

Exploring Translanguaging Practices in Indonesian Education

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to elucidate a comprehensive perspective on translanguaging practices in Indonesian education by reviewing empirical literature published in scientific journals. There have been debates on how different languages should be treated in a language learning class especially in EFL classroom context, where students have limited access to target language use and exposure outside the classroom. This study involved 5 ELT teachers and 10 secondary students by collecting data through observations, interviews, and questionnaire. Teachers and students have the benefit of translanguaging practices in EFL classrooms, yet it should be taken into account that L1 should be adopted judiciously. They translanguage using English, Indonesian, and local languages. They have voiced their agreement to the implementation of translanguaging as pedagogy since it positively impacts EFL teaching and learning. However, few teachers have contrasting views about this voice. Future research should focus on investigating translanguaging through experimental research design or pedagogical intervention in EFL classrooms whose students are coming from multiple linguistic backgrounds. The implications of the practice of translanguaging at Indonesian Education are effective and optimal to help students as a new strategy in learning English as foreign language because it can be used to motivate and analyze students' problems in mastering English as a foreign language.

Keywords: *Education, Practices, Translanguaging*

Introduction

In the dynamic landscape of Indonesian education, a fascinating shift is underway—one that transcends traditional language boundaries and embraces the richness of linguistic diversity. The exploration of translanguaging practices has emerged as a compelling avenue for educators, researchers and policymakers to understand and harness the potential of multilingualism within the educational sphere. This article delves into the intricate tapestry of translanguaging in the Indonesian context, unravelling the ways in which students, teachers, and institutions navigate the multifaceted dimensions of language. As Indonesia, with its myriad of ethnicities, cultures, and languages, continues to foster a sense of national unity, it becomes imperative to examine the role of translanguaging in shaping educational methodologies.

Translanguaging, the seamless movement between languages for effective communication, challenges conventional notions of monolingual instruction. It encourages an inclusive and dynamic approach that recognizes the linguistic assets students bring to the learning environment.

This exploration takes us beyond the theoretical foundations of translanguaging, aiming to provide a nuanced understanding of its practical applications in Indonesian classrooms. By examining real-life examples, case studies, and the experiences of educators and learners, we seek to uncover the ways in which translanguaging can enhance language acquisition, foster cultural appreciation, and promote a more equitable educational experience for all. As we embark on this journey through the intricacies of translanguaging in Indonesian education, we invite readers to consider the broader implications for educational policies, curriculum development, and the cultivation of a learning environment that celebrates the diverse linguistic tapestry that defines Indonesia. Join us in unravelling the layers of translanguaging, as we explore its potential to transform education and empower learners in the archipelago.

Literature Review

The language used by teachers and students during the learning process is referred to as classroom talk (Rendi Afriadi & Hamzah, 2021). Through the language that is used by teachers and students in the learning process, communication and interaction among them can occur. They can interact with each other by using language, even it is English, Indonesian, and local languages. Learning a foreign language involves the learner's first language linguistics repertoire, or more precisely, linguistics knowledge of the previous language mastered by the learner (Afriadi & Hamzah, 2021). It will make it difficult the students easier in learning foreign language if they understand about linguistics knowledge of the previous language than those who do not understood about it. As explained by García (2011), the success of learning a foreign language cannot be separated from the linguistic knowledge of the learner's first language. It may say that learning a foreign language and the linguistic knowledge are one whole because they need and support each other. This is also closely related to multilingual contexts.

Multilingualism is a reconceptualization of communication strategies used by multilinguals, both in classroom and social contexts, using their linguistics repertoire to gain knowledge, interpret other people's opinions, and create communication by using the languages they already mastered (Li, 2011; García & Li, 2014). In other words, using multilinguals both in the classroom or social contexts helps learners to get some information that they need. In addition, it is also reinforced by the statement that the success of learning a second language is strongly influenced by the knowledge or system of the learner's first language (Dulay, et al., 1982; Lado, 1957; Weinreich, 1979; Corder, 1992; Brown, 2005). It means that the learners' first language system has a big role for them in learning foreign language, it can impact their comprehension in learning foreign language.

