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Translanguaging in Higher Education: Perceptions and Practices among English Major Undergraduate Students in a Multilingual Setting

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Abstract: *Scholars have recognized that multilingual students frequently switch between languages to fulfill the linguistic requirements of their target language, either intentionally or unintentionally. Huang & Chalmers (2023), along with Weib & Lin (2019), emphasized that studying translanguaging in the classroom discourse is not only about encouraging fluid multilingual practices within the limits and boundaries set up by the academic tasks, but it also aims at challenging and transforming it into an effective pedagogical practice in a variety of educational contexts where the school language or the language of instruction is relevant to all types of learners. There, exploring various perspectives on practice is important, as this can impact learning. This need motivates the researcher to conduct further studies involving different participants to gain deeper insights. Supporters of these practices argue that students naturally use their native language in class to learn the target language (Nambisan, 2014), while others advocate for an "English-only" approach that has become increasingly common among multilingual learners (Cook, 2001; Moore, 2013). However, even if teachers discourage the use of these techniques, learners' connections to various languages remain in their minds (Atan, Hamid, Badrul, Azhar & Norway 2024; Huang & Chalmers, 2023). As such, the benefits and drawbacks of translanguaging pedagogy continue to be the subject of extensive research in language teaching and learning (Liu, 2023; Wagner & Troth, 2013).Thus, the present study explored an explanatory sequential mixed methods focusing on the perceptions and practices among undergraduate students in a multilingual setting and determine (1) how the Bachelor of Secondary Education (Major in English) students perceive translanguaging as (a) practice, (b) for second language learning, (c) in social settings, and (d) in higher education (2) finds out the reasons why students perceive translanguaging positively. Based on careful analysis of the data gathered, it shows that respondents lean toward agreement with positive statements regarding translanguaging practices in academic or communicative contexts. This indicates that most of the college students who come from different linguistic backgrounds were in favor of the use of translanguaging in linguistically diverse learning environments. From the students' narratives, six (6) themes emerged about the reasons why students perceive translanguaging positively, as follows: (1) promotes inclusive and equitable learning environments, (2) enhances comprehension and conceptual understanding, (3) increases confidence and participation, (4) facilitates clarification and reduces cognitive load, (5) improves strategy for active classroom engagement and (6) enables contextualization and relatability of lessons.*

Keywords—translanguaging; multilingual practices; contextualization

1. INTRODUCTION

This In the contemporary world, where linguistic diversity abounds, it becomes imperative to study further the potential functions of translanguaging in multilingual classrooms and study the language learners' perceptions of translanguaging (Wang, 2022; Gayete, 2025 & Yuan, 2024).

Scholars have recognized that multilingual students frequently switch between languages to fulfill the linguistic requirements of their target language, either intentionally or unintentionally. Huang & Chalmers (2023), along with Weib & Lin (2019), emphasized that studying translanguaging in the classroom discourse is not only about encouraging fluid multilingual practices within the limits and boundaries set up by the role sets, objectives, and academic tasks, but it also aims at challenging and transforming it into an effective pedagogical practice in a variety of educational contexts where the school language or the language of instruction is relevant to all types of learners. There, exploring various perspectives on practice is important, as this can impact learning. This need motivates researchers to conduct further studies involving different participants to gain deeper insights.

Language educators in multilingual classrooms worldwide use translanguaging in their teaching and learning process. It happens often without being fully aware of it. In some cases, they may even deny using this approach. Translanguaging can also occur naturally and spontaneously during instruction. This suggests that monolingual educational policies are insufficient in regulating or restricting such dynamic language practices (Canagarajah, 2011; García & Kleifgen, 2020). As the linguistic landscape continues to expand, it is crucial to investigate the complex aspects of translanguaging in multilingual educational environments (Bhatt & Bolonyai, 2019; Heugh, Harding-Esch, & Coleman, 2021), with many research studies indicating that these versatile language

strategies are commonly employed by multilingual students, who seamlessly transition between languages to accommodate the wide-ranging linguistic demands in their classrooms, whether deliberately or as an inherent part of their communication process.

The use of translanguaging in the classroom has been a topic of debate among scholars, educators, and researchers. Supporters of these practices argue that students naturally use their native language in class to learn the target language (Nambisan, 2014), while others advocate for an "English-only" approach that has become increasingly common among multilingual learners (Cook, 2001; Moore, 2013). However, even if teachers discourage the use of these techniques, learners' connections to various languages remain in their minds (Atan, Hamid, Badrul, Azhar & Norway 2024; Huang & Chalmers, 2023). As such, the benefits and drawbacks of translanguaging pedagogy continue to be the subject of extensive research in language teaching and learning (Liu, 2023; Wagner & Troth, 2013).

In recent years, numerous studies have demonstrated that translanguaging pedagogy has gained popularity among diverse linguistic backgrounds. According to Liu (2023) and Zhou (2023), translanguaging pedagogy advocates linguistic equity among learners. Students are encouraged to utilize linguistic resources beyond classrooms through translanguaging, providing support, context, and validation, and empowering learners to use target linguistic varieties beyond language acquisition. Moreover, it enhances language learners' cognitive capacities, allowing them to compose significant or meaningful texts in familiar, cultural, or even sociolinguistic contexts, making it a suitable and advantageous approach in a multilingual setting (Banda, 2018).

Additionally, translanguaging encourages multilingual individuals to express their entire linguistic palette in a classroom setting (García & Sánchez, 2022). Consequently, multilingual individuals can use their knowledge and experience, including their mother tongue, to effectively learn a new target language, thereby enhancing their linguistic development. These studies indicate that learners employ translanguaging pedagogy to fulfill their cognitive needs in acquiring the target language.

