

## Translanguaging Practice in EFL Classroom: A Comparative Study of Chinese and Indonesian Universities

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### Abstract

This comparative study investigates translanguaging in undergraduate English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms in China and Indonesia, filling a gap in comparative and higher education research. Employing a qualitative approach, this study employed classroom observations and interviews in two universities in China and Indonesia to explore translanguaging's pedagogical integration into language learning. A total of 70 university students and four lecturers in China and Indonesia became the participants of this study. The data collected from the transcriptions of classroom recordings were categorized based on Fang and Liu's (2020) classifications of classroom translanguaging practices and interrater were applied to ensure the validity of analysis results. The findings show while consistent in Chinese contexts, Indonesian classrooms showed variations, notably lacking content localization. The comprehensive examination of translanguaging in Chinese and Indonesian EFL classrooms confirms its efficacy in leveraging students' existing linguistic and cultural backgrounds to foster a deeper understanding of a second language, making learning more inclusive and engaging. This study enriches the existing body of research by demonstrating the versatility and impact of translanguaging across diverse linguistic and cultural landscapes. Finally, by describing translanguaging as a bridge between students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds and EFL learning, this study offers crucial insights for educators aiming to embrace more inclusive and responsive teaching approaches, underscoring its transformative potential in EFL classrooms.

**Keywords:** translanguaging, EFL classrooms, higher education, comparative study

## Introduction

The monolingual approach in second language education that advocates for the exclusive use of the target language has posed significant challenges to learners' confidence and engagement. According to Cummins (2007), this viewpoint maintains a rigid division between L1 and L2, supported by the idea that immersion in second language learning experiences (L2) should be preferred over first language (L1) acquisition. However, there are serious ramifications for learners from this monolingual approach which could undermine their confidence and hinder their progress toward learning a second language. Furthermore, it can have a significant impact on how they feel about learning a second language, which can affect their engagement and behavior in L2 learning.

While the monolingual approach has been widely practiced and debated within EFL classroom contexts, alternative pedagogical strategies that might better address the challenges learners face should be explored. In countries where English serves as a foreign language, like Indonesia and China, the drawbacks of employing an English-only policy, especially regarding learner confidence and engagement, should not be overlooked. In these countries, the discussion of the suitability and effectiveness of an English-only policy in an EFL classroom is questioned, as posed by Emilia and Hamied (2022) within the Indonesian context and Sun, Wang, and Liu (2015) within the Chinese context. Therefore, this consideration sets the stage for exploring translanguaging as an innovative approach, contrasting the monolingual approach, that embraces the linguistic diversity present in EFL classrooms.

Classroom translanguaging practices are embraced by non-native English speakers to foster an inclusive learning environment that values and utilizes native linguistic resources. Translanguaging aims to soften the sharp distinctions that are typically made between languages, supporting the acknowledgment of multilingual practices from the viewpoint of language users as opposed to the languages themselves (Garcia, 2009; García & Wei, 2014). This method creates a more inclusive and dynamic learning environment. Using translanguaging as a pedagogical strategy allows teachers to take advantage of their students' linguistic diversity while also acknowledging it, which increases student participation and engagement in class activities.

Concerning translanguaging practices in the expanding-circle countries, exploring translanguaging in Chinese and Indonesian EFL classrooms offers a promising avenue for enhancing language education in multilingual contexts. Comparing translanguaging practices between these two countries is crucial due to their populous and linguistically diverse settings. Moreover, both countries encounter challenges in teaching EFL due to their multiple local languages that coexist with the national language, making the monolingual approach to teaching English extremely complicated. Therefore, exploring the implementation of translanguaging in these settings can shed light on how it is applied across different environments to highlight best practices in EFL classrooms.

Based on the elaborations above, this study aims to investigate translanguaging strategies in higher education to reveal the complex applications of translanguaging in the Chinese and Indonesian contexts. The study intends to shed light on the potential of translanguaging to enhance second language teaching and learning in a variety of educational settings by investigating these dimensions.

## Literature Review

Translanguaging was coined by Williams (1994) as a bilingual teaching approach, and it has since expanded to include the flexible language use of multilingual people and communities in our increasingly interconnected world. This method, which has been elaborated by Baker (2011) and others, emphasizes the interaction of languages in learning and cognition and sees multilingualism as an integrated linguistic system. However, the theoretical viewpoint that treats languages as interconnected parts of a single system (Canagarajah, 2011) questions the conventional bilingualism views and highlights the resourcefulness and adaptability of multilingual speakers. Nevertheless, by utilizing linguistic diversity in the classroom, translanguaging has emerged as a crucial pedagogical tool that improves comprehension and engagement.

