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MEDIATING THE DIGITAL SELF: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW OF TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES ON TECHNOLOGY, LANGUAGE EDUCATION, AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF LINGUISTIC IDENTITY

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Abstract. This systematic literature review synthesizes the main results and conclusions of 33 studies published between 2020 and 2024 examining the dual impact of technology on teacher and student linguistic identities. Six main thematic clusters are identified: technology as a disruptor and reconstructor of teacher authority; technology as a space for plurilingual and translingual identity affirmation; digital policies, structural inequalities, and imposed identities; emotional regulation and the reconstruction of a “capable” digital teacher identity; specific technological affordances enabling identity work; and controversies and contradictory evidence. Overall, findings reveal that technology serves as a powerful mediator in teacher identity reconstruction, prompting shifts from traditional instructor to digital facilitator and cultural mediator. Simultaneously, technology also introduces significant tensions by amplifying sociolinguistic inequities, particularly in under-resourced contexts, where limited access to devices or connectivity can reinforce existing hierarchies. When applied with pedagogical intent, technology-enabled practices like digital storytelling and translingual projects become vital tools for affirming students’ plurilingual identities, allowing them to draw on their full linguistic repertoires. Moreover, reflective, technology-supported professional development is essential for navigating this complex identity work, as it helps teachers critically examine their own positionalities and biases. The review concludes that the influence of technology is shaped by pedagogical stance, institutional support, and engagement with power dynamics, advocating for its use to create inclusive, identity-affirming environments rather than enforcing standardization or a one-size-fits-all model of language instruction.

Keywords: identity, language education, language teachers, linguistic identity, systematic literature review, technology.

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Обзорная статья

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ФОРМИРОВАНИЕ ЦИФРОВОГО «Я»: СИСТЕМАТИЧЕСКИЙ ОБЗОР ЛИТЕРАТУРЫ, ПОСВЯЩЕННЫЙ ВЗГЛЯДАМ УЧИТЕЛЕЙ НА ТЕХНОЛОГИИ, ЛИНГВИСТИЧЕСКОЕ ОБРАЗОВАНИЕ И ПОСТРОЕНИЕ ЯЗЫКОВОЙ ИДЕНТИЧНОСТИ

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Аннотация. Данный систематический обзор литературы обобщает основные результаты и выводы 33 исследований, опубликованных в период с 2020 по 2024 г., посвященных двойственному влиянию технологий на языковую идентичность учителей и учеников. Выделено шесть основных тематических групп: технология как дестабилизирующий и реконструирующий фактор учительского авторитета; технология как пространство для утверждения многоязычной и транслингвальной идентичности; цифровая политика, структурное неравенство и навязанные идентичности; эмоциональная регуляция и реконструкция «компетентной» цифровой идентичности учителя; специфические технологические возможности, позволяющие работать над идентичностью; а также противоречия и неоднозначные данные. В целом, результаты показывают, что технология выступает мощным посредником в реконструкции идентичности учителя, способствуя переходу от традиционной роли инструктора к роли цифрового фасилитатора и культурного посредника. Одновременно технология также создает значительные противоречия, усиливая социолингвистическое неравенство, особенно в условиях недостаточного ресурсного обеспечения, когда ограниченный доступ к устройствам или связи может укреплять существующие иерархии. Применение технологий в педагогических целях, таких как цифровой сторителлинг и транслингвальные проекты, становится важным инструментом для утверждения многоязычной идентичности учащихся, позволяя им задействовать весь свой языковой репертуар. Более того, рефлексивное, поддерживаемое технологиями профессиональное развитие является необходимым условием для успешной работы с этой сложной идентичностью, поскольку оно помогает учителям критически осмысливать собственные позиции и предубеждения. В обзоре делается вывод, что влияние технологий формируется педагогической позицией, институциональной поддержкой и взаимодействием с динамикой власти. Предлагается использовать технологии для создания инклюзивной, подтверждающей идентичность среды, а не для стандартизации или насаждения универсальной модели обучения языку.

Ключевые слова: идентичность, языковое образование, преподаватели языков, языковая идентичность, систематический обзор литературы, технологии.

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Introduction

Identity, a complex and multi-dimensional construct, has been a subject of inquiry within different fields such as sociology, psychology, and linguistics. It extends beyond an individual's internal psychological state to be profoundly formed and continually reshaped through social engagement and

cultural frameworks. From a sociocultural perspective, identities are understood as emergent, relational outcomes of interaction [1, 2] rather than fixed attributes, exhibiting fluidity that mirrors the dynamism of social environments. Central to this process is language, considered as the principal mechanism, through which identity is enacted, negotiated, and influenced by both societal categories and cultural stances [3]. Consequently, language must be seen not merely as a tool for communication but as a fundamental medium for the expression and ongoing formation of the self.

