

Students' Perceptions on Translanguaging in English Teaching-Learning Process

Andi Nur Hafidzah Alfiyah Qashas¹, Nurdin Noni^{2*}, Chairil Anwar Korompot³

^{1,2,3}English Education Department, State University of Makassar, Indonesia

*Corresponding E-mail: nurdinnoni@unm.ac.id

Abstract

This study aims to determine students' perceptions of class 2020 of the English Education Study Program of Universitas Negeri Makassar about the use of translanguaging in the English teaching-learning process. The researcher used a mixed-method research design (quantitative-qualitative), using a questionnaire and interview to collect the data. The sample questionnaire is 165 participants taken by voluntary sampling technique and five participants for the interview taken by purposive sampling technique. The data analysis from the questionnaire revealed that the student had positive perceptions about the lecturer's use of translanguaging, as evidenced by a mean score of 36.41 and classified as positive because it helped them to have a better understanding and participated better and more efficiently in the lesson, and the student has moderate perceptions about their own translanguaging practices, as evidenced by a mean score of 17.27 and classified as moderate. The questionnaire result indicated that students have moderate to positive attitudes overall. The result of the interview showed that five students responded positively to the practice of translanguaging. Based on the interview result, the student perceived that when translanguaging occurred in the classroom, the English teaching-learning process was efficient because most students understood the material given better, participated actively, and were motivated to improve their English skills.

Keywords: *Students' perception, translanguaging.*

1. Introduction

In Indonesia, English has a state as a foreign language because English is taught after the first language. Moreover, there are so many languages in the world like English, Mandarin, Arabic, etc. that all these languages are examples of foreign languages which are taught in Indonesia.

Nowadays, language learning is important for human social development. As a language that is used by more than half of the population in the world. English holds the key as an international language. English is a tool of communication among people of the world to get trade, social-cultural, science, and

technology goals. Moreover, English competence is important, students need to understand and use English to improve their confidence to face global competition.

Learning is an activity where an individual transfers knowledge. While, teaching is to give lessons or knowledge to students in a school, college, university, etc. Thus, learning and teaching activity are related to one another. On the other hand, the success of the transferring knowledge activity from teachers to students depended on how the teachers cover the material or the subject in activities, appropriately.

An English instructor can use translanguaging as one of the communication strategies in the classroom. Translanguaging in education is defined as a process where students and teachers collaborate in the practices involving different languages to develop new language practices while sustaining the existing ones as well as communicating knowledge and voicing socio-political facts through linguistic inequalities (García & Kano, 2014). Translanguaging not only can utilize to assist the process of English teaching as a foreign language but also translanguaging involves the use of students' first language (L1) in learning English. It can attract students to learn English. The effective communication connection between teachers and students will be harmonious through translanguaging. So, translanguaging has been applied by many English teachers as a pedagogic strategy in the process of English teaching as a foreign language. The function of translanguaging is not only as a pedagogic strategy for the teacher in the classroom but also applied outside of the classroom.

There were several studies to discuss translanguaging practices in Indonesia, for instance, Rasman (2018). Rasman's study took a case of translanguaging in a junior high school classroom context. Using a qualitative case study, he analyzed a 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 (L1) did not inhibit the learning.

Another study by Raja, Suparno & Ngadiso (2021) examined grade VIII students' perceptions towards translanguaging practice in two EFL classes of a private boarding school located in East Nusa Tenggara. The data was collected using online questionnaires consisting of close-ended and mainly open-ended questions. The result showed that most students expressed negative feelings toward student-directed translanguaging. Meanwhile, teacher-directed translanguaging was more acceptable, as indicated by most students who

had positive feelings toward their teachers' translanguaging.

However, although many researchers in Indonesia have researched translanguaging, most researchers have focused on researching the implementation of translanguaging in high school classrooms. The researcher found few studies that focused on the implementation of translanguaging in universities in Indonesia and the perceptions of students on translanguaging in terms of communicating with their lecturer and their own friends in the English teaching-learning process. To fill this gap, the researcher is interested in researching the implementation of translanguaging in Universitas Negeri Makassar to find out the students' perception on their lecturers' translanguaging process and on their own translanguaging process.

