I-ROLE 2023
International Conference of Research on Language Education

TRANSLANGUAGING AS A STRATEGIC ESSENTIALISM TO SHUTTLE ORIENTATIONS SPECIFIC TO LEARNERS

Caesar DeAlwis (a), Aiza Johari (b)*, Affidah Morni (c)
*Corresponding author

(a) Universiti Teknologi MARA, Sarawak, Malaysia, cjerdealwis@uitm.edu.my
(b) Universiti Teknologi MARA, Sarawak, Malaysia, aiza@uitm.edu.my
(c) Universiti Teknologi MARA, Sarawak, Malaysia, affidah75@uitm.edu.my

Abstract

This paper explains how multilingual rural students use their linguistic repertoire to facilitate their learning of the English language in class (reading comprehension). The study adopts the translanguaging approach as its theoretical framework. 22 students participated in this qualitative study, in which the English language teacher used translanguaging to overcome the loss of motivation, low level of proficiency, and emotional challenges among the students. This paper reports on how the subject teacher, and her students explored and experienced an English language reading comprehension lesson, in which the students were required to engage other languages through the process of translanguaging. The findings of this study showed that the practices of translanguaging offer support for students' development as a second language in a rural setting in multilingual Sarawak. Therefore, the main reason for its usefulness is because translanguaging is a case of strategic essentialism to shuttle orientations specific to learners' own terms.

Keywords: Translanguaging, learners, multilingualism, strategic essentialism

1. Introduction

Sarawak has a rural population of about 46 percent of the total population of 2.45 million (Department of Statistics Sarawak, 2020). Teaching English language in rural Sarawak has always been challenging and little is known of the status of English language usage in most rural schools. Renganathan (2021) revealed that persistent issues such as lack of interest and the need to use English among rural students, poor infrastructure and limited resources in schools, and lack of parental support in assisting schoolwork at home, remain as major challenges for improvement for English education in rural schools. After teachers' training, the ways of teaching and learning English are simply and generally imposed on the students and then, they are expected to be successful in the varying context of teaching and learning in rural schools.

Teacher training approach alone is not the best practice that could acknowledge the role of literacies, and the attitudes of the learners which were shaped by their mother tongue environment (Hazita, 2005). In rural Sarawak, it is also important to have an ethnographic understanding of how English language is viewed by the longhouse / village communities and to be aware of the extent in which it is useful in the lives of these rural communities. With Bahasa Melayu as the medium of instruction in Sarawak since 1977, the status of English has become that of the "second language" in schools. However, with the 37 ethnic groups in Sarawak who speak using their various dialects as their mother tongue, English cannot be considered as a second language at home, too. Personal communication with a senior English language teacher in rural Sarawak (Mr. James Anak Rijet), revealed that many rural school children in his rural secondary school continue to treat English as a foreign language, which preventing them from becoming fluent by the end of their school years. Furthermore, since English is not a necessary subject to pass, some students and parents see it as unimportant.

The Malaysian Ministry of Education (MoE) launch of the English Language Education Roadmap for Malaysia 2015- 2025 which marks a strategic direction in second language education in the nation (Don, 2015). The roadmap becomes a useful guide for the English language curriculum developers and teachers to ascertain that all Malaysian students, both in the urban and rural primary and secondary, achieve proficiency levels aligned to international standards, benchmarked against the Common European Framework of Reference or CEFR. The reform holistically outlines the progress of school learners as competent users of the English language and to enable them to participate fully in both professional and academic contexts from schools up to tertiary level, teacher training and the industry. Aligning the Malaysian Education system for the teaching of English with an international standard (CEFR) is an element in the Malaysia Education Blueprint, that aims to boost the level of education in the country to international standards (Don, 2015 p. 36). The four components of listening, speaking, reading and writing are equally important in CEFR.

Translanguaging (TL), although is a newer term as compared to code-switching in the field of second language acquisition is common multilingual classrooms. However, translanguaging is different from code switching since TL is a conscious strategy used to develop one's language repertoire (García & Lin, 2016). The term code switching is similar to TL in the sense that both of the terms refer to the switching between languages, but code switching has been perceived as a lack of target language knowledge and has, therefore, not been welcomed into the second language classroom (Park, 2014, pp.

