



TRANSLANGUAGING AS A LANGUAGE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY IN A MULTILINGUAL CLASSROOM

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Abstract— Communication can be challenging for learners studying in a multilingual environment who have various linguistic backgrounds. The translanguaging approach is introduced at this point. There are studies about it; however, the results differ based on the context. This study, specifically considered the senior high school teachers and students of the University of the Cordilleras in Baguio, which is a melting pot of cultures and ethnicities, using Iloko as the primary language and speaking specific dialects. This study aimed to determine the attitude of senior high school English teachers and students and to distinguish the difference between the attitudes of the aforementioned population concerning the practice of translanguaging as a language management strategy in a multilingual classroom. Descriptive-comparative research was conducted, where the researcher compared the relationship between the two variables. A T-test was used to compare the means of the two research samples. The findings revealed that the practice of translanguaging is often helpful for students to express their thoughts and ideas during interactions and collaborations, but it is rarely helpful for students to perform well in speaking and writing as regards of assessment. Further, the students perceived translation more positively than the teachers. Students can use their native language in English classes, but teachers may struggle with balancing subject purpose. This is very much the key component in future attempts to develop students' English proficiency while maintaining their native language.

Keywords— Translanguaging, Language Management Strategy, Multilingual Classroom, Native Language

I. INTRODUCTION

In Kachru's (1982, 1988) concentric circles of English, the inner circle refers to the traditional cultural and linguistic bases of English, for instance, the USA, Canada, and UK; the outer circle represents the institutionalized non-native varieties of English as a Second Language (ESL), for example, India, Singapore, Korea, and the Philippines; and the expanding circle pertains to the regions where the performance varieties

of English are used in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context, such as Russia and China. As an ESL country and because the Philippines was colonized by America, which led to the teaching of the English language, the acquisition of a second language is becoming more challenging, and the level of proficiency and communicative competence of students is gradually diminishing despite the firm implementation of the English Only Policy (EOP) in the English classes. English-only instructional policies for English learners appear to be a barrier to learning English. There are limitations to communicating ideas through speaking and writing for fear of committing mistakes in terms of pronunciation and grammar. In contrast, acknowledging the use of students' heritage language ensures dynamic social interaction and a positive attitude toward learning the second language.

Learners who speak more than one language could be better at using the first language (L1) than the second language (L2). A two-way approach could be employed as an effective pedagogy. Cummins (2008), as cited in Creese and Blackledge (2010), defines bilingual education as "the use of two (or more) languages of instruction at some point in a student's school career". In a multilingual classroom, the teacher encourages the students to communicate and express themselves in English, but not all of them can communicate using the second language because they are more comfortable using their first language. Even though English is still the primary language of instruction, other languages should be considered as well, such as their home language. They use their home language to think about language use and understand how language functions and works, which optimizes their linguistic repertoires.

The learners are more engaged in class and flexible when using their native language. Hence, translanguaging as a language management strategy benefits them. Language management addresses communication problems that help learners confidently express themselves. Mwaniki (2014) states that "language management" is the critical and creative deployment of strategies designed to address language-related challenges and harness language resources, especially in multilingual settings. Teaching in a context wherein the learners speak more than one language is challenging, and so



are the learners when they converse with their classmates when they are asked to recite, or when they present in front of others. The dilemma is aggravated when English is imposed as a medium of communication in the classroom.

Filipinos, a multi-lingual race, consider English their second language. Combining international and vernacular languages is a common practice in rural and urban settings, enhancing formality and sounding more dignified (Valerio, 2015). There are eight major languages or lingua franca that are utilized as the language of instruction as per DepEd Order 16, Series 2012, Guidelines on the Implementation of the Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE), Tagalog, Kapampangan, Pangasinense, Iloko, Bikol, Cebuano, Hiligaynon, Waray, Tausug, Maguindanaoan, Maranano, and Chabacano. Yet, the term "mother tongue" is more specific, for it pertains to a native, home, or heritage language that a person has grown up speaking since early childhood. Baguio is known to be a melting pot, a fusion of cultures and ethnicities, where Iloko is the commonly used language; however, considering that the city's residents are from other provinces of the Cordillera, there are particular dialects that they speak. Therefore, in a classroom, the students speak various languages and dialects in which English as a medium of instruction is the least priority unless the teacher enforces the use of the English Only Policy (EOP). Nonetheless, the students do not comply with the policy.

