

TRANSLANGUAGING AS A PRACTICAL PEDAGOGY BASED ON EDUCATORS' PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

As new approach of language teaching, translanguaging has become a popular topic and widely debated in applied linguistic for the last few years. This study explored educators' perspective about the use of translanguaging as practical pedagogy in EFL classroom in relation to their position that play a significant role in shifting educational practices. The research data was taken in the form of quantitative and qualitative using questionnaires and interview with participants by involving 15 English educators of Higher Education in Jakarta. The findings revealed positive outlooks on the use translanguaging as pedagogical practices in EFL that gave them opportunities rather as weaknesses like lack of proficiency. In addition, the educators also expressed various perceptions about language as separated system, language mixing, and language as single system that support each other.

Keywords: *EFL, Pedagogy, Repertoire, Translanguaging.*

INTRODUCTION

The concept of translanguaging has been frequently studied by scholars in recent years, particularly in applied linguistics and sociolinguistics. Translanguaging as a new theory of language, according to Li Wei (2018), is beyond the language itself. The "trans" preamble emphasizes the concept of translanguaging, which refers to fluid behaviors that transcend beyond socially created language systems and structures to engage diverse multiple meaning-making systems and subjective experiences (Wei, 2018). Garcia (2009) broadened the definition of translanguaging to include processes in which students freely and flexibly adapt school language practices into their personal linguistic repertoire. For example, students may use their native language productively or receptively, and they are free to share what they know.

Translanguaging as a pedagogy has evolved alongside the concept of translanguaging. Williams, a Welsh educationist, created the term "translanguaging" which refers to the intentional alternation of language within student activities in a

bilingual classroom. Translanguaging is seen as a normal behavior among bi/multilinguals, according to Cenez & Gorter (2015), as cited in (Galante, 2020). It is often involuntary, unscripted, and occasionally unconscious. The term "translanguaging" refers to the unintentional use of languages, often known as "spontaneous translanguaging." Translanguaging is pedagogically distinct from spontaneous translanguaging in that it is used to aid language learning (Cenoz, 2017).

Although translanguaging and code-switching are closely connected, the former goes beyond the latter because it does not merely depict the bilingual educator and student moving between two languages or using two languages as two independent monolingual systems. Translanguaging is a more systematic and planned procedure that allows the speaker to build meaning and promote the affective aspect of language use in such a way that bilinguals may shape their experiences and create meaning by using the full linguistic and semiotic repertoire at their disposal. As a result, educators consider translanguaging as a viable pedagogical approach in bilingual classrooms where both languages are used for all purposes and in all domains (Garcia, 2009; Garcia & Li, 2014).

Translanguaging as a notion is based on normalizing translingual activities that have occurred in communities all across the world. It is the deployment of a speaker's whole linguistic repertoire in ordinary life contact without concern for strict adherence to the socially and politically determined bounds of named languages (Otheguy, García, & Reid, 2015). As pedagogy, Garcia (2014) in (Seals, 2021) translanguaging embraces and builds upon "the ways in which multilingual students and teachers engage in complex and fluid discursive practices that include, at times, the home language practices of students in order to 'make sense' of teaching and learning, to communicate and appropriate subject knowledge, and to develop academic language practices." Furthermore, translanguaging is about empowering, permitting, and encouraging students.

Study of translanguaging pedagogy has challenged some conventional beliefs in linguistics study by proposing at least three different views. First, different languages of instruction should be kept separate and considers the boundaries of languages as porous and fluid which is different from the traditional views. Second, questioning the belief that the ultimate goal of learning a second or foreign language is to achieve native (like) competence and values learners' whole linguistic and semiotic repertoires (Cenoz & Gorter, 2017; García & Lin, 2016). Third, translanguaging views the boundaries of languages as softened and blurred and takes a holistic view of language and other semiotic resources to constitute multilingual speakers' communicative repertoire (Garcia & Wei, 2014). As a result of the long standing dominance of monolingual techniques, this challenges the conventional belief that languages are best taught monolingually, which results from the long prevalence of monolingual methodologies (García & Lin, 2016). In many cases of language education, very often found that educators are advised or even mandated to utilize the target language exclusively and student's linguistic resources are not valued. These views may make it difficult for educators to change their attitudes and behavior in favor of a translanguaging approach (Lin, 2013).

