

Indonesian undergraduates' perspectives of translanguaging

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Abstract—The practice of translanguaging among English users is receiving growing attention as English is now perceived as a lingua franca, a global language. Most users, around 817 million (Bolton and Bacon-Shone, 2020) reside in Asia. This changing reality alters the sociolinguistic landscape of communication as English is spoken more by those who have diverse home languages. With an awareness that English is the property of its users, the response on how the practice of accommodating all linguistic resources they have needs examining. Although research concerning this issue has been increasing in countries where English is an additional language, how it is perceived by Indonesian undergraduates still receives less attention. In this current study, data was collected through a survey, and analyzed using descriptive statistics. Results indicate that translanguaging generally has a positive response in four different foci: as a practice, for English learning, for social uses, and in university context. Some implications on the policy are also discussed to respond to the findings.

Keywords: bi/multilingualism, Indonesian undergraduates, linguistic resources, translanguaging

I. INTRODUCTION

Monolingual language ideologies have occupied the language practices for such a long period because languages are seen as separate from one to another. As a matter of fact, traditionally bilingual and multilingual individuals were taught to divorce their first or home language from another language that they are learning. However, the swift paradigm on how to treat an individual's all linguistic resources is gaining stronger attention. This awareness is fed by a belief that all languages are equal for status. Traditionally in educational context, there lies terms such as 'standard' and 'target' language which contest languages. This implies that there is a language which is higher in status than the other. The social justice in employing all linguistic resources is denounced with this statement which leads to social inequality (Blackledge, Creese, & Takhi, 2014, p.193).

The use of translanguaging practices in real-life communication and classrooms incorporate views that languages strengthen each other, not contaminate (Cenoz, 2019; Makoni & Pennycook, 2007). The purpose of accommodating all linguistic resources is to succeed in communication purposes and develop skills to engage with multilingual societies. Drawing on multilingualism phenomena, translanguaging in

classrooms is called pedagogical translanguaging or intentional translanguaging (Cenoz & Gorter, 2017). It is originally a pedagogical strategy where the input and output of language learning use different languages. However, it is now expanding to include any classroom strategies that enable the use of more than two languages. Intentional translanguaging has served several benefits. Garcia, Johnson, and Seltzer (2017) postulate that it serves four main purposes: 1) supporting students' engagement with complex texts; 2) giving opportunities to negotiate, refute, and challenge textual information; 3) mediating classroom atmosphere that promotes social justice where it challenges linguistic hierarchies; 4) providing sensitive classroom community that values all members who use all linguistic resources they have. Besides intentional translanguaging, there is spontaneous translanguaging which refers to a more general form of translanguaging because it happens in more natural settings both inside and outside classrooms. It is usually characterized with loose boundaries of languages as they are at play in a communication practice (Garcia & Li, 2014). The studies of spontaneous translanguaging were mostly carried out in English-speaking countries with speakers that use English as an additional language (Garcia, 2009; Gort & Sambiante, 2015; Martinez-Roldan 2015; Moody, Chowdhury, & Eslami, 2019).

The present study, inspired by the study of Moody, Chowdhury, and Eslami (2019), is aimed at exploring the perceptions of Indonesian undergraduates on the translanguaging practices which were done by their instructors or themselves in both classroom settings and social communication contexts. Indonesian undergraduates of this study are bilinguals and multilinguals as they speak more than one language; a local language, a national language, and English. To guide this study, the research questions are:

1. How do bilingual and multilingual Indonesian undergraduates view the practice of translanguaging?
2. How do bilingual and multilingual Indonesian undergraduates view translanguaging for English learning?

3. How do bilingual and multilingual Indonesian undergraduates view translanguaging for social uses?
4. How do bilingual and multilingual Indonesian undergraduates view the use of translanguaging in university context?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Bi/multilingualism and translanguaging

