TRANSLANGUAGING PRACTICE IN HIGHER EDUCATION EFL CLASSROOM: LECTURER'S AND STUDENT'S PERSPECTIVES ON THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES (AN ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY)

Oleh:

Alfian

0327098703

PROGRAM STUDI PENDIDIKAN BAHASA INGGRIS

FAKULTAS KEGURUAN DAN ILMU PENDIDIKAAN

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INTRODUCTION

It is suggested that translanguaging can be used in education, particularly in bilingual education, as a transformative practice to provide a trans-space of change and interdisciplinarity of knowledge and understandings (García & Wei, 2014). In Asian countries, where English is used as the medium of educational instruction, there is a growing awareness of the consequences of linguistic diversity in education (Smith, 2017). In its practice, however, students typically come from diverse linguistic backgrounds, using one language as a medium of education appears to be a challenge. Another important thing was when and how can other languages be used as a resource for learning? (García & Wei, 2014). Given the context, Translanguaging seems to be worth practicing since Translanguaging bridges understandings of language diversity for different types of students–those who are said to be bilingual and those considered multidialectal (Li, 2020). Although the practice of Translanguaging has been extensively exposed in the classroom setting, its application in the Higher Education EFL classroom appears to get less attention. Therefore, it may elicit positive and negative responses from lecturers and students.

DISCUSSIONS

What is Translanguaging?

Translanguaging must be well defined since there has been some discussion over whether it is distinct from code-switching. Cen Williams introduced the word translanguaging in Welsh to refer to a teaching approach in which the language of input and language of output are purposely changed (García & Wei, 2014). Its primary goal is linked to an educational strategy in which students are encouraged to switch between languages for receptive or productive usage; for example, students may be instructed to read in English and write in Welsh, and vice versa (Baker, 2011). From this definition, I would say that translanguaging is one of the instructional methodologies used in the classroom. Furthermore, Canagarajah (2011) defines translanguaging as the ability of multilingual speakers to shuttle between languages by seeing the several languages that compose their repertoire in an interconnected way. I posit that we might use translanguaging to various activities in the school that focus on developing four language abilities (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). It is scaffolding activities that

need to be well designed. It is in line with what had been proposed by Li Wei (2018), stating that translanguaging is a scaffold that needs careful and systematic implementation. In my opinion, Williams' and Baker's, Garcia's, and Wei's definition of translanguaging must be considered. We may discover various definitions of Translanguaging from other renowned researchers interested in Translanguaging. Knowing who initially created the term will help us compare one description to another.

Given this understanding, I agree with Molina and Samuelson (2017), asserting that Translanguaging is distinct from code-switching. They urged that the process of changing two languages is referred to as code-switching, whereas translanguaging is concerned with the speakers' construction, which builds the entire language repertoire. In my opinion, one important thing to distinguish between translanguaging and code-switching is laid on the practice in the classroom. Translanguaging usually occurs in the classroom while code-switching is outside the classroom, and more importantly, when we are talking about Translanguaging, we are utterly talking about the scaffolding activities. I concluded that Translanguaging practice could be done not only for bilingual and multilingual classes but also for the class using English as a medium of instruction. It is in line with Smith (2017), asserting that Translanguaging is a helpful term in contexts where the focus is on how students from a language background different from the mainstream learn in an EMI set.

Translanguaging as a Theory and Practice

Several studies have been conducted to better understand translanguaging as a theory and practice; however, most translanguaging studies have been conducted in K–12 settings, and little is known about translanguaging in higher education (Park, 2018). Because of this challenge, I believe it is necessary to investigate translanguaging in a higher education setting to identify a gap between theory and practice in the Higher Education EFL classroom. It is paramount to see the actual practice of translanguaging in the classroom setting. However, Mazzafero (2018) asserts that The original conceptualization of TL contributed to laying the foundation of an epistemological change concerning how multilingual dynamically construct their everyday language practices within and without the classroom. In my opinion, with the potential practice of Translanguaging, it is not impossible to bring about this practice either in the classroom or out of the classroom if scaffolding activities are used. It is crucial since the scaffolding activities are mainly used to create various affordances and opportunities for learning during students' collaborative social interactions, as Rajendram (2021) proposed.