Dialect refers to a language's unique pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammatical features. It is formed when people are geographically and socially separated. Dialects can be classified as social dialects or regional dialects based on social class and background (Tegegne, 2015). The Philippines is a diverse nation with numerous languages, dialects, and sub-dialects; thus, it is expected that the students are multidialectal. It is a situation in which a person understands or speaks more than two varieties of the same language (Poudel, 2010). This is the reason why students with different linguistic backgrounds studying in a multilingual context find communication very challenging. This is where the translanguaging approach is introduced.

Translanguaging involves a person using their entire language repertoire, including varieties, registers, and styles. Teachers should respect students' home languages and use their personal language repertoire to help students access content, improve general American English proficiency, and achieve academic success. Leveraging students' daily translanguaging abilities can maximize learning through activities and strategies (Hillcrest, 2021). In addition, it is an effective method for teaching English materials or foreign languages to multilingual students, enabling efficient understanding of target language through translation of words, vocabularies, sentences, and phrases. In the study, the teacher used Bahasa Indonesia in order to unify the different characteristics of the ethnic groups and local languages. Students will find it easier to comprehend meanings in both English and local languages (Nursanti, 2021).

In a class with five different local languages, according to the teacher, translanguaging as a linguistic resource in Grade 1 MTB-MLE class is useful in communication processes, they actively participate in discussions and fully absorb the material, cooperative learning is visible, and slow learners quickly learn concepts. It could also be inferred that translanguaging is already a part of the actual language that surrounds children (Casalan, 2022). Further, the use of translanguaging serves as a 'bridge' to the learners' learning of English, which instantiates the use of translanguaging as a mediating tool between the teacher and the learners, between and among the learners, between the teacher and her tasks, and the learners and their tasks. It suggests that the use of translanguaging in English classrooms, particularly in multilingual settings, should be encouraged because it helps mediate the communicative functions that learners need to fulfill to succeed in their various tasks (Reyes, 2018).

With this, translanguaging is a natural process for multilingual learners, and they engage in it independently. By utilizing it as a resource for learning, in which the teachers use translanguaging intentionally as part of the instruction (learning activities or strategies), the learning goals and objectives are likely to be more easily achieved. It does not only value the home language of the learners, but it also serves as a bridge, connecting the home language (first language) to English (second language), and serving as a medium to improve their English proficiency. Translanguaging as a pedagogy may be deemed beneficial, but it remains arguable about how positive the attitude of teachers and students towards the pedagogy in language teaching and learning is and how it could be effectively implemented.

Thus, this study aimed to answer the following questions:

1. What is the attitude of senior high school English teachers about the practice of translanguaging as a language management strategy in a multilingual classroom?
2. What is the attitude of senior high school students about the practice of translanguaging as a language management strategy in a multilingual classroom?
3. What is the difference between the attitudes of senior high school teachers and students about the practice of translanguaging as a language management strategy in a multilingual classroom?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Translanguaging acknowledges multiple languages, despite English being the primary language of instruction. It is a teaching approach that facilitates students' learning of academic English by enabling them to think in multiple languages and use their home language simultaneously. For example, a student is reading an English article while also thinking and connecting in his home language, annotating, writing comprehension responses, and translating them into English, utilizing his full linguistic repertoire (Najarro, 2023).



This infers that translanguaging can improve the academic proficiency of the students, for they can use their home language to consider their overall language use. They are not deprived of the right to use their home language; moreover, they use it to aid them in understanding a prompt or comprehending a text.