50-51). TL is useful because it utilises the linguistic repertoire of a person when producing and learning different subjects for educational purposes, for example when acquiring English as a second language.

García et al. (2006) on the one hand defined translanguaging as the use of several languages in a multilingual classroom, while Lin and Martin (2005) explained that translanguaging involves the use of two languages. One of them is the official community language, whereas the second one is the official language of the lesson. In contrast, García and Li (2014) dismissed such definition, and further regarded translanguaging neither as two separate languages nor as a synthesis of different language practices or as a crossing of two languages. It refers to the mediation of identities and cognitive activities of students enabling them to make meaning by the use of their language repertoire and thus expand it (García & Li, 2014, p. 20). Therefore, "translanguaging refers to new language practices that make visible the complexity of language exchanges among people with different histories, and releases histories and understandings that had been buried within fixed language identities constrained by nation states" (García & Li, 2014, p. 21). For Ali (2021) translanguaging is an effective, pedagogical tool used by Pakistani teachers teaching the English language in Pakistan to help their multilingual students achieve the target language.

Translanguaging has initially been coined with code-switching (García & Li, 2014). However, at a later stage, the two concepts were distinguished in theory and practice. Theoretically, Translanguaging presupposes a heteroglossic point of view, where bilinguals operate their entire linguistic repertoire to make meaning. Code-switching, however, expresses a monoglossic point of view, with the bilinguals alternating between two linguistic systems (García & Li, 2014). Additionally, Translanguaging is foregrounded into Cummin's theory of 'interdependence' (1979), claiming the level of proficiency in L2 bears down on the learner's development in L1 (García & Li, 2014). Code-switching is, differently, perceived to be the product of L1 interference, mostly regarded as having a negative influence in second language teaching and learning (Alhawary, 2018).

In practice, Translanguaging has been established as a pedagogical strategy in language teaching. Code-switching on the other hand, signals the switching back and forth between languages in all types of situational contexts (Nagy, 2017), 'rarely institutionally endorsed or pedagogically underpinned' (Creese & Blackledge, 2010, p. 105). When utilised in classroom settings, code-switching has been viewed as 'embarrassing', 'dilemma-filled', 'feelings of guilt', 'squandering our bilingual resources' as the languages 'contaminate' one another (Creese & Blackledge, 2010, p. 112). Instead, Translanguaging is perceived to add flexibility in pedagogic classroom approaches, where 'ideas are more easily conveyed, understood, and relayed'.

The use of translanguaging in the classrooms in rural Sarawak has not been much explored, therefore, the current study examines this phenomenon in one rural secondary school in Sarawak. The aim of this research is to investigate how translanguaging is used as a linguistic support for the students in the ESL classroom in a remote secondary school in Sarawak. This study adopts the definition provided by Garcia (2006) in which bilinguals operate their entire linguistic repertoire to make meaning. One of them is the official community language, whereas the second one is the official language of the lesson. In this study, the official language for instruction is Bahasa Malaysia, the community language is Iban, and the language of the lesson is English.

In the domain of teaching bilingual / multilingual students, the issue of using the first language in a second- language based class has been widely controversial. English language teachers in Malaysia were told that they must use "English Only" in the classroom, and frequently, teachers claimed that they are afraid to be caught practicing code switching in the language classroom for various reasons. In fact, code switching takes place in the ESL classroom situations all the time even in urban schools.

Cenoz and Gorter (2011) explained that English teachers are often required to use only English and avoid any other references to elements of any other languages. For rural schools in Sarawak, this (monolingual bias) is a perennial problem that has yet to be solved. An urban bilingual Malay /English teacher teaching in a rural school stated:

> *If I speak using only English in class while teaching, everyone makes noise and do not pay attention because they don't understand the English lessons. But when I speak in Malay and explains in Malay, they do not understand the lessons in English. So, I just code-switch English with Malay when teaching English.* (TESL Teacher Danial Mirza, Interview data 14th May 2022)

Numerous programmes have been designed and implemented to develop students' English language skills in rural schools so that they may compete with students studying in urban schools. However, for the rural students, English remains a challenging subject to master. Ee Chop Ler's study (2012) showed that five major problem areas existing, namely peer pressure and motivation, attitudes towards English, teaching methodology, school culture, influence of Islamic teaching on the learning of English, are factors affecting the learning of English in rural Malay dominant rural schools.