In this context, the exploration of identity within the context of language education has gained increasing attention in recent years [4–7], particularly as educators navigate the complexities of multilingual classrooms. Such an increase in academic interest can be explained by the relations between plurilingualism and identity. Plurilingualism is not merely the ability to communicate in multiple languages as it is deeply intertwined with identity formation. In fact, the act of learning and using different languages can significantly influence an individual's self-perception and social identity, since language can serve as a marker of identity, shaping how individuals view themselves and how they are perceived by others [8, 9]. Language teachers, therefore, hold a unique position in facilitating this identity negotiation among their students. They not only teach linguistic skills but also help students navigate the complex interplay of cultural and social identities that come with plurilingualism. Research has indeed shown that language teacher identity is often constructed through their interactions with students and the languages they teach [10–12]. For instance, teachers who embrace their plurilingual identities can foster an environment where students feel empowered to express their own linguistic backgrounds. This empowerment is crucial in multilingual classrooms where students may otherwise feel marginalized or pressured to conform to a dominant language or culture [13] (Kang et al., 2022). In this sense, the recognition of students' diverse linguistic repertoires can enhance their sense of belonging and self-worth, thereby positively impacting their language learning experiences [14, 15].

The relationship between plurilingualism and identity is further complicated by societal attitudes towards language diversity. In many contexts, certain languages are valorised while others are minoritized or even stigmatized, leading to complex identity negotiations for both teachers and students [16, 17]. Language teachers must be aware of these dynamics and actively work to create inclusive spaces that honour all languages and cultures represented in their classrooms. This approach supports students' linguistic development, at the same time, it also fosters a more equitable educational environment [4, 18]. Incorporating multilingual perspectives into the curriculum can also enhance students' critical thinking and cultural awareness, helping them develop a more nuanced understanding of their identities and the world around them by engaging with texts and materials from various linguistic and cultural backgrounds [7, 17]. This pedagogical approach aligns with the principles of critical pedagogy, which emphasizes the importance of recognizing and addressing power dynamics within educational settings [19] (Kang et al., 2022).

The integration of educational technology in language teaching has also transformed how plurilingualism and identity are approached in the classroom. Technology provides innovative tools that can enhance language learning and facilitate the exploration of identity among students. For instance, digital platforms can offer access to diverse linguistic resources, enabling students to engage with multiple languages and cultures in ways that were previously unavailable [9, 17]. This exposure can help students develop a more complex understanding of their own identities as they navigate different linguistic landscapes. Moreover, technology can support personalized learning experiences that cater to the unique identities of each student, as language teachers can tailor their instruction to meet the specific needs and interests of their multilingual students by using adaptive learning technologies [4, 15]. This individualized approach not only enhances language acquisition but also fosters a sense of agency among students, allowing them to take ownership of their learning journeys [9, 20]. As students engage with technology, they can explore their identities in a safe and supportive environment where they are encouraged to express themselves in their preferred languages. The role of educational



technology in promoting plurilingualism and identity is particularly evident in collaborative learning environments. Online platforms facilitate communication and collaboration among students from diverse linguistic backgrounds, enabling them to share their experiences and perspectives [9, 17]. This collaborative approach not only enriches the learning experience but also fosters a sense of community among students, reinforcing their identities as multilingual learners. Furthermore, technology can serve as a bridge between formal, non-formal, and informal learning contexts, allowing students to engage with language and culture outside the classroom [15, 21]. However, the effective integration of technology in language education requires careful consideration of the sociocultural context, in which it is implemented, and teachers must be aware of the digital divide and ensure that all students have equitable access to technological resources [9, 20]. Additionally, educators should critically evaluate the content and tools they use, ensuring that they reflect the diverse identities of their students and promote inclusivity [16, 17]. By doing so, language teachers can take advantage of the power of educational technology to support students' plurilingualism and identity development in meaningful ways.

Language teachers play an important role in integrating educational technology into their lessons to support students' individual identities. Research has shown how educators can create inclusive learning environments that recognize and celebrate the diverse linguistic backgrounds of their students by using various digital tools and resources. For instance, they can use multimedia resources, such as videos and interactive applications, to expose students to different languages and cultures, thereby fostering a sense of belonging and identity [9, 17]. One effective strategy is the use of collaborative online platforms that allow students to work together on projects, share their linguistic experiences, and engage in discussions about their identities. These platforms can facilitate peer-to-peer learning, where students learn from each other's cultural perspectives and linguistic skills [9, 17]. Additionally, teachers can encourage students to create digital portfolios that showcase their language skills and cultural identities, providing them with a space to express themselves and reflect on their learning journeys [15, 22]. Moreover, language teachers can use technology to provide personalized feedback and support to students, identifying individual learning needs and tailoring their instruction accordingly [20], helping learners navigate their unique identities as multilingual learners. Furthermore, teachers can incorporate culturally relevant materials and resources into their lessons, ensuring that students see their identities reflected in the curriculum, validating their experiences and fostering a deeper connection to the content being taught [15] (Susanto and Arifani, 2023). When integrating educational technology in ways that honour and support students' individual identities, language teachers can create a more inclusive and engaging learning environment that promotes both linguistic and personal growth.