The dominance of monolingual ideologies in English Language Teaching (ELT) has historically marginalized the role of students' L1 in L2 learning, promoting English as the sole medium of communication and inadvertently overlooking the linguistic and cultural richness students bring to the classroom (Phillipson, 1992; Mahboob & Lin, 2016). This perspective has often led to the perception of L2 learners' outputs as deficient across various linguistic domains due to the overlooked influence of L1 (May, 2011; Hamed, 2018; Nuruzzaman et al., 2018; Chania & Amri, 2019; Boonraksa & Naisena, 2021; Rafael, 2019; Putri & Rosa, 2020). However, a paradigm shift is occurring, with a move away from adhering strictly to native speaker norms towards embracing multilingual ELT classrooms that recognize and leverage the linguistic diversity of students as emerging multilinguals (Rabbidge, 2019) and cultural values in language learning (Baker, 2011; Creese & Blackledge, 2010). This shift facilitates the adoption of translanguaging approaches, which integrate students' L1 knowledge into the learning process, enhancing both teaching efficacy and classroom management (Illman & Pietilä, 2018; Kampittayakul, 2018; Gabryś-Barker, 2020). Such approaches have been shown to significantly improve student engagement, comprehension, and overall language proficiency, particularly benefiting those with lower initial proficiency levels by providing a more inclusive and relatable learning environment (Iversen, 2019; Dougherty, 2021; Akbar & Taqi, 2020; Yuvayapan, 2019; Burton & Rajendram, 2019; Gabryś-Barker, 2020).

In China, translanguaging within ELT has gained traction, evidenced by studies like Wang's (2020) which highlighted its role in enhancing interactive communication in content-based university instruction. Research by Fang and Liu (2020) and Zhou and Mann (2021) further validates translanguaging's benefits, particularly for students with varying English proficiencies, advocating for its inclusion in multilingual teaching strategies. In addition, Zhang and Jocuns (2022) also observe a preference for translanguaging over monolingual approaches, underscoring its utility in supporting students, especially those less proficient in English.

In Indonesia, translanguaging is shaping ELT practices across educational levels, as shown by studies in settings like Islamic boarding schools (Madkur, 2022; Aribah & Pradita, 2022) and regions such as West Papua (Sahib, 2019). These studies reveal translanguaging's effectiveness in not only enhancing classroom engagement and management but also in facilitating vocabulary acquisition and integrating cultural values. However, challenges arise due to the linguistic diversity of teachers, especially in areas with a significant number of non-native educators (Sahib et al., 2020). At the tertiary level, translanguaging continues to show promise, improving students' language

skills and adapting well to online learning environments (Atta & Naqvi, 2022; Emilia & Hamied, 2022). Overall, in both Chinese and Indonesian EFL contexts, translanguaging is recognized for leveraging linguistic resources to improve comprehension, reduce student anxiety, and promote a more inclusive and effective language learning environment (Nur et al., 2020; Liando et al., 2022; Nursanti, 2021).

Previous translanguaging studies show significant gaps in the literature regarding translanguaging practices in undergraduate EFL classrooms, especially in nations with high levels of linguistic and cultural diversity like China and Indonesia. Studies that bridge the linguistic and educational traditions of these countries are particularly scarce when it comes to comparative analyses. Moreover, although translanguaging has been thoroughly studied in elementary and secondary education contexts, its use and consequences at the undergraduate level have drawn relatively less attention. In stark contrast to the bilingual or multilingual contexts frequently depicted in existing literature, this gap also exists in the EFL context, where English serves as a foreign language rather than the language of the dominant society. Furthermore, the focus on teacher strategies and perspectives has overshadowed the underrepresentation of the student perspective on translanguaging practices. Finally, there is much to be learned about how different language policies affect educational outcomes. One area that could use further investigation is the impact of educational planning and language policy on translanguaging in EFL classrooms, particularly in the context of comparative frameworks.

Using insights from Fang and Liu (2020), this study addresses the gaps by investigating how translanguaging practices are classified in the classroom. They list the following five different translanguaging techniques: (1) explaining concepts or language points by employing a variety of linguistic resources, such as L1, diagrams, and visuals; (2) checking comprehension by having students translate concepts to gauge their understanding of the material; (3) localizing knowledge by connecting English-originated content to Chinese contexts and examples; (4) reinforcing instruction through repetition in L1 or code-switching to make instructions clear; and (5) building rapport in the classroom through the use of translanguaging.

## **Research Objectives**

This research aims to classify and compare the strategies of translanguaging employed in Chinese and Indonesian EFL classrooms, guided by Fang and Liu's (2020) classifications. The study objective is to identify, categorize, and compare the specific translanguaging strategies utilized by the lecturers within the diverse linguistic and cultural landscapes of China and Indonesia. By comparing the two countries, this research is committed to underscoring the similarities and differences in translanguaging implementation across these two settings.

## **Methodology**

### **Research Design**

This study employs a qualitative research design to delve into the intricacies of translanguaging practices within the EFL settings in China and Indonesia. By employing a qualitative approach, this study aims to capture the nuances of translanguaging strategies occurring naturally within classroom interactions to provide descriptive insights into translanguaging practices.