According to the findings of Nadesan and Md. Shah (2020), students found speaking to be a difficult activity to be conducted within a short period of time. Students lacked confidence and were afraid of being judged harshly by their peers or the teacher if they engaged. They also formed a pessimistic perspective concerning their abilities to communicate in the target language. Additionally, being afraid to speak in front of a group can make people feel unmotivated to say what they wanted to say. Shy youngsters were unable to communicate confidently since they were naturally shy.

One example that illustrates the negative aspects of the 'English-only rules' is the study conducted by Adamson and Fujimoto-Adamson (2012) in Tokyo, the authors collected data through questionnaires from 240 students, audio recordings of conversations between student volunteers and mentors, between students, and between a student and a mentor (in the context of an advisory meeting) at a language resource center in a Japanese university. The center provided space and resources for students to develop their English proficiency, and briefly implemented an English-only rule over a zone in their center. The researchers found that students with lower proficiency and lower motivation often stopped using the center, which then indicated that the center was not fulfilling its goal to serve as a source of support to students learning other languages by failing to provide content and advice that they might need in their studies.

Once the English-only rule in the language centre from Adamson and Adamson-Fujimoto's study was repealed, both students and staff expressed relief; the students were relieved because they did not

need to struggle and avoid their native language any longer, and the staff members were relieved because they were uncomfortable enforcing the restrictive policy on students. By insisting that English language learners' function is to communicate as English-speaking monolinguals, educators can negatively impact learners' motivation to acquire the target language. These negative effects stem from a lack of use or appreciation of the students' native language, which is something that can be combatted through the use of translanguaging (Adamson & Fujimoto-Adamson, 2012).

From an educational perspective, García et al. (2006) on the one hand defines translanguaging as the use of several languages in a classroom. On the other hand, Lin and Martin (2005) explains translanguaging as the use of two languages. One of them is the official community Iban language, and the second one is the English language. Translanguaging is very closely linked to code-switching. As the term implies, the code- switching deals with switching from one language code to another (David, 2003). Dealwis (2016) investigated an ESL teacher changing footing in a rural Bidayuh primary school and discovered that code- switching occurred due to pupils' lack of confidence in speaking English.

The research questions for the present study are as follows:

i.   What are the practices of translanguaging that offer support for the students' development inlearning English as a second language in a rural school?

ii. What are the reasons translanguaging can be useful to shuttle orientations specific to the learners'own terms?

2.   Research Methods

2.1. Respondents

2.1.1. Student participants

The study was conducted in a rural secondary school located in Saratok, Sarawak, where most of the students were Iban with some Malays, Chinese, and thus, multilingual, and multicultural. All of the students were able to speak Bahasa Malaysia and Iban fluently. However, in the Form 4G class investigated, all the 22 respondents were Iban students who spoke Iban as their first language and Bahasa Malaysia as the language of instruction. There were 16 male and 6 female students and all of them were included in the investigation.

The student participants of this study were selected based on two criteria. Firstly, the participants must have given consent through filling in the declaration of consent approved by the school and the TESL Teacher Sulan Lian Anak Jilan (pseudonym), the class and subject teacher. Secondly, all the 22 students accepted and participated fully in the study after the researchers explained the objectives and procedures of data collection for interviews to carry out the study. The students were from the low English language proficiency group who obtained Grade D and Grade E for the UPSR English, thus, making them the targeted respondents for the study.

2.1.2. Teacher participant

TESL Teacher Sulan was chosen based on two criteria: (1) He/she should be an English teacher, and (2) he/she should teach a low English proficiency class. The teacher participant was teaching several English classes and the Form 4G, the low English proficiency class was selected by the teacher herself as she would want to try another approach in teaching this low English proficiency students.

Teacher Sulan is an Iban from Saratok, Sri Aman, Sarawak. Hence, she understood the learning and language difficulties faced by the rural Iban students. She has a TESL (Teaching of English as a Second Language) background and speaks three languages fluently namely, Iban, English and Malay. She has 15 years of teaching experience in the selected school upon graduating from Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris, Tanjung Malim, Perak. Teacher Sulan also has a Diploma in Translation from the University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur.