A study by Raja et al. (2022) explored how students in Indonesia feel about translanguaging, the practice of using their native language in the classroom. With the use of a mix of research methods, the study found that translanguaging is common and generally well-received by students. However, learners mentioned that their teachers don't actively encourage them to use their native language inside the classroom. Specifically, they motivate them to practice the target language during the teaching and learning process. Despite this, Indonesian students see translanguaging as beneficial, believing it helps them complete tasks quickly, strengthens their speaking and/or thinking skills, and improves their overall academic performance (Kusumaningputri & Khazanah, 2021; Rasman, 2018).

Moreover, Poza and Stites (2022) explained that the practice of translanguaging in the classroom enhances language development by enabling learners to access their linguistic repertoire without restraint, thereby fostering a supportive learning environment. They corroborate Wei's (2011) and Raja, Suparno & Ngadiso's (2022) assertions regarding the origins of translanguaging pedagogy, emphasizing creativity and criticality as essential components for nurturing a supportive learning environment. Through translanguaging, learners can select the most appropriate linguistic feature from their overall linguistic repertoire to associate with their new target language. Straszer et al. (2022) and Yadav (2014) highlighted that learners' language development in the target language can be further improved by employing their native language in the classroom. Consequently, multilingual students can leverage their knowledge and learning experience, including their mother tongue, to facilitate the acquisition of new target languages.

Contrarily, some scholars posit that translanguaging from L1 to L2 has little to no impact on learners' outputs. For example, translating one's work is an ineffective strategy (Ellis & Shintani, 2013; Cohen, 2014). In their research on 39 intermediate-level French learners, two-thirds wrote better in French when thinking in L2, while only one-third improved through translation. Flores (2019), along with Burner & Carlsen (2023), assert that translanguaging can significantly enhance cognitive, language, and literacy skills in schools, but further research is needed to understand why these practices are not being implemented effectively, as explained by Nambisan (2014).

The Philippines requires further research to comprehend the nuances of translanguaging practices, styles, and classroom patterns. García (2009) emphasized the need for a suitable language learning method in a multilingual country with a diverse population. Multilingual education, which involves teaching using at least three languages, is an appropriate approach for addressing the diverse needs of language learners (Cenoz & Gorter, 2020; UNESCO, 2003).

Relatedly, De Los Reyes (2019), in his study, "Translanguaging in multilingual ESL classrooms in Mindanao, Philippines," suggested that multilingual teachers and learners should use their language practices in the classroom to enhance meaning among themselves and between them and their tasks. He further argued that the participants demonstrated translanguaging as their inherent multilingual practices. This perspective is consistent with the concept of multilingualism.

Specifically, the limited number of studies examining translanguaging in higher education focusing on the perceptions and practices among undergraduate students in a multilingual setting prompted the researcher to undertake the present investigation. Consequently, this paper (1) explores how the Bachelor of Secondary Education (Major in English) students perceive translanguaging as (a) practice, (b) for second language learning, (c) in social settings, and (d) in

higher education (2) finds out the reasons why students perceive translanguaging positively.

2. METHODOLOGY

The present study implied an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design. It involves the integration of both quantitative and qualitative approaches across various stages of the research process. It includes the formulation of research questions, data collection, research analysis, and academic interpretation. According to Tashakkori and Teddlie (as cited in Pregoner, 2024), this methodological approach enables a comprehensive understanding of the research problem by combining numerical data with reliable insights. Likewise, Ivankova et al. (2024) emphasized that this design usually unfolds in two distinct phases: the quantitative phase is conducted first, and its results are used to guide and inform the subsequent qualitative phase.

In the present study, data were collected sequentially, beginning with quantitative methods, followed by qualitative exploration to further interpret and explain the initial results. Specifically, this approach enriched the study by allowing the students' interview responses to elaborate on their answers to the quantitative survey. In other words, the qualitative data provided deeper insight into the tabulated and analyzed results.

In the quantitative phase, a cross-sectional design was used to simultaneously measure both the outcomes and exposures of the respondents at a single point in time. Bowen, Rose, & Pilkington (2017) also explained that the reason for collecting sequential quantitative and qualitative data into one study is that it brings together two types of information, providing greater understanding and insight into the research topics that may not have been obtained by analyzing and evaluating data separately. Thus, this method allowed the study to present numerical data alongside respondents' perceptions of translanguaging. To further interpret the quantitative findings, qualitative interviews were conducted with purposefully selected participants.

3.1. Research Setting

The current study was conducted at a College in Mambajao, Camiguin Province, Northern Mindanao, Philippines. The most widely spoken language in Camiguin is Cebuano, also known as Bisaya. While Cebuano is the dominant language, Kinamigin, the indigenous Manobo language, is still spoken by some, particularly in Sagay and Guinsiliban. Other languages heard on the island include Boholano, Hiligaynon, Tagalog, and English, which are widely understood.

Moreover, Neri, Paz, Roa, Ragragio, and Carlos (2010) also noted that Camiguin is an island shaped by volcanic activity, characterized by expansive coastlines, rich natural resources, and fertile volcanic soils, features that make it highly suitable for human habitation. Due to these favorable conditions, the Spaniards selected Camiguin as their initial settlement site in Mindanao before expanding to other parts of Northern Mindanao.

