding, to explore how dialogic webbing is enacted, I began by systematically identifying instances of translingual dialogic webbing in both conversations and student worksheets. Each instance was carefully coded to capture how it supported K-emergent bilinguals in navigating the picturebook's visual and verbal elements. To ensure accuracy and consistency, I revisited the data multiple times to refine the codes and ensure they reflected the nuances of translingual dialogic webbing.

The initial coding generated a set of primary codes that highlighted specific practices, interactions, and strategies associated with translingual dialogic webbing. These primary codes, along with their corresponding instances, were transferred to an Excel spreadsheet. In the first column, I detailed each instance, while the second column was used to record the associated primary code. This structured format facilitated a systematic approach to pattern coding. Example primary codes include "intermixing languages," "interpreting visuals based on texts," "interpreting color choices," and "collaborative questioning between students."

Pattern coding involved grouping related primary codes into broader categories by identifying recurring relationships, similarities, and contrasts across the data. I examined the ways in which different primary codes co-occurred and reinforced each other to capture patterns across the primary codes. Through this process, I developed higher-order categories that represented interconnected ideas across the data. Example pattern codes are "negotiating meaning through translingual practices," "collaborative construction of narrative understanding," and "dynamic interplay between visual and textual interpretations." These

categories were further analyzed to identify overarching themes that encapsulated the essence of translingual dialogic webbing. To ensure these themes were valid and reliable, I cross-checked the identified patterns against the raw data, seeking alignment between the themes, the primary codes, and the theoretical framework of translingual dialogic webbing.

5. Translingual Dialogic Webbing Implemented in Korean ELT

This section, using concrete examples from the classroom activities, illustrates how translingual dialogic webbing helped K-emergent bilinguals navigate intricate meanings embedded in texts and images, both individually and collaboratively.

5.1. Exploring Situated and Nuanced Meanings Across Languages and Cultures

The most prominent pattern of K-emergent bilinguals' responses is that they initially access their home language, Korean, to make sense of the English text, and those practices evolve through their existing linguistic resources (see García & Li, 2014). Dialogic interactions via translanguaging helps emergent bilinguals navigate between different linguistic and cultural worlds, enabling them to see English words and sentences through the lens of their home language(s) and vice versa (see Bakhtin, 1981). Once K-emergent bilinguals begin decoding the literal meanings of words and sentences, they activate and interweave a range of resources—linguistic, semiotic, and cultural—to construct a deeper understanding of the text, generating culturally and situationally nuanced meanings.

With the teacher's facilitation, each K-emergent bilingual's ideas intertwine with others through translingual practices. This process of translingual dialogic webbing develops into meanings that are more culturally and situationally nuanced. The excerpt of a classroom conversation (Table 2) and students' worksheets demonstrate how translingual dialogic webbing helps K-emergent bilinguals understand and generate the situated meaning of texts and images both individually and collaboratively.

Sora first translates "took care of" as "길렀습니다 (raised)," encoding care as "raise." However, during the classroom conversations, we discussed the meaning of "care" and shared opinions on which type of translation would best fit the situation described in the text and the corresponding image. Since the main character, Evan, tends to the weeds as a substitute for his deceased puppy, after a series of conversation, we conclude that "돌봤어요(cared for)" would be a more suitable translation into Korean. On her worksheet (Figure 1), Sora draws a red triangle and adds "돌봤어요" beneath her original Korean translation, likely indicating that she accepts the meaning generated from the conversation

while still wanting to retain her original translation. In contrast to Sora, Jaein retains his original translation (Figure 2), maybe because "보살피다 (cared for)" is a close synonym of "돌보았습니다 (cared for)."