The proposal of translanguaging itself is to recognize the complex and mixed language practices of bilingual works, as well as the necessity for language classrooms to begin to mirror these worlds more closely. In relation to literacy, Hornberger Link and (2012) call for the need to focus on "practices that recognize, value, and build on the multiple, mobile communicative repertoires, translanguaging and transnational literacy practices of students and their families" (p. 274). Pennycook (2007) in his work *Global Englishes and Transcultural Flows*, the following: "Languages will flow and change around us, new combinations of languages and culture will be put together, the text will be sampled and mixed in ever new juxtapositions. Students are in the flow; pedagogy needs to go with the flow. In line with this notion, it requires the reconceptualization (Pennycook, 2007, p. 158).

In this study, the idea of perspective is based on an educator's perception, assumption, or view about translanguaging as a pedagogical practice in EFL classroom. Educators, like everyone else, have broad views (beliefs and policies) on education, politics, music, the environment, and other topics. The viewpoint of an educator on a certain topic may range from one person to the next. Since educational decisions (beliefs and policies) are frequently resistant to change, educators' perspectives are distinctive and have an impact on them. Therefore, this study tries to further contribute on translanguaging studies in linguistics literature. In particular this study explores educators' perspective on what do educators think about translanguaging as practical pedagogy? To what extent are the policies of educators on the use of translanguaging in EFL classroom?

METHODOLOGY

This study used both qualitative and quantitative data, which is referred to as mixed-method research (Creswell, 2018). The participants in this research study were 15 English educators from higher education institutions in Jakarta. They were asked to fill out an online survey issued via google.form. The questionnaire consists of a series of statements modified from Anderson (2018) in which educators were requested to provide an assessment on the structured statements/questions by picking agree, disagree, or neutral. To avoid a broad debate, the study focused solely on educators' beliefs and policies toward the use of translanguaging as a practical pedagogy in EFL classrooms. The researcher also conducted an interview with selected individuals to interpret their experiences and approaches in order to enrich the data. Interview data collection is an efficient technique of seeking and documenting individual or group perspectives, feelings, ideas, beliefs, and policies regarding their own experiences in their own words. The researcher also displayed selected views from educators on the use of translanguaging in EFL classroom.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

RQ 1. What do educators think about translanguaging as practical pedagogy?

In general, English educators in higher education have a good outlook toward translanguaging in EFL classroom. Educators consciously and purposefully employed translanguaging as practical pedagogy and this occurred naturally as part of their regular routine. The following discussion goes into great detail in addressing the research question. Table 1 and 2 indicated the educators' beliefs on translanguaging and practically how they employed it as a strategy in conducting English teaching learning activities.

Table 1. Belief in Language Teaching

No	STATEMENTS	Agree	Disagree	Neutral
1	Other languages in English lessons can help students learn more. But, we have to keep it as minimal as possible and maximize the use of English.	70%	30%	5%
2	Students need to do language mixing in English lesson.	60%	33%	7%
3	Students should understand their first language well and English should be introduced as an intermediate-level subject.	25%	75%	-
4	Language should be treated separately to avoid confusion.	23%	77%	-

The majority of educators believe that allowing foreign languages into English lesson will help students in effectively learning the target language. As a strategy or an approach in language acquisition, the participants heavily agreed that the use of other languages (L1) including language mixing into English lessons is beneficial to students' learning (English). Only 30% of educators, on the other hand, disagree with

this statement. The rest 5% is in the position on neutral, meaning they do not have clear mind to respond the statement above. It can be interpreted as well that educators realized that English as targeted languages in English lesson need a special attention by giving the students maximal exposures to practice and use it during the English session. In relation to number 2, the finding revealed that the majority of participants (60%) agreed that linguistic mixing was necessary. Only a few participants 33% and 7 % stand with position disagree and neutral. Educators probably thought that acquiring foreign language (English) using monolingual approach will be very difficult without language mixing.