Camiguin is the second smallest province in the country in terms of population and land area, after Batanes. Its provincial capital is Mambajao, which is the province's largest municipality in both areas and population. It is known as the "Paradise Island" of Mindanao. It boasts of its scenic sea and mountain views and white beaches. Within the island lie seven volcanoes; hence, Camiguin is known as the island born of fire. Bongado (as cited by Apostol & Saministado, 2022) built a historical assumption that, together with the other earlier migrants from the nearby islands of Cebu and Bohol, the Manobo speakers forged the Kinamiging language as it came to be known, an accumulation of the Manobo, Cebuano, and Boholano languages. The speakers of this generic Manobo language eventually inhabited the island of Camiguin. It can be found in the northern part of Mindanao through the gradual northward spread.

Although the participating school in this present study is guided by the CHED Memorandum Order No. 59, series of 1996 (support of the Philippine Bilingual Education Policy, which), it is reasonable to point out that translanguaging is a common practice in the students' learning context. As Canagarajah (2011) argued, monolingual educational policies cannot control translanguaging practices in a linguistically diverse learning environment. In fact, in this study, the majority of the participants reported that they speak English and Cebuano in class discussions, and at the same time, their teachers used these two languages in classrooms. It is also interesting to note that Filipino and Kinamigin languages were seldom used by both students and teachers.

3.2. Research Participants

Based on the results from the quantitative data analysis, participants in the qualitative phase were purposely selected following the set criteria: (a)they responded to the quantitative survey questionnaire, and (b) they had the highest mean score in the survey, which means they viewed translanguaging positively. The researchers chose 5 participants from each section who had a positive perception of translanguaging based on the descriptive analysis of the quantitative data. Therefore, a total of 10 participants were invited to participate in the semi-structured interview to further share the reasons behind their views on translanguaging. Only students with positive perceptions of translanguaging were chosen because the quantitative analysis of this study provided findings that most of the respondents positively viewed translanguaging.

3.3. Research Instruments

A. Survey Questionnaire:

The study employed a survey questionnaire to gather data on respondents' perceptions of translanguaging. The questionnaire items were originally developed by Rivera and Mazak (2017), later modified by Moody et al. (2019), and subsequently adopted by Calingasan, Erlano, Salik, and

Sinagandal (2022) in their research. After pre-testing the instrument, this adapted survey was found to be reliable for the present research because it had an internal consistency of 0.872.

The content of the questionnaire has different sections. The first section stated the title and the purpose of the study. The second section provided a simple definition of translanguaging and situational examples of how translanguaging is applied by teachers in classes. The third section consisted of 23 statements, which were designed to explore the perceptions of students towards translanguaging. Lastly, the fourth section requested respondents to grant the researchers full consent to collect, store, access, and/or process their data for the purpose and period allowed under the Republic Act 10173, otherwise known as the Data Privacy Act of 2012, and other applicable laws and regulations.

B. Semi-structured Interview

The study used a semi-structured interview guide for participants to explain their perspectives on translanguaging. The interview questions were asked in the qualitative phase of the study. Codó (2022) considered an interview a useful method for gathering information on multilingualism. It includes personal and interpretive information and ideas, benefits, and impressions of their language and other language users' behaviors (Soto-Corominas, Roquet, & Segura, 2024). Additionally, the interview comprised open-ended questions that allowed participants to expound their views on translanguaging. These questions, which were anchored on the quantitative result, specifically in the aspects of L2 learning and higher education, were checked and pre-tested to assess whether the questions captured the relevant information provided by the respondents.

C. Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

This study was conducted in two phases: quantitative and qualitative stages. After the study was approved by the Institute of Teacher Education, the researcher conducted a pre-testing of the quantitative survey and the semi-structured interview. First, the adapted survey was administered to 50 students enrolled in the same college. There were no major issues found during the pre-testing after the respondents were debriefed about their experience in completing the survey. According to them, all items and even the instructions were clear and understandable. Most importantly, the instrument was reliable (= 0.827). Before the final data gathering, a letter of request with informed consent was sent to the Dean of the Institute of Teacher Education (ITED). Furthermore, the respondents were informed that they could withdraw from the study during the process of collecting and analyzing the data.

D. Quantitative Phase

The researcher collected data from the undergraduate respondents through a printed survey questionnaire. During the data gathering, she utilized a total enumeration technique in choosing the participants. In the survey, students were provided with the definition of translanguaging. Specific class situations where translanguaging is applied were also given after the definition.

E. Qualitative Phase

Based on the quantitative results, she drafted interview questions for the qualitative phase. The researcher pre-tested the questions on five bona fide students from the same institution. Similarly, no challenges were found; however, although the questions asked in English were comprehensible, interviewees preferred to code-switch from English to Cebuano and vice versa in responding to the questions. Mikuska (2017) asserted that pre-testing is vital in research to assess the viability and aptness of the interview questions before conducting the full-scale study.

After analyzing the quantitative data and pre-testing the interview questions, we purposely identified the participants for the semi-structured interview by determining those who got the highest (4.00) mean results. At least five of the participants in each section who viewed translanguaging positively were selected and contacted to participate in an interview.

Before starting, each participant was presented with the interview protocol and was asked to sign the informed consent to allow the researchers to record the entire conversation. The interview questions guided the whole interview process. After the interview with each participant, the qualitative data were transcribed and thematically analyzed. Thematic analysis is an attainable, adaptable, and increasingly popular method for analyzing qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2012).

Participants were asked to share and expound on their reasons behind their specific perceptions of translanguaging based on how they experienced it. Specifically, this research followed the procedures of Alase (2017). It started with the coding of qualitative data by reading the interview transcripts more than three times. In the coding process, she individually highlighted repeated keywords, phrases, or sentences from the participants' responses. During the coding, the participants were given anonymity codes (CIN#1) to keep their identities confidential.