**Research Setting and Participants**

The research was conducted at the provincial university-level EFL classrooms in China and Indonesia, offering a comparative lens on translanguaging in diverse educational and cultural contexts of two populous countries with a wide array of linguistic diversity where English serves as a foreign language. Furthermore, at the university level, pedagogical strategies, including translanguaging, are often employed deliberately.

The study's participants encompassed university students and faculties from both China and Indonesia. In China, the research involves two experienced English literature teachers, each with seven years of teaching experience, and a cohort of 36 junior students enrolled in mandatory English courses. The Indonesian component includes two educators with expertise in English education and English studies, each with a minimum of five years of teaching experience, alongside 34 tertiary-level students, providing a broad spectrum of insights into translanguaging practices. The participant selection from both countries was strategically made to encapsulate the engagement with English at the university level which shapes their linguistic and academic identities and makes their experience with translanguaging practices pertinent to this study. Moreover, the inclusion of experienced educators ensures that this study benefits from professional insights into the integration of translanguaging strategies in language instruction.

**Research Instruments**

Three research instruments used in this study are observation checklists, field notes, and audio recordings. First, structured observation checklists outlined specific behaviors, interactions, and translanguaging practices to look for in each translanguaging strategy during classroom observations. This study designed the observation checklist based on Fang and Liu's (2020) translanguaging strategy classifications by listing the points of observation under each category. Second, field notes captured the detailed descriptive and analytical observations that complemented the observation checklists. These notes provided a detailed narrative of classroom dynamics in which translanguaging occurred. Third, audio recordings served as documentation of authentic classroom interactions that captured the spontaneous use of language within the natural flow of the lessons. These recordings allow the researchers to revisit the classroom sessions multiple times for thorough and detailed analyses of the data. In addition, these recordings provided a consistent dataset for multiple researchers and increased the reliability of findings through inter-rater agreements.

**Data Collection**

Prior to data collection, permissions were sought from potential participants, ensuring informed consent for classroom observations and recordings were obtained. To ensure depth and accuracy, the data collection process involved pre-observation, classroom observations, post-observations, and data transcription and organization.

The pre-observation phase involved developing an observation checklist based on Fang & Liu's (2020) translanguaging classifications. The researchers studied this checklist to use in classroom observation and learned how to take detailed field notes. In addition, the researchers tested the audio recording setups to capture classroom sessions without intrusion.

During classroom observations, the researchers recorded translanguaging instances using the checklist. Additionally, they took extensive field notes to capture the classroom's broader pedagogical context. Furthermore, audio recordings were initiated at the start of each class to document the entire classroom sessions.

The post-observation phase involved a review of observation checklist and field notes for additional details post-observation. This phase also involved the secure storing of audio recordings before they were annotated with relevant contextual information.

Finally, the audio recordings were transcribed verbatim with anonymization, only focusing on translanguaging instances. The transcribed data from the recordings were then compiled into a coherent dataset for analysis alongside observation checklist records and field notes.

### **Data Analysis**

Initially, the transcribed audio and field notes were systematically coded based on Fang and Liu's (2020) translanguaging categories. For example, a code CE-L1 referred to the category of Concept Explanation where the teachers or students use L1 to explain complex English terms or concepts, or a code CC-Translate referred to the Comprehension Checking category where the teachers asked the students to translate key concepts or terms into L1 to verify the students' understanding. This coding facilitated the organization of data for further analysis.

Subsequently, emerging patterns and themes within the coded data were thematically analyzed. This phase of data analysis was focused on how translanguaging practices varied and aligned across the Chinese and Indonesian contexts. Additionally, insights from field notes were incorporated to get a deeper understanding to these themes for more understanding of translanguaging pedagogical implications before synthesizing them to identify the key narratives on translanguaging use.

Finally, teachers were then interviewed in their native languages (Mandarin for Chinese participants and Indonesian for Indonesian participants) to encourage in-depth responses about the reasons behind their translanguaging practices on instances of the observed translanguaging practices in the classrooms to strengthen the researchers' analysis results.

### **Results**

The study on translanguaging practices in Chinese and Indonesian EFL classrooms found that the practices followed the typology put forth by Fang and Liu (2020), which included localizing content, establishing a safe classroom environment, explaining concepts or language points, and checking comprehension. These practices varied in Indonesian classrooms, with content localization being conspicuously absent, even though all five categories were present in Chinese classrooms.

#### **Concept Explanation**

Using a combination of the target language, visual aids, and contextual cues to explain ideas or language components is a common translanguaging technique. Both Chinese and Indonesian contexts were noted for this approach, as the following examples demonstrate.

An example of translanguaging is seen in Extract 1, where the teacher uses cultural familiarity to improve understanding by incorporating Chinese to offer hints about a historical figure. In order to contextualize and reinforce learning, the teacher



employs translanguaging techniques such as the use of visual aids in conjunction with linguistic shifts, which aids students in deducing the reference to Premier Zhou Enlai.

### Extract 1

T: Now, I will give you a picture, obviously, he is very famous, you can guess who he is?

