Local Culture As Epistemic Core: Decolonizing English Education Through Intercultural Bilingual Citizenship

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Abstract
This article argues that local culture must be repositioned as the epistemic core of English language education in postcolonial and Global South contexts. Drawing on decolonial theory, intercultural philosophy, and critical applied linguistics, it examines how linguistic colonialism continues to shape English language textbooks, curricula, and pedagogical practices, frequently marginalizing local knowledge systems, cultural identities, and community-based epistemologies. Rather than conceiving culture as an illustrative or supplementary element, the article conceptualizes local culture as a legitimate source of knowledge, meaning, and pedagogical authority.

Building on the framework of the intercultural bilingual curriculum, the study advances the notion of intercultural bilingual citizenship as a transformative educational horizon that moves beyond instrumental language learning toward ethical agency, cultural recognition, and critical participation in plural societies. From this perspective, English education becomes a site for the negotiation of identity, power, and belonging rather than a neutral communicative enterprise.

The article also examines the flipped classroom as a pedagogical strategy with decolonial potential when grounded in local cultural narratives, lived experiences, and community knowledge. By reversing traditional hierarchies of content transmission, the flipped classroom enables learners to engage with English through culturally situated inquiry, fostering intercultural competence rooted in dialogue, reflexivity, and epistemic plurality.

Through a critical synthesis of prior research and theoretical contributions, this article advocates for a decolonial reconfiguration of English education—one that challenges linguistic domination, affirms local cultures as epistemic centers, and contributes to the formation of intercultural bilingual citizens capable of inhabiting global languages without renouncing their cultural roots.

Keywords: Local culture, Linguistic colonialism, Intercultural bilingual citizenship, Decolonial education, Intercultural Competence, English language education, Intercultural curriculum.

INTRODUCTION

English language education has become one of the most influential cultural, ideological, and pedagogical forces shaping contemporary schooling worldwide. In an era marked by intensified globalization, mobility, and digital connectivity, English is frequently presented as a neutral instrument for international communication, academic advancement, and economic opportunity. However, in postcolonial and Global South contexts, the expansion of English education has historically unfolded under conditions characterized by linguistic colonialism, epistemic asymmetry, and cultural hierarchization. Rather than operating as a culturally transparent medium, English has functioned as a vehicle for the reproduction of

Eurocentric worldviews, symbolic power, and knowledge regimes that marginalize local cultures, languages, and epistemologies (Quijano, 2000; Dussel, 1998; Canagarajah, 1999). From a decolonial perspective, this phenomenon cannot be understood independently of the broader structures of coloniality that continue to shape education systems long after formal colonial administrations have ended. Quijano's (2000) concept of the *coloniality of power* illuminates how language operates as a key mechanism through which hierarchies of knowledge, culture, and subjectivity are naturalized and maintained. English, within this framework, is not merely taught as a foreign language but is positioned as a superior linguistic and cultural code, implicitly associated with modernity, rationality, and global legitimacy. This positioning produces a crisis in English education that extends beyond pedagogy, manifesting instead as a deep cultural and epistemic tension between global linguistic demands and local ways of knowing.

One of the most visible expressions of this crisis lies in the persistent dominance of standardized curricula and multinational textbooks that circulate globally with minimal adaptation to local contexts. These materials often promote homogenized cultural narratives rooted in Anglo-American norms, lifestyles, and communicative practices, while systematically excluding or trivializing the histories, knowledges, and lived experiences of learners in the Global South. As Bourdieu (1991) has argued, language is not only a means of communication but also a form of symbolic capital that legitimizes certain social groups while disqualifying others. Within English education, this symbolic power is exercised through curricular choices that elevate external cultural references and marginalize local cultural capital, reinforcing patterns of dependency and epistemic subordination.

The marginalization of local cultures in English education is not an accidental byproduct of globalization but a structural consequence of dominant curricular logics that conceive culture as secondary to linguistic form and communicative function. In many English language classrooms, culture is treated as an illustrative add-on—confined to superficial celebrations, isolated readings, or stereotypical representations—rather than as a foundational source of knowledge and meaning. This reductionist approach strips culture of its epistemic value and transforms it into an object of consumption rather than a living framework through which learners interpret the world. As Walsh (2009, 2018) has emphasized, such pedagogical practices reproduce an "interculturality without power," one that acknowledges diversity rhetorically while leaving intact the colonial hierarchies that structure educational knowledge.

The consequences of this marginalization are particularly significant for the construction of learner identities and citizenship. When English education systematically privileges external cultural models, learners are subtly encouraged to distance themselves from their own cultural histories and social realities in order to gain linguistic legitimacy. This dynamic aligns with what Canagarajah (2002) describes as the internalization of linguistic hierarchies, whereby speakers of English as a foreign language come to perceive their own linguistic and cultural resources as deficient or inadequate. In this sense, English education risks becoming a site of symbolic violence (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977), where cultural dispossession is normalized under the guise of global competence.

In response to these challenges, critical scholarship in applied linguistics, intercultural education, and decolonial theory has increasingly called for a fundamental reorientation of language education. Rather than rejecting English outright, these perspectives advocate for a critical appropriation of the language—one that disrupts its colonial legacy and repositions it within locally grounded educational projects (Canagarajah, 2013). Central to this reorientation is the recognition of local culture not as a peripheral reference point but as an epistemic core that shapes curriculum, pedagogy, and learning objectives.

The notion of local culture as an epistemic core draws on intercultural philosophy and philosophies of liberation that foreground the ethical and political dimensions of knowledge production. Dussel's (1998, 2013) philosophy of liberation insists on the necessity of thinking from the standpoint of historically marginalized subjects and cultures, challenging the presumed universality of Western epistemologies. Applied to English education, this perspective demands a shift from externally imposed curricular models toward educational practices rooted in territorial histories, collective memory, and community knowledge. Such a shift does not imply cultural isolationism but rather an intercultural dialogue grounded in epistemic equity.

Within the field of language education, this dialogic orientation resonates with intercultural approaches that emphasize the development of critical cultural awareness and ethical engagement. Byram's (1997) model of intercultural communicative competence marked an important departure from purely linguistic conceptions of language learning by foregrounding attitudes, knowledge, skills of interpretation, and critical cultural awareness. However, as subsequent decolonial critiques have noted, many intercultural models remain implicitly Eurocentric, presupposing stable national cultures and overlooking the colonial conditions under which intercultural encounters occur. A decolonial rearticulation of intercultural competence thus requires situating culture within relations of power and recognizing local epistemologies as legitimate foundations for intercultural dialogue (Walsh, 2009; Soto, 2022, 2022).