Nevertheless, despite the acknowledged importance of the teacher's role, a significant gap remains in the research literature. Specifically, there is still a lack of systematic investigation into how pedagogical strategies within digital learning environments can be intentionally structured to support the formation and development of students' linguistic identities. To address this gap, this paper conducts a systematic literature review aiming to examine existing studies on the impact of technology on teachers' linguistic identity and how their technology-mediated pedagogical interventions influence students' linguistic identity. The review is guided by the following research question (RQ): How, and to what extent, does technology impact teachers' linguistic identity, and how do teachers' technology-mediated pedagogical interventions shape students' linguistic identities?

Methods and materials

Procedure

This study employs a systematic literature review methodology, recognized for its capacity to synthesize research findings in an objective and impartial manner [23]. To ensure methodological rigour

and transparency, the review was guided by the PRISMA framework [24]. The principles of PRISMA provide a structured protocol for conducting systematic reviews, offering a roadmap for the search, identification, selection, and analysis of relevant studies [25, 26].

The process began with a comprehensive search of the academic database, in this case Scopus. Specific parameters, including publication date range, study quality, and document type, were defined. A Boolean search string was constructed and applied to locate a preliminary set of publications to be considered in the analysis. These were then screened against predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria to arrive at the final corpus of studies for analysis. Data extraction and analysis followed a qualitative, inductive approach. Content from the selected studies was coded to identify emerging themes and generate new insights regarding the impact of technology on teachers’ linguistic identity and how their technology-mediated pedagogical interventions influence students’ linguistic identity [27]. The analytical technique of content analysis was applied, defined as a replicable method for drawing valid inferences from textual data [28, 29]. The review was conducted in December 2024.

Search strategy

To ensure the inclusion of high-quality research, this systematic review restricted its selection to peer-reviewed publications indexed in Scopus (www.scopus.com) [27], recognized as the most extensive abstract and citation database for peer-reviewed literature. The search was further refined to a publication window from 2020 to 2024, a parameter intended to capture the most current literature in a field characterized by rapid technological evolution. In direct alignment with the study’s RQ, the following Boolean search string was applied (Fig. 1).

Screening

The initial search in Scopus yielded 451 potentially relevant studies. These publications subsequently underwent a two-phase screening process, guided by the predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Peer-reviewed publications	Not accessible publications
Original research	Academic documents different from peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters (i.e., edited books)
Focused on teachers and technology-enhanced pedagogical interventions	Focused on learners, teachers’ professional identity or other topics
Analysing identity in relation to technology and language education	Analysing identity but not in relation to technology or language education
Subject area limited to social sciences and arts and humanities	Other subject areas (e.g., literature, sociology, religion, gender studies, medicine, psychology)
Studies published in final version or as preprints between 2020 and 2024 (final publication date can be 2025)	Publications in languages other than English
Publications written in English	

Source: Authors’ elaboration.

The first phase involved a preliminary title and abstract review, which excluded 314 publications. These were primarily omitted for being unrelated to technology-mediated language education (focusing instead on other subject areas) or due to inaccessible full texts. This resulted in a reduced corpus of 137 papers for further examination.

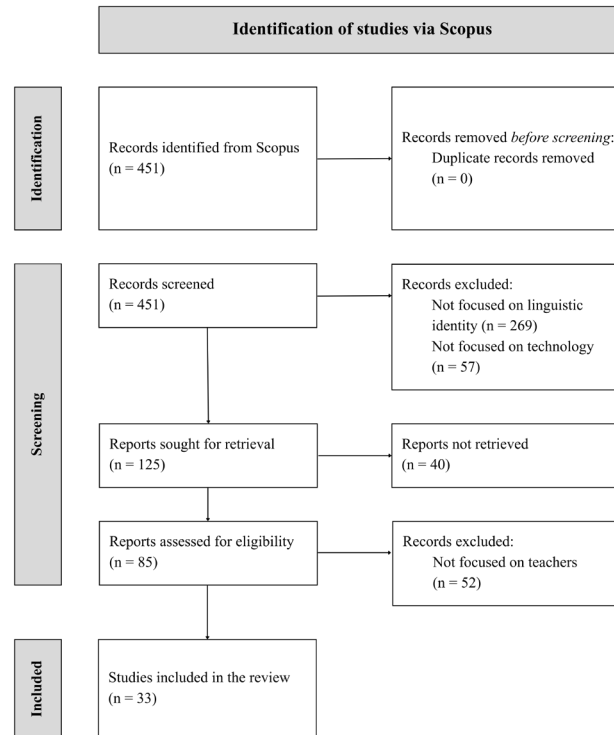
The second screening phase entailed a rigorous, full-text review of these 137 publications by the researchers, conducted independently to ensure reliability. The objective was to verify that each study specifically focused on technology impact on teachers’ linguistic identity and the influence of their