T: I will give you some hint or clue, you know the premier, I will give you another clue, *他在少年时期说过一句话*。(When he was young, he used to say some famous words)

Ss: *周恩来*.(Zhou Enlai)

T: Some pictures of Premier Zhou.

A strategic pedagogical approach is demonstrated in the Chinese EFL classroom by the teacher's translanguaging practice of introducing a historical figure in a combination of Chinese and English with visual aids. This approach bridges new English language content by utilizing students' preexisting linguistic and cultural knowledge. The teacher successfully drew on the students' prior knowledge by starting the conversation in English and giving hints in Chinese, which made the learning process more relatable and interesting. An anchor point was provided by mentioning Premier Zhou Enlai, a well-known figure in Chinese history, and using a famous quote from him to place the study of English in a familiar cultural setting. As a result of the new vocabulary and concepts being associated with established cognitive schemas, this helped with comprehension as well as retention. Additionally, the addition of a visual component-Premier Zhou's photo-solidified the link between the historical context and the language input, strengthening the multimodal learning process. By illustrating how the flexible use of several languages and semiotic resources can promote deeper comprehension and engagement in the language learning process, this practice is consistent with the translanguaging framework.

In the second extract, the teacher switches between Indonesian and English to clarify the usage of *will* and the future tense. A student responded spontaneously in English after the exchange started by eliciting responses from the class in Indonesian. Translanguaging is useful in real-time language instruction and correction, as demonstrated by the teacher's strategic code-switching, which not only added to and clarified student contributions but also clarified the grammatical point as seen below.

### Extract 2

T1: So, I'll is the short term for I will and the meaning is *saya* (I)...?

S1: *Akan* (will)

S2: *Nanti!* Eh! *Akan!* (Later! Um! Will!)

T1: *Akan* (will). *Jadi gitu ya*. I'll talk to you later. *Akan* (will). This is also something that will happen in the future. *Untuk menyatakan kegiatan di masa depan* (To state a future action) like *besok* (tomorrow) or *minggu depan* (next week), we can use will.

S2: We will test next week!

T1: We will HAVE A test next week?

*Enggak*. (No.) We will NOT have a test next week.

The pedagogical benefit of using students' L1 for grammatical clarification in L2 learning was demonstrated by the translanguaging strategy used in the Indonesian EFL classroom, where the teacher switched between Indonesian and English to explain the future tense. Students felt more at ease participating in class when the teacher

initially switched to Indonesian to elicit student responses. The next student response in English, which used the target grammatical structure, showed that they had internalized the concept and were actively participating in the lesson. The way the teacher expanded on the student's attempt in a combination of English and Indonesian and corrected it is an example of how translanguaging can be used to provide prompt, understandable feedback. This exchange demonstrates how the language structure is used in a communicative context and clarifies the grammatical point.

### Comprehension Checking

The process of checking comprehension within EFL classrooms, particularly through the lens of translanguaging, offers profound insights into its pedagogical efficacy. Fang and Liu (2020) delineates this approach as teachers' method of verifying students' grasp of key concepts by encouraging the translation of these concepts into the students' first language. This translanguaging strategy, observed in both Chinese and Indonesian classrooms, facilitates a deeper understanding and engagement with the learning material.

In a Chinese EFL setting, when a teacher uses translanguaging, they typically give students an English sentence to translate with the phrase "result in" serving as the main point of emphasis. The teacher skillfully scaffolds student understanding by strategically switching between Chinese for instruction and English for content clarification. This bilingual exchange demonstrates the effectiveness of translanguaging in enhancing learning by having students apply newly learned language structures while also confirming their understanding.

### Extract 3

T: 两分钟大家思考一下如何把这个句子翻译成英文。(I will give you two minutes to think about how should translate the sentence into English)

T: You can translate the sentence by using the phrase result in. We have learnt the phrase, right?

Ss: 导致 · 结果.(It means lead to or consequently)

T: Who can have a try? Very easy, very easy, for example, 团队 team, environment 环境 · 成功 success, very easy, right, who have a try?

T: Okay, you, please. 这为女生.(The girl over there)

S: 我只会简单的 · 其他就不会了。(I just know some simple words.)

T: Okay, sit down, please.

The teacher used a variety of strategies in the Chinese EFL classroom to assess comprehension through translanguaging. When given in Chinese, the first instruction was to consider translating a sentence into English. This helped the students connect with the English language content by using their first language as a scaffold. This method validated the students' preexisting linguistic resources while also reducing the cognitive load associated with processing new information in a foreign language. The idea of *result in*, which was previously introduced, was then encouraged to be used. This reinforced and served as a reminder of the material that had been learned. The teacher's skillful switching between Chinese and English to deliver content and instructions is an excellent example of how the translanguaging framework emphasizes fluid language practices that improve learning. The teacher's encouraging acknowledgment and the student's attempt to respond, despite admitting to having a



limited vocabulary, highlight the inclusive environment of the classroom where translanguaging promotes a sense of safety and encourages language exploration.