2.2. Data collection procedures

Data collection on the 22 students and their English teacher entailed 3 days of observation with field notes and videotaping and four interviews. All the 22 students in Form 4G (the low English proficiency class) were selected as approved by the school administrator.

This study used a qualitative approach in order to investigate an Iban ESL teacher (Teacher Sulan) and 22 of her students' experiences linked to the translanguaging practices lesson developed by the researchers. The data were collected through two methods: observation, individual and focus group semi-structured interviews. Two lessons were observed. The first observation was a regular lesson without the researchers' intervention, whilst the second lesson developed by the researchers included translanguaging practices. Besides, 4 semi-structured interviews were conducted: two interviews with the teacher before the translanguaging lesson and after the translanguaging lesson, and 2 focused group interviews with students (11 students each group) after the translanguaging lesson. To add, the interviews and the observation data have been combined to give rich information for the study. The combination of these methods contributes to rich data, which Creese (2010) also stated "the data are detailed and varied enough that they provide a full and revealing picture of what is going on" (p. 126).

With assumptions that the 22 students participated in multiple discourses and their participation was responsive to their environments (Ler, 2012), semi structured interviews were conducted using Seidman's (2006), provided a three-part structure which concentrated on participants' histories, the information regarding experiences, and the making of meanings.. The data from interviews and observations could reveal both the students' and teacher's perceptions on language use across contexts. The data were then described and theorized with open and axial coding of field notes and interviews (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) and included codes such as "reasons translanguaging was preferred," "reflecting on language knowledge and value," and "translanguaging for school" using Hyper Research. To establish trustworthiness, the interview data were triangulated with observations, and findings were corroborated through consultation with other TESL teachers, besides Teacher Sulan. The steps of data collecting are detailed as below:

2.2.1. Step 1

For the first step, the researchers developed a translanguaging lesson using the reading text 'Open House' (Appendix 1) as provided by the subject teacher. The teacher identified 10 vocabulary items to explain the meanings in English to the students.

2.2.2. Step 2

The researchers interviewed Teacher Sulan to gauge the proficiency level of the students, attitude and interests towards learning English. Teacher Sulan gave her feedback on teaching using English only in class.

2.2.3. Step 3

The researchers observed the subject teacher teaching using English-only in class to note the participation and responses from the students.

2.2.4. Step 4

In the translanguaging lesson, Teacher Sulan utilised the reading text 'Open House'.

First, she asked the students about the festivals in Malaysia and explained the meaning of open house. She told the students to respond in either Iban, Malay or English. Then, Teacher Sulan asked four students to read the text aloud. Next, Teacher Sulan explained the meanings of the 10 vocabulary items in English. Then, Teacher Sulan asked the students to further explained the meanings in English, Bahasa Malaysia or Iban or mixed languages available in their repertoire.

Then, Teacher Sulan asked the students to choose the sentences (A-D) to fit each box (the reading task in APPENDIX 1) The sentences underlined in the text are clues. The students were allowed to discuss in English, Bahasa Malaysia or Iban before giving their answers.

2.2.5. Step 5

The researchers interviewed two groups of students after the translanguaging lesson to obtain their feedbackof using Bahasa Malaysia, Iban and English when responding to the teacher.

2.2.6. Step 6

The researchers interviewed Teacher Sulan after the translanguaging lesson to obtain her feedback of the second lesson / translanguaging lesson.

3. Findings

The two most important findings are (1) teacher and students discovered the process to be fun and useful when working with their L1 i.e., native language Iban, and the school language Bahasa Malaysia, as a tool and students and teacher had good experiences of using Iban and Bahasa Malaysia to overcome

their language learning problems. This practice has allowed the students to express themselves easily using the languages available in their repertoire.