TITLE-ABS-KEY (language AND identity AND technology) AND PUBYEAR > 2019 AND PUBYEAR < 2026 AND (LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA,"SOCI") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA,"ARTS")) AND (LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE,"English"))

Source: Scopus (www.scopus.com).

Fig. 1. Search query string in Scopus



Source: Authors' elaboration (adapted from [25]).

Fig. 2. PRISMA flow diagram

technology-mediated pedagogical interventions on students' linguistic identity, excluding studies solely centred on learners or other tangential topics. To ensure consistency in the screening process, interrater reliability was assessed using a percentage of agreement calculation [30]. Following an independent review, the two researchers achieved an initial agreement rate of 98 %. Any coding discrepancies were resolved through a collaborative review and discussion, resulting in a final consensus of 100 %. After this comprehensive second screening phase, 104 publications were excluded, resulting in a final corpus of 33 studies for inclusion in the review. Fig. 2 shows the process followed during the screening phases.

Coding

To address the RQ, an inductive, grounded-theory approach to coding was employed for the analysis of the 33 selected studies [31]. This strategy was selected to allow themes to emerge directly from the data, thereby minimizing researcher presuppositions and generating insights into the impact of technology on teachers' linguistic identity and the influence of their technology-mediated pedagogical interventions on students' linguistic identity.

The coding process was conducted using ATLAS.ti v.25 for MacOS. Adopting an *in vivo* technique, codes were generated directly from the researchers' own language within the texts, ensuring the analysis remained firmly anchored to the original findings [32].

Findings

Descriptive overview of the corpus

Fig. 3 shows the distribution of publications per year and type of paper. It is worth to mention that although some of the selected studies had been initially published in 2024 (as ‘first online’ versions, which are commonly published in many journals), they were later updated as published in 2025, with specific journal volumes/issues assigned. For this reason, Fig. 3 also presents studies published in 2025.

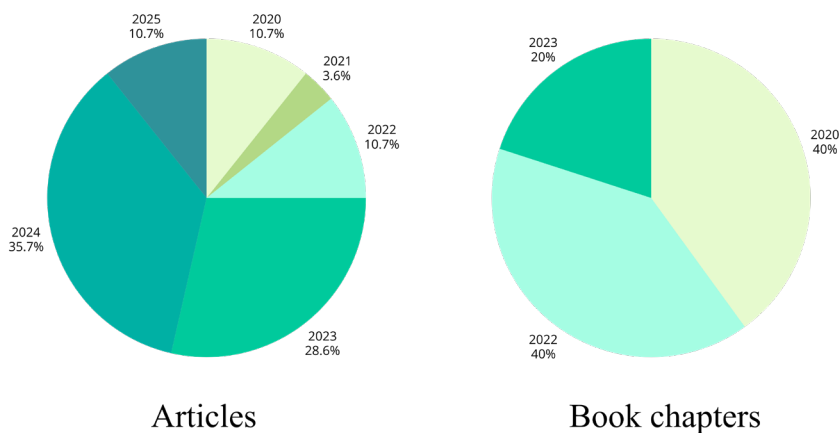
As shown in Fig. 3, the temporal distribution of the reviewed studies indicates a clear concentration in recent years. A substantial proportion of the publications appeared in 2024 (30.30 %), followed by 2023 (27.27 %). This pattern highlights the rapidly developing nature of the field, with more than half of the included studies published within the past two years.

Cross-cutting themes in teachers’ linguistic identity

The thematic analysis of the 33 selected studies reveals several recurrent patterns regarding how technology impacts teachers’ linguistic identity. First, technology acts as a catalyst for professional reconstruction. Across diverse contexts – from Chile to China, from Rwanda to Indonesia – teachers are moving away from the traditional role of sole authority on “correct” language. Instead, they reconstruct themselves as facilitators of critical digital literacies, guides through global English, designers of translingual fanfiction projects, or cultural mediators using digital storytelling [4, 7, 22, 33].

Second, this reconstruction is emotionally charged and agentive. It is rarely a smooth transition; rather, it involves anxiety, vulnerability, and a need for developing digital self-efficacy. The sudden shift to online teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic, for example, forced many teachers to rebuild their identities from crisis, a process that required emotional regulation and peer collaboration [34–36]. Teachers who successfully navigated this often came to see themselves as “modern,” “tech-savvy,” and student-centred educators [37, 38].