Opening a "translanguaging space" promotes respect for all languages in classrooms, fosters productive engagement in academic and social interactions, and promotes equitable teaching, learning, and identity formation (Dougherty, 2021). This implies that the home language of the students should be recognized and valued for academic success. They do not feel excluded; rather, they feel accommodated and empowered. Students usually have difficulty expressing their ideas and feelings in English, but the use of their home language alleviates their anxiety and gives them confidence. Students use translanguaging in their everyday lives, and this can be utilized to further enhance their learning.

However, certain attitudes and ideologies of teachers and students towards languages, language learning, and translanguaging were identified as challenges in implementing translanguaging pedagogy (Kim & Weng, 2022). Prioritizing English over other languages is the purpose of subjects in which English is the primary medium of instruction. It defeats the purpose of the subject or hinders the attainment of the learning outcome if the teacher allows the use of other languages. Conversely, it could be the other way around, wherein the students are deprived of the opportunity to use their home language or forced to use the English language, resulting in passive learners who refuse to participate. Also, the simultaneous use of both languages may be overwhelming and confusing for learners. It can be an effective learning tool, but it could be against the mastery of the English language.

Language policies, curricula, and assessment practices retain their preoccupations with national and standard languages (Conteh, 2018). As much as the English teachers want to incorporate learners' home language in terms of assessment and instruction, they refrain from doing so to comply with the K-12 program outcome, in which any senior high school graduate or basic education completer is ready to proceed to any of the four exits of the K-12 program by being able to proficiently communicate orally and in writing. Hence, the use of the English language is strictly implemented in the classroom, where the students are not allowed to use their language, especially when the class requires speaking or presenting.

Translanguaging in ESL classrooms enhances understanding and processing of information, but has limited impact on language proficiency. Students' higher grades post-translanguaging demonstrate enhanced understanding and knowledge processing. If used wisely, it could be a valuable asset to ESL classrooms and programs, challenging students' thinking skills and answering questions based on understanding (Akbar & Taqi, 2020). Additionally, Translanguaging is an effective practice for improving

students' English language proficiency, allowing them to switch between languages and negotiate meaning effectively. However, not all teachers are comfortable with translanguaging strategies or are beginning to use it (Champlin, 2016).

Omidire and Ayob (2022) revealed that the enablers of using learners' home languages as a support strategy to facilitate learning and teaching within multilingual classrooms were a non-threatening environment and the teachers' positive attitudes towards translanguaging. However, the constraints included the extent of language complexities and contrary views relating to L1. Also, Yuvayapan (2019) found that EFL teachers' perceptions of translanguaging differ from their practices. Although they held positive views about translanguaging in some particular situations, they did not frequently employ this pedagogy due to the expectations of their institutions, colleagues, and parents of their students.

Through translanguaging, the teachers were able to present their lessons, conduct classroom discussions, enhance students' understanding, and manage student behavior more effectively and efficiently; and the students, in turn, were able to participate in classroom discussions and substantively demonstrate their knowledge and understanding (De Los Reyes, 2019). Furthermore, Both natural and official translanguaging are employed in English language teaching, and translanguaging bridges the linguistic gap between learners' L1, L2, and the target language, which is common in a linguistically diverse country such as the Philippines. Translanguaging in language classrooms is growing in practice but needs to be established as a teaching pedagogy (Gatil, 2021).

The literature shows the pros and cons of translanguaging as a pedagogy, strategy, or tool in teaching in a multilingual classroom or English language teaching. However, translanguaging may not be applicable in all teaching and learning contexts, may not be appropriately and effectively employed, and may be contrary to language ideologies that lead to different views among teachers and students.

Through this study, the teachers will be more receptive, positive, and effective in the utilization of translanguaging strategies, allowing the students to employ their full linguistic repertoire. Also, the learners' comprehension and English proficiency will be improved by considering their home language, connecting their home language to English, and creating a non-threatening environment. Furthermore, it challenges the monoglossic ideologies of schools. It supports the use of multiple languages in classrooms, providing equal privileges to different language learners.

III. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

To allow objectivity and accuracy of results, a quantitative method was applied, which provides summaries of data that support generalizations about the phenomenon under study



and employs prescribed procedures to ensure validity and reliability (Serrano, 2016). Regarding the quantitative research design, a descriptive design was preferred because it gives a better and deeper understanding of a phenomenon (Amante, Atienza, & Mendoza, 2008) and reveals problems for which timely remedial measures may be instituted (Ariola, 2006). Specifically, descriptive-comparative research was conducted, where the researcher could compare and draw conclusions based on the findings about the relationship between two variables. The researcher delved into the attitudes of senior high school English teachers and students at the University of the Cordilleras toward the practice of translanguaging and determined if there is a difference between the attitudes of senior high school teachers and students regarding the practice of translanguaging.

Population and Locale of the Study

In determining the population of the teachers, the researcher used total enumeration, in which all teachers under the English language department were considered since there are only 12. As for the students, there were 73, of whom a random sample

was drawn through simple random sampling. In this particular method, each member of the population has an equal probability of being selected as a sample (Garcia, 2003). This study was administered at the University of the Cordilleras, Senior High School Department. The teachers and students are from different regions of the Philippines with different linguistic, cultural, educational, and philosophical backgrounds.

Data Collection Instrument

In the gathering of the data, the questionnaire employed by Nambisan (2014) in the study "Teachers' Attitudes Towards and Uses of Translanguaging in English Language Classrooms in Iowa" was adopted and modified based on the content to benefit the study of the researcher. The questionnaire went through validation, and as for reliability, it underwent reliability testing using Cronbach's alpha. Table 1 presents reliability estimates of the variables using the scale of interpretation for the index of Cronbach's alpha by Tavakol and Dennick (2011).

Table 1. Reliability Statistics of the Questionnaires

Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Interpretation
10	.893	Good

The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was solved via the Statistics Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). It measures the reliability of the items in terms of internal consistency, that is, how closely related the items are as a group. The Cronbach's coefficient is 0.893 and is interpreted as good. This implies that the questionnaires have good internal consistency and reliability.

Data Collection Procedure

The researcher administered the questionnaire to 12 senior high school English teachers and 73 senior high school students. The researcher presented an overview of the study to understand its significance and elucidated its contents, specifically on items that may not be easily grasped or understood by some respondents. The respondents were able to finish answering the questionnaire within three to five minutes. Subsequently, the researcher collated the data, tabulated the answers, computed the scores, interpreted the results, and analyzed and evaluated the findings of the study to be able to answer the last problem of the study.

Treatment of Data

In answering the statement of the problems, appropriate statistical treatment was used to analyze the data. For the first and second statements of the problem, identifying the attitudes of senior high school English teachers and senior high school students toward the practice of translanguaging as a language management strategy in a multilingual classroom, the researcher used the mean, which is the exact mathematical center of a distribution. It is equal to the sum of all scores divided by the number of cases (Cristobal, A., & Cristobal, M., 2017). The researcher looked into the average attitude of senior high school English teachers and senior high school students toward the practice of translanguaging as a language management strategy in a multilingual classroom; correspondingly, a t-test was employed to determine if there is a significant difference between the two groups, namely senior high school English teachers and senior high school students.