It is within this critical horizon that the concept of intercultural bilingual citizenship emerges as a central pedagogical and ethical objective. Citizenship, in this sense, transcends legal status or civic participation and is understood as a process of identity formation, cultural recognition, and social agency. An intercultural bilingual citizen is not simply a competent user of two languages but a subject capable of navigating cultural difference critically, engaging ethically with others, and participating actively in plural societies without renouncing their cultural roots. This conception aligns with decolonial educational frameworks that link language learning to social transformation and epistemic justice (Soto, 2021; Walsh, 2018).

Pedagogically, the re-centering of local culture as an epistemic core necessitates innovative approaches capable of disrupting traditional hierarchies of knowledge transmission. In this regard, the flipped classroom offers significant decolonial potential when implemented critically. By relocating content delivery outside the classroom and transforming class time into a space for dialogue, inquiry, and collaborative meaning-making, the flipped classroom can facilitate the integration of local cultural narratives, community knowledge, and student experiences into the learning process. When grounded in intercultural and decolonial principles, this approach enables learners to engage with English not as passive recipients of external knowledge but as active producers of culturally situated meanings (Soto, 2023).

The purpose of this article is to argue that local culture must be repositioned as the epistemic core of English language education through the framework of intercultural bilingual citizenship. By critically examining the persistence of linguistic colonialism in English curricula and textbooks, and by exploring the pedagogical possibilities of intercultural bilingual curricula and flipped classroom approaches, this study seeks to demonstrate how English education can be transformed into a site of decolonial praxis. Rather than conceiving English as an end in itself, the article proposes a vision of language education oriented toward cultural dignity, epistemic plurality, and democratic participation.

In doing so, this article contributes to ongoing debates in cultural studies, applied linguistics, and education concerning the decolonization of knowledge and the role of language in the construction of social futures. By situating English education within

broader struggles over culture, power, and recognition, it offers a theoretically grounded and culturally situated perspective for reimagining language teaching in postcolonial and Global South contexts—one in which learning English becomes a means of inhabiting global languages without surrendering local identities.

2. Local Culture as Epistemic Core

Reconceptualizing local culture as an epistemic core requires a decisive rupture with traditional curricular models that treat culture as an ancillary or decorative dimension of language education. In dominant paradigms of English language teaching, culture has historically been reduced to a set of static representations—customs, celebrations, or communicative norms—often detached from the lived realities of learners. Such approaches reflect a broader epistemological hierarchy in which knowledge produced in Euro-American contexts is positioned as universal, while local knowledge is relegated to the realm of the particular, the anecdotal, or the folkloric. From a decolonial perspective, this hierarchy is neither neutral nor accidental; rather, it is a constitutive feature of the coloniality of knowledge that continues to shape educational systems in the Global South (Quijano, 2000).

Understanding local culture as an epistemic core implies recognizing it as a legitimate source of knowledge production, meaning-making, and ethical orientation. Culture, in this sense, is not merely what learners *have* but what they *know through*—a framework that organizes perception, interpretation, and action within specific historical and territorial contexts. As Dussel (1998, 2013) argues, epistemology cannot be separated from the geo-historical location of subjects; knowledge is always produced from somewhere, and the denial of this situatedness constitutes a form of epistemic violence. In English education, the systematic privileging of external cultural references effectively silences local epistemologies, reinforcing the illusion that valid knowledge must originate elsewhere.

This epistemic marginalization is closely linked to the operation of symbolic power within educational institutions. Bourdieu's (1991) notion of linguistic capital helps illuminate how certain languages, discourses, and cultural references acquire legitimacy while others are devalued. In English language classrooms, the dominance of standardized varieties of English and their associated cultural norms functions as a gatekeeping mechanism, determining whose knowledge counts and whose voices are heard. When local cultural resources are excluded from curricular content, learners' embodied knowledge—their histories, memories, and social practices—is rendered invisible, undermining both their educational engagement and their sense of cultural dignity.

From this standpoint, repositioning local culture as an epistemic core is not simply a pedagogical adjustment but a political and ethical act. It entails challenging the assumption that curriculum design must follow externally imposed standards and instead advocating for educational practices rooted in local realities. Walsh (2009, 2018) conceptualizes this shift as a move from functional or superficial interculturality toward a critical interculturality that confronts power relations and colonial legacies directly. In the context of English education, critical interculturality demands that local cultural knowledge be integrated not as content to be translated into English, but as a structuring principle that informs learning objectives, pedagogical strategies, and assessment practices.

Such an approach aligns with broader decolonial calls to delink education from Eurocentric epistemological frameworks. Quijano (2000) emphasizes that coloniality persists precisely through the naturalization of Western categories of thought, which present themselves as universal and value-neutral. In English education, this naturalization manifests in curricular discourses that frame communicative competence, fluency, and global intelligibility as self-evident goals, while obscuring the cultural and ideological assumptions underpinning them.

By contrast, a curriculum grounded in local culture foregrounds questions of meaning, identity, and social responsibility, situating language learning within the lived experiences of learners and their communities.

The epistemic centrality of local culture also has profound implications for how knowledge is constructed in the classroom. Traditional transmission-based models position teachers and textbooks as primary authorities, transmitting externally validated knowledge to passive learners. When local culture becomes the epistemic core, however, learners' experiences and community knowledge emerge as legitimate starting points for inquiry. This shift resonates with decolonial pedagogies that emphasize dialogic learning, collective reflection, and the co-construction of knowledge (Freire, 1970; Walsh, 2018). In such contexts, English is no longer taught as an abstract system detached from reality but as a tool for interpreting, narrating, and critically engaging with local worlds.

This reconceptualization also challenges dominant notions of intercultural competence within language education. While models such as Byram's (1997) have contributed significantly to moving beyond purely linguistic frameworks, they often presuppose relatively symmetrical intercultural encounters and stable cultural boundaries. In postcolonial contexts marked by historical asymmetries and cultural displacement, these assumptions require critical revision. Intercultural competence, when grounded in local culture as an epistemic core, becomes less about adapting to external norms and more about negotiating meaning from a position of cultural agency. It involves the capacity to engage with other cultures without internalizing deficit views of one's own.

Within this framework, local culture functions as a site of epistemic resistance. Canagarajah (2002, 2013) has shown how speakers in the Global South appropriate English strategically, reshaping it to express local meanings and identities. This practice of linguistic and cultural re-signification demonstrates that English need not be a vehicle of domination; it can also become a medium for articulating alternative epistemologies. However, such possibilities can only be realized if curricula recognize and valorize local cultural knowledge rather than suppressing it in favor of standardized norms.