TABLE 2

Classroom Conversation from Session 2

|	Original Conversation	Conversation translated in English (" ", meaning originally spoken in English)
Teacher	여기 그림을 보면 weeds 가 많이 자라는데 Evan 은 오히려 그것을 took care of 했다고 나와있어. What would be the best translation for this verb phrase? 이 동사구를 어떻게 해석하면 좋을까?	In this picture, a lot of "weeds" are growing, but Evan "took care of" them instead. "What would be the best translation for this verb phrase?" What would be the best translation for this verb phrase?
Sora	저는 *길렀습니다*라고 썼어요.	I wrote *gileotseumnida* (meaning raised).
Jaein	어, 그런데 care 는 보통 아이를 care 한다 이렇게 쓰잖아요. 그래서 *보살폈습니다*라고 했는데요, 저는.	Um, but, we usually use "care" to "care" a child. So, I wrote *bosalpeotseumnida* (meaning cared for).
Teacher	왜 보살폈다가 맞는 것 같아?	Why do you think cared for works better?
Jaein	죽은 강아지 대신에 잡초를 care 한 건데, 강아지를 Evan 이 계속 돌보았잖아요.	He "cared" the weeds as a substitute of the puppy, and Evan took care of the puppy before.
Teacher	아, 그렇게 생각할 수도 있겠네. 또 다른 의견 말해볼 사람? Anyone who wants to add something?	Ah, that makes sense. Anyone who wants to add something? "Anyone who wants to add something?"
Seoah	저는 *돌봤어요*라고 하는 게 더 좋을 것 같아요. 읽을 때 *보살피다*보다는 *돌봤어요*가 더 부드러워서요.	I would like to use *dolboatseoyo* (meaning cared for). When reading, *dolboatseoyo* sounds softer than *bosalpida* (meaning cared for).

FIGURE 1

Sora's Translation

[#13] Itchy ones. Spiky and prickly ones. Foul-smelling ones. These weeds suited Evan just fine, so he <u>took care of</u> them. 간지러운 잡초들. 뾰족하고 가시가 돋친 잡초들. 냄새 나는 잡초들. 이 잡초들은 에반에게 딱 맞았기에, 그는 그것들을 길렀습니다.
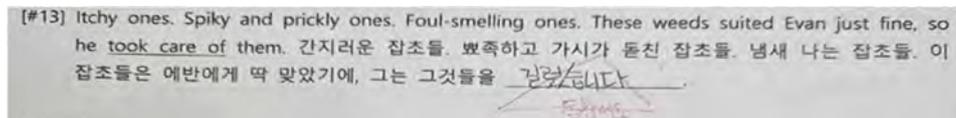
FIGURE 2

Jaein's Translation


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#13] Itchy ones. Spiky and prickly ones. Foul-smelling ones. These weeds suited Evan just fine, so
he took care of them. 간지러운 잡초들. 뾰족하고 가시가 돋친 잡초들. 냄새 나는 잡초들. 이
잡초들은 에반에게 딱 맞았기에, 그는 그것들을 ___보살폈어요___.
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Another important aspect is that Sora and Jaein incorporate a tone suited for a storybook, avoiding the dry, word-for-word translation. Instead, they translate the sentences with consideration for both the context and the book's intended target audience. Moreover, it is significant to note that Seoah also incorporates her knowledge of the rhythmic flow of Korean pronunciation. It may be because "보살피다" (pronounced *bosalpida*) could sound strong and dense in Korean, while "돌봤어요" (pronounced *dolboatseoyo*) sounds softer and better aligns with the flow of other components in the Korean translation.

The classroom conversation and K-emergent bilinguals' worksheets demonstrate how they interweave their Korean language repertoires and background knowledge of appropriate tone in a story book, linking this understanding to the narrative, visual imagery, target audience, and overall flow of the Korean translation. In other words, translingual dialogic webbing occurs on both individual and interpersonal levels, and helps K-emergent bilinguals to land on the situationally and culturally nuanced interpretations, and even rhythmically appropriate translations.

5.2. Navigating and Creating Layered, Evolving Meanings of Visuals and Narrative

Through translingual dialogic webbing, K-emergent bilinguals delve into the story, generating more nuanced interpretations. In one discussion, we analyzed an image of Evan at a pumpkin festival, recovering from grief. A white pumpkin in the image's corner sparked interest, fostering more profound thinking, and deeper connections between the reader and the story, as well as between languages, present and past. As seen in the following classroom conversation (Table 3), translingual dialogic webbing serves as a powerful process that enables K-emergent bilinguals to collaboratively interpret symbolic meanings within the visuals in relation to the storyline.