Traditionally, bilingual speakers' linguistic behavior was explained under the perspective of monolingual norm in which Weinreich (1954) claimed that interference should be interpreted as deviation of either language's norm. This means that when a bilingual speaker chooses to use features that do not strictly adhere to one of the named languages, this bilingual practice is deemed wrong. Consequently, under this perspective, the bilingual speaker is prone to stigmatization of being wrong or inadequate. Translanguaging challenges this perspective. Translanguaging enables linguists to see language practice by bi/multilinguals differently from the traditional-monolingual norms. Translanguaging does not see the bi/multilinguals' linguistic practice to simply demonstrate the use of two distinct named languages; rather, it demonstrates what Garcia and Li Wei (2018) claim as "the disaggregated view of language as the meaning-making features those human beings use". This is to say that translanguaging goes beyond the operation of nation-based named languages to the activation of the bilingual speakers' full linguistic repertoire to purposefully mean in communication. Under the perspective of translanguaging, the interference is not seen as a defect but a natural consequence of being in a translanguaging space (Li Wei, 2011). Anzaldúa (1987) explains that linguistically this is the case with bilingual speakers for they constantly live in the border where the distinctive use of the two languages is not the norm.

Benefits of translanguaging in language learning and communication

The term translanguaging was first introduced by Williams (1994) which refers to the integration of the two languages for bilingual classroom's instruction as a pedagogical strategy. Garcia and Orthegui (2020, p.8) contend that translanguaging works to help bilingual students to guarantee that they are able to perform bilingualism in ways that show them who they are. Further, they contend that translanguaging goes beyond 'linguistic' as it involves how bodies, signs, gestures, add to the system of meaning-making of language users which are used in their communication.

In addition to the exploration of pedagogical benefits that are catered by translanguaging practices in classrooms, recently, studies have geared on observing the impacts that translanguaging practices have on social interactions. Lying on the premise that identity is constructed socially and awareness of one 'self' prevails through social interaction (Riley, 2007), translanguaging becomes one way to project the group affiliations that language learners have. García

(2010) affirms that multilingual speakers choose their language practices in relation to who they want to channel in an interaction. Creese and Blackledge (2015) exemplify how a teacher of a Panjabi class in Birmingham uses two resources, English, and Panjabi, altogether as a normal-accepted practice. The observation to the class session shows how the teacher uses translanguaging as a strategy to accentuate identity markers, e.g., the teacher selectively uses Panjabi for 'Sikhism' and 'kinship' concept, and the students reciprocate voluntarily by shifting to Panjabi terms when demonstrating the Panjabi cultural capitals they experience at home. This example showcases that translanguaging allows both the teacher and the students to adopt and negotiate their identity. Through a thorough observation on translanguaging practice employed by a teacher teaching a mariachi class in a U.S. high school, Aydar and Eneix (2019) disclosed that translanguaging helps to retain and promote the identity of a minority group. The activation of the use of both languages in the class helps the members to foster a wide array of cultural and linguistic identity development. These reports validate the benefits of translanguaging pedagogy for the exploration and awareness of bilingual learners' identity.

In social interaction, translanguaging also helps to promote solidarity between the participants who are interacting in a diverse cultural ground. Creese, Blackledge, and Hu (2018) confirmed this through their observation in communication between two butchers and buyers in a market in Birmingham. Their investigation reveals that translanguaging practice helps to break the communicative barriers sourcing from different culture interplays by transforming 'cultural stereotypes into a unifying resource for laughter and communicative overlap' (p.4). The similar function is also disclosed in a study reported by Creese and Blackledge in 2019. The observation on the communication between information assistants and customers in a city library in Birmingham shows that the use of translanguaging as a strategy employed by information assistants has shifted the communication experience from information provision to a more emotionally invested interaction. Translanguaging is also seen as a strategy to avoid communication breakdown.

Perceptions on translanguaging

There have been several studies to discuss translanguaging practices in Indonesia, for instance Rasman (2018), and Santoso (2020) with different research settings. Rasman's study took a case of translanguaging in a junior high school classroom context. Using a qualitative case study he analyzed video recording of EFL learners' interaction while having a group discussion. From an ecological perspective, he found that translanguaging practices helped the learners to learn and the use of learners' first language did not inhibit the learning. Another study by Santoso (2020) which was carried out in a university context investigated five participants from the majoring English department. Data from audio-recorded classroom observation and interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis. Findings revealed that translanguaging practices were employed to scaffold their understanding of difficult concepts, to enable them to develop criticality and creativity on the language uses, and to interact in a collaborative discussion with peers.