The notion of local culture as an epistemic core is particularly salient in the construction of intercultural bilingual citizenship. Citizenship, understood decolonially, is not merely a legal or institutional status but a process through which individuals and communities assert their right to knowledge, voice, and participation. An intercultural bilingual curriculum grounded in local culture enables learners to engage with English from a position of epistemic confidence, fostering the ability to navigate global discourses while remaining rooted in their cultural contexts. As Soto (2021, 2022) argues, bilingual education acquires transformative potential only when it integrates cultural identity, ethical reflection, and social responsibility as central components.

Moreover, positioning local culture at the center of English education contributes to what Dussel (2013) describes as a pluriversal epistemology—one that recognizes the coexistence of multiple ways of knowing without subordinating them to a single universal standard. In educational terms, this implies designing curricula that are open to epistemic plurality, where local narratives, oral traditions, artistic expressions, and community practices are not merely translated into English but actively shape the content and direction of learning. Such curricula resist cultural homogenization and affirm the legitimacy of diverse epistemic traditions within global linguistic spaces.

Importantly, this epistemic re-centering does not entail rejecting global knowledge or isolating learners from transnational discourses. Rather, it seeks to establish a dialogic relationship between local and global knowledges, one grounded in reciprocity rather than hierarchy. English, within this dialogic framework, becomes a language of encounter rather

than imposition—a medium through which learners articulate local concerns, engage critically with global issues, and participate in intercultural dialogue on their own terms.

In sum, conceiving local culture as an epistemic core represents a paradigmatic shift in English language education. It challenges the colonial foundations of dominant curricula, disrupts symbolic hierarchies of knowledge, and reorients pedagogy toward cultural dignity and epistemic justice. By foregrounding local culture as a source of knowledge rather than an object of representation, this approach lays the groundwork for a decolonial English education capable of fostering intercultural bilingual citizens who can inhabit global languages without relinquishing their cultural roots. (Soto, 2023)

2.1 Linguistic Colonialism in English Education: Textbooks, Curriculum, and Power

Linguistic colonialism in English education operates through subtle yet pervasive mechanisms that normalize particular languages, cultures, and epistemologies while marginalizing others. Although contemporary discourses often frame English as a neutral global lingua franca, critical scholarship has demonstrated that its global spread is deeply entangled with historical processes of colonial domination and ongoing structures of power (Phillipson, 1992; Pennycook, 1998). In educational contexts, these structures materialize most visibly through curricula and textbooks that privilege Eurocentric cultural narratives and linguistic norms, reinforcing asymmetrical relations between the Global North and Global South.

Textbooks produced by multinational publishing houses play a central role in sustaining linguistic colonialism. Marketed as globally applicable resources, these materials frequently present standardized varieties of English—primarily British or American—as unquestioned norms, while embedding cultural references that reflect middle-class Western lifestyles, values, and communicative practices. Such representations not only exclude local cultural realities but also implicitly construct them as irrelevant or incompatible with legitimate English use. As Canagarajah (1999, 2002) argues, this process contributes to the ideological construction of linguistic deficiency, whereby learners from peripheral contexts internalize the belief that their linguistic and cultural repertoires are inadequate for global participation.

From a Bourdieusian perspective, this phenomenon can be understood as the reproduction of symbolic power through educational discourse. Bourdieu (1991) conceptualizes language as a form of symbolic capital that derives its value from institutional recognition rather than intrinsic linguistic qualities. In English education, textbooks function as instruments of legitimation, defining which forms of language and culture are worthy of academic recognition. By systematically excluding local voices and knowledge systems, these materials reinforce a hierarchy in which external cultural capital is valorized while local cultural capital is devalued, perpetuating educational inequalities under the guise of standardization.

Curriculum design further consolidates these hierarchies by embedding colonial assumptions about knowledge, progress, and modernity. Official curricula often prioritize communicative efficiency, global competitiveness, and alignment with international benchmarks, frequently at the expense of cultural relevance and social contextualization. While such objectives are presented as pragmatic necessities, they obscure the ideological choices underpinning curricular frameworks. Quijano's (2000) concept of the coloniality of knowledge is particularly illuminating here, as it reveals how Western epistemological models are naturalized as universal standards, rendering alternative ways of knowing invisible or inferior.

The power of curriculum lies not only in what it includes but also in what it excludes. When local histories, languages, and cultural practices are absent from English curricula, learners

are implicitly positioned as consumers of external knowledge rather than producers of meaning rooted in their own realities. This exclusion has profound implications for identity formation, as it encourages learners to dissociate academic success from cultural belonging. As Dussel (1998, 2013) contends, such epistemic exclusion constitutes a form of cultural negation that undermines the ethical foundations of education in plural societies.

Linguistic colonialism also operates through pedagogical practices that prioritize conformity to native-speaker norms and standardized assessment criteria. Pronunciation models, discourse conventions, and communicative tasks often reflect idealized Western contexts, reinforcing the notion that legitimate English use is tied to proximity to native norms. This dynamic marginalizes local varieties and hybrid forms of English, despite growing recognition of World Englishes and English as a lingua franca. Pennycook (2010) notes that the persistence of native-speakerism in pedagogy reflects deeper ideological commitments to linguistic purity and cultural authority, which remain largely unchallenged in mainstream curricula.

The consequences of linguistic colonialism extend beyond the classroom, shaping broader processes of citizenship and social participation. When English education privileges external cultural models, it risks producing subjects who are linguistically competent yet culturally alienated—capable of navigating global discourses but disconnected from their own communities. Walsh (2009, 2018) describes this condition as a form of epistemic displacement, in which learners are encouraged to adopt dominant cultural frameworks at the expense of local knowledge and collective memory. Such displacement undermines the possibility of education as a tool for social transformation and democratic engagement.

Against this backdrop, decolonial scholars have called for a critical interrogation of the political economy of English education. This involves examining not only classroom practices but also the global structures that regulate textbook production, curriculum standardization, and teacher training. Multinational publishers, international testing agencies, and policy frameworks exert considerable influence over what counts as legitimate English education, often marginalizing locally developed materials and pedagogical innovations. As Phillipson (2012) argues, these global networks sustain linguistic imperialism by aligning language education with economic and geopolitical interests rather than local educational needs.

Challenging linguistic colonialism therefore requires more than superficial curricular adjustments; it demands a reconfiguration of the epistemological foundations of English education. This reconfiguration entails recognizing local cultures as sources of knowledge rather than obstacles to linguistic proficiency. It also involves legitimizing local varieties of English and hybrid communicative practices as expressions of cultural agency. Canagarajah (2013) emphasizes that such an approach shifts the focus from linguistic correctness to communicative justice, foregrounding the ethical dimensions of language use in unequal global contexts.

Within this decolonial framework, curriculum becomes a site of struggle over meaning, power, and representation. An intercultural bilingual curriculum grounded in local culture resists linguistic colonialism by integrating community knowledge, territorial histories, and social realities into language learning. Rather than positioning English as a replacement for local languages and cultures, such curricula frame it as a resource for articulating local perspectives and engaging critically with global discourses. As Soto (2021, 2022) argues, this approach transforms bilingual education into a process of cultural affirmation and epistemic empowerment.