Minjoon's question leads K-emergent bilinguals to analyze the white pumpkin's symbolism, connecting it to loss and memory. Drawing from personal experience, Hayune suggests the main character's smile might conceal unresolved grief while treasuring the puppy's memory in Evan's heart. The students' ability to draw on their Korean language repertoire and past experiences allows for a deeper, more emotionally and experientially resonant interpretation of the visuals and the narrative, particularly the white pumpkin as a

metaphor for loss and memory. The conversation above highlights the value of translingual dialogic webbing, that is, students and teachers bridge past and present, and linguistic and semiotic repertoires with textual and visual elements as well as to enjoy polyphony of diverse opinions. The web is in motion rather than being static.

TABLE 3
Classroom Conversation from Session 3

|	Original Conversation	Conversation translated in English (" ", meaning originally spoken in English)
Minjoon	쌤, 근데, 왜 여기 왼쪽에는 white pumpkin 이 있어요?	Teacher, but um, why is the "white pumpkin" placed in the left corner?
Jiyool	어, 작가가 주황색 물감이 부족했나?	Uh, maybe the illustrator ran out of orange ink?
Hayune	그건 아니겠지. 상징 아닐까? 흰색은 죽음을 상징하니까. 죽은 강아지 같은데.	I don't think so. Doesn't it symbolize something? Because white symbolize death, it might represent the deceased puppy.
Teacher	그럼 white pumpkin 이 죽음이라면 이 그림 전체는 어떤 뜻인 것 같아?	So, the "white pumpkin" means death, what do you think the overall message of this image is?
Minjoon	죽은 강아지 대신에 잡초를 care 한 건데, 강아지를 Evan 이 계속 돌보았잖아요. 그러니까, 죽은 강아지는 마음 한 구석에 묻어 두고, 잘 지내겠다? 그런 거 아닐까요?	He "cared" the weeds as a substitute of the puppy, and Evan took care of the puppy before. Well, Evan might want to keep the memory of his puppy in a corner of his heart as he moves forward. That's what I think.
Hayune	어떻게 잘 지내. 나 우리집 강아지 죽고 나서 정말 힘들었어. 잘 지내는 척하지만, 강아지는 언제나 마음 속에 있다, 이거겠지.	How can he do well? I had a hard time after my puppy died. Maybe Evan pretends to be fine, but his puppy will live in his heart forever. That's what this image means.

The value of translingual dialogic webbing is also evident in the individual multimodal response activities, as shown in examples that highlight their creativity, insights, and empathy toward Evan's love, loss, grief, and recovery. K-emergent bilinguals move between English texts and their Korean and visual repertoires to interpret the intricate messages about love and grief inherent in the picturebook. For example, in Figure 3, Hayune provides a visual representation of an alternative ending to the story, depicting the deceased puppy as an angel watching over Evan and a new puppy from behind.

In the final session, Hayune explains the visual image to her classmates and me as we sit in a circle, "이 그림을 그리면서, 음, 제 죽은 강아지 Mocha를 생각했어요. 여기 날개 달린 강아지는 수호천사고 Evan과 새 강아지를 지켜주고 있어요. 천사가 된 강아지도 Evan이 느끼는 슬픔만큼 슬플 거라고 생각했어요. 슬프면서도 동시에

웃으면서 Evan의 행복을 빌어주고 있을 것 같았어요. (I thought of my deceased puppy, Mocha, when drawing this image. The puppy with wings is a guardian angel, protecting Evan and the new puppy. And the grief of the angel puppy mirrors the heaviness of Evan's own sorrow. While feeling sad, the angel must still wish for Evan to be happy, with a smile on its face.)"