Several translanguaging practices that were used made the translanguaging lesson successful.

i.   Note-taking in Bahasa Malaysia and Iban while listening to or reading English texts

When Teacher Sulan explained the text and vocabulary items in English, the students tried to figure out themeanings in BM and Iban by discussing with their partner.

i.   Repeating content in Bahasa Malaysia and Iban to complete tasks

The students would read the text again and try to repeat the content in Bahasa Malaysia or Iban.

ii.   Drafting response in Bahasa Malaysia and Iban

When Teacher asked for the meaning of the vocabulary items and oral questions related to the text, the students would think and write their responses in either Iban or Bahasa Malaysia or a mixed language.

iii.   Making cross-language comparisons when reading

The students were told to discuss while reading to compare the meanings in Iban with Bahasa Malaysia andlink it to the English vocabulary items in the text.

iv.   Developing students' metalinguistic awareness through activities that encourage cross-linguistic comparisons, such as translation and cognate instruction.

The students were able to use all the languages available in their linguistic repertoire to gauge an understanding of the text

v.   Talking with friends in Bahasa Malaysia and Iban to make sense of tasks given

The students reported that working with their friends using languages available in the linguistic repertoire made it faster and easier to understand English.

vi.   Learning English better with multilingual classmates

The students revealed that learning English using the translanguaging approach was fun, interesting and livelier.

3.1. Observation Data

3.1.1. The 'English- Only' lesson according to the Weekly Lesson plan

The first lesson observed was based on an ordinary English lesson prepared by Teacher Sulan with zero intervention from the researchers. Teacher Sulan used a reading text 'Penang Botanic Gardens' and later the students were given fill in the blanks exercise at the end of the lesson. A significant finding based on this lesson was a commotion occurring in the classroom. The observation of this lesson showed that numerous students were not interested in joining and participating in the reading lesson. Furthermore, several of the students were distracted and disturbed the whole class while the teacher was explaining the meanings in English. They failed to respond positively in English.

From the teaching observation, most of the students lost their focus quickly as soon as the teacher started to ask a few students to read the text aloud. Soon the class became noisy. Some students began to speak loudly in Iban and Bahasa Malaysia.

Two students left their seats and went to the toilet. In addition to these, the students jeered and made fun of the students who responded to the teacher's questions using broken English. The two students did not return from the toilet until the lesson ended.

3.1.2. The translanguaging lesson

First, we framed students' strategic use of multiple languages as translanguaging, or the practices associated with moving across languages and registers of speech to make meaning (García et al., 2006). Next, we explored these practices through elicited firsthand accounts of how the students used language and how their dispositions towards language influence language used. For Teacher Sulan, knowing why her students used language is critical in informing how that language can be leveraged in instruction.

The second lesson observed was the lesson that used translanguaging as a resource where the students were allowed to use the languages in their linguistic repertoire namely Iban /Malay/English or a mixed language. Several findings were noted in the data analysis. In comparison to the first lesson, the students seemed to have had a change of attitude towards the lesson. While the first lesson may be described as filled with low student engagement and noise, the students seemed more active and more involved in the second translanguaging lesson.

For the translanguaging lesson, when the vocabulary task was given, the students seemed attentive, and they worked diligently to explain the meanings in Iban or Bahasa Malaysia. Some even tried explaining in English after the teacher had explained earlier. During the "starter", the researcher noticed that some students seemed confused and excited as the students looked at their teacher who asked them to respond in Iban or Bahasa Malaysia. One student even commented the fact that it was easier to explain in Iban because he could find the exact words.

In the second task, the students were allowed to discuss aloud in Iban and Bahasa Malaysia before selecting their answers. The class became very active, and some students actually tried speaking using some English while choosing the sentences. The noise in the classroom was related to students busy discussing their options. The student activity seemingly increased compared to activities observed during the first lesson observation when English Only was used for teaching. Due to translanguaging, within a couple of minutes, many of the students raised their hands. Teacher Sulan asked the students whether the questions were linked to the reading task. They wanted Teacher Sulan to explain the meanings of some words in the sentences in Bahasa Malaysia, which Teacher Sulan obliged willingly.

Some students asked each other for the same meanings of the words in Bahasa Malaysia and Iban to capture the meanings in English better. The teacher told them to try to translate those words into English and some managed to translate. During this process, translanguaging practices shed light on how these low proficiency students chose to use Iban and Bahasa Malaysia other than English (LOTE's) to make sense of schoolwork even though these languages are often discouraged during an English-only lesson.