Before the analysis, she bracketed and suspended their perspectives of the phenomenon being studied so that their views would not influence the interpretations of the lived experiences of the participants. Next, exploratory comments on the highlighted statements were provided as annotations, wherein related statements were grouped until the emerging themes were generated. Finally, the emerging themes were narrowed down to identify the main themes of the interview responses.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Based on careful analysis of the data gathered from surveys, observations, audio recordings, transcriptions, field

notes, and interviews, the respondents lean toward agreement with positive statements regarding translanguaging practices in academic or communicative contexts. This indicates that most of the college students who come from different linguistic backgrounds were in favor of the use of translanguaging in linguistically diverse learning environments. From the students' narratives, six (6) themes emerged about the reasons why students perceive translanguaging positively, as follows: (1) promotes inclusive and equitable learning environments, (2) enhances comprehension and conceptual understanding, (3) increases confidence and participation, (4) facilitates clarification and reduces cognitive load, (5) improves strategy for active classroom engagement and (6) enables contextualization and relatability of lessons.

Problem 1. Perceptions on translanguaging as (a) practice, (b) for second language learning, (c) in social settings, and (d) in higher education

Results of the quantitative analysis

Table 1 below shows that the respondents have an overall positive perception of translanguaging (mean=3.40, SD=0.549). With a mean score of 3.40 on a 4-point Likert scale, the results suggest that the respondents lean toward agreement with positive statements regarding translanguaging practices in academic or communicative contexts. This indicates that most of the college students who come from different linguistic backgrounds were in favor of the use of translanguaging in linguistically diverse learning environments.

From a statistical standpoint, the mean of 3.40 approaches the upper limit of the scale, implying that most participants either "agree" or "strongly agree" with favorable perceptions of translanguaging. The standard deviation (SD = 0.549) further supports this interpretation, indicating relatively low variability in the responses. In other words, most responses cluster around the mean, reinforcing the conclusion that there is a consensus or general uniformity in positive perceptions among the respondents. Despite the dominant position of the English language in the Philippines, bilingual and multilingual students from Northern Mindanao, part of the country, believe that allowing them to use their full linguistic repertoire at the educational institution and in various social settings is beneficial to them.

Translanguaging, defined by García and Wei (2014), is the dynamic and strategic use of more than one linguistic resource by bilingual and multilingual speakers to create meaning, to promote learning, and to communicate effectively. The evidence of respondents' general positive attitude towards translanguaging suggests increasing awareness of its pedagogical and communicative potential within multilingual classroom settings. This positive prediction can be indicative of a variety of salient advantages:

(a) increased linguistic inclusion, whereby learners feel enabled to apply their full range of linguistic practices without limitation.

(b) greater cognitive and metalinguistic sensitivity, since smooth use of language may enhance understanding and critical reflection.

(c) validation of linguistic identities, especially for minority language speakers, who may be otherwise marginalized or devalued in monolingual or English-dominated settings.

Table 1: The perceptions of BSE Major in English Undergraduate Students towards Translanguaging

	Mean	**SD**
Perceptions of Translanguaging as a Practice	**3.44**	**0.57**
1. Translanguaging should not be avoided by bilinguals.	3.48	0.584
2. Instructors at my college engage in translanguaging.	3.54	0.523
3. Translanguaging is a natural practice for bilinguals.	3.38	0.553
4. Translanguaging indicates linguistic proficiency in a second language.	3.25	0.607
5. Translanguaging is not a disrespectful practice.	3.55	0.563
6. Translanguaging is not confusing for me.	3.44	0.581
Perceptions of translanguaging for second language learning	**3.46**	**0.534**
7. Translanguaging helps me learn a second language.	3.48	0.524
8. Translanguaging is acceptable when learning a new Language	3.54	0.523
9. Translanguaging is essential for learning a new language.	3.44	0.521
10. Translanguaging has assisted me in learning a second language.	3.54	0.501
11. Language instructors should not avoid translanguaging because it will prevent second language learning.	3.29	0.602
Perceptions of translanguaging in social settings	**3.37**	**0.527**
12. It is okay to engage in translanguaging in social settings.	3.34	0.521
13. I use translanguaging in social settings.	3.33	0.559
14. Translanguaging is socially acceptable	3.45	0.500
Perceptions of translanguaging in higher education	**3.35**	**0.551**
15. It is okay to engage in translanguaging in higher education settings	3.31	0.591
16. Bilinguals should be able to engage in translanguaging to complete college assignments.	3.00	0.577
17. Translanguaging is acceptable to use within college-level assessments.	3.04	0.698

18. It is appropriate for college instructors to engage in translanguaging.	3.20	0.499
19. Translanguaging by a college instructor is professional.	3.08	0.582
20. I would not feel upset if a college instructor engaged in translanguaging during class.	3.55	0.563
21. If an instructor used translanguaging in class, it would be helpful for bilingual students.	3.65	0.480
22. Translanguaging helps me engage in conversations with my classmates.	3.66	0.499

In addition, the positive attitude reflected in the data can also be a sign of receptiveness to pedagogical innovation and a change in educational language ideologies, from monolingual bias towards a more pluralistic one that sanctions multilingual practices in formal contexts. Despite this, while the mean score indicates a fairly positive response, the moderate standard deviation does leave open the potential for a minority of the population to be neutral in outlook. Qualitative data were pursued further to explore these outlier perceptions to gain insight into possible resistance or perceived issues with academic rigor.