FIGURE 3
Hayune's Visual Artwork Depicting an Alternative Ending to the Story
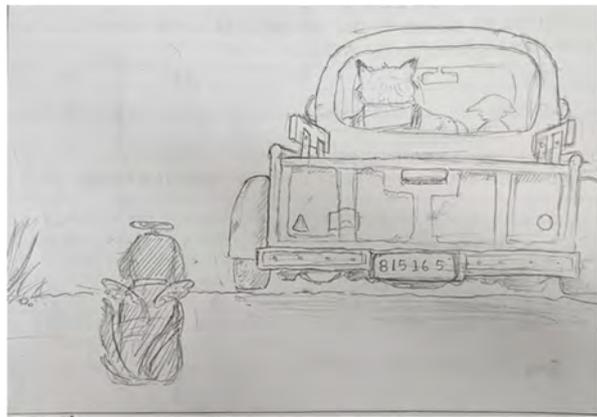
Hayune might have chosen to position the deceased puppy in the left corner of the image with its back turned, prompting viewers to imagine the puppy's facial expressions, thereby intensifying the sadness and evoking a sense of hopefulness in the image. Viewers typically read a picture from left to right (Serafini, 2013), which Hayune might have been aware of, guiding us from Evan's previous puppy embodied in an angel to Evan's new beginning of a new friendship with a new puppy. That is, Hayune leverages her past experience of losing her own puppy with her knowledge of visual techniques to reinterpret the ending, crafting an image imbued with layered meanings that enhance the depth of the story.

Another example of visually reinterpreting the story is creating an alternative cover, as shown in Sora's drawing (Figure 4).

FIGURE 4

Sora's Alternative Cover of the Picturebook
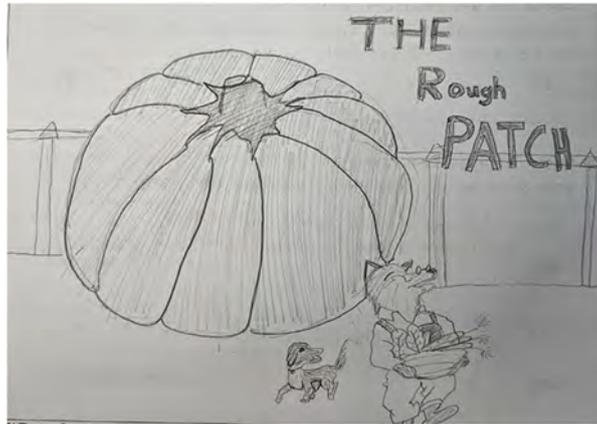
When sharing Sora's work with her classmates, Jiyool asks why she placed the gigantic pumpkin at the center of the image (Table 4).

TABLE 4

Classroom Conversation from Session 5

|	Original Conversation	Conversation translated in English (" ", meaning originally spoken in English)
Jiyool	어! pumpkin 진짜 크다. 왜 주인공보다 호박이 더 커?	Wow, the pumpkin is really big. Why is the pumpkin bigger than the main character?
Sora	이 책에서 호박을 통해서 story 가 전환점을 맞이 하잖아. 호박 기르면서 Evan 이 healing 하기 시작하고, Evan 도 슬픔을 극복하고 성장하는 것 같아서.	In this book, the story takes a turning point when a pumpkin suddenly appears Evan's garden. While growing the pumpkin, Evan heals, recovers from his emotional wounds, and transforms, I think.
Jiyool	어, 그럼 큰 호박은 Evan 이 성장한다는 의미인 거야? 그래서 큰 거야?	Does the big pumpkin symbolize Evan's growth, then? That is why its size is big?
Sora	응. 이야기가 주는 message 는 과거의 슬픔을 극복하고 한층 더 성장하고 희망을 품고 나아가라고 말하는 것 같아서. 그래서 호박을 크게 그렸어.	Yes, the story conveys the message that we must heal from the past to transform into a better version of ourselves and move forward with hope. That's why I drew the big pumpkin.

Sora interprets the pumpkin as a symbol of life, awakening a sense of purpose in Evan, who had lost his meaning of life after the death of his puppy. For Sora, the key message of

this picturebook is the recovery from grief, staying hopeful, and moving forward, all of which are embodied in the gigantic pumpkin. Sora intertwines her interpretation of the significant message with her knowledge of visual technique to express her profound idea. For Jiyool, however, the size of the pumpkin seems abnormal, as its significance is proportional to its size based on his understanding of visual techniques. Drawing from Sora's explanation, Jiyool understands that placing the gigantic pumpkin is intentional, aiming to convey the message of personal growth. This marks a moment of dynamically evolving dialogic webbing for discovering and co-constructing layered meanings of life and grief embedded in the visuals and the narrative.