In the Indonesian context, the teacher uses the opportunity for students to summarize a peer's plans in Indonesian following an English discussion to make sure they understand. The student's request for an Indonesian response and subsequent accurate summary highlights the beneficial effects of translanguaging on comprehension. This exchange demonstrates how translanguaging helps students absorb L2 content more fully by enabling them to express their ideas in L1, which helps them understand English discourse on a deeper level as seen in Extract 4.

#### Extract 4

T2: Plans. What is a plan?

SS: *Rencana!* (Plans!)

T2: *Rencana.* (Plans.) I believe all of you have plans. It can be short term plans, it can be long term plans. Do you have plans? [silence]

T2: You don't have plans?

SS (some): Yeees.

S1: *Ada* (I have plans), Ma'am.

SS: Me too.

T2: Ok. *Coba, saya mau tanya* [student's name] (Let's try. I want to ask [...]). Are you here?

S2: Yes, Ma'am.

T2: Hi, [student's name]! Do you have any plans after the class?

S2: Yes, Ma'am. With my friends. We will watch a movie.

T2: Oh! How nice! What movie are you going to watch?

S2: Honestly, we don't know because [pause] because [pause]

T2: Ah! So you haven't decided on it. *Rencananya belum sampai situ ya?* (Your plan hasn't reached that far?)

S2: Yes, Ma'am. Stop at going to the movie [laugh]

T2: *Ada yang bisa jelaskan rencananya* [student's name] (Someone can tell us what is [...] plan?)

S3: Me!

T2: Yes, please [student's name]

S3: In Indonesian, Ma'am?

T2: Of course.

S3: *Jadi* [student 2's name] *sama temennya mau nonton film habis kelas. Tapi belum tau mau nonton apa. Bener, Ma'am?* (So, [...] and her friends are going to see a movie after the class. But they don't know what to watch yet. Is that right, Ma'am?)

T2: That's right! Good job!

The Indonesian classroom example provides additional context for understanding how translanguaging is used in comprehension assessments. The teacher's question concerning plans started a bilingual conversation that fluidly combined Indonesian and English, mirroring the language environment of the classroom. In addition to testing students' comprehension of the material in English, this translanguaging technique helped them make the connection between the concept and their own experiences, which were expressed in their L1. The pause that occurred after the first question, and the affirmation that followed in both Indonesian and

English, demonstrated how comfortable and proficient the students were with using the English language. Translanguaging played an important role in verifying students' linguistic identities and guaranteeing comprehension, as demonstrated by the teacher's facilitation of a student recounting another's plans in Indonesian with permission to use L1. A clever use of translanguaging to support language acquisition while preserving engagement and inclusivity was demonstrated by the teacher's affirmation and praise in English, which served to connect the L1 insights back to the L2 learning objectives.

### Knowledge Localization

The translanguaging practice of localizing knowledge, observed exclusively in Chinese EFL classrooms, underscores the pedagogical strategy of contextualizing English language content within the familiar cultural and linguistic landscape of the students. In order to bridge the gap between the foreign language and the students' real-world experiences, the teacher used culturally relevant examples and metaphors to clarify concepts taught in English, as shown in Extract 5.

#### Extract 5

T: Okay, now, move back to your book, you will see some famous poets or famous sentences. 我们现在来学一些关于成功的名人名言 (repeating the former sentence in Chinese), first one, Abraham Lincoln said always bear in mind, your own resolution to succeed is important than anything.

T: So, this picture shows the relationship between success and failure, 失败和成功的关系 (repeating the former sentence in Chinese). Just like the iceberg, above the water, success under the water, failure

Ss: Failure.

T: 所以成功是很小一部分, 大部分的艰辛努力在失败中度过的。

Here, the teacher used a well-known statement from Abraham Lincoln to talk about the ideas of success and failure—a universal subject with a regional twist. The teacher ensured understanding and culturally adapted the lesson by repeating the English explanation in Chinese. The teacher compared success to the visible tip of an iceberg, with the majority of effort and failure lying below the waterline. Students were able to establish a strong connection with the material thanks to this analogy, which is common in many cultures but especially poignant in the Chinese educational context where hard work and perseverance are highly valued. The teacher skillfully employed translanguaging here to not only translate the material but also to transform it, making it understandable and relevant to the students' own experiences and cultural perspectives.

### Instruction Reinforcement

Both Chinese and Indonesian EFL classrooms demonstrate the importance of translanguaging as a strategic pedagogical tool for reinforcing instruction. The method helps to elucidate, highlight, and reinforce comprehension of the educational material presented in L2 by repeating important ideas in the students' L1.

One example of effective instructional reinforcement in the Chinese context was when a teacher repeated instructions and content summaries in Chinese after first presenting them in English. Translanguaging helps students internalize newly introduced language points into their cognitive framework while also ensuring that they understand the core of the lessons as seen in Extract 6.