Ultimately, addressing linguistic colonialism in English education requires a shift from assimilationist models toward pedagogies of dialogue and recognition. By exposing the power relations embedded in textbooks and curricula, educators can foster critical

awareness among learners and teachers alike. This awareness is a prerequisite for the construction of intercultural bilingual citizenship, understood as the capacity to participate in global linguistic spaces without relinquishing cultural identity or epistemic autonomy. In this sense, the decolonization of English education is inseparable from broader struggles for cultural justice and democratic knowledge production in postcolonial societies.

2. 2 Intercultural Bilingual Curriculum from a Decolonial Perspective

An intercultural bilingual curriculum conceived from a decolonial perspective represents a deliberate departure from conventional curricular models that prioritize linguistic efficiency, standardization, and external benchmarks of success. Rather than treating curriculum as a neutral or technical instrument, decolonial theory invites an understanding of curriculum as a cultural, political, and ethical text—one that embodies specific epistemological assumptions and power relations (Apple, 2004; Walsh, 2009). Within English education, this reconceptualization is particularly urgent, given the historical role of language curricula in reproducing linguistic hierarchies and cultural dependency in postcolonial contexts.

From a decolonial standpoint, the intercultural bilingual curriculum must be grounded in the recognition that knowledge is plural, situated, and historically produced. Quijano's (2000) critique of the coloniality of knowledge underscores how Western epistemologies have been universalized through educational systems, marginalizing alternative ways of knowing. In English education, this process manifests in curricula that privilege external cultural references and standardized linguistic norms while relegating local knowledge to the margins. A decolonial intercultural bilingual curriculum seeks to disrupt this hierarchy by positioning local culture, language practices, and community knowledge as foundational elements rather than supplementary content.

Such a curriculum reframes bilingualism not as a compensatory strategy or a transitional stage toward monolingual proficiency in English, but as a permanent and valuable condition of linguistic and cultural plurality. This perspective challenges assimilationist models of bilingual education that implicitly construct local languages and cultures as obstacles to global participation. Instead, bilingualism is understood as a resource for epistemic expansion, enabling learners to navigate multiple cultural worlds without subordinating one to another (Canagarajah, 2013). Within this framework, English is taught alongside—and in dialogue with—local languages and cultural narratives, fostering additive rather than subtractive forms of bilingualism.

Central to the decolonial intercultural curriculum is the redefinition of curricular content. Rather than organizing learning around abstract linguistic structures or culturally neutral themes, the curriculum is oriented toward issues emerging from learners' social realities, historical experiences, and territorial contexts. Topics such as community memory, social inequality, environmental justice, and cultural heritage become legitimate and necessary content for English learning. This approach aligns with Dussel's (1998, 2013) insistence on grounding educational projects in the lived experiences of historically marginalized subjects, transforming curriculum into a site of ethical engagement and social critique.

Pedagogically, an intercultural bilingual curriculum from a decolonial perspective emphasizes dialogic and participatory methodologies that redistribute epistemic authority in the classroom. Teachers are no longer positioned solely as transmitters of externally validated knowledge but as mediators who facilitate dialogue between local and global epistemologies. Learners, in turn, are recognized as knowledge producers whose cultural experiences constitute valid starting points for inquiry. This shift resonates with Freirean pedagogical principles, particularly the notion of education as a practice of freedom grounded in dialogue and critical consciousness (Freire, 1970).

Assessment practices within this curricular model also require critical rethinking. Standardized testing regimes often reinforce linguistic colonialism by privileging native-speaker norms and decontextualized language use. A decolonial intercultural bilingual curriculum advocates for assessment approaches that value meaning-making, critical reflection, and intercultural engagement over formal accuracy alone. Such approaches recognize diverse communicative repertoires and legitimize hybrid linguistic practices as expressions of cultural agency rather than deficiency (Pennycook, 2010; Canagarajah, 2013).

The intercultural dimension of the curriculum is inseparable from its decolonial orientation. Interculturality, when understood critically, goes beyond the celebration of diversity to address the power relations that structure intercultural encounters. Walsh (2009, 2018) distinguishes critical interculturality from functional approaches by emphasizing its commitment to social transformation and epistemic justice. In the context of bilingual curriculum design, this commitment translates into curricular choices that foreground dialogue between cultures while explicitly acknowledging historical asymmetries and ongoing inequalities.

This critical intercultural orientation also reframes the goals of English education. Rather than preparing learners to adapt uncritically to dominant global norms, the curriculum seeks to cultivate intercultural bilingual citizens capable of engaging ethically and critically with cultural difference. Citizenship, in this sense, is not reduced to civic knowledge or legal status but encompasses the capacity to participate in social life with dignity, agency, and responsibility. As Soto (2021, 2022) argues, an intercultural bilingual curriculum must integrate linguistic learning with ethical reflection and cultural affirmation if it is to contribute meaningfully to social transformation.

Importantly, the decolonial intercultural bilingual curriculum resists the fragmentation of language, culture, and identity that characterizes many contemporary educational reforms. By integrating these dimensions into a coherent pedagogical project, the curriculum affirms the inseparability of language learning from broader processes of subject formation. English, within this framework, becomes a means of articulating local concerns, narrating collective histories, and engaging in intercultural dialogue on equitable terms. This reorientation challenges the instrumental logic that dominates much of English education and reasserts the role of curriculum as a space for meaning-making and ethical deliberation.

At the institutional level, implementing an intercultural bilingual curriculum from a decolonial perspective requires structural support and political will. Teacher education programs must prepare educators to engage critically with curriculum design, textbook selection, and pedagogical decision-making. This includes developing awareness of linguistic colonialism, cultivating sensitivity to local cultural contexts, and fostering the ability to design culturally responsive learning experiences. Without such preparation, decolonial curricular intentions risk being reduced to rhetorical commitments rather than transformative practices.

In sum, the intercultural bilingual curriculum from a decolonial perspective represents a strategic intervention in the struggle over knowledge, culture, and power within English education. By centering local culture as an epistemic foundation, legitimizing bilingualism as a resource, and foregrounding critical interculturality, this curricular approach offers a pathway toward educational practices that affirm cultural dignity and epistemic plurality. It lays the groundwork for the formation of intercultural bilingual citizens capable of inhabiting global linguistic spaces without reproducing the logics of domination that have historically accompanied them.