In terms of perceptions towards translanguaging there have been several studies in other contexts outside Indonesia. Rivera and Mazak (2017) for example designed a case study involving twenty-nine Puerto Rican university students majoring psychology to discover their responses on the practices and pedagogy of translanguaging in their experience. Using case study, classroom observations, collections of students-teachers' materials, and surveys on language attitude, they revealed that generally the participants perceived translanguaging as mostly neutral to positive. The study concluded that the positive perceptions on translanguaging were sourced from the better information and the more experiences they have on the practice of translanguaging rather than the proficiency.

Another study which took undergraduate participants was carried by Cartens (2016). The participants were taking a construction engineering program in South Africa. They were asked about their perception on the use of translanguaging as a pedagogy strategy. Using a semi-structured survey questionnaire as a data collection method, there were several findings. First, translanguaging is viewed to help them learn the concept at hand as it enables them to understand the bigger picture, to distinguish and to simplify concepts, and to deliver their own conceptual comprehension. Translanguaging was also seen to help them develop competence and self-assurance of using English. Additionally, it was also claimed to give a platform for students to create terms using African languages and impacted positively on social cohesion between themselves.

Moody, Chowdhury, and Eslami (2019) also discussed translanguaging and the perceptions of graduate (masters and doctoral) students in the US. They recruited 182 bi/multilingual graduates. Using survey design, the participants answered 26 questions determining perceptions on translanguaging. The results showed that the participants were mostly supportive of translanguaging for helping them learn English as the L2, in social encounters, and as practices between/ among bi/multilinguals. Their perceptions on translanguaging in higher education context was interesting as the data showed that the participants viewed translanguaging as a sign of lack of proficiency.

The previous studies had set a ground for information on translanguaging and how it was perceived by different participants especially with university students both undergraduates and graduates. In the context of Indonesia, the study on perceptions of translanguaging which encompasses situations in the classroom and beyond is still rarely conducted. Although research in translanguaging has flourished in English as a foreign language or additional settings, how it is perceived by Indonesian university participants needs showcasing to extend the discussion further both in Indonesia and in a wider context internationally.

III. METHODS

Settings and Participants

This study was in a university in East Java province, Indonesia. There were 219 participants who were undergraduates majoring in English literature who joined this

study on voluntary basis. They were invited to answer the survey because they have experiences of practicing translanguaging both due to pedagogical purposes and social purposes in offline and online encounters. The participants' age spanned between 18 to 24 years old. They were bi/multilinguals as they spoke Bahasa Indonesia as a national language, English, and most of them also spoke a local language for instance Javanese, Madurese, or Sundanese.

Data collection

The survey data was collected using Google form. Before they participated in this survey, they were informed about the nature, the purposes, and the goal of this study. They received information on how the researchers used their perceptions over the issue of translanguaging. Their perceptions were recorded, examined, and interpreted which later was written in a piece of academic report. They knew they could withdraw participation if they disagreed, and they could request for the survey results by contacting the researchers via telephone.

Instrument

This study used a questionnaire which was adapted from Rivera and Mazak (2017) and Moody, Chowdhury, and Eslami (2019). Originally their questionnaire consisted of 23 content statements which was aimed to gain the participants' views on translanguaging. The 23 statements sought perceptions on four different themes, 1) translanguaging as a practice; 2) perceptions of translanguaging for L2 learning; 3) perceptions of translanguaging in social settings; 4) perceptions of translanguaging in higher education. This current study developed three additional questions under the theme 'perceptions of translanguaging in social settings' as we wanted to gain insight of their views on how they engage in translanguaging for communication purposes. Due to this addition, the total questions were 26. The questionnaire of this study had two parts. First part was the demographic information questions which requested participants' name, email address, age, and languages they speak, while the second part was the content questionnaire consisting of 26 questions. The questions were statements concerning the four themes to be rated using a Likert scale ranging from one to five, with one representing strongly disagree and five indicating strongly agree.

Data analysis

Data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics which showed the mean, and the standard deviation for each component of the statement in the questionnaire. The mean was calculated by taking the sum of all responses for each statement in the questionnaire divided by the count of all responses. The standard deviation was gained by calculating the square root of the variance. Following Moody, Chowdhury, and Eslami (2019) researchers categorized the mean values into three. A score between 2.5-3 was considered a neutral perception toward a questionnaire statement. On the other hand, anything below 2.5 was considered negative while above 3.5 was positive.

