PERSONAL STATEMENT

I am writing to apply for an I-140 self-petition immigrant visa under the EB-2 NIW category. This letter outlines my proposed endeavor and its significant merit and national importance to the United States.

I received my **MA degree with distinction from the University of Nottingham in 2017** and completed my **Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics at Aston University in 2021**. I began my career as a teacher at the Ministry of Education in Türkiye, where I worked for seven years. Then, I moved into higher education as a research assistant, lecturer and assistant professor in the UK and Türkiye for 8 years. Since 2024, I have been working as a **postdoctoral researcher at …….. University, Estonia**. Over 16 years of professional experience, I have built expertise in **multilingual pedagogy, early English education, technology-enhanced education, translanguaging, and teacher education**. I have also had the chance to collaborate internationally, publish high-impact research, and receive recognition.

Based on this background, my proposed endeavor is elaborated as follows.

Proposed Endeavor

I will conduct advanced research on the development, classroom implementation, and large-scale evaluation of an **AI-Assisted Translanguaging Framework** to enhance English language acquisition among young multilingual learners with limited English proficiency in the U.S. Building on my current post-doctoral project **(awarded the prestigious Seal of Excellence by the European Commission, funded by the Estonian Research Council, and reinforced by the 2025 TESOL International Award in the U.S. for my translanguaging research),** I will adapt and expand this work to the U.S. context.

My focus will be threefold. **First**, I will design classroom models that help teachers integrate students' home languages with English in K–12 classrooms, using linguistic diversity as a strength to improve literacy, participation, and achievement. **Second**, I will incorporate Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based assessment tools that give teachers real-time feedback on students' reading, writing, and speaking progress. These tools will support fair, data-driven evaluation and timely support for learners who are struggling. **Third**, I will create and deliver teacher training programs, combining digital modules and workshops, to ensure both pre-service and in-service teachers can apply the framework effectively. Partnerships with

TESOL International (of which I am a member) and U.S. teacher education programs will be central to this effort.

This endeavor directly supports critical U.S. priorities in equitable education, multilingual learner success, and the effective use of technology in schools. By introducing a scalable, research-based framework, my work will help close achievement gaps and strengthen teacher preparation. The outcomes, including practical curricula, teacher training, and AI-supported assessment tools, will not only improve literacy among students with limited English proficiency but also contribute to the U.S. Department of Education's mission of ensuring high-quality education for all learners.

Details of the Proposed Endeavor

My proposed endeavor will advance the educational and scientific foundations of language pedagogy in the U.S. by developing, piloting, and scaling an AI-Assisted Translanguaging Framework tailored to the needs of students in K–12 classrooms. Building on my current post-doctoral project, I will adapt this work to the U.S. context to address the persistent achievement gaps faced by English learners (ELs). These learners are described as disadvantaged groups by the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights. The endeavor will integrate applied linguistics, classroom pedagogy, and digital technologies to ensure that teachers have practical and research-based tools for supporting ELs in the U.S.

First, I will design and test instructional models that combine translanguaging pedagogy with structured classroom practices, enabling teachers to draw upon students' linguistic repertoire as a resource. These models will be piloted in collaboration with schools serving large multilingual populations, with a focus on measurable outcomes in literacy, participation, and academic achievement.

Second, I will incorporate AI-assisted digital tools into these models to provide teachers with accessible, real-time insights into student learning. These tools will support classroom decision-making, help identify learners at risk of falling behind, and allow for more equitable, data-driven teaching practices. Importantly, AI will serve as a supporting mechanism for translanguaging pedagogy, ensuring that technology complements rather than replaces the human and social dimensions of teaching.

Third, I will create professional development programs for pre-service and in-service teachers to ensure effective dissemination and adoption of the framework. These programs will include digital training modules, in-person workshops, and collaborative partnerships with TESOL International and teacher education programs in the U.S. By equipping educators with practical strategies and ongoing support, the endeavor will ensure sustainable implementation at scale.

This endeavor will engage a wide network of stakeholders, including school districts, teacher education programs, professional associations, and policymakers, to facilitate nationwide adoption. Ultimately, the goal is to expand access to equitable, effective, and technology-supported English language education, reduce achievement gaps among ELs, and strengthen the U.S. education system's ability to serve a diverse and growing student population.