In statement number three and four, there is a strong link between language learners and additional language. According to the results of the study, English majority of educators agreed that English as a required subject should be taught alongside the first language. Surprisingly, when confronted with concerns that constitute the foundation of the concept of translingual practices in language, such as whether language should be regarded separately or as a single system, all the participants have a similar perceptions meaning the majority of them disagreed to the statements above and only a few number of them agreed (25% & 23%).

Table 2. Belief in Language Teaching

No	STATEMENTS	Agree	Disagree	Neutral
5	Using another language in classroom management when teaching English.	58%	12%	30%
6	Doing translation for English teaching.	53%	20%	27%
7	Asking the student to do translation when learning English between English and other languages.	80%	15%	5%
8	Helping students' pronunciation through comparison between first language and English.	50%	23%	27%
9	Using text and audio, including other	65%	25%	10%

	languages in English pronunciation			
10	Using multimodality as other resources to discipline students in English lesson	85%	15%	-

Translanguaging as a practical pedagogy is applied in teaching learning English activities, as seen in survey questions 5-6. This statement can be supported by all of the responses from the educators who served as the study's primary sources. None of them claimed to have never done language mixing before. This means they've used translingual practices in a variety of ways and for a variety of objectives as a strategy to ensure that English language learning activities are done appropriately. They completed the translation, which included instructing the students to perform the same actions as specified in statement five.

In language learning process, it was found that educators also compared the sounds of students' first language with English to help their understanding. However, the intensity of the educators varied as in number six which is between agree, disagree, and neutral. This also shows that they have different policies, so they are free to regulate, including the use of translanguaging as practical pedagogy in their class.

In statement number nine, it was found that a few numbers of the educators never used text or audio in speaking English. While the other educators are just the opposite, namely doing it regularly. This is also the same as statement number ten, where majority of the educators has used English to discipline students in participating in learning. This means that for certain purpose, the educators one and off employed other language in class managements for instance to help students stay focus in English learning.

Here is the example of acceptance to do translanguaging as practical pedagogy by allowing the students to use other languages in English lesson. This excerpts was expressed by Mr. Farid (pseudonym) one of the English educators who involved in this survey.

“Saya tidak keberatan mahasiswa melakukan baur bahasa in English lesson. Namun demikian, saya tetap meminimalkan penggunaan bahasa selain Inggris dalam menjelaskan dan merespon pertanyaan-pertanyaan mahasiswa.”

“I don’t mind students mixing languages in the English lesson. However, I still minimize the use of languages other than English in explaining and responding to student questions”.

Farid's comment raises new questions about the significance of L1 in the teaching and learning of second, foreign, and other languages. In some regions of language instruction, the target language or one language (monolingual ideology) still dominate and become the policy not just of educators but also of institutions (policy maker). The goal of learning is not to turn off one's L1 but to expand one's repertoire. Learning "new languages - to become bilingual and multilingual, rather than replacing the learner's L1 to become another monolingual-often gets forgotten or neglected, and the bilingual, rather than monolingual, speaker is rarely used as the model for teaching and learning," according to Learning (Wei, 2018, p. 16).

RQ 2. To what extent are the policies of educators regarding the use of translanguaging in EFL class room?

Educators have the right to control in the classroom, including deciding on the language that will be used to communicate with their students. Educators have the freedom to pick the language they will use without being compelled to do so by anyone. To respond to the second questions, participants were asked to share their thoughts about policies in the EFL classroom using structured statements. In this section, it appears that the educators' rules are congruent with their values by allowing the use of the L1 in English class, as shown in table 3.

In terms of language policy, all English educators tacitly allowed their students to speak languages other than English in their classes to varying degrees. On table 3, all the statements are slightly personal that address language policy in EFL classroom interactions.