IV. RESULTS

In this section, the survey results are presented to explain the participants' perception of translanguaging under four themes: translanguaging as a practice, translanguaging for L2 learning, translanguaging in social settings, and translanguaging in higher education.

Table 1 The recapitulation of questionnaire results

Questions	Negative (below 2.5)	Neutral (2.5-3.5)	Positive (Above 3.5)	std
Translanguaging as a practice				
Translanguaging should be avoided by bilinguals.	2.52			1.01
Instructors at my university engage in translanguaging.			3.77	0.80
Translanguaging is a natural practice for bilinguals.			4.17	0.80
Translanguaging indicates a lack of linguistic proficiency in your second language		3		1.02
Translanguaging is a disrespectful practice.	1.89			0.94
Translanguaging is confusing for me.		2.50		1.01
Perceptions of translanguaging for L2 learning				
Translanguaging helped me learn a second language.			4.25	0.79
Translanguaging is only acceptable when you are learning a new language		3.02		1.08
Translanguaging is essential for learning a new language.			3.96	0.86
Translanguaging has assisted me in learning a second language.			4.05	0.80
Language instructors should avoid translanguaging because it will prevent second language learning		2.68		1.02
Perceptions of translanguaging in social settings				
It is okay to engage in translanguaging in social settings.			3.74	0.82
I use translanguaging in social settings.			3.94	0.92
Translanguaging is socially acceptable.			3.99	0.86
Translanguaging helps me to convey my intended effects for instance expressing humour, insult, or disappointment.			4.07	0.83
Translanguaging in social settings helps			4.05	0.89

others to identify my cultural background (for instance that I am from Madura).				
Translanguaging practice helps me to become closer with my partners while having an interaction.			3.97	0.89
Perceptions of translanguaging in higher education				
It is okay to engage in translanguaging in higher education settings			3.51	1.01
Bilinguals should be able to engage in translanguaging to complete university assignments		3.16		1.06
Translanguaging is acceptable to use within university-level assessments.		3.10		1.02
It is appropriate for university instructors to engage in translanguaging			3.54	0.79
Translanguaging by a university instructor is unprofessional.	2.25			0.98
I would feel upset if a university instructor engaged in translanguaging during class	2.23			1.05
If an instructor used translanguaging in class, it would be helpful for the bilingual students.			4.02	0.82
Translanguaging helps me engage in conversations with my colleagues			4.01	0.78
Translanguaging helps me understand conversations with my colleagues			4.12	0.79

DISCUSSION

Perception of translanguaging as a practice

The findings generally show that Indonesian undergraduates' perceptions were neutral-positive. They showed disagreement for the statement if translanguaging should be avoided (M=2.52) and that it was a disrespectful practice (M=1.89) and if it was confusing (M=2.5). The participants were neutral to view translanguaging as an indication of lack of proficiency (M=3). This suggests that Indonesian undergraduates perceive translanguaging practice as a common practice to show someone's decision in using all linguistic resources (M= 4.17) to guarantee successful communication in the academic arena as it was shown in their

positive perception if university instructors engage in translanguaging (M=3.77).

Compared to Moody, Chowdhury, and Eslami's study (2019), this study shows a stronger welcoming perception for translanguaging as a practice. Indonesian undergraduates do not see translanguaging as something to be avoided and disrespectful but a natural practice for bilinguals and multilinguals. These views on translanguaging are possibly caused by a common phenomenon of their teachers shuttling between languages in the classroom making this practice acceptable. Moreover, the fact that the participants themselves are all bilinguals and multilinguals, it gives evidence that their linguistic repertoire comes into play in their daily engagement with people in both the academic and non-academic settings.

The participants' view on translanguaging as a sign of lack of proficiency in English was neutral. This result when read together with other results seemed to contradict with the participants' view on translanguaging as a practice in general. Their view on university instructors who practice translanguaging was positive (M=3.77). This suggests that the view on translanguaging as a sign of lack of proficiency is directed to themselves or undergraduates in general. Perhaps, their neutral perception of translanguaging is driven more by their low self-confidence to show and use their all-linguistic repertoire. This could possibly be since society has higher regards towards people who use all English structures without shuttling between any other languages. Considering the participants are English major students, the demand of being able to show their English only repertoire is high as it relates to the perception of proficiency. It is likely that what undergraduates feel about always performing in English is the result of hegemonic views (Phillipson, 2011) which privileges native speakers and undermines bilingual/multilingual language rights.