Translanguaging practice in EFL classroom

Translanguaging in schools creates the possibility that bilingual students could use their entire linguistic and semiotic repertoire to make meaning. The teacher would take it up as a legitimate pedagogical practice (García & Wei, 2014). Regarding its practice in the EFL classroom, I agree with Rabbidge's (2019) assertion that English learners in EFL circumstances have substantially less exposure to and interaction in English. Hence language programs that increase exposure to English are said to be essential. It is presented as something entirely new, and it necessitates a social semiotic theory that allows for a new interpretation of language. Traditional language ideas are addressed to fight disruptive beliefs such as the monolingual bias in most language education settings. What becomes crucial, in my opinion, is that lecturers must establish a translanguaging perspective before designing or conducting it in the EFL classroom. A translanguaging perspective is based on unearthing the colonial difference and how language, bilingualism, and multilingualism have been and continue to be utilized to minoritize and racialize conquered and colonized nations (Panagiotopoulou et al., 2020)

Lecturer's perspectives on Translanguaging practice

Yuvayavan (2019) discovered that EFL instructors' views did not correspond to their behaviors. Although they had good attitudes toward translanguaging in specific contexts, they did not regularly use this technique due to their institutions, colleagues, and student's parents. Another study from Yuan and Yang (2020) shows that teacher educators may not always know how translanguaging works to help enhance their classroom practice. In my opinion, it indicates that teacher educators firstly need to become conscious of their translanguaging intuition and view translanguaging as a valuable tool for education. I also believe that lecturers' translanguaging practice is closely related to their individual beliefs and values and external policy and requirement in different teaching contexts. Therefore, teacher educators need to engage in ongoing reflections to examine their assumptions and work environment (associated with social, cultural, and linguistic features) when engaging in translanguaging practice (Yuan & Yang, 2020). To sum up, lecturers' perspectives on translanguaging practice seem to be varied due to several factors. Lecturers' beliefs and a deep understanding of how to use translanguaging in the classroom were also paramount.

Students' perspectives on Translanguaging practice

The perceptions of students in higher education have received attention in some studies. Cartens (2016) evaluated the impact of translanguaging on the development of African

bilinguals' academic literacy in English. In this study, the participants reported the benefits of this pedagogy, especially its cognitive gains. It enabled them to scaffold their understanding by creating an overall picture, simplifying the concepts, and making distributions among them. Another study shows that translanguaging can enhance multilingual students' understanding of concepts through collaborative learning. It is proposed that translanguaging can be used in collaborative learning activities to enhance a deeper understanding of the material (Mbirimi-Hungwe & McCabe, 2020). However, students who felt less optimistic about translanguaging encouraged by their teacher expressed fears of becoming confused or not fully acquiring the language of schooling. Other students reported becoming confused only when different languages are used a lot (Ticheloven et al., 2019). Another finding indicates that learners used translanguaging agentively to support one another's language learning, build rapport, resolve conflict, assert their cultural identity, and draw on knowledge across languages. However, learners' use of translanguaging was constrained by their teacher's and peers' language policies and practices, parental discourses about linguistic capital, and societal discourses on ethnicity, nationality, and marginalization (Rajendram, 2021).

CONCLUSION

Translanguaging practice in Higher Education EFL classroom needs to be well prepared and maintained as several considerations need to be considered for its approach. Several findings support the practice of Translanguaging, while others found its drawback so that it is worth investigating to see on the lecturers' and students' perspectives. Suppose we want future professionals to be bilingual and multilingual. In that case, bilingual activities and instruction should be employed at all levels, and universities need to recanalize all department courses, including foreign language, for improvements (Velásquez, 2019). One notion that I think is essential to be a guideline to understand Translanguaging is the concept of Multi Competency theory. It is a notion that emphasizes the speaker's entire intellect rather than their native or second language. It holds that someone who understands two or more languages is distinct from someone who is monolingual and, as such, should be seen as an individual rather than as a substandard monolingual. It shifts the perspective on second language learning (Wang, 2019). Students may regard translanguaging as both a threat and an opportunity. However, lecturers must see it as a university-wide theme applied to translanguaging through active and collaborative learning.

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