Third, a persistent tension exists between empowerment and devaluation. While some teachers use technology to affirm plurilingual identities and challenge monolingual school norms [39], others find their linguistic expertise reduced to technical support roles or their local knowledge ignored by top-down digital policies [16]. In English-medium instruction (EMI) contexts, STEM teachers often resist being positioned as English language teachers, creating an identity crisis that technology does not resolve but sometimes exacerbates [13, 40].



Source: Authors’ elaboration.

Fig. 3. Distribution of papers per year and type of publication



Cross-cutting themes in students' linguistic identity

The reviewed studies also show how teachers' technology-mediated pedagogical interventions shape students' linguistic identities. The most hopeful findings centre on identity-affirming pedagogies. When teachers embrace a plurilingual, critical stance, technology becomes a space for students to explore and perform their hybrid selves. Through collaborative online platforms, multimodal composing, and projects that intentionally blend English with local slang or indigenous elements, students are not merely practising a language but also piecing together their identities as translingual, global-local meaning-makers [4, 22, 41].

Conversely, when technology is used without critical intentionality, it can reproduce existing hierarchies. In contexts where digital platforms enforce English-only policies or standardised content, students receive the implicit message that their home languages have little value [16]. Moreover, heavy student use of external technologies (e.g., translation apps or AI tools) can reduce their dependence on the teacher, but without careful guidance this may not translate into deeper identity development [42]. Digital storytelling, telecollaboration, and online forums are effective only when teachers actively design tasks that invite students to reflect on and express their linguistic repertoires [33, 43].

Controversies and contradictory evidence across the reviewed studies

The synthesis of the corpus reveals notable contradictions that point to the context-dependent nature of technology's impact. One central controversy concerns teacher authority. Ren and Pan [42] found that students' use of external technologies threatened an experienced teacher's sense of linguistic authority, diminishing her professional identity. In contrast, Gonzalez-Vidal [4] showed how the same broad type of technology (digital platforms for fanfiction) empowered teachers to adopt translingual identities and embrace new pedagogical roles. This discrepancy suggests that the effect depends on whether technology is positioned as a threat to be controlled or as a resource for co-construction.

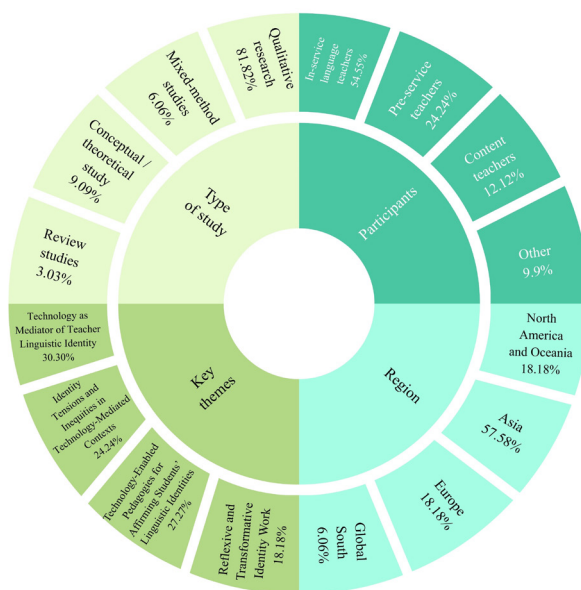
A second controversy relates to digital platforms as identity spaces. Ulla et al. [21] celebrate TikTok as a venue where teachers can express authentic, relatable identities that enhance student engagement. By contrast, Kwihangana [16] warns that platform policies and algorithmically driven content can impose restrictive, monolingual, and commodified identities. Similarly, Loo [44] describes online teaching as forcing a constant "performance" that challenges authenticity, while other studies highlight the liberating potential of asynchronous video for identity exploration [45]. These contradictions underscore that technology is never neutral; its impact is mediated by teacher agency, institutional support, and the specific design of pedagogical activities.

How specific technological affordances enable linguistic identity work

To move beyond general claims about "technology", the analysis also examined how specific technological features contribute to identity construction. Four affordances emerged as particularly salient:

- Asynchronicity and recordability (e.g., Flip, video self-analysis): The ability to record, review, and rehearse reduces anxiety and allows teachers and students to perform a more confident linguistic identity. Chen and Wong [45] showed that pre-service teachers used asynchronous video to practice academic English and build professional identity without real-time pressure. Díaz-Martín and Gómez-Parra [46] found that video self-analysis acted as a "technological mirror," helping teachers shift from seeing themselves as language teachers to flexible bilingual educators.