2. Literature Review

2. 1. Translanguaging

2. 1. 1. Definition of Translanguaging

According to Wei (2018), translanguaging has been linked to teaching methods, regular social association, cross-modal and multimodal correspondence, semantic scenes, visual expressions, music, and transgender discourse.

It was an unusual procedure in which language learners could intervene in critical social and psychological exercises for activity, knowing, and being through the core work of different branches of semiotics (García & Wei, 2015). Translanguaging, for example, was once thought to be a strategy that could assist students in developing academic language (Baker, 2006). Students could read texts in one language and then discuss the topic in another language to make them easier to understand.

2. 1. 2. Benefits of Translanguaging in Language Learning

The use of Indonesian and other indigenous languages (L1) in English classrooms is commonplace in Indonesia, where English is

taught as a foreign language, reflecting a controversial point of view on the use of L1 in L2 classes (Almoayidi, 2018). As seen from the perspective of translanguaging, the use of L1 can be beneficial as it encourages more engagement in classroom activities. This is especially beneficial for students who are just starting. As Lie (2007) noted, the use of Indonesian also helps many English teachers, who barely speak the language, prepare their students for English tests. The use of the teacher's first language (L1) has some advantages and disadvantages for students developing their English skills.

According to Atkinson (1993), a teacher's use of L1 can help students to use the limited time efficiently with productive or communicative activities. It means the interference of using L1 by the teachers can help students to use valuable class time efficiently. For the students, teachers who teach using L1 can help them find a new word in the target language.

Translanguaging can offer many advantages for language learners, from helping students develop strategies to direct the conversation to helping them bridge their identities as speakers of their mother tongue and as learners and speakers of English. It is enabling students to use their mother tongue as a positive linguistic resource will be an asset to them and assist them in developing helpful ways to communicate in English. Through these terms, students can develop ESL and have a solid foundation in their mother tongue.

2. 2. Perception

Perception is based on how individuals interpret different sensations including the five senses, sight, sound, smell, touch, and taste. Perception is the process of observing and categorizing information and ideas and the arrangement of the information.

Drucker (1959) says perception is more important than analysis. Perception is always real, while analysis may be imaginary. Perception is used to understand the world with

five senses. It is an active process of analyzing the world and understanding it through the five senses. Perception is used to search for truth and facts in the world. Perception depends on the experience that an individual has.

2. 3. The Importance of Students' Perception

Based on the explanations of perception above, it can be related to the process of learning where the students gain information through experience and become part of one's storage of facts. In other words, students can have a perception of something if they have experienced the process. Thus, the way the students perceive the teacher's language use in the classroom may significantly affect the students' academic performance.

Students' perceptions are the main and the most important resource in the teaching and learning process. Students can learn from teachers, while teachers cannot teach without students (Danim, 2010). All learning process always begins with perceptions.

Thus, based on what they see, hear, taste, smell, and touch, people interpret their idea meaningfully through the perceptual process. Perception is important because it influences how students gain information through experience and retain it as part of their knowledge storage. As a result, in EFL learning, students' perceptions of translanguaging use in their classroom should be carefully considered because it influences how students perceive the instructor's language use and may have a significant impact on their academic performance.

3. Research Methodology

3. 1. Research Design

This study aims to explore students' perceptions about the implementation of translanguaging in the teaching and learning process of English in the classroom. Considering the purpose of this study, the

researcher applied a mixed-method research design, an approach to an investigation that includes quantitative and qualitative data (Creswell, 2014). Specifically, it is a mixed explanatory method where the quantitative phase was conducted first and then followed up by the qualitative phase to elaborate on the previously obtained quantitative results.

3. 2. Population and Sample

This study's participants are students from classes registered for the fifth semester of the academic year 2022/2023 at the English Department of Languages and Literature Faculty of Universitas Negeri Makassar. In English Education Study Program consists of five classes, namely A, B, C, D, and E in Pare-Pare. Class A has 31 students, class B has 34 students, class C has 31 students, class D has 35 students, and class E has 34 students. So, the total number of students in the English Department Study Program was 165 students taken by voluntary sampling technique and the sample interview is five participants taken by purposive sampling technique.