The interviews with students revealed that all students indicated that they have been informed repeatedly by their primary and secondary school teachers throughout the years to use English only during English class and that their Iban and Bahasa Malaysia languages were not useful in an English lesson. This gave them the impression that Bahasa Malaysia and Iban languages were undervalued when learning English. On the other hand, the students said that they actively used Iban and Bahasa Malaysia to

make sense of the school. They wished translanguaging to become a norm in their school to support learning of a difficult language such as English.

No student had thus far gotten a warning for either inappropriate behavior or commotion, unlike the first lesson where several students were told to keep quiet. All the students seemed to have viewed the given tasks positively. As the teacher monitored the students' enthusiasm, one of the students initiated a conversation outside her group and with Teacher Sulan in English. Sandra was one of the student participants who has also been interviewed. She asked Teacher Sulan in English whether she knew that people in UK have open houses or not when celebrating Christmas? To her question, the teacher answeredpositively and that people in UK celebrate Christmas with family and friends, too.

3.2. Interview data from teacher

Teacher Sulan was interviewed twice by the researchers. The first one was conducted prior to the lesson that was built on translanguaging as a resource, while the second was conducted after the lesson. Several findings were revealed, including the two main findings: 1. The teacher has a wide repertoire when it comes to teaching English using the students' native language i.e., Iban and also, Bahasa Malaysia, the school language of instruction. 2. The teacher has positive experience to the translanguaging lesson. The findings found in the two interviews would be presented separately (see Table 1 below).

She was first interviewed after teaching 'Penang Botanical Gardens' in English only. Teacher Sulan said1: *"The lesson was quite successful because some objectives were achieved but to what extent students couldunderstand, that I'm not sure. This is because they don't bother to pay attention while I'm teaching, I knowthey don't like me to use English only because it is difficult to understand."*

Teacher Sulan described teaching English using translanguaging as a resourceful, positive and more useful experience. There were several significant findings. Most significant of all, Teacher Sulan, an Iban herself who was proficient in Iban, became more relaxed in her English language classroom as her students showed greater interest and participation in translanguaging using languages in their repertoire.

The second planned translanguaging lesson allowed Teacher Sulan's students to shift from Iban to support the learning of English. Since this study used a lesson with translanguaging practices, the English language lesson encouraged the students to use Iban to complete the given English vocabulary task. This corresponds to García and Li (2014) and Ali (2021) who affirmed that by translanguaging, students will be able to show a complete understanding of their learning. Therefore, translanguaging can be useful to shuttle orientations specific to the learners' own terms. The reasons for translanguaging by the Teacher Sulan are summarised in Table 1 below

Table 1. Reasons translanguaging was preferred for teaching

Able to praise more students because more students participated√
Able to build stronger bond with all the students√
Able to give practical feedback to all the students √
Able to help low proficiency students successfully √
Able to make students understand the reading text easily √
Able to make students understand the vocabulary items √

Able to quickly clarify and get responses from students during activities √

Able to better manage the classroom √

3.3. Interview data from the students

The students revealed that they preferred the translanguaging lesson to the 'English- Only" lesson because of several reasons as stated below. The reasons for translanguaging by the students are summarised in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Reasons translanguaging was preferred for learning

Able to discuss the reading text 'Open house' easily in small groups using Iban, Bahasa Malaysia andEnglish easily without the teacher checking on them √

Able to brainstorm with classmates for vocabulary meanings in the reading text without restricting toEnglish only √

Able to respond to teacher's questions easily as they could respond in Bahasa Malaysia and Iban. √

Able to aid fellow classmates who could not understand English by translating for themusing either Bahasa Malaysia or Iban √

Able to get more participation from other classmates who were often ridiculed for not being able to speak English √

Able to learn English on their own terms √

Able to show to the teacher that they wanted to learn English but preferred the translanguaging approach √

Able to communicate freely with their English language teacher without feeling intimidated due to lackof English proficiency √

3.4. Discussions

Translanguaging can be useful to shuttle orientations specific to learners' own terms. The following experience was shared by the Iban students in Teacher Sulan's class.