Participants in the current study find translanguaging a good practice (mean = 3.44, SD = 0.569). It indicates that participants view translanguaging as a positive and normal linguistic practice, especially in bilingual and multilingual educational contexts. The mean score of 3.44 (SD 0.569) also reports a broad consensus among participants that translanguaging is an excellent practice, whereas the somewhat higher mean of 3.46 (SD = 0.534) supports its perceived utility for second language acquisition. These highly comparable mean scores, complemented with rather low standard deviations, imply that the participants not only approve of but also sanction the educational benefits of translanguaging for higher learning education.

This data aligns with García and Wei's (2014) conceptualization of translanguaging as a normative, rather than exceptional, process among multilinguals. The respondents' views reflect an understanding that translanguaging is not an instructional flaw or linguistic deficiency but a cognitive and communicative strategy that facilitates meaning-making and learning. By allowing the utilization of the first language in class, students are not forsaking English learning but are instead utilizing their first language(s) as a support system to build proficiency in a second language. This is in contrast to conventional monolingual methodologies that enforce strict language segregation and frequently marginalize learners' linguistic repertoire.

Notably, the respondents acknowledge that translanguaging is already present in the educational context. It can be observed in real classroom practices, especially among college teachers who unconsciously switch between languages to facilitate understanding, explain concepts, and involve learners. Students' beliefs that this practice does not interfere with second language acquisition refute the long-standing myth that exposure to more than one language in the learning process leads to confusion or hinders linguistic development. Rather, the findings point towards the possibility that translanguaging can increase students' confidence, engagement, and metacognitive awareness because it enables them to tap into previous knowledge and build new meaning more comprehensively and expansively.

In sum, the results are highly in favor of the pedagogical validity of translanguaging, particularly in multilingual classrooms. They lend empirical support to appeals to reorient language teaching policies and practices to legitimize and tap the entire linguistic repertoire of learners, instead of inhibiting it. As the respondents suggest, translanguaging is not only widespread but also a requirement for fair and successful second language acquisition.

In terms of the use and function of translanguaging in social settings, the findings of the study indicate that respondents hold a generally favorable perception of translanguaging in social contexts, as evidenced by a mean score of 3.37 (SD = 0.527). In terms of the use and function of translanguaging in social settings, the findings of the study indicate that respondents hold a generally favorable perception of translanguaging in social contexts, as evidenced by a mean score of 3.37 (SD = 0.527). This mean score suggests a strong level of agreement that translanguaging. It implied that it is not only socially acceptable but also functionally significant in everyday interactions, particularly within bilingual or multilingual environments. The relatively low standard deviation further suggests a shared consensus among respondents, reinforcing the idea that translanguaging is an entrenched and normalized part of their communicative practices beyond the classroom.

This view is in concordance with modern sociolinguistic theories. It situates the concept of language use as dynamic, fluid, and context-bound. Moreover, translanguaging in social context goes beyond linguistic boundaries and captures the experienced linguistic realities of multilingual speakers, especially in multilingual societies where code-switching, code-mixing, and hybrid language practice are usual (Wei, 2018). In line with this, respondents' acknowledgment of translanguaging as socially acceptable points to its potential as a strategy for negotiating identity, promoting inclusivity, and enabling interpersonal understanding in different communicative contexts, including peer communication, community engagement, and online communication.

In addition, the fact that students find positive benefits of translanguaging in a social context also indicates the potential of translanguaging to empower learners to access their language repertoires fully without fear of being stigmatized or corrected. It is evidence that students feel most confident, authentic and connected to others when they can move fluidly across languages. Translanguaging, in this aspect, is not just a

communicative act, but also a type of social action, through which multilinguals convey subtle meanings, affirm their self-identities, and manipulate social relations.

Importantly, this challenges long-standing monoglossic ideologies that view language mixing as improper or deficient. Instead, the data affirms that translanguaging is a legitimate and valued practice within multilingual communities, particularly among youth and students whose linguistic practices reflect their sociocultural realities. Therefore, this finding has significant implications for language policy and pedagogical practice. It advocates for the acknowledgment and integration of translanguaging in academic spaces and broader social spheres, where it serves both functional and identity-affirming roles.

Lastly, college students in this study have a positive view of translanguaging in higher education (M=3.35, SD=0.551). It further reveals that respondents maintain a favorable perspective on translanguaging within higher education settings. This mean score, positioned near the upper end of the Likert scale, indicates a generally positive attitude toward integrating translanguaging practices in academic contexts. The relatively low standard deviation implies that this viewpoint is widely shared among participants, reinforcing the notion that translanguaging is not only accepted but also valued by bilingual and multilingual students facing the challenges of college-level education.

Students' belief that translanguaging assists them in completing assignments and handling assessments points to its pragmatic function as an academic support mechanism. In higher education, where cognitive and linguistic demands are often intense, allowing students to draw on their full linguistic repertoire can serve as a cognitive scaffold, a tool that bridges gaps in comprehension, critical thinking, and expression. This aligns with Vygotskian theories of learning, where Veresov (2020) explained that this theory emphasizes the mediational role of language in the development of higher-order thinking skills. In this context, translanguaging becomes a means of accessing prior knowledge, articulating complex ideas, and engaging more meaningfully with course content.

In addition, the perception of translanguaging as a helpful means of communication among peers indicates its potential in promoting collaboration, inclusivity, and a feeling of belonging in linguistically diverse classrooms. It facilitates mutual understanding and fosters a more inclusive environment where students are not held against their linguistic capacities but are, rather, encouraged to capitalize on them as learning assets.