3. 3. Research Instrument

In collecting data, the researchers used two instruments, namely:

a. Questionnaire

In this study, the researcher used a questionnaire to determine the perceptions of the students about the use of translanguaging in the English teaching-learning process by lecturers and themselves. The questionnaire consisted of 15 close-ended questions and was adapted from Alhaj & Alwadai (2022). In addition, some questions were modified by the researcher herself to suit the purpose of this study.

b. Interview

The researcher used the technique of data analysis based on Miles & Huberman (1994) cited Sugiyono (2014: 247-252) which involves three steps: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification.

3. 4. Data Collection

The research used questionnaire and interview instruments to obtain data.

a. Questionnaire

The first instrument was a questionnaire. Firstly, the researcher provided a WhatsApp group and then informed the chairman of each class to invite other students/participants. The researcher asked for participants' permission and willingness to fill out the questionnaire that the researcher had prepared using Google Forms. Then, before the participants filled out the questionnaire, the researcher gave a brief explanation about the research and how to fill out the questionnaire.

b. Interview

The type of the interview was a semi-structured interview. Firstly, the researcher asked permission from the selected students according to the criteria to take the time to be interviewed. Then, the researcher provided interview guides and explanations. The interview guide consists of a list of questions. The researcher also provided a Zoom link for the interview session and sent it and informed the participant to join. Finally, the researcher interviewed the students to get a strong argument about their perception on the use of translanguaging in the English teaching-learning process.

3. 5. Data Analysis

a. Questionnaire

The questionnaire used the Likert scale, which consists of five-point scales as follows:

Table 1. Likert Scale

Series of statement	Score	
	Positive	Negative
1. Strongly agree	5	1
2. Agree	4	2
3. Undecided	3	3
4. Disagree	2	4
5. Strongly disagree	1	5

(Gay, 2006)

The questionnaire to gain students' perceptions on lecturers' translanguage practices consisted of 10 items. If the respondent chose all statements with strongly agree (SA), he/she got 50 and if all the respondents chose all the

statements with strongly disagree (SD), he/she got 10. So, $50 - 10 = 40$. Since the questionnaire uses five scales. So, the interval will be $40:5=8$. The classification of the perception will be:

Table 2. Students' Perception on Lecturers' Translanguage Practices Range Score Classification

43-50	Strongly Positive
35-42	Positive
27-34	Moderate
19-28	Negative
10-18	Strongly Negative

The questionnaire to gain students' perceptions on their translanguage practices consisted of 5 items. If the respondents chose all statements with strongly agree (SA), he/she got 25 and if all the respondents chose all the statements

with strongly disagree (SD), the respondents got 5. So, $25 - 5 = 20$. Since the questionnaire uses 5 scales, the interval will be $20:5=4$. The classification of the perception will be:

Table 3. Students' Perception on Their Own Translanguage Practices Range Score Classification

22-25	Strongly Positive
18-21	Positive
14-17	Moderate
10-13	Negative
5-9	Strongly Negative

The data were analyzed using the formula below:

$$P = F/N \times 100\%$$

Where:

P: Percentage

F: Frequently

N: Amount of sample

(Gay, 2006)

Calculating the mean score by using the formula below:

$$\bar{x} = (\sum X)/N$$

Where:

\bar{x} : Mean Score

$\sum X$: Total row score

N: The total number of students

(Gay, 2006)

b. Interview

The researcher used the technique of data analysis based on Miles and Huberman (1994) cited in Sugiyono (2014: 247-252) which is involving three steps: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification.

4. Findings

Based on the data analysis from the questionnaire, it was found that students perceived that the lecturers' translanguaging practices in the English teaching-learning process were positive and it was found that the students perceived that their translanguaging practices were moderate.