2.3 Intercultural Bilingual Citizenship

The concept of intercultural bilingual citizenship emerges as a response to the limitations of dominant educational models that reduce language learning to technical competence or economic utility. In decolonial and intercultural frameworks, citizenship is not understood merely as a legal status or a set of civic obligations, but as a dynamic process of identity construction, cultural recognition, and ethical participation in plural societies. From this perspective, English education becomes a critical site where citizenship is negotiated, contested, and potentially transformed through language, culture, and power relations.

Traditional approaches to citizenship education within language teaching have often emphasized communicative skills for global mobility, employability, and cross-cultural interaction, frequently detached from local social realities. While these approaches acknowledge cultural difference, they tend to frame intercultural encounters as symmetrical exchanges, overlooking the historical and structural inequalities that shape them. As a result, learners may acquire linguistic proficiency while remaining unaware of the power dynamics embedded in global communication. A decolonial conception of intercultural bilingual citizenship seeks to address this gap by situating language education within broader struggles for cultural dignity, epistemic justice, and social inclusion (Walsh, 2009; Dussel, 2013).

Intercultural bilingual citizenship foregrounds the right of learners to inhabit multiple linguistic and cultural worlds without experiencing cultural displacement or epistemic subordination. In this sense, bilingualism is not merely a functional skill but a political and ethical resource that enables individuals to navigate diverse social spaces critically. As Canagarajah (2013) notes, bilingual speakers in postcolonial contexts often engage in strategic negotiation of meaning, drawing on hybrid repertoires to assert agency in unequal communicative situations. Recognizing these practices as legitimate expressions of citizenship challenges deficit-oriented views of bilingualism and affirms the creative and resistant dimensions of language use.

Central to the construction of intercultural bilingual citizenship is the recognition of local culture as a foundation for civic agency. Citizenship education that ignores learners' cultural histories and community knowledge risks producing abstract, decontextualized subjects whose participation is limited to formal or symbolic domains. By contrast, a culturally grounded approach situates citizenship within everyday practices, social relationships, and collective memory. Dussel's (1998) philosophy of liberation underscores the ethical imperative of grounding educational projects in the lived experiences of marginalized communities, emphasizing that citizenship must be built from below rather than imposed from dominant centers of power.

Within English education, intercultural bilingual citizenship entails rethinking the purposes of language learning. Rather than preparing learners to assimilate into dominant linguistic norms, education oriented toward intercultural citizenship fosters critical awareness of how language shapes social relations, access to resources, and participation in public life. Byram's (1997) emphasis on critical cultural awareness provides an important foundation for this shift, yet a decolonial extension of his framework requires explicit attention to colonial histories and ongoing inequalities. Intercultural bilingual citizenship thus integrates linguistic competence with ethical judgment, cultural reflexivity, and social responsibility.

Pedagogically, fostering intercultural bilingual citizenship requires learning environments that encourage dialogue, critical inquiry, and collective meaning-making. Learners must be invited to reflect on their own cultural positions while engaging with others in ways that acknowledge difference without reproducing hierarchy. This process involves examining how global languages like English have been used to include or exclude, empower or marginalize, and how they can be reclaimed as tools for social critique and community

expression. As Soto (2021, 2022, 2023) argues, when language education is aligned with intercultural citizenship, it contributes not only to individual development but also to the strengthening of democratic and culturally plural societies.

Intercultural bilingual citizenship also challenges the privatization of language learning as an individual investment. Dominant neoliberal discourses often frame English proficiency as personal capital, emphasizing competitiveness and self-advancement. A decolonial perspective, by contrast, emphasizes the collective dimensions of citizenship, highlighting solidarity, mutual recognition, and shared responsibility. English education oriented toward intercultural citizenship therefore prioritizes collaborative learning, community engagement, and the exploration of social issues relevant to learners' contexts.

Importantly, intercultural bilingual citizenship is not a static endpoint but an ongoing process shaped by historical, cultural, and political conditions. It requires continuous negotiation between local and global identities, between belonging and openness, and between resistance and dialogue. Education plays a crucial role in facilitating this negotiation by providing spaces where learners can critically examine dominant narratives and articulate alternative visions of social life. In this sense, English classrooms become sites of civic formation, where language learning intersects with ethical deliberation and cultural affirmation.

In sum, intercultural bilingual citizenship represents a reorientation of English education toward cultural justice and democratic participation. By integrating local culture, bilingualism, and critical interculturality, this framework positions learners as active subjects capable of engaging with global languages without relinquishing their cultural roots. It extends the decolonial project of education by linking language learning to broader struggles for recognition, equity, and epistemic plurality, reaffirming the transformative potential of English education in postcolonial and Global South contexts.

2.4 Flipped Classroom as a Decolonial Pedagogical Strategy

The flipped classroom has gained prominence in contemporary educational discourse as an innovative pedagogical model that reconfigures traditional patterns of instruction. Typically defined as an approach in which content delivery occurs outside the classroom—often through digital media—while classroom time is devoted to interaction, problem-solving, and collaborative learning, the flipped classroom is frequently promoted for its efficiency and learner-centered orientation. However, when examined from a decolonial perspective, its significance extends beyond methodological innovation, revealing its potential as a strategy for epistemic reorientation and pedagogical justice in English language education.

In dominant implementations, the flipped classroom is often framed within technocratic narratives of innovation, efficiency, and individualized learning, aligned with neoliberal educational agendas. Such framings risk reproducing existing epistemic hierarchies by simply transferring standardized content from textbooks to digital platforms without questioning whose knowledge is being transmitted or whose voices are represented. A decolonial approach challenges this instrumentalization by asking not only *how* learning is organized, but *what knowledge* is prioritized and *from where* it is produced (Walsh, 2018; Pennycook, 2010).

When grounded in local culture as an epistemic core, the flipped classroom can disrupt traditional hierarchies of knowledge transmission. By relocating initial exposure to content outside the classroom, educators can curate materials that foreground local narratives, community histories, and culturally situated issues rather than relying exclusively on externally produced textbooks. Classroom time, in turn, becomes a space for dialogue, critical reflection, and collective meaning-making, where learners engage with English through the analysis of their own social realities. This pedagogical shift resonates with

Freire's (1970) conception of dialogic education, in which learning emerges through critical engagement with the world rather than passive reception of information.

From a decolonial standpoint, the flipped classroom enables a redistribution of epistemic authority. Traditional teacher-centered models often position educators—and by extension, textbooks and standardized curricula—as sole arbiters of legitimate knowledge. In contrast, a critically oriented flipped classroom recognizes learners as co-constructors of knowledge, whose cultural experiences and linguistic repertoires are integral to the learning process. This redistribution challenges the symbolic power structures described by Bourdieu (1991), which privilege externally sanctioned forms of knowledge while marginalizing local cultural capital.

