Translanguaging Practices and Learners' Engagement, Linguistic and Para-Linguistic Competencies in English

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Abstract— In the dynamic global communication landscape, authentic classroom languages emerged as pivotal lingua franca, facilitating cross-cultural interactions and access to knowledge and opportunities. Proficiency in English, regional and the vernaculars, encompassing linguistic and para-linguistic dimensions, is increasingly recognized as a critical factor in educational success and professional advancement. This study assessed language practices like translanguaging and learners' engagement, linguistic and para-linguistic competence in English. This study employed a correlational research design, collecting data from 230 students in grades 4 to 6 at Carpenter Hill Elementary School. The findings further provide that translanguaging practices often manifested during evaluation and learning activities as parts of the lesson delivery when teachers give instructions and clarify concepts, specifically using English, Filipino, and Hiligaynon as mediums of instruction, and specifically, translation manifested 136 times throughout 12 sessions, and 658 times for code-switching. It was discovered that the level of learners' engagement and linguistic and para-linguistic competence in English was considered satisfactory due to the usage of translanguaging practices. In addition, data suggests that the relationship between the extent of using translanguaging and the learners' engagement and linguistic and para-linguistic competence pose a positive or high correlation.

Keywords— linguistic competence, paralinguistic competence, translanguaging

I. INTRODUCTION

In linguistic pedagogy, languages are perceived as complex when used in various setups. Essentially, English as a global language should also be viewed as a multifaceted tool involving cultural understanding and utilization of multimodal practices (Fang & Liu, 2020). Considering that native speakers have been outnumbered by non-native speakers of English, policies for curriculum are being considered to integrate how language should be taught and assessed at schools (Li, 2018). This is why translanguaging in practice and pedagogy has become an important tool for recognizing the linguistic resources of students and teachers. This involves using several languages for students and teachers to analyze the academic content they are dealing with (Wei & García, 2022).

Mother tongue teaching has been proven to be an effective means to empower student learning and increase the involvement of students and teachers in the teaching-learning process (Nadela-Grageda et al., 2022). Englis and Boholano (2021) further claimed that using the first language in instruction enabled students to become more productive, especially when learning English.

Numerous studies have also claimed that the mother tongue is crucial in learning a second language. It helps establish patterns or habits and is even more helpful when the habit is applied in the mother tongue and the pupil's second language (Kasap & Emamvirdi, 2023). In

addition, in translanguaging, the mother tongue is an important tool integrated into the curriculum for learners to better understand instruction and possibly learn a new language, especially English (Casalan, 2022).

Prior research has established a correlation between the need to study linguistics and paralinguistic competence and the teaching materials used for mother tongue education (Dreisbach & Demeterio III, 2021). In relation to this, there was also an ongoing debate about the issue of Philippine pedagogy, which puts the "English Only Policy" in question, as this did little help in teaching English to students. This is why Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) was institutionalized in 2009 (Gatil, 2021).

With the passage of time and the expansion of instructional language, there is a need to openly discuss human perception and measure observations about the student's involvement in the classroom. This is due to the evolving nature of the instructional language. It can also focus on linguistic and communication abilities, which shape the thinking and understanding of the language user (even in unexpected speech) and enable them to engage with the recipient more suitably and intelligently, especially when using a second language like English (Ismail, 2017).

Based on the notions and the grey literature in elements presented above, the researcher is encouraged to assess actual language practices, learners' engagement, and linguistic and paralinguistic competence in English. To be more specific, this study can gather relevant information from respondents, such as students at Carpenter Hill Elementary School, Koronadal City, Philippines. The information that can be collected is centered on the quality delivery of translanguaging in teaching English and the impact of this learning on learners' engagement. This study can be beneficial in identifying the relationship between translanguaging in classroom discussion and learning English and how it also affects language teachers' accomplishment of their goals.

This study addressed the following statement of the problem: (1) What is the level of the use of translanguaging? (2) What is the level of learners' engagement in English? (3) What are the learners' linguistic competence levels in English? (4) What is the level of learners' paralinguistic competence in English? (5) Is there a significant relationship between the extent of translanguaging in teaching English and learners' engagement, linguistic, and paralinguistic competencies in English?