Perception of translanguaging for L2 learning

Generally, the participants' view of translanguaging for L2 learning was positive. They perceived that it helped L2 learning (M=4.25), and that it was essential for learning English as an additional language (M=3.96). They were neutral about the statement that university instructors should avoid translanguaging (M=2.68). This finding on participants' perception of instructors' acts of shuttling between languages could be interpreted as a mild acceptance on translanguaging practices performed by lecturers. They were also generally neutral on the view that translanguaging was acceptable when learning a new language (M=3.02).

A perception that welcomes translanguaging as a help for L2 learning means a strong acceptance toward the use of all linguistic resources to assist learning content knowledge. A study by Mazak and Herbas-Donoso (2015) revealed that science professors practiced translanguaging in the classroom because they were unsure of their students' language proficiency, therefore the home language (Spanish) was used to help students understand core materials. This fact has driven professors' choices of using Spanish in the class but using key terms in English to help the students familiarize themselves with Internet or library catalogue searching.

Another study from Cahyani, de Courcy, and Barnett (2018) on Indonesian university instructors' practice of shuttling languages while in classroom contexts showed that translanguaging practices were driven by several reasons such as scaffolding knowledge, classroom management, building interpersonal rapport, and expressing affective concerns. These common actions of making use of linguistic resources in classroom interactions seem to feed a view that translanguaging is helpful in learning English as a new and additional language.

On the statement if the instructors should stop shuttling languages, the participants' views were neutral. However, the mean (M=2.68) was just slightly above negative. This can arguably be noted as a mild disagreement toward the instructors' use of English constantly or monolingual use of a learned language (in this case English). They believed that instructors' use of home languages and English while in classroom and outside classroom was beneficial. Omidire (2019, p.4-5) for instance appeals that translanguaging scaffolds language development and learning in a way that input is negotiated by the help of home language to yield successful comprehension. Garcia (2019, p.370-371) describes the advantages of translanguaging as a practice that optimizes meaning, sense of creativity and the critical skill of learning experience. Translanguaging also supports relationship building between students and teacher-students, promoting identity acknowledgement, and a positive classroom climate (Hillman et.al, 2019, p.43).

Perception of translanguaging in social settings

Overall, the undergraduates had high positive perceptions of translanguaging as a social practice. They perceived that it is normal to shuttle between languages while having social interactions (M= 3.74) as they acknowledged performing translanguaging while interacting with peers (M=3.94). They showed a positive welcoming perception of translanguaging as an acceptable act (M=3.99). Translanguaging was also perceived to help them convey their intentions correctly and appropriately such as delivering humor, expressing affront, and disappointments (M=4.07). It also helped to convey themselves and how they would prefer others to understand them (M=4.05). It was also seen to assist them to get cozy while talking with friends (M=3.97).

Most participants considered using more than one language while communicating is a common act for those who speak more than one language. Their perception is that translanguaging helps them perform better socially and culturally which can be interpreted as a sign of adaptation to a particular context of interaction and communication (Richards & Wilson, 2019). It was also derived from the questionnaire that showing cultural affiliation is also one of the strong reasons for the participants' use of translanguaging (M= 4.05). Sociolinguistically, multilingualism views languages as bounded entities of which language users utilize whatever linguistic features, they own to get what they mean at best (Jorgensen et al., 2011). Being interpreted as fluid, mixed, hybrid, the act of using two or more languages while interacting serves many purposes, among which are getting the messages across and performing self. A study from

Dumanig, David, and Manan (2020) with Filipinos in Malaysia for instance revealed that getting themselves understood and accepted by Malaysians was one of reasons the participants reduced their Filipino accents and accommodated their pronunciation to the local context. They also developed their multiple identities by adopting a Malaysian linguistic particle 'lah' while speaking English to succeed in communication which is termed as accommodation (Giles & Powesland 1975, p. 233). Another study of translanguaging practice online encountered by Schreiber (2015) showed that it maintained connections with other home language users (p.81) and membership of speech community. Regarding the results from this current research, the participants acknowledged that translanguaging helped them to be comfortable when conversing with friends. This act of building rapport such as delivering humor is assumed to be more successfully matched and well-received if it is performed in home language.