**Extract 6**

T: So, through previous learning, we have finished 2 units, right? 通过以前的学习，我们是不是学了两个单元了，对吗？(The repeating of the sentence in Chinese -So, through previous learning, we have finished 2 units, right?)

Ss: 对。(Yes)

T: Do you remember the title of Unit 1 living in harmony, and unit 2 is being positive and positive thinking?

T: Unit 2 tells how to keep a positive life.

T: 第二单元见了我们怎样积极向上一些。(The repeating of the above sentence Unit 2 tells how to keep a positive life.)

T: Look at teaching content, after learning, first you have learn new words and expression, then you can talk about topics, lastly build your own goal of your life. 和成功有关的学习和表达，谈论简单的话题，最后呢，通过学习有一个理想的目标。(the repeating of the sentence in Chinese: Look at teaching content, after learning, first you have learned new words and expression, then you can talk about topics, lastly build your own goal of your life)

In Extract 6, the Chinese EFL teacher's use of translanguaging to reinforce instruction showcases a deliberate pedagogical strategy aimed at enhancing student comprehension and retention. By summarizing key points of previous lessons in both English and Chinese, the teacher not only ensures that the instructional content is accessible but also reinforces the connection between new vocabulary and previously covered material. This dual-language recapitulation serves a critical function in the translanguaging framework, as it acknowledges and leverages the students' existing linguistic resources to scaffold new language learning.

The teacher's approach reflects a nuanced understanding of translanguaging, not merely as a tool for translation but as a means to deepen conceptual understanding. By articulating the titles and core concepts of the units in both languages, the teacher facilitated cognitive bridging, where students could link new English terms with their corresponding concepts in Chinese. This method underscores the translanguaging principle that students' L1 is an asset in L2 learning, promoting a more integrated and holistic approach to language acquisition.

Translanguaging in reinforcing instructions was also used by the teacher in the Indonesian EFL classroom to get the students talking about the attention-grabbing aspects of presentations. In addition to ensuring understanding, the seamless transition between English and Indonesian broke down linguistic barriers and encouraged participation as seen in Extract 7.

**Extract 7**

T1: The next thing is the attention-grabbing. *Apa itu* (What is) attention-grabbing?

S1: Setelah perkenalan? (After the introduction?)

T1: No. It's still a part of the introduction. *Masih bagian dari perkenalan* (It's still a part of the introduction). *Ada yang bisa tebak?* (Anyone can guess?) Attention-grabbing.

Attention. What is attention? *Attention itu artinya apa?* (What does it mean by attention?)

SS: *Perhatian!* (Attention)

Extract 7 illustrates how an Indonesian EFL teacher employed translanguaging to engage students and check their comprehension of the lesson's discussion. The teacher's seamless transition between asking questions in English and Indonesian not only catered to the diverse proficiency levels within the classroom but also encouraged active participation by making the content more relatable and understandable. This interaction exemplifies the translanguaging framework's emphasis on fluid language practices that foster inclusive and dynamic learning environments.

The teacher's use of translanguaging to clarify the concept of attention-grabbing and to elicit students' personal experiences and plans demonstrated a strategic approach to making the English content meaningful and relevant to the students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds. By validating and incorporating students' responses in Indonesian, the teacher reinforced the instructional content while also acknowledging the students' L1 as a valuable tool for learning. This practice highlights the potential of translanguaging to reinforce instruction.

**Rapport Building**

The use of translanguaging to foster a conducive and friendly learning environment is a notable aspect observed in both Chinese and Indonesian EFL classrooms. This practice not only aids in language comprehension but also significantly contributes to building a positive classroom rapport, essential for an effective learning experience.

In the Chinese context, the teacher's introduction of a culturally familiar song, Hua Wei, and the subsequent invitation to listen to it as a class activity exemplify the strategic use of translanguaging to create a relaxed and engaging classroom atmosphere as can be seen in Extract 8.

**Extract 8**

T: Have you sung the Hua Wei song? *大家听过华为的主题曲吗?* Okay.

Dream is Possible.

Ss: *梦想是可能的。*

T: *我们先听一下这首歌好不好?* (would you like to listen to the song, how about that?, then we will do some listening exercise.

Ss: *好, okay.*

The teacher's use of translanguaging to introduce a culturally familiar song (Hua Wei) served as an innovative approach to breaking the monotony of traditional language lessons. By inviting students to listen to a song and subsequently engage in a listening exercise, the teacher effectively blended cultural elements with language learning objectives. This strategy not only made the learning process more enjoyable but also demonstrated the teacher's consideration of the students' cultural backgrounds and interests. The seamless switch between English and Chinese not only ensured clarity of instructions but also reinforced the notion that both languages are valuable tools in the learning process. This approach aligns with the translanguaging framework, which advocates for the fluid use of languages to create more inclusive and dynamic learning environments. The positive student response highlights the effectiveness of translanguaging in not just facilitating language acquisition but also in enhancing student motivation and class participation.