Another salient example of showing critical and creative thinking via translingual dialogic webbing is students' translingual written responses. In Figure 5, Jimin, who is a quiet but attentive and caring listener throughout, illustrates Evan's emotional journey after losing his puppy, tracing Evan's progression from grappling with death to slowly embracing recovery. In the writing, Jimin delves into the main character's emotional day, expressed through a weaker form of translanguaging. He wrote his ideas in Korean first, followed by corresponding English translations. Jimin's fictional diary demonstrates his progression of thinking and construction of layered meanings, as shown by his corrections with double lines and the new words written above. For example, he initially wrote 이상한 (weird) but later changed it into 슬픈 (sad) to describe the day of losing the puppy. Similarly, after writing "the new weeds growing," he might have realized it did not align with the original Korean sentence and revised it to "I could see the new weeds growing," which is more grammatically sound and better reflects his intended meaning.

FIGURE 5
Jimin's Fictional Diary
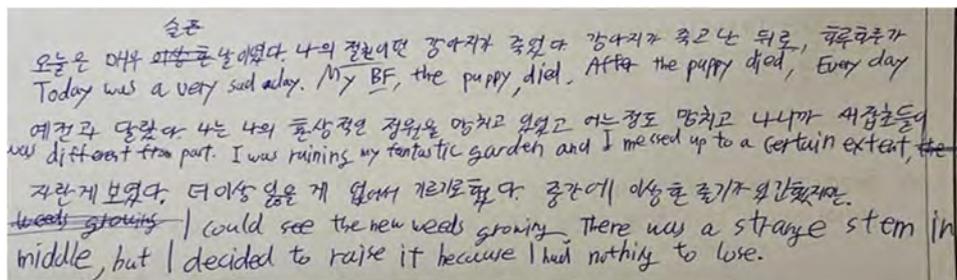
Jimin is an emergent bilingual at a more advanced stage than his classmates. However, the more important aspect is that Jimin's writing exemplifies the interconnectedness of emergent bilinguals' dynamically developing bilingual repertoires, with his Korean and English components aligning nearly perfectly. His advanced dynamic bilingualism is also

reflected in his use of English word order. The word order of Korean and English differs significantly, with the verb placed next to the subject in English, while the verb comes at the end in Korean. Most importantly, Jimin's seemingly straightforward writing demonstrates the depth of his empathy for Evan's sorrow, as seen in the line, "I decided to raise it because I had nothing to lose." Jimin reflected on why Evan chose to nurture weeds rather than eradicate them, which is another example of navigating the layered meanings of the multimodal narrative.

As seen in the all examples of this findings section, K-emergent bilinguals' reading is not a static act of translation, but a dynamic interplay between the text and the reader's entire meaning making repertoire, creating a "dialogized hybrid" (Bakhtin, 1981) where linguistic, cultural, semiotic, experiential, and even emotional elements merge. The more resources the reader brings into this transaction with the text, the more intricate the web of understanding becomes. Thus, translingual dialogic webbing allows K-emergent bilinguals to create and navigate deeply layered interpretations of the narrative, where their entire meaning making resources come together in a rich, evolving process to co-construct the meanings of life, death, grief, and growth.

6. Discussion and Conclusion

6.1. Summary of the Findings

K-emergent bilinguals use Korean to navigate English texts, evolving meaning through translanguaging and dialogic interactions. Facilitated by their teacher, K-emergent bilinguals integrate linguistic, cultural, and semiotic resources to interpret texts collaboratively. This translingual dialogic webbing fosters culturally nuanced, contextually appropriate understandings, reflected in their class discussions and rhythmically fitting Korean translations. Also, translingual dialogic webbing enables K-emergent bilinguals to interpret symbolic meanings collaboratively, integrating linguistic, cultural, and emotional resources. Through translingual classroom discussions and multimodal responses, students dynamically explore themes of love, loss, and recovery, creating deeply layered interpretations. This evolving process merges text, visuals, and personal experiences into rich understandings of the selected picturebook.