Kalang, an Iban student admitted that translanguaging helped to build his English linguistic strength. Furthermore, the other students in the class also commented that they could learn English language meaningfully using Iban, their mother-tongue. Although translanguaging in ESL teaching is not encouraged among ESL teachers in Malaysian schools, Teresa, the class monitor said that it was indeed a useful method when teaching low English proficiency students. Rengga, another student also added that he preferred using translanguaging to English-only lesson because the teacher would not show any sign of stress when teaching them. In fact, an Iban student, Marvin highlighted that   translanguaging could save so much time especially, when trying to find the meaning of new words.

In Malaysia, translanguaging is banned in the classroom but Nyelang felt that the translanguaging lesson clearly showed that it was useful to make all his classmates participated and remained active during the English lesson. Therefore, it was not surprising that Teacher Sulan received good responses from all her students   during the translanguaging lesson. She agreed that it would be a useful pedagogical tool in the ESL classroom. According to Teacher Sulan, "It is not unusual for me and the other English Language teachers in my school to switch between the languages English and Bahasa Melayu or Iban but we do feel guilty." The findings from the first lesson of teaching using English-only in the weaker class showed that it limited the potential learning opportunities that could be created in comparison to the translanguaging lesson of Iban, Bahasa Malaysia and English in the second lesson.

A student by the name of Rena said that when it came to using Iban and Bahasa Malaysia in learning English, she could speak naturally because she found it difficult to speak using English only. Teacher Sulan concurred by saying that natural translanguaging among her students occurred mostly because the students were eager to learn. Hence, it often resulted in her translanguaging with weaker individual students, weaker pairs, and small groups of students to ensure an understanding of the lesson.

Teacher Sulan was convinced that by using such planned translanguaging method, her students were able to show a complete understanding of the reading text 'Open house'. Since this study used a reading text with planned translanguaging practices, the English teacher, Sulan, was informed by the researchers to encourage her students to use Bahasa Malaysia and Iban to complete the given two tasks.The translanguaging approach that Teacher Sulan adopted had a decisive effect on students in the classroom as it became more student- centred.

Both students and teacher supported the idea of using translanguaging in the classroom as it assisted the less proficient students to build their confidence in learning English. Teacher Sulan also shared that her past teacher training courses introduced her to many methods of teaching English and stressed a lot on eliminating the presence of L1 in all ESL classrooms. Very often she was informed that in better classes, it was possible to use the English- Only approach but rather difficult in the weaker classes. In fact, teachers must use their discretion when to use English only in their lessons.

Teacher Sulan admitted that the translanguaging approach, which supported the idea of using the mother tongue in the ESL classroom, has made the weaker students showed interest in learning English. She also argued against the assumption that the use of Iban or Bahasa Malaysia has prevented the weaker students from showing interest in learning English.

Therefore, Teacher Sulan was on the right track in utilising the students' linguistic competence in making the classroom environment more student-centred. Another interesting finding which emerged from the data analysis is how the translanguaging practices contributed to the classroom environment. The presence and use of Bahasa Malaysia and Iban, other than English seemed to be a motivating experience for the students.

The lesson which was conducted in the English-only approach, was controlled by unfocused students and much noise. On the other hand, the findings in the subsequent lesson that uses translanguaging practices, showed that the noise level was greatly reduced, the students became more keen and self- motivated to complete the task given. As ccompared to the first lesson, the students were highly engaged and active during the second lesson. Table 3 below summarizes the classroom implications of using translanguaging in this study.

Table 3. Classroom implications using translanguaging

Included multilingual texts in the classroom library and encouraged reading in LOTEs.
Established a constellation of literacy practices that makes multilingualism the norm, rather than the exception, in the classroom.
Managed to get students interviewed classmates about their language practices, created a multilingual word wall, and shared some of their own language-learning experiences.
Discussed with students the rewards and challenges of their emerging bilingualism

Key: LOTEs Languages other than English

4. Conclusion

Overall, the teacher and students valued the uses of translanguaging in the teaching and learning process and it is rather significant in the process of teaching and learning to realise the importance and the gains to be obtained from the practice of translanguaging. All the respondents described translanguaging with confidence as they can shuttle orientations specific to their own terms. This is in accordance with García et al. (2006) also affirmed that multi lingual acceptance in teaching and learning a foreign language to learners can help make teaching and learning more casual and less intimidating.