The flipped classroom also offers opportunities to contest linguistic colonialism by diversifying the sources of input used in English education. Instead of relying exclusively on materials produced by multinational publishing houses, educators can incorporate locally produced texts, oral histories, audiovisual narratives, and community-based knowledge as primary learning resources. Such practices not only enhance cultural relevance but also legitimize local epistemologies as worthy of academic engagement. Canagarajah's (2013) notion of translingual practice is particularly relevant here, as it highlights how learners draw on multiple linguistic and cultural resources to negotiate meaning in contextually grounded ways.

In classroom interactions, the flipped model facilitates pedagogical practices that foster intercultural competence rooted in critical awareness rather than adaptation to dominant norms. Through discussion, collaborative projects, and inquiry-based tasks, learners can analyze cultural representations, question stereotypes, and reflect on power relations embedded in language use. This process aligns with Byram's (1997) emphasis on critical cultural awareness, while extending it through a decolonial lens that foregrounds historical asymmetries and epistemic injustice. Intercultural learning, in this context, becomes an ethical and political practice rather than a purely communicative skill.

Moreover, the flipped classroom supports the development of intercultural bilingual citizenship by creating spaces where language learning is linked to civic engagement and social responsibility. When classroom activities are oriented toward local issues—such as community memory, environmental challenges, or social inequality—learners use English as a means of articulating local concerns and participating in broader conversations. This approach reframes English not as a tool for individual mobility alone, but as a resource for collective expression and democratic participation (Soto, 2023).

It is important, however, to recognize that the decolonial potential of the flipped classroom is not inherent but contingent upon pedagogical intentionality. Without a critical framework, flipped instruction can replicate the same colonial logics it seeks to overcome, merely digitizing dominant content and reinforcing individualistic learning models. A decolonial flipped classroom requires educators to engage critically with curriculum design, material selection, and classroom interaction, ensuring that pedagogical decisions align with principles of cultural dignity, epistemic plurality, and social justice (Walsh, 2009).

Teacher education plays a crucial role in enabling this transformation. Educators must be prepared not only to use digital tools but also to critically evaluate the cultural and ideological assumptions embedded in instructional materials. This preparation includes developing sensitivity to local cultural contexts, fostering reflexivity about one's own positionality, and cultivating the ability to facilitate dialogic learning environments. Without such preparation, the flipped classroom risks becoming a methodological trend rather than a vehicle for pedagogical change.

In sum, when reimagined from a decolonial perspective, the flipped classroom emerges as a powerful pedagogical strategy for transforming English education. By centering local

culture, redistributing epistemic authority, and fostering dialogic engagement, it challenges linguistic colonialism and supports the formation of intercultural bilingual citizens. Rather than merely flipping the sequence of instruction, this approach flips the epistemological foundations of language education, repositioning learners and their cultures at the heart of the educational process.

2.5 Intercultural Competence Revisited from a Decolonial Perspective

Intercultural competence has become a central concept in language education, frequently presented as an essential outcome of learning English in an increasingly interconnected world. Dominant frameworks describe intercultural competence as a combination of attitudes, knowledge, skills, and behaviors that enable effective and appropriate interaction across cultural boundaries (Byram, 1997). While such models have significantly expanded the scope of language education beyond purely linguistic concerns, they often remain embedded within Eurocentric assumptions that obscure the historical and political conditions shaping intercultural encounters, particularly in postcolonial contexts.

From a decolonial perspective, intercultural competence cannot be understood as a neutral or universally applicable set of skills. Rather, it must be situated within relations of power that determine whose cultures are recognized, whose knowledge is legitimized, and whose voices are amplified in intercultural communication. Quijano's (2000) concept of the coloniality of power provides a critical lens for examining how interculturality is frequently framed from the standpoint of dominant cultures, positioning learners from the Global South as subjects who must adapt to external norms in order to be deemed competent. Such framings risk reproducing epistemic asymmetries under the guise of intercultural understanding.

A key limitation of mainstream intercultural competence models lies in their tendency to conceptualize culture as a stable and bounded entity, often associated with national identities. This perspective overlooks the hybrid, dynamic, and contested nature of cultural identities in postcolonial societies, where histories of colonization, migration, and resistance have produced complex cultural configurations. As Pennycook (2010) and Canagarajah (2013) argue, intercultural communication is better understood as a situated practice in which meaning is negotiated through diverse linguistic and cultural resources rather than adherence to predefined norms.

Revisiting intercultural competence from a decolonial standpoint entails shifting the focus from adaptation to dominant cultural expectations toward the affirmation of local cultural agency. Intercultural competence, in this sense, involves the capacity to engage with difference critically and ethically while remaining grounded in one's own cultural epistemologies. Walsh (2009, 2018) emphasizes that critical interculturality must confront the colonial structures that shape intercultural relations, moving beyond superficial recognition of diversity to address questions of power, inequality, and epistemic justice.

This reframing has significant implications for English language education. When intercultural competence is defined primarily in terms of appropriateness according to native-speaker norms, learners are implicitly encouraged to suppress local communicative styles and cultural references. Such expectations reinforce deficit perspectives that portray local cultures as barriers to effective communication. A decolonial approach challenges these assumptions by recognizing hybrid and localized forms of English as legitimate expressions of intercultural engagement. In doing so, it aligns with Canagarajah's (2013) advocacy for translingual practices that valorize linguistic diversity and cultural creativity.

Intercultural competence revisited from a decolonial perspective is thus inseparable from questions of citizenship and identity. It involves cultivating critical awareness of how language operates within systems of power and how intercultural encounters can either reinforce or resist domination. Learners are encouraged not only to understand other

cultures but also to interrogate the conditions under which intercultural communication occurs. This includes examining the role of English in global inequalities, the politics of representation in educational materials, and the ways in which cultural hierarchies are reproduced in everyday interactions.

Pedagogically, fostering decolonial intercultural competence requires learning environments that promote reflexivity, dialogue, and critical inquiry. Rather than transmitting cultural facts or norms, educators facilitate processes through which learners analyze cultural narratives, question stereotypes, and reflect on their own positionalities. Such practices resonate with Freire's (1970) emphasis on critical consciousness and dialogic education, sitting in intercultural learning within broader projects of social transformation. Local culture plays a central role in this process, serving as both a reference point and a source of epistemic strength. By engaging with local cultural narratives, histories, and practices, learners develop a sense of cultural confidence that enables more equitable intercultural dialogue. As Dussel (1998, 2013) argues, ethical interculturality requires recognition of the Other not as an object of study but as a subject of knowledge. Applied to English education, this principle underscores the importance of grounding intercultural competence in local epistemologies rather than subordinating them to external frameworks.

Importantly, revisiting intercultural competence from a decolonial perspective does not imply rejecting intercultural engagement or global communication. On the contrary, it seeks to deepen these processes by sitting them within ethical and political considerations. Intercultural competence becomes a means of fostering solidarity, mutual recognition, and collective responsibility in a world marked by profound inequalities. English education, when aligned with this vision, contributes to the formation of intercultural bilingual citizens capable of engaging with global languages critically and creatively.