6.2. Limitations

Despite its valuable insights for Korean ELT, this study has several limitations. First, the findings are context-specific, focusing on a particular group of K-emergent bilinguals within

a specific educational and cultural setting, which may limit their generalizability to other contexts or populations. The qualitative nature of the analysis, including coding and interpretation, could introduce researcher subjectivity despite efforts to validate themes. Furthermore, the study offers only a snapshot of classroom interactions and lacks a longitudinal perspective to explore how translingual dialogic webbing evolves over time. The findings also highlight the crucial role of teacher facilitation, but the extent to which such practices can be replicated across classrooms with varying teaching styles or expertise remains unclear. These limitations underscore the need for future research to address these gaps and further explore the dynamics of translingual dialogic webbing.

6.3. Theoretical and Pedagogical Implications

This study illustrates how K-emergent bilinguals strategically and collaboratively leverage their meaning making resources, especially when translanguaging and dialogic interactions are fostered through the use of a picturebook. In practice, translingual dialogic webbing can transform monologic Korean ELT classrooms into more dialogic and creative spaces that embraces fluid language practices and values the polyphony of voices. Rather than prioritizing acquiring higher English proficiency based on idealized monolingual norms to become like native English speakers, this approach celebrates K-emergent bilinguals' *development* of dynamic bilingual repertoires, mobilizing their unique linguistic and cultural resources [emphasis added]. It must be noted that translingual dialogic webbing acknowledges the importance of enhancing English proficiency in ELT. However, passive target language acquisition, particularly through parroting discrete skills, should not be the sole focus of the ELT, especially when students bring diverse experiences and resources. Translingual dialogic webbing emphasizes that the focus should be on emergent bilinguals' dynamic English development alongside their home languages and creativity.

Reimagining and transforming Korean ELT is essential, because it is deeply ingrained in deficit views based on idealized monolingualism. Such perspectives only reinforce negative beliefs about emergent bilinguals, leading them to perceive their English as inadequate instead of recognizing it as a work in progress. As seen in the participating K-emergent bilinguals' writing and in their search for more nuanced translations of the multimodal narrative written in English, K-emergent bilinguals' linguistic, cultural, experiential and semiotic repertoires are intricately interconnected. From monolingual perspectives (i.e., native-nonnative binaries), students' conversations and written responses merely reflect their limited English proficiency spoken and written by nonnative English speakers. From translanguaging and dialogic perspectives, however, K-emergent bilinguals continuously dialogue with and strategically mobilize their available meaning making assets to navigate and construct layered meanings with creativity and critical insight. In this regard, Korean

ELT should provide K-emergent bilinguals the time and space to individually and collaboratively construct meaning, while validating their linguistic choices and their ideas.

The integration of CYAL, particularly picturebooks, can support K-emergent bilinguals in leveraging their linguistic and semiotic resources through accessible language and engaging visuals. Also, picturebooks with poignant stories with appealing visuals, like the picturebook selected for this study, can inspire K-emergent bilinguals deeply engage with their evolving worlds. What is most important, however, is not merely the use of picturebooks but the creation of linguistically and emotionally inclusive spaces through translingual and dialogic classroom activities. In other words, integrating picturebooks, or even official English textbooks, should go beyond simple word-for-word translation and aim to maximize K-emergent bilinguals' creative and critical thinking potentials.

In addition, translingual dialogic webbing emphasizes the co-construction of knowledge through interaction, and values the unique stories, experiences, knowledge, perspectives that each emergent bilingual brings to the classroom. In this process, teachers play an integral role within the evolving web by listening to students' ideas and personal stories, facilitating the development of their thoughts, and modeling translanguaging to enrich the webbing experience. While collaboratively engaging in the webbing process, Korean ELT classrooms can become inclusive spaces where K-emergent bilinguals express themselves in their own brilliant ways, resonating with today's multilingual and multimodal realities. When we celebrate the beauty of translanguaging and dialogic interactions, we can affirm that language learning is not a race toward monolingual perfection, but a journey toward self-expression and human connection. In this way, K-emergent bilinguals can be empowered not just to learn English, but to craft and share their unique voices with the world in their developing bilingual repertoires.

Applicable levels: Secondary, tertiary

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