However, Cummin (2007) states that there are needs to be a rethinking of how teachers and scholars perceive this particular practice because L1 belongs to the students and should not be seen as a variable

in preventing language L2 learning. The first language cannot be an obstacle in learning foreign language. Both first language and foreign language are completing each other. In addition, there is a language practice called translanguaging in which originally widely known and spread because Chen Williams during the 1980s did a class observation in Welsh where the teachers talked to the students in Welsh yet constantly received the response from students in English then later this phenomenon is named *trawsieithu* from Welsh language that later translated into English as what is known today as translanguaging (Lewis et al., 2012). Translanguaging is done by using second language or English in delivering material then it is translated into first language. By using this translanguaging, it can simplify learners in learning foreign language.

Translanguaging is used for various functions in EFL classroom. Yuvayapan suggests that translanguaging functions as a means of giving instruction. Giving instruction is commonly done in either L1 or L2, but it is most commonly in L1 to ensure that all students understand what they are expected to do. The second function is reviewing languaging. Reviewing language is commonly done by providing students with L2 expression or ideas and explain or discuss it with either L1 or L2. The third function is eliciting language. In its function, translanguaging is used by teachers to ask students for the L2 equivalent of an L1 expression with more openended condition. The next function is setting up dialogue. It shows that translanguaging has a very important role for EFL learners. Its function helps EFL learners to understand what to do in learning process, so that, the goal of study can be reached. Moreover, Garcia & Wei also suggests how translanguaging functions in classroom. First, teachers use translanguaging to involve and give voice. In this case, teachers invite students to participate and to involve in the learning process using languages they understand. Second, translanguaging enables teachers to give clarification for students. The last function of translanguaging for teachers is to ask questions. In other word, beside helping EFL learners in learning, translanguaging also helps teachers to deliver what they mean or what the learners are expected to do in order to achieve the goal of the study.

Translanguaging is also similar to activate the speakers' multilingualism to enhance their language skills. A multilingual speaker has far more linguistics repertoire than a monolingual speaker and is more experienced at learning a new language (Nurvita Anjasari, 2022). Translanguaging is easier to be implemented on multilingualism speakers than monolingual speakers, because multilingual speakers have much more linguistic repertoire than monolingual speakers, and it can assist them to learn EFL more easily. Furthermore, translanguaging utilizes positive transfers from the learner's first language to the target language (Conteh, 2019). It switches linguistic repertoire from the first language to English. Another definition of translanguaging is a multilingual context consisting of oral and written language interactions (Garcia, 2009). Both oral and written interaction are used in translanguaging so that learners can interact each other in oral or written. In line with previous opinions, translanguaging is a tribute to the existence of the first/previous language mastered by the learner who uses it in class (Hall & Cook, 2012). In this case, translanguaging does not dispose of the first language, but it takes the first language to facilitate EFL learners. Meanwhile, a more complex definition was conveyed by Wei & Garcia (2014) that translanguaging is an approach to language use, bilingualism, and bilingual education which considers the practice of using two languages not as two separate language systems a traditional way, but as a linguistic repertoire with socially constructed features.

It means that first language and English cannot be separated because they are one whole that need and assist each other in learning process. Translanguaging according to Garcia (2013) is not only limited to bilingualism, translation, and code-switching but also relates to language maintenance and language sustainability in which practically there is interaction with the social context in the target language. Translanguaging is a means that can be used in interaction both in learning process or in social context continuously.

Methods

The design of method used in this research is qualitative research methods. Qualitative research according to Cresswell (2014) is a specific tradition in social science, which focuses on the exploration of the meaning of individuals or groups. Qualitative research tries to understand and interpret human and social behavior by participants in a particular social setting. To explore and investigate the role of translanguaging, this present study adapted aspects and features of a case study research design. A case study is a kind of qualitative research design that focuses on a single unit, such as one individual, one group, one organization, or one program (Ary et al., 2009). It implies a single occurrence of something that the researcher is interested in examining. Case studies are able to answer descriptive questions about why something happened by looking at the process (Ary et al., 2009).

This article reviewed several studies on translanguaging practices in EFL classrooms in the Indonesian context. I selected articles published in academic journals and proceedings. I searched scholarly literature on translanguaging studies conducted within the Indonesian context on a publicly available online search engine to focus my search for the topic under investigation, to connect a variety of information, and to exactly find what I was looking for. This article is guided with three research questions; (1) How translanguaging contributes to helping the learning activities, (2) How code-mixing and code-switching are used in class instructions as teachers' strategies as well as also looking at (3) How does the pedagogical implications of translanguaging in the context of a multilingual classroom.