Importantly, the respondents also indicate a willingness to engage in translanguaging when instructed by teachers. It reflects a positive language ideology change in the classroom. With it, instead of requiring strict compliance with monolingual norms, learners of languages now appreciate the instructional benefits of teachers' strategic employment of translanguaging to promote understanding and engagement. This reflects an increasing recognition of the place of multilingual pedagogies in enabling diverse learners, especially those who are likely to struggle to engage with English-only teaching.

In conclusion, the results indicate that translanguaging is not only seen as socially and cognitively advantageous but also institutionally significant in higher education. It promotes academic achievement, facilitates classroom interaction, and corresponds to the actual linguistic practices of bilingual and multilingual students. These findings reinforce the imperative for institutions to adopt translanguaging as a legitimate and strategic pedagogical strategy, one that can promote more equity, accessibility, and learner agency in multilingual learning spaces.

Problem 2: Reasons why students perceive translanguaging positively

Results of the qualitative analysis

This section discusses and reports the findings based on the qualitative analysis of interview responses collected from undergraduate students majoring in English. The research aimed to investigate students' perceptions and practices of translanguaging in a multilingual higher education environment. Based on thematic analysis of the participants' stories, several main themes emerged representing how translanguaging affects their classroom experiences, understanding, and participation. These themes shed light on the pedagogical potential of translanguaging as a communicative and cognitive approach within multilingual teaching contexts. The analysis weaves together direct quotes from participant interviews with supportive scholarly literature to contextualize and validate each emergent theme. This method allows for the foregrounding of the voice of the students while grounding the findings within wider academic debates around multilingual education and translanguaging pedagogy.

Theme 1: Promotes Inclusive and Equitable Learning Environments

Students comprehensively characterized translanguaging as an effective means of evening the academic playing field, especially in linguistically plural classrooms. Unlike favoring only English-proficient students, translanguaging gives all students, no matter their background language, equal chances of voicing themselves, participating in conversations, and showing comprehension. This teaching approach deconstructs the prevailing hierarchy that tends to marginalize less English-proficient students by acknowledging and legitimating the deployment of their first or home languages in academic communication.

As a result, students reported feeling more empowered, respected, and included in the learning process. The respondents emphasized that translanguaging reduced the fear

of being judged for language errors during the classroom activities. This fear often discourages participation in English-only classrooms. Instead, it cultivated a sense of belonging and mutual respect among each other, where their linguistic identities were not seen as deficiencies but as assets and skills. In this way, translanguaging fosters a more inclusive and democratic classroom environment, one where all students feel welcome, seen, and heard, regardless of their linguistic capital.

(1) CIN#1*: "**Translanguaging promotes inclusive education... students like us can easily express our ideas using both our native language and the target language**...Also, students can freely express their thoughts we it comes to translanguaging because they are confident in speaking different languages or the languages that are available for them."*

(2) *MIC#1: "Through translanguaging .... I'm actually more comfortable... to learn and participate in class.... **Also, translanguaging supports equality in the classroom by reducing language barriers.** For some reason, translanguaging means allowing all students to participate actively and freely."*

Garcia and Wei (2014) assert that translanguaging "creates a more equitable classroom environment by validating and incorporating the multilingual repertoires students bring into school." It shifts the classroom from a monolingual to a multilingual space that affirms all linguistic identities.

Theme 2: Enhances Comprehension and Conceptual Understanding

Students consistently described translanguaging as a powerful tool for leveling the academic playing field, particularly in linguistically diverse classrooms. Rather than privileging only those who are fluent in the dominant academic language (English), translanguaging provides all learners, regardless of their linguistic background, with equitable opportunities to express themselves, engage in discussions, and demonstrate understanding. This classroom routine dismantles the traditional hierarchy that often marginalizes students who are less proficient in English by recognizing and validating the use of their home or first languages in academic discourse.

As a result, students reported feeling more empowered, respected, and included in the learning process. They emphasized that translanguaging reduced the fear of being judged for language errors, which often discourages participation in English-only classrooms. Instead, it cultivated a sense of belonging and mutual respect, where their linguistic identities were not seen as deficiencies but as assets. In this way, translanguaging fosters a more inclusive and democratic classroom environment. It's a place where all students feel welcome, seen, and heard, regardless of their linguistic capacity.

*(1) CUT#1: "For me, translanguaging is a positive tool for learning ... because of translanguaging, students like us can understand the lessons better... and if ever there are complex vocabularies and other technical terminologies that are used in sentences...then **we can comprehend the sentence better if their translanguaging during the discussion in class."***

*(2) IZZ#1: "For me, translanguaging is a big help because ....even if I can participate using English language during classroom discussion ... **it's still different if the topics are explained and translated using our first language because explanations are much more specific ... it has a big impact on our learning process.***

Creese and Blackledge (as cited by Mitchell, Myles & Marsden, 2019) found that translanguaging aids deeper understanding by enabling learners to use all their linguistic resources to access meaning. This aligns with Vygotsky's (1978) theory that learning is mediated through language and social interaction.

Theme 3: Increases Confidence and Participation

Translanguaging was frequently cited by the participants as a liberating linguistic and pedagogical approach that boosts learners' confidence in the classroom. Most Most students reported that being able to switch between English and their home languages, such as Filipino or Bisaya, significantly alleviated their stress about speaking up in class. This flexibility enabled them to express themselves better, especially when they struggled to find the right English words or to negotiate complicated concepts.

Consequently, with translanguaging, the students indicated that they were more ready to engage in class discussions. They respond to group tasks and pose questions for clarification without fear of being judged or misinterpreted. The results indicated that this empowering feeling of being able to communicate freely is a result of understanding that their entire language repertoires are not only tolerated but appreciated as learning resources. In practice, translanguaging takes away the stress of sticking rigidly to English, which so often produces communicative blocks for multilingual learners. Rather, it promotes more genuine, assured, and richer interaction with course material, hence a more student-centered and inclusive learning environment.