References

Adamson, J., & Fujimoto-Adamson, N. (2012). Translanguaging in Self-Access Language Advising: Informing Language Policy. *Studies in Self-Access Learning Journal*, 59-73. https://doi.org/10.37237/030105

Alhawary, M. T. (2018). *Routledge Handbook of Arabic Second Language Acquisition*. Taylor & Francis. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315674261

Ali, A. (2021). Understanding The Role Of Translanguaging In L2 Acquisition: Applying Cummins' CUP Model. *Journal of Cultura and Lingua, 2*(1), 15-25. https://doi.org/10.37301/culingua.v2i1.10

Cenoz, J., & Gorter, D. (2011). A holistic approach to multilingual education: Introduction. *The Modern Language Journal, 95*(3), 339-343.

Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2008). *Basics of Qualitative Research Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theor* (3rd ed.). Sage.

Creese, A., & Blackledge, A. (2010). Translanguaging in the bilingual classroom: A pedagogy forlearning and teaching. *The Modern Language Journal, 94*, 103–115. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2009.00986.x

David, M. K. (2003). Role and functions of code-switching in Malaysian courtrooms. Multilingua. *Journal of Cross-Cultural and Interlanguage Communication, 22*(1), 5-20. https://doi.org/10.1515/mult.2003.005

Dealwis, C. (2016). *An ESL teacher changing footing in a rural Bidayuh primary school*. Paper presented at METLA Conference May 30th 2016, Kuching, Sarawak.

Department of Statistics Sarawak. (2020). *Sarawak Statistical Bulletin Year 2020*. Sarawak Printing Press, Kuching.

Don, M. Z. (2015). English language proficiency, graduate employability and the role of CEFR. ASEAN Seminar 2015 on "Best Practices in English Teaching in ASEAN Universities". *UM repository*. http://doi.org/10.17576/3L-2018-2403-13

García, O., & Li, W. (2014). *Translanguaging: Language, bilingualism and education*. Palgrave Macmillan

García, O., & Lin, A. (2016). Translanguaging and Bilingual Education. In O. García, A. Lin, & S. May, (Eds.), *Bilingual Education, Encyclopedia of Language and Education* (Vol. 5, pp. 117-130). Springer.

García, O., Stubbnab_Ganggas, T., & Torres-Guzmán, M. (Eds.). (2006). Imagining Multilingual Schools: *Languages in Education and Globalization*. Multilingual Matters.

Hazita, A. (2005)."Knowledge-based-economy-as-institutional-learning discourse in Malaysia: Change in the language of instruction policy and representations of readiness among the role players in tertiary education". *Paper presented at International Conference on Worlds in Discourse*: *Representations of Realities, Solls*. Intec 2005, 21-23, November 2005.

Ler, E. C. (2012). Cultutal Factors Affecting English Proficiency in Rurl Areas. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies, 3*(1), 1-23. https://doi.org/10.7575/aiac.alls.v.3n.1p.1

Lin, A. M. Y., & Martin, P. W. (Eds.). (2005). *Decolonisation, globalisation: Language-in-education policy and practice*. Multilingual Matters

Nadesan, N. K., & Md. Shah, P. (2020). Non-Linguistic Challenges Faced by Malaysian Students in Enhancing Speaking Skills. *Creative Education, 11*(10), 1988-2001. https://doi.org/10.4236/ce.2020.1110145

Nagy, N. (2017). Cross-Cultural Approaches: Comparing Heritage Languages in Toronto. *Variation, 23*(2). http://repository.upenn.edu/pwpl/vol23/iss2/12

Park, G.-P. (2014). Factor Analysis of the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale in Korean Learners of English as a Foreign Language. *Psychological Reports, 115*(1), 261-275. https://doi.org/10.2466/28.11.pr0.115c10z2

Renganathan, S. (2021). English language education in rural schools in Malaysia: a systematic review of research. *Educational Review*, 1-18. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2021.1931041

Seidman, I. (2006). *Interviewing as Qualitative Research: A Guide for Researchers Research: Education and the Social Sciences* (3rd ed.). Teachers College Press, New York, NY 10027.