Scale of Interpretation

Scale	Descriptor	Interpretation
4.20-5.00	VF	Very Often
3.40-4.19	O	Often
2.60-3.39	SO	Somewhat Often
1.80-2.59	NF	Never Often
1.00-1.79	N	Never



IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Attitude of senior high school teachers on translanguaging as a language management strategy in a multilingual classroom

Table 1. Senior high school teachers' attitude on translanguaging

Items	Mean	Description
1. Using students' native language in the classroom helps in explaining concepts.	3.84	O
2. Using students' native language in the classroom engages students in collaborative tasks.	3.67	O
3. Using students' native language in the classroom helps in understanding instructions.	3.68	O
4. Using students' native language in the classroom enables participation by lower proficiency students.	3.45	O
5. Using students' native language in the classroom encourages students to respond to the teacher's questions.	3.88	O
6. Using students' native language in the classroom helps students perform well in speaking and writing.	3.53	O
7. Using students' native language in the classroom creates a conducive atmosphere for learning.	3.71	O
8. Using students' native language in the classroom allows students to express thoughts without hesitations.	3.97	O
9. Using students' native language in the classroom avoids barriers among students.	3.71	O
10. Using students' native language in the classroom gives students a sense of belongingness.	3.96	O
Overall Mean	3.74	O

The attitude of senior high school teachers toward the practice of translanguaging as a language management strategy in a multilingual classroom had a numerical value of 3.74, which is interpreted as often. The item "Using students' native language in the classroom allows students to express thoughts without hesitations" acquired the highest mean with a numerical value of 3.97; however, the item "Using students' native language in the classroom enables participation by lower proficiency students" obtained the lowest mean with a numerical value of 3.45. Although the two items are different to the mean, both items were interpreted often.

This implies that the students can unreservedly express themselves by allowing the use of their native language. Macawile and Plata (2022) revealed that teachers exhibit a positive attitude towards translanguaging, which aids their students in meaning-making and knowledge construction. Also, Reyes (2018) showed that the participants' use of translanguaging mediated their communicative functions in the teaching and learning of English in multilingual ESL classrooms. The learners could communicate better through

translanguaging, suggesting that it is their inherent and natural way of communicating as multilingual.

Moreover, students with low proficiency in English can overcome their speaking anxiety by being allowed to use their native language in the classroom, which makes them more engaged and participative. According to Ha et al. (2021), translanguaging is used as an effective way to help the majority of low-level students overcome the fear of speaking English because it boosts the participants' confidence. Thus, it can also help improve the students' fluency in speaking.

Translanguaging enables the students to consider other languages as resources and value linguistic and cultural diversity. In the Philippine setting, the majority of Filipinos are multilingual. They are fluent in three or more languages, including their mother tongue, Filipino, and English. These language varieties, or linguistic repertoires, can be utilized by the students to improve their communicative competence. They are encouraged to use their linguistic skills, which improves their communication skills.

Attitude of senior high school students on translanguaging as a language management strategy in a multilingual classroom



Table 2: Senior high school students' attitude on translanguaging

Items	Mean	Description
1. Using students' native language in the classroom helps in explaining concepts.	3.00	SO
2. Using students' native language in the classroom engages students in collaboratives tasks.	3.33	SO
3. Using students' native language in the classroom helps in understanding instructions.	3.09	SO
4. Using students' native language in the classroom enables participation by lower proficiency student.	3.67	O
5. Using students' native language in the classroom encourages students to respond to teacher's questions.	3.75	O
6. Using students' native language in the classroom help students perform well in speaking and writing.	2.58	NF
7. Using students' native language in the classroom creates a conducive atmosphere for learning.	3.25	SO
8. Using students' native language in the classroom allows students to express thoughts without hesitations.	4.33	VF
9. Using students' native language in the classroom avoids barriers among students.	3.75	O
10. Using students' native language in the classroom gives students a sense of belongingness.	3.67	O
Overall Mean	3.45	O

The data suggest that the attitude of students toward translanguaging as a language management strategy in a multilingual classroom is often interpreted with a numerical value of 3.45. The item with the highest mean is "Using students' native language in the classroom allows students to express thoughts without hesitations," which is interpreted very often with a numerical value of 4.33. On the other hand, the item with the lowest mean is "Using students' native language in the classroom helps students perform well in speaking and writing," which is often interpreted with a numerical value of 2.58.