- Multimodality and semiotic flexibility (e.g., digital storytelling, fanfiction platforms): The integration of text, image, sound, and video enables users to juxtapose different languages and semiotic resources within one artifact. This affordance materially supports translingual identity work. In [4], students blended English with Chilean slang and indigenous elements in digital fanfiction, enacting hybrid identities that would be impossible in a traditional paper exercise. Liontas [33] similarly showed how digital storytelling allowed teachers and doctoral students to voice and reshape their linguacultural selves.



Source: Authors' elaboration.

Fig. 4. Main thematic clusters and key patterns from the analysed studies

– Algorithmic visibility and performance (e.g., TikTok, YouTube): Short-video platforms afford virality and audience feedback, pushing teachers to construct a condensed, relatable, and sometimes entertaining digital persona. Ulla et al. [21] documented how this can enhance teacher-student connection, but also risks commodifying linguistic identity, where engagement metrics overshadow pedagogical depth. Ho (2025) observed that YouTube positions teachers as both language professionals and entrepreneurs, framing English learning as a commodified path to identity transformation.

– Discursive and policy infrastructures (e.g., online policy documents, platform language policies): Even seemingly non-technical features – such as the exclusive use of English in a national educational ICT policy – constitute a technological affordance. Kwihangana [16] demonstrated how the lexical and grammatical choices within policy documents construct a normative digital identity for teachers that excludes local linguistic realities. This highlights that technological identity work operates not only at the classroom level but also at the structural level of policy design.

These findings confirm that it is not “technology in general” but the interaction between specific affordances and pedagogical intentionality that shapes linguistic identities. Table 2 synthesises the main thematic clusters emerging from this analysis, including the number of studies, representative references, and key patterns for both teachers and students.

Discussion and conclusion

This systematic review, synthesizing insights from 33 recent studies, has sought to understand the dynamic and often profound relationship between digital technology and identity in language education. The guiding question was: *How, and to what extent, does technology impact teachers' linguistic identity, and how do their technology-mediated pedagogical interventions influence the shaping of students' linguistic identities?* The evidence reveals that technology is far from a neutral classroom accessory; it acts as a powerful catalyst, a site of conflict, and a creative tool for the ongoing negotiation of who we are as language users and educators.

Research has shown that the integration of technology into language education has fundamentally reshaped how teachers perceive and enact their professional roles. For many educators, digital tools have become both a reflective surface and an active force in the formation of their professional selves.

Table 2. In-depth analysis of selected studies

Thematic cluster	N	Representative studies	Key findings: teachers' linguistic identity	Key findings: students' linguistic identity
Technology as a disruptor and reconstructor of teacher authority	6	[7, 34, 36, 42]	Generative AI and digital tools undermine the traditional role of the teacher as the sole authority on "correct" language. Teachers experience identity tensions but can reconstruct themselves as facilitators of critical digital literacies and global English. The process is emotional and agency-driven.	Students gain access to external digital resources, reducing dependence on the teacher. This can threaten teacher authority but also opens space for more autonomous, critical language use. However, without teacher guidance, students may struggle to develop a reflective linguistic identity.
Technology as a space for plurilingual and translingual identity affirmation	8	[4, 8, 22, 39, 41]	Multilingual teachers of colour use digital platforms to challenge monolingual school norms, validate home languages, and design identity-responsive curricula. Technology enables them to adopt roles as translingual facilitators and cultural mediators, strengthening their professional identity as culturally responsive educators.	Students express hybrid identities by blending English with local slang, indigenous elements, or home cultures in digital storytelling, fanfiction, and online forums. Technology becomes a space for identity exploration, creative expression, and critical engagement with diverse linguacultures.
Digital policies, structural inequalities, and imposed identities	5	[13, 16, 40, 47]	National technology policies written only in English (e.g., in Rwanda) place teachers within a technocratic discourse that devalues local linguistic knowledge. Teachers resist being positioned as English language teachers (e.g., STEM lecturers in EMI contexts), creating identity crises. Technology can reinforce top-down, monolingual agendas.	Students receive the implicit message that their home languages have little value in technology-mediated education. When teachers are forced to focus on standardised, English-only content, students' plurilingual identities are neither validated nor supported.
Emotional regulation and the reconstruction of a "capable" digital teacher identity	5	[35, 38, 44, 48]	The sudden shift to online teaching (e.g., during COVID-19) disrupts teachers' established identities, generating anxiety and low self-efficacy. Through emotional regulation and developing digital competence, teachers reconstruct themselves as "capable online teachers." However, technology can also create a sense of inauthenticity and constant "performance," challenging their professional identity.	Technology-mediated environments may constrain the rich, relational interactions where students' linguistic identities are usually built. However, when teachers successfully manage their digital identity, they can foster a more engaging and supportive environment for students' language learning and identity development.
Specific technological affordances enabling identity work	4	[21, 33, 45, 46]	Asynchronous video (e.g., Flip) provides a low-anxiety space for pre-service teachers to practice academic English and develop a confident professional identity. Video self-analysis acts as a "technological mirror" that helps teachers shift from seeing themselves as language teachers to flexible bilingual educators. TikTok allows teachers to express a relatable, performative identity.	Digital storytelling empowers teachers to design identity-affirming pedagogies that support students' linguacultural identity development. Online mentoring communities and multimodal platforms create "third spaces" for reflection, which indirectly enhances teachers' capacity to create inclusive, identity-sensitive learning environments for students.
Controversies and contradictory evidence	5	[42] vs. [4, 21] vs. [16, 44]	Technology can simultaneously threaten teacher authority (e.g., when students use external tools) and empower it (e.g., through translingual projects). Some studies celebrate digital platforms for authentic identity expression, while others warn that platform policies impose restrictive, monolingual identities. The impact of technology is highly context-dependent, mediated by teacher agency, institutional support, and specific technological affordances.	Students' identity development benefits most when teachers adopt a critical, plurilingual stance. However, without pedagogical intentionality, technology can simply reproduce traditional, teacher-led assessment practices and fail to support students' linguistic identity.