*(1) HAN#1: "Translanguaging is okay because **it can help students ... share their thoughts without fear of making mistakes**, which helps us understand lessons better. It makes the classroom feel more welcoming because our different languages, like Bisaya and Filipino, are seen as strengths, not barriers.*

*(2) ACA#1: "Also, in terms of translanguaging, we can participate freely when we understand the lesson ...**we feel like there is freedom to use our language to understand and comprehend the terminologies that are not familiar ... because we can interact freely***

during classroom discussion *... and we can be capable of constructing concepts in our mind with translanguaging...sometimes, if we use purely English or hear straight English reporting, we lack confidence in speaking and asking questions during discussion."*

According to Canagarajah (2011), translanguaging serves as a confidence-building strategy, particularly for multilingual learners, by legitimizing their language practices and reducing the emotional and cognitive pressure of strict adherence to English-only norms.

Theme 4: Facilitates Clarification & Reduces Cognitive Load

When students encounter unfamiliar vocabulary or complex sentence structures, translanguaging serves as a critical scaffolding mechanism that facilitates comprehension and reduces cognitive load. Instead of requiring students to decode all information in only English, which is perhaps their second-best language at this point, translanguaging enables them to access their first languages to read for free meaning, make sense, and resolve confusion. This routine lightens the cognitive load normally burdening decoding academic texts or technical materials, especially among students with continuing development of English proficiency. Through a change to a more familiar code, the students can ground new knowledge against what they already know, increasing the efficiency and relevance of learning. The respondents often cited how breaking down difficult vocabulary into Filipino or Bisaya during class discussions helped them memorize abstract ideas and retain information better. Thus, translanguaging is a support system for pedagogy that fills the gaps of languages in addition to facilitating better comprehension through aligning the usage of language with the cognitive as well as cultural resources of students.

(1) *INT#1: "(...) For me, I see translanguaging as a tool that helps students...to understand better the topic... most specially the students during reporting, when they use translanguaging then those topics... they can get it...they can go with the discussion with clear understanding...then it can lessen the confusions with technical terms. It's just that... It's easier for students to understand new topics in reporting if there is translanguaging during the teaching and learning process...* ***It's easier to connect with lessons.... translanguaging is effective for learning, as it enhances our vocabulary, skills, and learning phase in the classroom."***

(2) *RSA#1: "So, translanguaging has been practiced .... not just here inside the institution... that we are allowed to apply and use translanguaging in learning ...so it's much more effective for us... to understand a specific concept. For example, there is a concept written in English, then it has a deep meaning ...* ***for me, it's much better to apply translanguaging to understand it using our first language."***

(3) *SDG#1: So, for me, the reason why I strongly agree with translanguaging...Like, I have a positive perception of it because there were times when students could not understand the target language (English) ... so we need to translate so that students can get the lesson and connect with it using their first language.* ***It can be an effective tool for interactive classroom participation among students that promotes positive engagement and communication... inside the classroom...*** *Translanguaging practices help the students in communicating during the learning process, most especially during classroom interactions where we may have trouble understanding complex topics or maybe new lessons.*

Hornberger and Link (2012) characterize translanguaging as an information processing strategy enabling learners to code-switch and receive information in the most convenient language for them, reducing the effort involved in learning.

Theme 5: Improves strategy for active classroom engagement

The interview answers disclosed that translanguaging is being used actively not just during lectures, but in many different kinds of learning activities such as group work, role-playing, oral presentations, brainstorming sessions, and even during tasks like graded recitations. This widespread implementation of translanguaging confirms that it is more than just code-switching; it is a part of the pedagogical and communicative nature of the classroom. These findings indicate that translanguaging is responsible for the development of a more student-centered and participatory learning context, in which students are not mere recipients of information but rather active co- builders of knowledge.

Through the facilitation of the use of various languages during collaborative work, translanguaging facilitates more inclusive peer-to-peer interaction and promotes fair participation from students who possess varying levels of linguistic capabilities. It further fosters classroom dynamics through allowing students to present ideas with greater ease and relate to experiences from everyday life, making learning relevant and accessible. The translanguaging practice, therefore, sits comfortably with constructivist and sociocultural accounts of learning, where interaction, dialogue, and co-construction of meaning are foregrounded. Finally, the students' accounts demonstrate how translanguaging not only supports understanding but also redefines classroom culture as dialogic, responsive, and enabling of multilingual learners.

(1) *EDA#1: "As a student...using translanguaging specially in class... then there are times that we cannot understand what is meant by the reporter... so in that case, for me reporter then needs to have translanguaging from English to Bisaya to better present the concept to the students.* ***It is beneficial in classroom activities, not just during reporting but also group discussions, role playing, brainstorming***

activities... *generating examples through translation, and oral graded recitations.*

(2) *JAM#1: "Ahm and I believed that translanguaging also is applied especially in the classroom. If we are allowed to apply translanguaging, we are much more confident and comfortable.* ***Less pressure if we can have translanguaging... more connection to the topic means more learning about it.***

Wei (2018) also emphasizes the extent to which translanguaging enables more engaged, interactive classrooms where learning itself is a dialogic and collaborative enterprise. Through classroom interaction of various types, learners can co-construct knowledge across multiple languages.