In sum, a decolonial reconceptualization of intercultural competence challenges dominant models that prioritize adaptation to hegemonic norms and instead foregrounds cultural agency, epistemic plurality, and ethical engagement. By situating intercultural learning within local cultural contexts and power relations, this approach reclaims intercultural competence as a transformative educational goal. It reinforces the central argument of this article: that English education must be reimagined not as a vehicle for linguistic assimilation, but as a space for decolonial praxis rooted in local culture and oriented toward intercultural bilingual citizenship.

2.6 Interculturality and Decolonization

Interculturality, when approached from a decolonial perspective, transcends its conventional treatment as a pedagogical strategy for managing cultural diversity. In dominant educational discourses, interculturality is often framed as an instrument for facilitating communication across cultures, promoting tolerance, and enhancing mutual understanding. While these objectives are not insignificant, they frequently operate within depoliticized frameworks that leave intact the colonial structures shaping intercultural relations. A decolonial reading of interculturality, by contrast, situates it within broader struggles over knowledge, power, and historical recognition, emphasizing its transformative potential as a project of epistemic and cultural liberation (Walsh, 2009; Dussel, 2013).

From this standpoint, interculturality must be understood as a response to the enduring legacy of coloniality in education. Quijano's (2000) concept of the coloniality of power highlights how colonial hierarchies persist through cultural, epistemological, and linguistic mechanisms long after the end of formal colonial rule. In educational contexts, these hierarchies manifest in curricula, pedagogies, and assessment practices that privilege Western knowledge systems while marginalizing local and Indigenous epistemologies.

Interculturality, when stripped of its critical dimension, risks functioning as a superficial acknowledgment of difference that fails to challenge these asymmetries.

Critical interculturality, as articulated by Walsh (2009, 2018), explicitly confronts the power relations underpinning intercultural encounters. It rejects the notion of culture as a neutral or static entity and instead emphasizes its dynamic, contested, and political nature. Within English education, this perspective demands a reexamination of how languages are positioned in relation to cultural legitimacy and social authority. English, as a global language, cannot be divorced from its colonial history or its contemporary role in global inequalities. Interculturality, therefore, becomes a means of interrogating how English education can either reproduce or resist linguistic domination.

Decolonization, in this context, is not a metaphorical gesture but an epistemic and pedagogical process aimed at dismantling colonial logics embedded in educational practice. Dussel's (1998, 2013) philosophy of liberation underscores the ethical imperative of thinking from the perspective of historically marginalized subjects, challenging the presumed universality of Western epistemologies. Applied to language education, decolonization involves reclaiming local cultures as sources of knowledge, re-centering marginalized voices, and fostering dialogic relationships between diverse epistemic traditions.

Interculturality and decolonization converge most clearly in the reconfiguration of curriculum and pedagogy. A decolonial intercultural approach resists the assimilationist tendency to frame intercultural learning as adaptation to dominant norms. Instead, it promotes a dialogic engagement between cultures grounded in reciprocity and mutual recognition. This approach aligns with Canagarajah's (2013) emphasis on translingual practices, which recognize the legitimacy of hybrid linguistic forms and challenge the authority of standardized norms. Interculturality, from this perspective, becomes a space of negotiation where meaning is co-constructed rather than imposed.

The relationship between interculturality and decolonization also has profound implications for subject formation. Education systems shaped by coloniality often produce subjects who internalize deficit views of their own cultures, associating academic success with cultural displacement. A decolonial intercultural framework seeks to counteract this process by fostering cultural confidence and epistemic agency. Learners are encouraged to engage critically with both local and global knowledge systems, developing the capacity to navigate cultural difference without renouncing their own identities. This process is central to the formation of intercultural bilingual citizens, whose participation in global linguistic spaces is grounded in cultural dignity rather than assimilation.

Moreover, decolonial interculturality reframes the ethical dimensions of education. It calls for pedagogical practices that cultivate responsibility toward the Other, understood not as an abstract cultural category but as a concrete subject situated within specific historical and social conditions. This ethical orientation resonates with Dussel's insistence on the primacy of the Other in any project of liberation and challenges educators to reconsider the purposes of language education beyond instrumental outcomes.

In English education, integrating interculturality and decolonization requires sustained critical reflection on the materials, methods, and discourses that shape classroom practice. Textbooks, curricula, and assessment tools must be examined for the cultural assumptions they reproduce, and alternative resources rooted in local contexts must be developed and legitimized. Pedagogical innovation, such as the decolonially oriented flipped classroom discussed earlier, provides opportunities to enact this integration by creating spaces for dialogue, critical inquiry, and community engagement.

Ultimately, interculturality and decolonization are not parallel agendas but interdependent processes. Interculturality without decolonization risks becoming a managerial discourse

that accommodates diversity without challenging domination. Decolonization without intercultural dialogue, on the other hand, risks isolationism and the reification of cultural boundaries. Together, they offer a framework for reimagining English education as a space of epistemic plurality, ethical engagement, and social transformation.

In sum, positioning interculturality within a decolonial horizon enables a redefinition of English education that aligns with the central argument of this article: that local culture must function as the epistemic core of pedagogical practice. By integrating interculturality and decolonization, English education can move beyond linguistic proficiency toward the cultivation of intercultural bilingual citizens capable of engaging critically with global languages while affirming their cultural roots. This reorientation not only challenges linguistic colonialism but also contributes to broader efforts to democratize knowledge and foster more just educational futures.

3. METHODOLOGY

This article adopts a qualitative, theory-based review methodology, grounded in critical, decolonial, and intercultural epistemologies. Rather than pursuing empirical data collection or experimental validation, the study is designed as a critical interpretive synthesis of theoretical contributions, scholarly debates, and the author's sustained academic production in the fields of intercultural bilingual education, linguistic colonialism, curriculum studies, and decolonial pedagogy. This methodological orientation consists of review articles in the humanities and cultural studies, where theory functions not merely as a lens but as the primary object of analysis.

The methodological design is informed by qualitative documentary research, focusing on the systematic selection, analysis, and interpretation of academic texts that address English language education in postcolonial and Global South contexts. The corpus analyzed includes seminal works in decolonial theory, intercultural philosophy, critical applied linguistics, and sociology of education, as well as peer-reviewed articles and books authored by the researcher over more than a decade. These texts were selected based on their conceptual relevance to the central categories of the study: local culture, linguistic colonialism, intercultural bilingual curriculum, intercultural bilingual citizenship, intercultural competence, flipped classroom, and decolonization.