Table 3. Language Policy

No	STATEMENTS	Agree	Disagree	Neutral
11	I let my students to use other languages during English teaching	58%	32%	10%
12	I let my students to use the bilingual dictionary when teaching English	69%	-	31%
13	I let my students to mix English and other languages to write in English lessons	100%	-	-
14	I let my students to take notes in other languages in English lesson	50%	45%	5%
15	I proactively encourage students to use other languages in my lesson	65%	35%	-

In terms of language policy, all educators (11,12,14) had the same policy, which was to allow students to speak in other English language classrooms or to use a bilingual dictionary. Furthermore, they are one voice in the context of writing in English lessons, as stated in statement number 13. None of them have ever answered or allowed their students to mix languages in English writing except when making personal or individual notes from the students, so that they have the freedom to make notes based on their own preferences.

Even though the educators all taught English, a few of the participants were still considering other languages as alternate ways for making it easier for pupils to understand when preparing or teaching English to their students. Number 14 depicts the policy of the educators, particularly those who do not think about or have space in their heads to think about language, indicating that the educators' policies tend to be monolingual rather than translingual.

In number 15, when English educators were asked whether they were proactive in encouraging their students to mix languages in English lessons, it was found that a few numbers of the participants stated that they never did. This is certainly in line

with the previous comment, which gave a lot of space for English to be heard and spoken in EFL remote learning interaction. Of course, this policy is based on each educators' understanding and uniqueness in teaching and managing their classes when English learning activities are in progress.

Looking back to the survey above, it seems a little different in the practice of writing; there is a tendency that all educators do not to allow the translingual practices in writing. This data seems encouraging, and there is no tolerance in writing to do the translingual practice. Here are relevant statements from the educators.

“Baur bahasa dalam *speaking* boleh dengan pertimbangan tertentu. Namun dalam tulisan tidak bisa saya terima karena mahasiswa sejatinya bisa memanfaatkan kamus. Apalagi tugas menulis selalu diberikan waktu yang lebih leluasa” Ibu Citra.

"Language mixing in speaking can be done with certain considerations. But in writing, I can't accept it because students can use a dictionary. Moreover, I always assign the writing assignments with flexible time.” Ms. Citra.

In a separate interview, Mr. Esper thinks that writing has a different policy from speaking, which occurs quickly and flows just like that. He always encourages students to avoid using mixed language in writing. Statement of Mr. Esper that represent his main idea is as follows:

“Aneh saja, jika dalam praktek menulis mahasiswa juga melakukan baur bahasa. Tidak seharusnya terjadi karena mahasiswa tidak sedang berinteraksi dengan orang lain tetapi dengan dirinya sendiri dan waktunya fleksibel” Mr. Esper

“It's strange, if in writing skill students also mix languages. In writing exercise, students are not interacting with other people in real time but they do with themselves and the time is flexible.” Mr Esper

The use of English inside the classroom varied depending on the educators' preferences and policy. Based on the talk with selected participants, they used English moderately. They also allowed their students to use whatever languages they chose. The educators did not discriminate against the mixing of languages that happened in

their classes. Only a few numbers of the participants enforce the use of English only inside the classroom. As matter of fact, educators who used translanguaging as practical pedagogy in EFL, it was found their classroom interactions livelier and more fluid. Students felt more empowered that they could communicate in different languages and employ other resources freely.

CONCLUSION

The findings indicated that educators of higher education have positive outlooks toward translanguaging a practical teaching approach in EFL. Majority of them employed this new approach strategically in different occasions with different purposes such as to organize the classroom management, to help students easily understand the targeted language, and to check students' understanding. Moreover, the educators revealed strong acceptance to the use translanguaging as practical pedagogy that gave them opportunity to support English learning rather than as weakness as well-known as indication of lack of proficiency. Although, the participants do not recognize with the notion of translanguaging as new approach of language studies, they perceive positively with the use of translanguaging in their teaching activities by giving their students an opportunity to use other languages in EFL classroom. So, there is a need gradually to promote this notion widely not only to educators but also to the policy makers who have significant role in shifting educational practices.

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