Theme 6: Enables Contextualization and Relatability of Lessons

Students also spoke highly of the way translanguaging allows for the connection of classroom material to their actual lives, cultural histories, and day-to-day language use. Through the inclusion of localized illustrations and contextually grounded references—often in their native tongues, otherwise abstract or exotic scholarly ideas become more tangible, understandable, and accessible. Such linking classroom knowledge with lived experience not only aids in comprehension but also leads to higher engagement and retention of material.

(1) *JEL#1: "Translanguaging allows students to expound concepts... much more detailed. It can also provide examples that are relevant and relatable to the students, without others' expectation that we are required to speak in pure, straight English. With translanguaging, it could also give much more contextualized ideas... relatable instances, for example, very complex ideas, and through translanguaging, it makes those concepts much more understandable. The lesson is much easier to grasp by students... because they can use different languages which is more familiar to them.* ***In short, students and teachers can contextualize lessons more with translanguaging."***

(2) *IZZ#1:* ***"Explanations are much more specific... it has a really big impact on our learning process...****students can learn because they can clarify concerns on the topic. In short, translanguaging also functions for clarification... With that clarified concepts in mind... we can surely understand the lesson."*

The participants highlighted that when lessons are taught in accessible language structures, idioms, or culture-relevant examples, they can build meaning and critically interact with the content. For example, abstract theoretical concepts become easier to understand when instructors or peers make parallels from immediate contexts or offer translations that strike a chord with students' sociocultural realities. Thus, translanguaging serves as a bridge between instructional language and the learner's environment, placing learning within a context of familiarity and relevance.

This approach fits with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which holds that learning is strongest when it is facilitated through tools, like language, that are based in the culture of the learner. Translanguaging not only enhances linguistic understanding but also promotes greater, more substantial learning by locating content within students' forms of knowing. Makalela (2015), however, contends that translanguaging fills the space between home language and school language, making educational material more salient in terms of students' practices. This is a pedagogical process that enables greater contextualization and comprehension.

4 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results are consistent with García and Wei's (2014) as mentioned by Hamman-Ortiz, Dougherty, Tian, Palmer & Poza's (2025) theoretical conceptualization of translanguaging as a naturalistic strategy that fosters meaning-making, cognitive challenge, and inclusive engagement. The little variation across responses in the sample also suggests that the positive attitudes are consistent overall.

Qualitative data confirms the quantitative findings, and the qualitative data identified six emerging themes that highlight how the use of translanguaging transformed the learning experiences of students: it creates an inclusive and equitable environment, increases understanding, increases confidence, decreases the amount of mental effort necessary to communicate, affords a greater opportunity to communicate, and fosters active engagement, and allows contextualization of lessons. Students' narratives underscore that translanguaging enables them to participate more fully, feel validated in their identities, and access deeper levels of understanding.

Further, the results resist the deficit view of multilingualism by demonstrating that translanguaging is not only not an obstacle for but also a potent scaffold for second language learning and critical thinking. These arguments for educational institutions to reconsider language policy and accept translanguaging as a recognized teaching approach.

Overall, the study brings translanguaging not only as a pedagogical practice, but as part of a broader sociolinguistic turn that promotes linguistic diversity, the cultivation of student agency, and equity within higher education. This supports that institutions of education should review language policies and embrace it as an accepted teaching method. Finally, the study frames translanguaging less as a pedagogical strategy and more as a sociolinguistic agenda that sustains bamboo in the wilderness by promoting linguistic diversity and equity in higher education institutions.

Recommendations

The study highlights the benefits of translanguaging in BSE English Major undergraduates, highlighting its potential

to enhance academic engagement, self-expression, and cultural identity validation, recommending its integration into higher education to bridge linguistic gaps and foster critical thinking. With this, the study recommends the integration of translanguaging into higher education, especially in multilingual settings like the Philippines. Current language policies, which compartmentalize English and Filipino use based on subject areas, are seen as ineffective by students. A more dynamic approach that mirrors multilingual experiences can help bridge linguistic gaps, promote deeper learning, and develop critical thinking skills. This also requires a re-examination of institutional language policies.

1. ***Integrate Translanguaging into Higher Education Teaching Practices***

The research revealed that students consider translanguaging as a valuable and empowering pedagogical practice. As such, higher institutions should deliberately integrate translanguaging practices into learning and teaching to make classroom experiences more inclusive and contextually appropriate. This means abandoning inflexible language compartmentalization (ex., English-only or subject-specific language restriction) and permitting students to utilize all their linguistic skills in meaning-making and engaging more critically with academic discourse.

2. ***Provide teacher training on translanguaging pedagogy***

To use translanguaging successfully, teachers require specific training on both theoretical and practical classroom approaches. Teachers should be made aware that translanguaging is distinct from spontaneous code-switching but is an organized strategy promoting understanding, critical thinking, and student participation. Training must involve concrete examples for teachers to handle and maximize multilingual classroom interaction, such as permitting brainstorming in the mother tongue and formal outputs in English.

3. ***Explore more on Stakeholder Perspectives and Language Ideologies***

Future researchers may explore more of the translanguaging practices and strategies. It may also consider examining the perspectives of various stakeholders (such as teachers, administrators, parents, and policymakers) and how these views intersect with prevailing language ideologies, attitudes, and institutional policies. Stakeholders are instrumental in influencing the language climate of schools, and their views tend to determine whether translanguaging is welcomed or rejected. Educators with a rigid monolingual ideology, for example, might view translanguaging as compromising academic standards, while those who are more progressive might view it as a vehicle for improving student engagement and equity. Investigating these underlying ideologies has the potential to inform researchers about deeper reasons why one would be for or against multilingual practices in the classroom.

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