II. METHODS

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design. A survey gathered data from Grade 4, 5, and 6 students. There were 230 students, of whom 77 came from Grade 4, 78 from Grade 5, and 75 from Grade 6, all enrolled in offered English subjects. The actual frequency of translanguaging practices, specifically translation and code-switching, was tallied from all 12 sessions.

With a 4-point Likert Rating Scale, the survey questionnaire consisted of 3 parts. Part 1 of the survey instrument was formulated to gather data on the extent of usage of translanguaging by teachers when teaching English. Part 2 focused on determining the students' behavioral, cognitive, and emotional engagement, as suggested in the study of Cooper (2014). Terogo et al. (2018) also studied linguistic competence, an instrument used to acquire students' linguistic and paralinguistic competence in English. Consequently, part 3 of the survey questionnaire contained the indicators to gather the students' responses to assess their paralinguistic competence.

The data were statistically analyzed. The data about the extent of the use of translanguaging in teaching English, the level of learners' engagement in English, and linguistic and paralinguistic competence in English were all analyzed using the mean. Meanwhile, Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to statistically measure the relationship between the study variables.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the data, which are shown using tabular form, with their interpretations and analyses.

3.1. Level of Translanguaging Practices in Teaching English

Based on the recorded classes, translation and code-switching were identified as the major translanguaging practices used by the teachers in English lessons. Out of the 12 sessions, it was determined that the teachers used code-switching more than translation. Specifically, out of the 794 recorded times of translanguaging, 658 of them were evaluated as code-switching. This backs the assertion of Soriano (2017), who claimed that code-switching is among the most common translanguaging practices used by teachers in the Philippines, especially when teaching English.

3.2. Level of Using Translanguaging in Teaching English

Table 1. Level of Using Translanguaging in Teaching English

Item / Indicator	Mean	SD	Description
1. Clarifying concepts and grammar	2.90	0.90	Often
2. Explaining words	3.05	0.88	Often
3. Giving instructions	3.10	0.94	Often
4. Ask/answer questions	3.03	0.81	Often
5. Giving feedback	2.90	0.91	Often
6. Praising learners	2.80	1.07	Often
7. Quick clarifications	2.89	0.94	Often
8. Supporting lower language level learners	3.09	0.96	Often
9. Beginning/end of lesson	2.95	1.07	Often
10. Classroom management	2.88	1.05	Often
Weighted Mean	**2.96**	**0.48**	**Often**

As reflected in Table 1, the researcher gathered data from the pupils, who regard their responses on the extent of using translanguaging in teaching English in their classroom. Translanguaging generally obtained a weighted mean of 2.96 and a standard deviation of 0.48. The data suggest that most respondents claimed that teachers use translanguaging often or transition from one language to another when giving instructions.

These findings support the notion that translanguaging happens in the classroom for various reasons, but most often when giving instructions or clarifying concepts. Teachers use this method, which is frequently observed by the learners, especially the diverse range of practices utilized (Donley, 2022; Barroga & Tampus, 2023).

3.3. Translanguaging Towards Learners' Engagement

Table 2. Level of Learners' Engagement in English in Terms of Behavioral, Cognitive, and Emotional Engagement

Variables	Weighted Mean	SD	Description
Behavioral Engagement	3.04	0.57	Satisfactory Engaged
Cognitive Engagement	3.04	0.61	Satisfactory Engaged
Emotional Engagement	3.06	0.58	Satisfactory Engaged
Overall	**3.05**	**0.51**	**Satisfactory Engaged**

Table 2 presents the level of learners' engagement in English in behavioral, cognitive, and emotional engagements. Based on the collated mean of each variable's indicators, the learners' emotional engagement obtained the highest weighted mean, 3.05. This implies that learners pose higher emotional engagement towards learning English. They are more likely to be motivated and see learning English as a positive experience.