The next step is data analysis. Data analysis in qualitative research involves comprehending the phenomenon, synthesizing information, explaining relationships, theorizing about how and why the relationships appear, and reconnecting new knowledge that is already known (Ary et al., 2009). After transcribing the data, the researcher discovered the role of translanguaging and classified the practices and their implications. In the last step, the writer explained and interpreted the findings based on the role of translanguaging and its implications.

Discussions

It can be argued that the pedagogical approach of using only English in English classes, which many Indonesian EFL teachers have practiced for many years, may have been a big misconception. Regarding the first research question, the translanguaging practices demonstrated in the selected studies presented in this

article suggest that the use of such approaches contributes to the recognition that linguistics belongs to the students, and that the use of such approaches contributes to students' self-expression (Puspitasari & Yumarnamt, 2020; Emilia & Hamid, 2022). In other words, the sole application of a monolingual policy in the classroom may limit students' potential for language learning and learning processes in the classroom. For both in-service and in-service teachers, language translation practices, if well integrated, can be seen as a tool to encourage students to be more engaged during lessons, but in most cases Combining Indonesian is proving to be more popular. Compared to teachers who mix three languages: English, Indonesian, and local languages (Khairunnisa & Lukmana, 2020; Sahib et al, 2020; Putrawan et al (2022)), potentially achieving better learning outcomes. It is important and recommended for teachers to increase the proportion of students' local languages during translanguaging exercises within schools. EFL Classroom Description.

Regarding the second research question, when it comes to code-mixing and code-switching as part of translanguaging, although translanguaging is often considered a natural phenomenon, teachers still have their own unique and more positive educational outcomes. This is achievable when performed in a more targeted manner and with modifications such as combining translanguaging and multimodality (Cahyani & Barnett, 2016; Setyaningrum et al., 2022). Therefore, code-mixing and code-switching activities found in classrooms should be encouraged, supported, and normalized as they are part of language learning. In fact, translanguaging approaches have shown that switching from one language to another during a lesson can be considered a natural phenomenon for language learners. Especially in the Indonesian context, teachers and students often feel guilty about mixing languages because it is considered rude by Indonesians.

Regarding the third research question regarding the pedagogical aspects and related implications of the use of translanguaging as a teaching approach, despite the recognition that the three languages are part of the students' language, there are seem to have something in common. Despite teachers' supportive reactions to translanguaging, some teachers believe that translanguaging is inappropriate in English classes; Not every teacher performs all his three languages during (Rasman, 2018, Raja and Ngadiso, 2022). Although some teachers have already embraced the idea of changing languages in addition to using English in English classes, the majority of practices are still limited to including Indonesian, and only a minority of teachers You can see that. Including the national language as part of language translation practices. A possible reason for this particular trend is the language policy, where teachers are gradually switching from using only English in English classes to combining other languages, in this case Indonesian.

Conclusion

Based on this critical review on the topic Exploring Translanguaging Practices in Indonesian Education, it can be said that translanguaging practices are quite common among EFL teachers in Indonesia, although many teachers still believe in the monolingual ideology in which teachers should only teach English as a target language in the EFL classroom. More teachers and pre-service teachers need to be exposed to the concept of translanguaging because (1) some EFL teachers in Indonesia still have misconceptions about the long-term adoption of monolingual ideology or monolingual policy has been passed from generation to

generation, which is consistent with the practice of linguistic dichotomy practiced by language teachers recognized by previous researchers (Howatt, 1984; Cummins, 2007). In addition, (2) the importance of translanguaging practices carried out in a multilingual classroom is necessary and necessary, especially in Indonesia, because the creation of meaning in understanding the teaching material can require all the linguistic characteristics of the student, to correspond to what one of the defenders of this view maintains Garcia (2009) has consistently promoted bilingualism as a dynamic phenomenon, stating that such non-linear linguistic processes are likely to be applicable to Indonesian multilingual students as well. Furthermore, (3) another potential additional challenge may very well be considering language mixing as a relevant activity, even though many studies have found and suggested that language mixing is a phenomenon. Natural objects are popular among multilingual communities and learners. Therefore, referring to Canagarajah (2011), translanguaging is a normal linguistic phenomenon, meaning that the practice needs to be pedagogically normalized in EFL classrooms as well as in society outside the classroom.

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