Details of the Substantial Merit and National Importance of the Proposed Endeavor

My endeavor addresses critical gaps in education for ELs in the U.S., a challenge with broad social and economic implications. It aligns with national education priorities to ensure equity, improve literacy, and close achievement gaps among ELs, who represent one of the fastest-growing student populations in the country. By developing and implementing an AI-Assisted Translanguaging Framework, my work will provide research-based instructional models and teacher training that directly support the integration and academic success of this population, reinforcing the U.S. commitment to equitable education.

According to the **U.S. Department of Education**, more than 5.1 million ELs were enrolled in U.S. public schools in 2024, accounting for nearly 10% of the total K–12 population (***Exhibit B.02***). The **National Center for Education Statistics** reports that EL students consistently perform below their peers in reading and math, with only 14% scoring at or above proficient in Grade 4 reading, compared to 40% of non-EL students (***Exhibit B.03***).

These disparities are not only educational but also economic. The **Brookings Institution** reports that nearly 19.2 million working-age adults in the U.S. are limited English proficient—about 10% of the labor force—and they earn 25–40% less than English-proficient workers (***Exhibit B.04***). Because virtually all labor force growth over the next four decades is projected to come from immigrants and their children, improving English proficiency is not only an educational issue but also a matter of national economic competitiveness. Research shows that EL students often fall behind academically, struggle with grades, and face higher

risks of absenteeism and social isolation, factors that contribute to long-term disadvantages in graduation, higher education, and workforce participation (***Exhibit B.05***).

The U.S. Department of Education's **Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA)** has emphasized the urgent need for evidence-based instructional models and teacher training tailored to EL students (***Exhibit B.06***). My proposed framework responds directly to this priority by integrating students' home languages into instruction, making classrooms more inclusive and effective, while simultaneously equipping teachers with practical tools to address linguistic diversity.

The importance of this endeavor is also highlighted by federal initiatives such as the **Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)**, which requires states to track and report EL progress (***Exhibit B.07***). In addition, the **National Education Technology Plan** highlights the integration of digital tools and AI-driven platforms as essential to advancing educational equity (***Exhibit B.08***). My work will contribute to these goals by combining translanguaging pedagogy with AI-assisted feedback mechanisms, enabling teachers to make data-informed instructional decisions while preserving the human and cultural dimensions of teaching.

The national significance of this work is further underscored by the most recent federal policy direction. In March 2025, the **White House** issued **Executive Order 14224, Designating English as the Official Language of the United States**, emphasizing that English proficiency is essential not only for economic advancement but also for civic participation and national cohesion (***Exhibit B.09***). By providing evidence-based translanguaging models and AI-supported tools, my work will directly support this policy priority, accelerating English acquisition for multilingual learners and ensuring their full participation in U.S. society.

By establishing standardized translanguaging-based instructional frameworks, AI-supported classroom tools, and professional development programs for teachers, this endeavor will help reduce academic disparities, improve long-term literacy outcomes, and lower educational costs by decreasing grade repetition, dropout risk, and the need for remedial instruction. Together, these outcomes underscore that the proposed work not only fills a critical gap in educational practice but also directly supports U.S. priorities in equitable education, multilingual learner achievement, teacher workforce development, and national competitiveness in an increasingly diverse and global economy.

Global Implications of the Proposed Endeavor

My proposed endeavor carries meaningful global implications. According to **UNESCO**, more than 40% of the world's population is educated in a language they do not fully understand, which creates major barriers to literacy and long-term academic success (***Exhibit B.10***). Similarly, recent **Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)** research shows that students from immigrant and minority language backgrounds are disproportionately at risk of dropping out of school and experiencing limited economic mobility due to insufficient access to high-quality bilingual education (***Exhibit B.11***). These challenges are particularly acute in low-resource settings, where teacher preparation programs and digital learning tools for multilingual education are scarce.

By advancing an AI-Assisted Translanguaging Framework that integrates home languages into English instruction, my work offers scalable and adaptable models for diverse educational systems worldwide. These frameworks have the potential to improve literacy, strengthen participation, and promote social inclusion for millions of multilingual learners, especially in contexts where immigrant and refugee populations are rapidly expanding.

Furthermore, the evidence-based instructional models and teacher training programs developed through this endeavor can serve as a foundation for global teacher education, digital learning capacity-building, and cross-national collaboration, helping to close the equity gap in regions without adequate multilingual education infrastructure. This aligns with the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4)**, which calls for inclusive and equitable quality education for all (***Exhibit B.12***).

In conclusion, my proposed endeavor holds substantial merit and national importance for the United States. Moreover, its methodology and outcomes have clear translational potential across international contexts, providing globally relevant solutions to the challenges of multilingual education in the 21st century.

Sincerely,

Dr. ....