In the Indonesian EFL setting, translanguaging emerges as a powerful tool for building rapport through humor, as evidenced by the playful exchange between the teacher and students regarding the concept of attention-grabbing.

#### Extract 9

T1: Ok. So...what is attention-grabbing then?

SS: *Mengambil perhatian.* (Taking the attention.)

T1: How? Bagaimana?

S1: *Ditarik-tarik.* (By pulling repeatedly.)

S2: Push! Push!

T1: Push?

SS: Pull!!

T1: *Memangnya pintu, ada push and pullnya?* (Do you think it's a door that you can push and pull?)

SS: [laugh]

T1: Alright. *Jadi* (So,) door grabbing *adalah* (is) *Tuh kan!* *Jadi* door-grabbing. (See! I said door-grabbing)

SS: [laugh]

The Indonesian classroom scenario presents translanguaging as a medium for injecting humor into the learning environment, thereby creating a more relaxed and interactive atmosphere. The teacher's playful exchange with the students about the concept of attention-grabbing exemplifies how translanguaging can be used to make abstract language concepts more tangible and engaging. The humor, facilitated through the bilingual dialogue about pushing and pulling doors, served as a metaphorical and literal bridge between languages, making the lesson more memorable and enjoyable for the students. This interaction not only aided in language comprehension but also fostered a sense of camaraderie among the students and between the students and the teacher. The use of both Indonesian and English in this light-hearted banter underscores the translanguaging framework's emphasis on the natural and strategic use of multiple languages to enhance communication and build positive relationships within the classroom.

## Discussion

A thorough examination of translanguaging strategies used in EFL classes in China and Indonesia reveals a strategic approach to language teaching that aligns with Fang and Liu's (2020) translanguaging strategy classifications used as the framework in this study. This approach is implemented through several translanguaging methods, namely concept explanation, comprehension checking, knowledge localization, instructional reinforcement, and rapport building. The methods employed in these classrooms are consistent with the principles of translanguaging theory, which advocates for the thoughtful integration of language resources to facilitate learning (García & Wei, 2014). Notably, Indonesian classrooms exhibit a slight difference with the absence of knowledge localization, whereas Chinese classrooms utilize these approaches. Hence, the claims made by scholars such as Baker (2011) and Creese and Blackledge (2010) about the critical role that contextual and cultural relevance plays in learning a language are supported by this discrepancy.

The method of concept explanation in this context is defined by teachers' adept use of language switching between L1 and L2 and their tactful use of examples. This practice embodies the main principle of the translanguaging framework that delves into the learners' linguistic repertoires to improve their comprehension and learn L2 more efficiently (García, 2009). Furthermore, the identified translanguaging practices from the presented classroom excerpts show how students' L1 and L2 are carefully mixed to improve comprehension. Hence, this finding is consistent with previous research conducted by Lewis, Jones, and Baker (2012) that emphasizes the benefits of translanguaging in language learning by integrating it into the learners' linguistic experiences and making it more inclusive, relevant, and engaging.

In terms of comprehension checking, translanguaging facilitates classroom interactions by allowing students and teachers to switch between L1 and L2 when eliciting the students' comprehension. Not only does this method validate the results of Fang and Liu (2020), but it also provides additional proof that translanguaging can significantly improve understanding by maintaining engagement with the material. In doing so, it also aligns with the notion that translanguaging techniques can transform language instruction by promoting greater comprehension and active engagement (Creese & Blackledge, 2010). It achieves this goal by creating a learning environment that is more responsive and inclusive.

Regarding knowledge localization, connecting the learning materials to students' language and cultural experiences can greatly boost engagement and comprehension (Wei, 2011). It demonstrates the potential of translanguaging to create a more inclusive, dynamic, and productive learning environment by acknowledging and utilizing the students' linguistic repertoire influenced by their cultural diversity in the classroom.

In addition, when instructions from L2 are reviewed in L1, translanguaging facilitates the emphasis, clarification, and reinforcement of L2 instructions. As per the recommendations provided by García & Wei (2014), this approach indicates how the translanguaging framework supports an integrated method of teaching languages that utilizes students' entire language repertoire to improve retention and comprehension regarding classroom instructions.



Finally, translanguaging becomes a crucial tool for rapport building to create a warm and engaging learning environment. Incorporating humor and culturally relevant content into classroom instruction can reduce anxiety resulting from language barriers and promote a sense of community among students in the classroom through translanguaging. This method stresses the significance of emotional and relational aspects in language education and highlights the transformative impact of translanguaging on classroom dynamics and student well-being (Creese & Blackledge, 2015).

In China, knowledge localization strategy was notably prevalent as the teachers adeptly contextualized English within familiar cultural narratives. This strategy not only facilitates comprehension but also engages the students by connecting L2 structures to their existing knowledge and experiences. The pedagogical choices highlight the importance of cultural relevance in language learning as they suggest that translanguaging strategies drawn on the students' cultural background potentially enhance their learning experience.