On the other hand, both behavioral engagement and cognitive engagement garnered a 3.04 mean. Similarly, based on the learners' surveys, these two variables are also satisfactorily engaged. Learners also showed satisfactory engagement in class, which can be seen in their behavior and performances.

This positive attitude of the learners supports the findings of Nishanthi (2020), who claimed that due to the usage of the mother tongue and practices wherein English can be easily understood, learners became more focused, motivated, and understood that such an opportunity would lead them to learn English quickly.

3.4. Linguistic Competence of Learners in English

Table 3. Level of Learners' Linguistic Competence in English

Variables	Weighted Mean	SD	Description
Vocabulary competence	2.86	0.54	Satisfactory
Grammar competence	2.84	0.58	Satisfactory
Discourse competence	2.77	0.55	Satisfactory
Overall	**3.05**	**0.51**	**Satisfactory**

As indicated in Table 3, vocabulary competence obtained the highest weighted mean of 2.86. Meanwhile, grammar competence received the second-highest mean of 2.84. Lastly, discourse competence gained the lowest mean of 2.77. However, it can be noted that though they present different values numerically, all variables still reflect satisfactory descriptions.

Hence, the overall level of learners' linguistic competence in English obtained an overall mean of 3.05. This means that the level of their linguistic competence, as referenced in their survey, is satisfactory. Students exude satisfactory skills in vocabulary, grammar, and discourse.

However, it is important to standardize that this result requires an understanding that there should still be room for improvements in delivering lessons and that students must still develop some skills and gain more knowledge in English. This finding aligns with the study of Terogo et al. (2018), who stressed that learning English is difficult for young learners. However, because of the means and practices employed in the classroom, like translanguaging, students gain skills and knowledge in English more effectively and quickly.

3.5. Paralinguistic Competence of Learners in English

Table 4. Level of Learners' Paralinguistics Competence in English

Variables	Weighted Mean	SD	Description
Non-verbal communication elements	2.82	0.59	Moderately Evident
Non-verbal behaviors	2.73	0.56	Moderately Evident
Overall	**2.78**	**0.53**	**Moderately Evident**

Table 17 shows that the non-verbal communication elements obtained a higher weighted mean of 2.82 between the two variables. Meanwhile, the non-verbal behaviors got a 2.73 weighted mean. However, based on the statistical interpretation, both are still described as moderately evident.

Hence, the survey shows that learners' competence in nonverbal communication and classroom behaviors is sometimes apparent in their performances. This supports the findings of Tadeo and), who underscore that students who clearly understand the lessons can respond using body language. The results of this assessment further the findings in this area of students' competencies in English (Tadeo & Queroda, 2020; Calyawa & Tampus, 2023).

3.6. Significant Relationship Between the Extent of Using Translanguaging in Teaching English and Learners' Engagement

This subsection presents the data regarding the significant relationship between the research variables, such as the extent of using translanguaging in teaching English, learners' engagement, linguistic, and paralinguistic competencies in English.

Table 5. Significant Relationship Between the Level of Using Translanguaging in Teaching English and Learners' Engagement

Variables	Behavioral Engagement	Cognitive Engagement	Emotional Engagement	Level of Engagement
Extent of the Use of Translanguaging	.393**	.349**	.374**	.424**

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Correlational analysis reveals a significant positive association between the level of the use of translanguaging in teaching English and behavioral engagement (r = .393, p < .01), cognitive engagement (r = .349, p < .01), emotional engagement (r = .374, p < .01), and overall engagement (r = .424, p < .01). These findings indicate that as the utilization of translanguaging strategies increases in English instruction, learners demonstrate higher levels of engagement across various dimensions.

The significant positive correlations found in this study suggest that incorporating translanguaging techniques into English teaching may enhance learners' engagement in multiple dimensions. Translanguaging may foster a supportive and inclusive learning environment where students feel valued and empowered to participate actively. This is also true in the study of Terogo (2022) and Soriano (2017), who found that using the mother tongue when teaching English can generate positive feedback from the students' performance in the class.