Note. N refers to the approximate number of studies in each cluster based on the review corpus (N = 33). Clusters are not mutually exclusive; some studies address multiple themes. The assignment of studies to clusters was based on inductive coding following a grounded theory approach [31]. Interrater reliability was 98%. Source: Authors' elaboration.

Across diverse contexts – from Chile to China, from Rwanda to Indonesia – teachers are reconstructing their linguistic identities through their engagement with technology [4, 16, 36] (Susanto and Arifani, 2023), while the traditional image of the teacher as the sole authority of “correct” language is being unsettled [7]. In its place, new identities are emerging: the teacher as a facilitator of critical digital literacies [7], a guide through global English [7], a designer of translingual fanfiction projects [4], or a cultural mediator using digital storytelling [22, 33]. This reconstruction, however, is rarely straightforward. It is an emotional and agentic process, fuelled by developing digital competence and often born from necessity, as seen during the pandemic’s shift to online teaching [35, 36]. Teachers who navigate this successfully often come to see themselves as modern, tech-savvy, and student-centred educators, finding that technology can expand their professional roles and sense of efficacy [37, 38].

Yet, this path of identity reconstruction is paved with tensions and inequities. Technology is never culturally or politically neutral; rather, it amplifies existing sociolinguistic hierarchies and introduces new forms of marginalization [16, 47]. The analysed studies show that in contexts where policy mandates English-only digital platforms, teachers find their local linguistic knowledge and identities devalued, framed as obstacles to economic progress rather than assets for learning [16]. Moreover, plurilingual teachers of colour, while using technology to validate students’ home languages, often find themselves relegated to technical support roles and their linguistic expertise overshadowed by administrative demands [39]. These conflicts underscore a critical finding: technology’s impact on teacher identity is deeply political. It can reinforce top-down, monolingual agendas or, conversely, become a tool for resistance and reclamation, depending largely on the agency of the teacher and the equity of the surrounding structures [7, 16, 39].

The most hopeful findings centre on how these teacher identities, in turn, shape the learning worlds of students. When teachers embrace a plurilingual, critical stance, technology transforms into a space for students to explore and affirm their own linguistic identities [4, 7]. Through collaborative online platforms, multimodal composing, and projects that intentionally blend English with local slang or indigenous elements, students are not just practicing a language but also performing and piecing together their hybrid selves [4, 41]. Digital storytelling and telecollaboration become exercises in intercultural citizenship, helping learners see their multilingual repertoires as a source of power and connection rather than a deficit [22, 43]. This affirms that critically aware teachers can use technology to do more than teach grammar, but also to foster belonging, agency, and a critical understanding of the digital world [7, 21].

Finally, this identity work finds essential grounding in teacher education and professional development. The review highlights how technology itself, through video self-analysis, online mentoring communities, and digital autobiography, can create vital “third spaces” for reflection [33, 43, 46]. In these spaces, pre-service and in-service teachers can safely deal with the tensions of their role, articulate their emerging philosophies, and build the intercultural competence necessary to support their future students [49, 50] (Susanto and Arifani, 2023). This reflexive practice is not a secondary consideration but a cornerstone for preparing educators to navigate the identity-diverse complexities of today’s classrooms.