Conversely, the translanguaging emphasis in Indonesian classrooms was more pronounced on concept explanation of grammar and comprehension checking. These strategies can be seen in the teachers' frequent navigation between Indonesian and English to clarify grammatical structures and verify the students' comprehension which then foster interactive and responsive learning environments. Hence, these findings underscore that the employed translanguaging strategies bridge L2 learning and students' understanding of complex L2 rules.

In conclusion, the extensive analysis of translanguaging methods in EFL classes in China and Indonesia validates translanguaging potential for teaching foreign languages as it points out the adaptive nature of translanguaging. The teachers in both China and Indonesia tailored the translanguaging strategies to suit their students' linguistic and cultural realities. Using students' pre-existing linguistic repertoires and cultural knowledge, translanguaging not only promotes a deeper understanding of L2, but also makes language learning more equitable, engaging, and comprehensive. This study builds upon previous research on the topic by showcasing translanguaging's effectiveness in a range of linguistic and cultural contexts by drawing from the Chinese and Indonesian contexts. However, the absence of content localization in Indonesian classrooms raises questions about the unexplored benefits of integrating local culture into language instructions. This gap suggests an area for further exploration of Indonesian EFL translanguaging practices.

Synthesizing the comparative insights, it is evident that translanguaging is not a universal strategy but rather a spectrum of practices adapted by the teachers based on their professional pedagogical objectives, tailored to the specific needs of the students. The difference in translanguaging practices between China and Indonesia, despite their contextual similarities, highlights the importance of responsive language pedagogy that facilitates the diverse linguistic landscape where the students operate.

It is important to note that this study significantly expands the body of research on translanguaging techniques employed in EFL classrooms by adding variables of higher education and comparative study. Comparing translanguaging practices in EFL classrooms in China and Indonesia higher education offers crucial new insights into how contextual and cultural relevance work in language learning. Furthermore, this research validates the need for a pedagogical change in EFL

environments toward teaching approaches that are more linguistically and culturally sensitive. In addition, this study also broadens the translanguaging theoretical framework by providing empirical evidence of its application and outcomes in diverse educational contexts. It advances translanguaging as a pedagogical strategy by giving educators a deeper understanding of how translanguaging can be strategically implemented to address the challenges of language instruction in multilingual and multicultural classrooms.

The pedagogical implication of this study can be seen in the nuanced role of translanguaging in enhancing English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction within the diverse contexts of Chinese and Indonesian classrooms. The study demonstrates how translanguaging can be used carefully to build rapport, verify understanding, help students understand conceptual explanations, support learning, and make a classroom that is more welcoming, interesting, and productive. It exemplifies translanguaging as a pedagogical bridge that connects students' existing linguistic and cultural repertoires with the acquisition of a new language. For educators who wish to adapt their teaching methods to be more linguistically and culturally sensitive, this study offers valuable insights regarding the subtle application of translanguaging practices. Furthermore, this study presents the transformative potential of translanguaging in global language education and advocates for its integration into pedagogical practices to better serve the needs of diverse learners.

Despite this study's significance, it is important to recognize its limitations. First, this study only investigated specific geographic and educational contexts and it may not have captured the diversity of translanguaging practices across different linguistic and cultural landscapes, which could limit the findings' generalization and broader application. Second, it might be difficult to draw strong conclusions about the relationships between translanguaging practices and academic success due to the absence of quantitative student outcomes. Third, the unique advantages and challenges of translanguaging in this study are not adequately placed within the broader context of language education methodologies because there has been no comparative study with those other approaches. It may be possible to expand on our knowledge of how translanguaging can enhance inclusive, culturally sensitive, and productive learning environments through future research addressing these limitations.

## **Recommendations**

We make the case for an all-encompassing strategy to fully realize the benefits of translanguaging in instruction for EFL classrooms in higher education. To ensure inclusive and dynamic classroom practices, it is necessary to offer teachers ample opportunities for professional development that will enable them to implement translanguaging effectively. At the same time, to improve learning engagement and comprehension, learning materials must be adapted to communicate more to students' cultural and contextual realities. Additionally, there is an urgent need to promote flexible language policies that facilitate the use of students' L1 in EFL classrooms to create a more encouraging learning environment. Promoting the creation of more encouraging learning environments that value linguistic diversity is crucial to raising students' comfort and engagement which can be realized by utilizing their entire language repertoire.

Finally, we recommend that future research on translanguaging in EFL classrooms take a multidisciplinary approach to better understand the pedagogical implications and long-term effects of this practice. To improve the generalizability of results, future research should cover a wider range of linguistic and cultural contexts than just Chinese and Indonesian settings. Furthermore, longitudinal research is essential to capturing the long-term effects of translanguaging on learner attitudes, academic achievement, and language proficiency. In addition, the relationship between translanguaging practices and student outcomes may become clearer if quantitative methodologies are combined with qualitative analyses. At last, future studies in these areas will make a substantial contribution to our understanding of translanguaging as a transformative pedagogical tool in international language education.

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