Perceptions of translanguaging in Higher Education

There were three statements which had very strong positive responses. Firstly, is it helpful for instructors to use translanguaging in the classroom (M=4.02). Secondly, do the participants perceive translanguaging as helpful in assisting them to communicate (M=4.01), and thirdly, does translanguaging help them understand what their friends say (M=4.12). The participants shared these views as they experienced them in their daily communication both in and outside the classroom. Two other statements posted positive views towards translanguaging too. Firstly, does university instructor's translanguaging practices show low professionalism (M= 2.25) and secondly if they felt upset when instructors used translanguaging while delivering materials in class (M= 2.23). The two previously mentioned statements indeed showed negative means (M= less than 3). However, these numbers should be read as their positive perception on the practice of translanguaging by university instructors. This can further be interpreted as a strong acceptance in the practice of using more languages while communicating in higher education contexts. These findings were in line with results from Caruso's study (2018) which revealed that translanguaging enabled students to reach comprehension and avoid misunderstanding. It also helped to promote inclusion among students with different language backgrounds. Other studies by Carol and van den Hoven (2016) and He, Lai, and Lin (2016) also shared similar results. The findings in this study shared similar results too with the study carried out by Moody, Chowdhury, and Eslami (2019) in which the participants were from various fields of study. This suggests that the practice of translanguaging is accepted positively across any major.

The findings of this study also show that there were two neutral perceptions on whether bilinguals should be able to do translanguaging while completing assignments (M=3.16) and whether translanguaging is acceptable for assessment purposes (M=3.10). The results indicated above are probably because the participants did not have any experience of doing assignments which allowed them to make use of any linguistic repertoire they have. They most likely were never assessed by instructors who welcome the use of more than

one language to deliver their answers. Santoso (2020) agrees that monolingual bias which is still heavily entrenched also contributes to a less favorable attitude to translanguaging practice in the classroom. This suggests that university instructors are called forward to practice translanguaging in the classroom and beyond to allow a more efficient flow in communication and multilingualism growth.

V. CONCLUSION

Translanguaging has received great attention as both in pedagogical and communicative practices. It is used in various contexts; either where English is spoken by the surrounding community or where English is not frequently spoken by offline communities. However, the affordances of technology and globalization has pushed language users to even make contacts more frequently through digital uses. Reflecting from these facts, multilingualism is represented through translanguaging. In higher education contexts, the practices of translanguaging have been growingly accepted. In this study, the Indonesian undergraduates mostly approved the practice of translanguaging both in classroom use and in communicative interactions. They had a positive view towards translanguaging practices by their instructors. Nevertheless, they had a neutral perspective if translanguaging indicates the instructor's lack of proficiency. We assume that this view is strongly related to them being English literature major undergraduates. This finding is interesting as they somehow perceive that shuttling between languages while communicating in and outside the classroom shows their shortfall. Further qualitative research on this perception which relates to their belief and attitude is important to examine the complexities.

There are some limitations concerning this study. Firstly, as the nature of this study is quantitative research, the reasons for translanguaging were not explored. Further qualitative research to investigate the perception of translanguaging in social contexts would be beneficial. Empirically, translanguaging is discussed in relation to identity and several pragmatic effects. More research focusing on the benefits, challenges, and effects of translanguaging in social contexts both offline and online encounters will advance the existing body of knowledge. Secondly, all participants of this study were English literature major undergraduates. Probing into the perception of translanguaging with Indonesian participants of different majors will give a better insight into the general perception of translanguaging among Indonesian undergraduates.

Drawing from the findings, there are several implications. Firstly, reflecting from sociolinguistic realities that nowadays English speakers are multilinguals, policy regarding the introduction of translanguaging as an acceptable, professional choice should be advocated. This could start from instructors' acceptance on the use of students' all linguistic repertoires whenever needed. Secondly, to be received by students, policy on the usage of only English that is usually present in higher education contexts especially in English department programs should be modified. This is to enable more academic benefits such as material

comprehension, criticality, self-development, and a positive classroom environment.

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