This review advances existing linguistic theories of identity by specifying how digital mediation alters the key mechanisms of identity construction. First, the principle of indexicality – where linguistic forms point to social identities – is transformed in digital spaces. As shown in [4], a student’s use of Chilean slang within an English fanfiction posted on a digital platform is not merely an index of local identity; it becomes a strategic, hyper-visible, and globally accessible act of translingual identity. Technology amplifies the reach and intentionality of indexicality, a phenomenon largely absent from pre-digital accounts. Second, the process of positioning becomes multi-layered in technology-mediated environments. The autoethnography by Loo [44] illustrates how online teaching forced a constant ‘performance,’ creating a tension between his reflective positioning (how he saw himself as an



authentic teacher) and his interactive positioning (how technology pushed him to be ‘entertaining’). This reveals a new dimension of the digital self: a fragmented, technologically mediated identity that coexists and often conflicts with the embodied self. Third, the review challenges purely social-constructionist views by highlighting material and political constraints on digital identity. Kwihangana’s [16] policy analysis shows that digital identities are not just negotiated but can be scripted in advance by technological infrastructures (e.g., English-only platforms). Consequently, this study proposes that digitally mediated linguistic identity must be understood as emergent from the interaction between human agency, pedagogical design, and the specific, non-neutral affordances of technological artifacts.

While offering a comprehensive synthesis of recent research, this review is not without limitations. First, the included studies include diverse methodological approaches, from conceptual papers and qualitative case studies to mixed-methods designs, which, while enriching the thematic analysis, may affect the generalizability of findings across different educational and sociolinguistic contexts. Furthermore, the review is temporally bounded, focusing on studies published between 2020 and 2024. This concentration, while capturing a critical moment of digital transition, may overrepresent certain themes related to the integration of technology in language education. Additionally, the geographic and institutional contexts of the studies, although varied, are not fully representative of all global settings, particularly under-resourced or indigenous educational environments where technology access and linguistic dynamics present unique challenges. These limitations highlight the need for future longitudinal research and more context-specific studies to further untangle the complex, evolving relationship between technology, teacher identity, and student linguistic development.

In any case, the relationship between technology and linguistic identity is profoundly reciprocal and contextual. Technology impacts teachers’ identities by simultaneously offering new avenues for professional growth – for example, Gong et al. [37] showed that novice Chinese language teachers in Hong Kong who successfully integrated technology reframed themselves as ‘modern’ and ‘student-centred facilitators’ – and exposing deep-rooted inequities, as Kwihangana [16] documented in Rwanda where English-only technology policies devalued teachers’ local linguistic knowledge. Teachers then, through their pedagogical choices, can take advantage of technology to cultivate students’ plurilingual identities, as Gonzalez-Vidal [4] demonstrated with translingual fanfiction. The extent of this impact pivots around critical factors: pedagogical intentionality, institutional support, and a committed engagement with issues of power and access [16, 47]. In contrast, when these factors are absent, technology may simply reinforce standardised norms, as Ren and Pan [42] found when students’ use of translation apps threatened teacher authority without fostering identity development.

Concrete examples from the reviewed studies illustrate how technology-mediated interventions shape students’ linguistic identities. In [22], Vietnamese university students used digital storytelling and online forums to express their home cultures in English, developing more confident and reflective multilingual identities. Similarly, Brownell [41] showed how a third-grade student labelled as ‘struggling’ in traditional literacy used multimodal composition to enact civic agency and reconstruct himself as an expert meaning-maker. In contrast, Ren and Pan [42] found that students’ heavy use of external technologies (e.g., translation apps) reduced their dependence on the teacher, threatening her authority without necessarily fostering their own identity development. These examples underscore that technology’s impact is contingent on pedagogical design and teacher stance.

This review moves beyond general claims about ‘technology’ by identifying four specific technological affordances that enable or constrain linguistic identity work in educational settings: (a) asynchronicity and recordability, which reduce anxiety and allow for identity performance; (b) multimodality and semiotic flexibility, which enable translingual juxtaposition; (c) algorithmic visibility and performance pressure, which can commodify or amplify identity expression; and (d) discursive policy infrastructures,

which impose normative digital identities from above. These affordances, provide a more precise vocabulary for future research on digitally mediated linguistic identity.

The present review makes a threefold contribution to linguistic knowledge. First, it empirically demonstrates that established identity principles (e.g., indexicality, positioning) operate differently in digitally mediated environments, becoming more deliberate, hyper-visible, and globally networked. Second, it introduces the concept of the technologically mediated ‘digital self’ as a fragmented yet agentive identity, constantly negotiated between performance and authenticity, as seen in the tensions experienced by online teachers [21, 44]. Third, by identifying specific technological affordances, it provides a more precise vocabulary for future research, moving beyond generic claims about ‘technology’ to a nuanced understanding of how digital tools shape who we are as language users and educators.

Ultimately, this review argues for moving beyond asking if technology should be used, to critically examining how and for what purpose. The goal must be to use digital tools not for standardization but for creating more inclusive, affirming, and critically engaged spaces where every teacher and student can see their linguistic identity reflected and respected.

Disclosure statement

The authors report that they have potential conflict of interest.

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