4. 1. Students' Perceptions on Lecturers' Translanguaging Practices

$$\begin{aligned}\bar{x} &= \frac{\sum X}{N} \\ \bar{x} &= \frac{6009}{165} \\ \bar{x} &= 36,41\end{aligned}$$

The result of the total score above taken from the questionnaire to determine the students' perception of the lecturer's translanguaging practices is 6009 with a total sampling of 165. It shows that the mean score of the student's perception on the lecturer's translanguaging practices in the English teaching-learning process is 36.41 which is classified as positive.

Based on the classification above, it shows the highest frequency and percentage, which is 109 students (66%) having a positive perception of the use of translanguaging by lecturers. Based on the statement in the questionnaire "I feel more secure when the lecturer uses Indonesian in expressing complicated ideas during the English teaching-learning process" in which as many as 70

students (42.4%) positively perceived that when the lecturer uses L1 (Indonesian) in expressing complicated terms in the English learning process, in this case, it shows that the use of translanguaging by lecturers helps students in following the English teaching-learning process. The statement "I have a better understanding when the lecturer translates new words into Indonesian" which was agreed by 71 students (43%) and the statement "When the lecturer uses Indonesian, I can understand the material better" which perceived positively by 75 students (45.5%), it can be found that the students had a better understanding when the lecturer used translanguaging. This is because students find it easier to grasp the meaning of what is conveyed by the lecturer and gain a better understanding when the lecturer used translanguaging in the English teaching-learning process.

4. 2. Students' Perceptions on Their Own Translanguaging Practices

$$\begin{aligned}\bar{x} &= \frac{\sum X}{N} \\ \bar{x} &= \frac{2850}{165} \\ \bar{x} &= 17,27\end{aligned}$$

The total score above from the questionnaire to find out the students' perceptions on their translanguaging practices is 2850 with a total sampling of 165. It shows that the mean score of the student's perception on their translanguaging practices in the English teaching-learning process is 17.27 which is classified as moderate.

Based on the classification above, it shows the highest frequency and percentage, namely 81 students (49%) who have moderate perceptions on their translanguaging practices. According to the result of the student's responses to the questionnaire, it shows that the student's response choices were dominated by the 'undecided' option. This shows that most students have not been able to determine their perceptions regarding the practice of translanguaging by themselves. Most of the items were rated 'moderate' the highest then

followed by 'positive'. The questionnaire result indicated that students have moderate to positive attitudes overall.

Based on the result of the interview, it shows that the use of translanguaging by the lecturer has an important role for students. Students feel that the use of translanguaging is very important, efficient, and useful in the English teaching-learning process. Students prefer when lecturers use two languages rather than only one language to build an effective English teaching-learning process.

The main research objective of this study is to the students' perception on translanguaging in the English teaching-learning process. Then the researcher formulated two research questions; 1) students' perceptions on lecturers' translanguaging practices in the English teaching-learning process and 2) students' perceptions on their translanguaging practices in the English teaching-learning process.

5. Discussions

As has been presented in the findings, the results of the questionnaire show that the average respondent has a positive attitude toward the use of translanguaging by the lecturer and their translanguaging practices. This can be seen from the results of the average score of the questionnaire and the result of the interview. The researcher found that students had a positive attitude toward translanguaging practices and provided two main points that the researcher found in the discussion.

5. 1. Better Student Participation and Understanding

The data from the findings show that students have positive perceptions of translanguaging practices carried out by lecturers in the English teaching and learning process. This shows that the practice of translanguaging carried out by lecturers can help students understand the material provided better and improve students' ability to participate in class. This is because all students can capture the meaning of what is

conveyed by the lecturer so that they can gain a better understanding and improve their class participation. Such findings confirm the advantage of translanguaging in education, which is the promotion of a deeper and fuller understanding of the subject matter (Baker, 2011). This is also related to the previous study, which shows that 76% of students agree with the use of L1 simplifies the students' understanding of English and its concept (Asriati & Jabu, 2022). In addition, the use of translanguaging practices by the lecturer when teaching English can also trigger higher responses from students. The finding related to a previous study from Rabbidge (2019), instructors' translanguaging practices can improve students' understanding of teacher/lecturer dialogue and improve students' ability to participate in lessons.