Table 6. The Significant Relationship Between the Level of Using Translanguaging in Teaching English and the Level of Linguistic Competence in English

Variables	Vocabulary Competence	Grammar Competence	Discourse competence	Level of Competence
Extent of the use of translanguaging	.388**	.346**	.306**	.415**

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Correlational analysis reveals a significant positive association between the level of using translanguaging in teaching English and vocabulary (r = .88, p < .01), grammar competence (r = .346, p < .01), discourse competence (r = .306, p < .01), and overall linguistic competence (r = .415, p < .01). These findings indicate a strong and significant relationship between the utilization of translanguaging strategies in English instruction and various aspects of linguistic competence among learners.

The significant positive correlations found in this study suggest that incorporating translanguaging techniques into English teaching may contribute to developing learners' linguistic competence in multiple dimensions. The exceptionally high correlation coefficient observed between translanguaging usage and vocabulary underscores the effectiveness of translanguaging in expanding learners' lexical knowledge by allowing them to draw on their entire linguistic repertoire.

Furthermore, these findings support the results in the study of Tadeo and Queroda (2020), who investigated the relationship between changing languages in the class or the usage of the mother tongue with the verbal skills and overall performance of students in English.

Table 7. Significant Relationship Between the Extent of Using Translanguaging in Teaching English and the Level of Paralinguistics Competence in English

Variables	Non-verbal behaviors	Non-verbal communication elements	Level of Competence
Extent of the Use of Translanguaging	.371**	.289**	.359**

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Similarly, the correlational analysis reveals a significant positive association between the extent of using translanguaging in teaching English and nonverbal behavior (r = .371, p < .01), nonverbal communication (r = .289, p < .01), and the level of paralinguistics competence (r = .359, p < .01). These finding suggests that as the utilization of translanguaging strategies increases in English instruction, students demonstrate higher levels of Paralinguistics competence. The correlation coefficient (r) between the extent of translanguaging teaching English

and nonverbal behavior is 0.371. This indicates a moderate positive correlation between these variables.

The correlation coefficient (r) between the extent of translanguaging teaching English and nonverbal communication is 0.289. This also indicates a moderate positive correlation between these variables. The correlation coefficient (r) between the extent of using translanguaging in teaching English and the level of Paralinguistics competence is 0.359. This indicates a moderate positive correlation between these variables.

The significant positive correlations found in this study suggest that incorporating translanguaging techniques into English teaching may enhance students' Paralinguistics skills. This could be attributed to translanguaging providing learners with additional resources and scaffolding to express themselves effectively in English, including through nonverbal means.

Similarly, in the study of Tadeo and Queroda (2020), the relationship between the usage of translanguaging or from English to the mother tongue and the nonverbal skills of the students showed a high positive correlation. This specifically stipulates that students' nonverbal skills could develop based on how often translanguaging is used in the classroom, as lessons are easier to understand. In this way, the results above support the claims from a previous study.

IV.   CONCLUSION

Translanguaging has been consistently used during the teaching and learning of English. The observed usage of translanguaging inside the classroom was manifested in other areas or parts of lesson delivery. This is because rather than slowing down students' progress in learning the English language, translanguaging made this process easier and faster for students. Hence, integrating the mother tongue of young learners into the curriculum is a highly successful method for enhancing the learning environment.

In addition, teachers often transition between several languages. From this perspective, *Taglish* (Fil-English) is commonly employed by teachers to elucidate concepts or instruct students in the classroom. This is especially helpful. Translanguaging helps in the effective acquisition of English competencies. Although it seemed to indicate issues with the learners' English proficiency as they age, it is still crucial to acknowledge that this approach enhanced their understanding and mastery of English.

Indeed, it is deemed that when it is utilized more often, lesson delivery becomes more effective, as seen in the students' performance, evaluation results, and engagement. However, it is also important to understand that although integrating translanguaging in the teaching English curriculum might posit positive outcomes, there should still be space for improvements and recommendations to develop a more enhanced teaching method.

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