

## TRANSLANGUAGING IN THE ESL/EFL CLASSROOM: PEDAGOGICAL INNOVATION OR LINGUISTIC CONFUSION?

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***Annotation:*** *This article discusses the role of translanguaging in English as a second language (ESL) and English as a foreign language (EFL) classes. This mainly focuses on its benefits and drawbacks of modern language learning environments. Translanguaging allows students to use their first language (L1) in order to improve understanding, reduce anxiety while studying a second or foreign language. The study examines how this strategy boosts students' confidence, motivation by making the learning process more meaningful and relevant to their real-life communication practices.*

***Key words:*** *target language, language acquisition, first language, classroom engagement, peer feedback, learner-centered strategy*

### INTRODUCTION

In today's multicultural and multilingual educational environments, the concept of translanguaging has become more common in the field of language teaching and learning. The term "translanguaging" refers to a variety of multilingualism-related topics that explain how multilinguals and bilinguals apply their language skills to interact with the world around them.[1] This pedagogical practice encourages language learners to use their first language (L1) to enhance comprehension while acquiring a second or foreign language (L2). This method is controversial to the traditional monolingual standards of language classrooms, particularly the "English-only" rules commonly used in ESL (English as a Second

Language) and EFL (English as a Foreign Language) contexts.

The adoption of translanguaging in ESL/EFL classrooms has created extensive debate among educators and scholars. On the one hand, there is an idea that translanguaging is a pedagogical innovation that increases deeper understanding, decreases learners' fear, and helps the development of multilingual identities. On the other hand, critics are concerned about potential linguistic confusion, and an over-reliance on L1 may hinder target language proficiency, slow down fluency, and create challenges for classroom management for teachers.

### **LITERARY REVIEW AND METHODOLOGY**

Through translanguaging, learners can understand, communicate, and create meaning in the target language by using all their linguistic resources from their first language instead of treating languages as separate systems. This makes conventional monolingual teaching methods more flexible, learner-centered. Translanguaging helps learners enhance a fuller understanding of content by connecting new knowledge with existing linguistic skills. These techniques also boost learners' confidence by lessening language anxiety and enabling them to express complex ideas in the target language [2]. The importance of translanguaging in creating learner identity, allowing students to speak more than one language, fosters a sense of empowerment and community in the classroom. This emotional involvement may therefore improve motivation and involvement, which are the most important aspects of successful language learning [3].

However, there are some controversial ideas showing negative aspects of translanguaging. For example, frequent use of L1 could limit exposure to the target language, potentially slowing down L2 development, especially in EFL contexts where learners lack opportunities to use English outside the classroom [4]. In some cases, students may complete grammar or writing exercises by thinking in their first language (L1) and then translating their ideas straight into English. This might lead to some mistakes because grammatical structures between L1 and L2 may not always match, which can lead to inaccurate speeches and sentences. Furthermore, in environments where English is rarely spoken outside the classroom, the classroom

might be the only place where learners are exposed to the language during the lesson. Overusing their L1 during this limited time, they may lose valuable practice opportunities. As a result, their exposure to authentic English input (vocabulary, expressions, pronunciation) is reduced. Similarly, Translanguaging can lead to linguistic confusion, where students blend languages by fully understanding neither one, if there are no defined educational rules [5]. However, I think that instead of using only one language (such as English), enabling both languages use in the classroom makes learning feel more understandable and natural.

The learning process becomes more effective and relevant if students connect what they learn in class to how they communicate in daily life. For example, Sun and Zhang examined the impacts of translanguaging in online peer feedback for improving English writing performance. The results showed that the adoption of translanguaging for online peer feedback was more effective, as compared to English-only online peer feedback, at least in the first round of the experiment, while this was not demonstrated in the second or third rounds. It's interesting to note that additional elements such as self-efficacy, motivation, agency, and translanguaging awareness were also considered in order to better understand how effective translanguaging is in promoting language learning [6].

Jiang et al. also conducted a study to explore how Chinese university students perceive translanguaging and to identify the factors that affect its use in language teaching and learning. Their one-way analysis of data indicated that first-year students who were not majoring in English were more open to the use of translanguaging by both teachers and classmates compared to students majoring in English. Moreover, multiple regression analysis revealed that the frequency of teacher translanguaging and students' attitudes toward translanguaging significantly predicted the extent to which students engaged in translanguaging themselves [7].

## **RESULTS**

According to the reviewed research, translanguaging has a variety of effects on language acquisition in ESL and EFL courses. Many researchers agree that translanguaging can promote beneficial learning outcomes such as increased

confidence in learners, better comprehension, and increased classroom participation. These advantages are frequently associated with students' capacity to use all of their language resources, which can help them comprehend difficult ideas and make more meaningful communication.

Furthermore, significant emotional and social advantages in language learning have been connected to translanguaging. By permitting the use of L1 in addition to L2, language anxiety is decreased, and learners feel more comfortable and confident when expressing themselves [8]. Additionally, by validating students' multilingual identities and fostering a sense of belonging, this method can increase motivation and classroom engagement. Additionally, students participate more actively and get a deeper understanding when new material is connected to their existing language expertise. However, other academics warn that relying too much on L1 can limit valuable exposure to L2, particularly in EFL situations where classroom time is sometimes the primary chance for target language practice. Overuse of the first language can potentially slow the development of L2 fluency and result in language interference or mistakes if not carefully guided. Thus, while translanguaging provides clear advantages, its use must be thoughtfully managed to avoid hinder development of L2 fluency.

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, these days, translanguaging is becoming an important and beneficial approach in language learning classrooms when students are from a range of linguistic backgrounds. It gives many advantages that can improve the educational process. If students have the chance to use both their first language (L1) and the target language (L2) during the lessons, they can learn new material by linking it to what they already know, and express themselves more openly. This helps them improve confidence, reduce anxiety in speaking and writing, and also allows students to take part in group discussions without fear of making mistakes. Consequently, the learning process will be more meaningful, develop multilingual identities among their learners. Furthermore, translanguaging makes language learning more natural and comparable to real conversation, in which people

constantly switch between languages to express their ideas. Learners can be more interested, motivated, and ready to take risks when they are using the target language if they believe their entire linguistic past is respected and not ignored. This can result in a greater understanding of language acquisition.

However, it is also important to take into account the potential disadvantages of translanguaging. When students use their first language excessively, they may spend less time learning the target language, that's why slows their improvement of fluency, accuracy, and confidence in L2 communication in everyday communication. This hinders improvement in EFL courses when students do not have many opportunities to practice English outside of the classroom. Furthermore, students may get confused between the two languages if teachers cannot provide true guidance on when and how to use translanguaging. This could lead to interference, which could slow their language development. Thus, I believe that translanguaging should be used wisely and purposefully. It should support, but not replace. Teachers should maintain a balance between students' first language as a beneficial tool and using the target language. If this balance is always maintained, translanguaging can be a useful strategy for improving language learning effectiveness.

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