The result of the data interview from the findings of the interview shows that students have positive perceptions on their translanguaging practices. This shows that the practice of translanguaging carried out by students can help students understand the material better and improve their ability to participate in class.

The student's perceptions about the use of the first languages in the English teaching-learning process as a resource is consistent with the study by Cartens (2016), where many students responded that translanguaging helped them to have a better understanding of complex concepts, as well as express their conceptual understanding. Additionally, students reported that translanguaging facilitates "confidence building," which is similar to what some of the participants from the study mentioned, that they were confident when they knew they could use two languages. Baker (2001) pointed out one potential advantage of translanguaging education, translanguaging can promote a deeper and more complete understanding of the subject matter. In line with Iversen's (2019) study, in which both observations and focus group interviews detail greater comprehension or understanding as an effect of translanguaging. Achieving or securing

comprehension is described as a result of the instructor's ability to draw on their linguistic repertoire to support the students' understanding.

5. 2. Students Feel Comfortable and Motivated

The data from the findings show that students feel comfortable and motivated in the lesson when translanguaging is used by the lecturer and themselves because students can follow the English teaching-learning process better and feel comfortable with the conducive environment for learning languages such as English. This conducive classroom will bring up students' motivation to learn because motivation is the most important factor for someone who wants to learn a language.

Related to a previous study conducted by Carstens' (2016) argument that translanguaging created a safe space for meaning-making within a community of L1 speakers resonates with the fact that the students of the current research felt comfortable and secure with using translanguaging. Students feel comfortable, secure, and motivated in the lesson when they practice translanguaging because the students are not nervous, and they are eager to participate in the lesson. They are able to interact with their lecturers and classmates more effectively, and they do not care about making mistakes because they can withdraw their language when needed. It is in this way maintains it bi/multilingual students maximize their learning when they use their first language. When students use two or more languages pragmatically, they maximize their performance and academic gain. Dougherty's (2021) observations showed how introducing the freedom to alternate between languages in the ELT classroom led to more students being willing to participate and answer questions on multiple occasions. Furthermore, when the students were assured, it was acceptable to use either English or their first language, those who had not participated actively in the lesson, due to not being confident in their English-

speaking proficiency, were reported to confidently contribute to the discussion.

The practice of translanguaging in the classroom will motivate students to improve their English skills. The use of translanguaging motivates and enables the students to follow and participate better in the English teaching-learning process and continue learning to improve their English skills. This is in line with the theory compiled by Wei (2018) which says that the use of all linguistic skills available to the teacher as well as the students and saw the potential in maximizing learning through the use of multiple languages as linguistic resources in an English classroom.

6. Conclusions

Based on the findings and discussions, it is concluded that most of the students had a positive perception on translanguaging practices in the English teaching-learning process. The findings from the questionnaire showed a positive perception by the student toward the practice of translanguaging by the lecturer and a moderate perception on their own translanguaging practices. In addition, the statement of positive perception about the use of translanguaging by the lecturer is supported by questionnaire data which shows the mean score of the student's perceptions on the lecturer's translanguaging practices is 36.41 and 17.27 for their translanguaging practices. This is supported by questionnaire data which found that when the lecturer practices translanguaging, the learning process in the classroom was efficient because most students understood the material given better, participated actively, and motivated them to improve their English skills.

This is also supported by the results of interviews from five students that they perceived positively the practice of translanguaging by the lecturer and themselves in the English teaching-learning process because it helped them to have a better understanding and improve their ability to participate in class.

The wise practice of translanguage in the classroom will help instructors in teaching and students in improving their English skills. The use of translanguage motivates and enables the students to follow and participate better in the English teaching-learning process and continue learning to improve their English skills. This is in line with the theory compiled by Wei (2018) which says that the use of all linguistic skills available to the instructor as well as the students and saw the potential in maximizing learning through the use of multiple languages as linguistic resources in an English classroom. Translanguage practices are helpful and useful as a strategy to create good communication and to build a safe environment in the English teaching-learning process to make the students enjoyable and prefer to speak up in the teaching-learning process. Therefore, there is a need for flexibility in language usage in the classroom to enhance interaction, learning, and the participation of students.

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