Gren (2022) revealed that the observed effects of translanguaging were generally positive, and the findings indicate that translanguaging is beneficial to students' communicative skills and comprehension, increasing participation and confidence, as well as providing additional support for lower proficiency students. However, the findings also show translanguaging to have negligible effects when it comes to the actual language skills of the students. Furthermore, students are shown to consider their linguistic resources important, but they are hesitant to use translanguaging out of fear that it will be an obstacle to their target language learning opportunities. Also, Chicherina and

Strelkova (2023) that the balance between the use of L1 and L2 in the classroom also requires a thoughtful approach. The use of L1 should be minimized; otherwise, it can be detrimental to the target language.

It implies that the use of native language is often helpful for students to express their thoughts during interactions and collaborations, but it is rarely helpful for students to perform well in speaking and writing in terms of assessment. Highlighting the usage of the two languages, home language and English, allows them to learn and creates an encouraging learning environment. This is evident when the teacher provides learning activities or part of the learning strategies to help the students understand the concepts, texts, and prompts and engage in discussion. However, in terms of assessments wherein the students are evaluated whether they have achieved the learning objectives, the use of native language rarely helps students perform well because assessments reflect only the English language employing a monoglossic perspective. The students are expected to perform using the target language, despite having multiple languages in their repertoires.

Difference between the attitude of senior high school teachers and students on translanguaging as a language management strategy in a multilingual classroom

Table 3: Senior high school teachers and students' attitude on translanguaging

Respondents	N	Mean	Interpretation	Mann-Whitney U	P-value
Students	73	3.74	O	387.5	0.523ns
Teachers	12	3.45	O		
Overall	85	3.70	O		

ns = no significant difference



The numerical value for the attitude of senior high school students on translanguaging as a language management strategy in a multilingual classroom is higher than the attitude of senior high school teachers. This difference in evaluation was found to be not significant as reflected in the p-value (0.523). This further implies attitude of senior high school students and teachers on translanguaging as a language management strategy in a multilingual classroom is different. According to Seals (2021), students displayed more confidence in using the target linguistic variety when they were encouraged to translanguaging; however, teachers were not sure what the effect of their translanguaging practices was on the student's learning, and how to proceed in a structured pedagogical way. Connecting their home language to English is more advantageous to students because they have the autonomy to use their home language in communicating, which is not ideal in English subjects considering the nature and goals of the subject, in which the students need to develop their communication skills using the target language for academic success. With this, teachers remain skeptical of translanguaging as a pedagogy.

This means that students perceive translation more positively than teachers. Translanguaging is in favor of the students, for they can use their native language in the classroom, specifically in English classes; however, for teachers who use English as a medium of instruction in teaching, allowing students to use their native language defeats the purpose of the subject; though they affirm that this language management strategy is beneficial in developing the communication abilities of the students. The first language of the students bridges the gap in learning the second language.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The senior high school teachers perceive the practice of translanguaging helpful as a language management strategy in a multilingual classroom for engaging students in conversations and enabling the participation of students with lower proficiency. The use of home language allows the students to converse with ease, deviating from a monoglossic view of language in the classroom.

The senior high school students perceive translanguaging as helpful in conversation; nevertheless, it is not often evident in their performance in speaking and writing. Students do not use their home language in speaking and writing performances in which the use of English is the required instruction, and teachers strictly implement the use of English to assess students' proficiency in the target language.

The senior high school students' attitude toward translanguaging is higher than that of the teachers. Students affirm that the use of their native language is an effective language management strategy for developing their communication skills. However, teachers, though they find translanguaging effective, have uncertainties concerning the

use of their home language in attaining the purpose of the English subject.

There should be further studies on mastering the second language while maintaining the home language of the learners. It will also be helpful if there are research endeavors on the effects of translanguaging in assessments, not only on instructions. Further, future research should consider the potential impact of translanguaging as a language management strategy in terms of psychological, cognitive, social, and cultural considerations and implications for educational practice.

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