The analytical procedure followed a thematic and relational approach, in which key concepts were identified, compared, and critically articulated across different theoretical traditions. Rather than summarizing existing literature descriptively, the review emphasizes conceptual dialogue and epistemic positioning, examining how dominant paradigms in English education reproduce colonial logics and how decolonial perspectives offer alternative frameworks. Special attention was given to identifying convergences, tensions, and gaps between intercultural models developed in Eurocentric contexts and those emerging from Latin American and Global South scholarship.

Interpretation was guided by principles of critical interculturality and epistemic justice, which prioritize the recognition of historically marginalized knowledge systems and the situated nature of theory production. In this sense, the methodology aligns with decolonial approaches that reject claims of neutrality and explicitly acknowledge the researcher's positionality. The author's previous works are incorporated not as self-referential evidence but as part of a coherent research trajectory that contributes to the consolidation of an intercultural bilingual curriculum grounded in local culture.

By employing a qualitative, theory-based review methodology, this article seeks to generate conceptual integration rather than generalization, offering a critical framework for rethinking English education from a decolonial perspective. The methodological rigor of

the study resides in its systematic engagement with theory, its coherence across analytical categories, and its contribution to ongoing scholarly debates on interculturality, curriculum, and the decolonization of language education.

4. DISCUSSION

The conceptual analysis developed underscores the necessity of rethinking English language education as a cultural, epistemic, and political project rather than a purely instrumental or technical enterprise. By positioning local culture as the epistemic core of educational practice, this article contributes to ongoing debates in intercultural education and decolonial studies that challenge the neutrality of curriculum, pedagogy, and language itself. The discussion that follows integrates the central insights of the theoretical sections, highlighting their implications for curriculum design, pedagogical practice, and the broader field of English education in postcolonial and Global South contexts.

One of the most significant contributions of this review lies in its articulation of local culture not as content to be incorporated into pre-existing frameworks, but as a foundational source of knowledge that reorients the entire educational process. This perspective extends critiques of linguistic colonialism by demonstrating how the marginalization of local epistemologies is sustained not only through textbooks and curricula, but also through dominant notions of intercultural competence and pedagogical innovation. In this sense, the article advances the argument that decolonizing English education requires epistemic repositioning rather than curricular supplementation, a claim that aligns with but also deepens existing decolonial scholarship in applied linguistics, and cultural studies.

The analysis of linguistic colonialism reveals that power operates in English education through normalized practices that often remain invisible to educators and policymakers. Textbook standardization, native-speaker norms, and global benchmarks function as mechanisms of symbolic domination that shape learner identities and limit the transformative potential of language education. By foregrounding these dynamics, the article contributes to critical discussions on the political economy of English teaching and reinforces calls for greater curricular autonomy and local knowledge production.

Importantly, the discussion of the intercultural bilingual curriculum reframes bilingualism and interculturality as sites of resistance rather than accommodation. Rather than viewing bilingual education as a transitional or compensatory model, the conceptual framework presented here positions bilingualism as a permanent and productive condition that enables epistemic plurality. This reorientation has implications for how intercultural competence is conceptualized, moving it away from adaptation to dominant cultural norms toward ethical engagement grounded in cultural agency and historical awareness.

The integration of the flipped classroom into this decolonial framework further illustrates how pedagogical innovation can either reproduce or disrupt colonial logics, depending on its epistemological orientation. The discussion demonstrates that methodological change alone is insufficient; without critical attention to content, voice, and power, innovative strategies risk reinforcing existing hierarchies. When grounded in local culture, however, the flipped classroom emerges as a pedagogical space for dialogue, reflexivity, and the co-construction of meaning, aligning pedagogy with decolonial aims.

Finally, the synthesis of interculturality and decolonization highlights the importance of maintaining a critical tension between dialogue and resistance. Interculturality without decolonization risks becoming a managerial discourse that neutralizes difference, while decolonization without intercultural dialogue risks epistemic closure. By bringing these dimensions together, the article offers a framework for English education that supports

the formation of intercultural bilingual citizens capable of engaging with global languages without cultural displacement.

Overall, this discussion positions the article as a theoretical contribution that bridges cultural studies, decolonial theory, and language education. It invites future research to move beyond descriptive accounts of intercultural practices toward critical examinations of epistemic power in curriculum and pedagogy, and it underscores the need for educational models that affirm local culture as a source of knowledge, dignity, and social transformation.

CONCLUSION

This review article set out to argue that local culture must be repositioned as the epistemic core of English language education if decolonial, intercultural, and socially just pedagogical projects are to be realized in postcolonial and Global South contexts. Through a critical synthesis of decolonial theory, intercultural philosophy, critical applied linguistics, and curriculum studies, the analysis has demonstrated that English education is never a neutral enterprise. Rather, it is a field deeply implicated in historical relations of power that shape knowledge production, cultural recognition, and citizenship formation.

By examining linguistic colonialism in textbooks, curricula, and pedagogical norms, the article has shown how dominant models of English education continue to privilege Eurocentric epistemologies while marginalizing local cultures and ways of knowing. In response, the concept of an intercultural bilingual curriculum grounded in local culture was advanced as a strategic intervention capable of disrupting these hierarchies. Such a curriculum reframes bilingualism as a resource for epistemic plurality rather than a transitional or compensatory condition and positions learners as cultural agents rather than passive recipients of external knowledge.

The discussion of intercultural bilingual citizenship further extended this argument by linking language education to ethical participation, cultural dignity, and social responsibility. From this perspective, learning English becomes a means of engaging critically with global discourses while remaining rooted in local identities. Similarly, the reexamination of intercultural competence from a decolonial lens challenged adaptation-based models and emphasized cultural agency, reflexivity, and epistemic justice as central educational goals.

Pedagogically, the article demonstrated that innovation alone does not guarantee transformation. The flipped classroom, when grounded in local culture and critical interculturality, can function as a decolonial strategy that redistributes epistemic authority and fosters dialogic learning. When detached from these principles, however, it risks reproducing the same colonial logics it seeks to overcome. This insight reinforces the central claim of the article: that methodological change must be accompanied by epistemological repositioning.

By integrating interculturality and decolonization, this review contributes a coherent theoretical framework for reimagining English education as a space of cultural re-existence rather than linguistic assimilation. The article does not propose a universal model but offers a conceptual orientation that can be adapted to diverse contexts where local cultures have historically been subordinated within educational systems.

Future research is encouraged to explore how these theoretical insights can inform context-specific curricular designs, teacher education programs, and policy frameworks. Empirical studies grounded in local realities may further illuminate the possibilities and challenges of implementing decolonial intercultural approaches in English education. Ultimately, reaffirming local culture as an epistemic core is not only an academic endeavor but also an ethical commitment to more just, plural, and culturally grounded educational futures.

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