Chapter 33
Translanguaging Practices to Express Emotion, Identity, Agency, and Social Justice

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Abstract Through critical autoethnography, in this chapter I elaborate my translanguaging practices in the *Introduction to Applied Linguistics* course and reveal that translanguaging practice is a favorable tool to dismantle the dominant monolingual concepts in the English-only classroom. It has not only supported my agency, emotion, deconstructive/decolonization project, and identity affirmation, but also enhanced students' comprehension of the course content. Two student representatives in my classroom confirmed that through their use of the Indonesian language, translanguaging created a more liberating space as English was no longer a "barrier" in the classroom learning. This suggests that translanguaging not only theoretically but practically creates a space for social justice. Even though constrained in the online context, teaching and learning through translanguaging have proved to remain meaningful for both lecturers and students.

Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss how I (as a multilingual instructor) used *translanguaging practices* in my *Introduction to Applied Linguistics* (IAL) course in the fifth semester between August and December 2020, a course conducted through a WhatsApp group due to the COVID-19 situation. This writing is the expansion of my chapter (Wahyudi, 2021c) which discussed my use of a critical approach in the IAL course to negotiate the teaching of dominant Englishes. In the IAL course, I gave students Li Wei's (2017) short paper to introduce them to translanguaging as a concept, make them *engage more emotionally* in the course (Baker, 2011 as cited in Lin, 2020; Wahyudi, 2021c), challenge the *monolingual approach* to English teaching (Garcia & Li, 2014), and exert "strong social justice implications" (Tian et al., 2020, p. 1). The lecturer and students in the class were mostly, if not all, multilingual speakers (see Wahyudi, 2018). Translanguaging mode was enacted, marked by the use of English, Indonesian, and sometimes a local language. I have discussed the details about this course

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in Wahyudi (2021c) and interested readers are welcome to consult it. The course is for fifth semester students who have passed the *Introduction to Linguistics* course. For applied linguistics materials, I made use of *Applied Linguistics* (Cook, 2003), a small introductory coursebook published by Oxford University Press. As for critical applied linguistics, I included topics such as translanguaging (Li, 2017), the revisit of linguistic imperialism (Canagarajah & Said, 2011), language learning and identity (Norton, 2011), post-method pedagogy (Kumaravadivelu, 2001), native speaker fallacy (Canagarajah, 1999), *English as an Islamic Language* (Mahboob, 2009), and English Language as *Naga* in Indonesia (Coleman, 2016) all of which have been discussed in (Wahyudi, 2021c).

Lin (2020) illustrated that research on translanguaging is still in its infancy as there is no single model of translanguaging. Back et al. (2020) argued that there is still a minimum amount of research which discusses the relationship between translanguaging and socioemotional experience. Dovchin (2021) has made *emotions* a critical component for her translanguaging research for female Mongolian immigrants in Australia. These three studies suggest that my critical autoethnographic research on translanguaging which, among others, discusses *emotions* and *agency* is a valuable contribution within the context of the current multilingual trend in TESOL (May, 2014). Emotion is important and is closely related to translanguaging because when I switch from English to Indonesian or Javanese (a local language), I can express my feelings in a better way. As for agency, my use of Indonesian in the classroom has helped me provide a deeper explanation of concepts to my students. Furthermore, my proposed chapter builds on and extends previous studies such as Raza et al. (2021) and Vaish (2020) that argue for a theoretical reorientation of TESOL as a multilingual field where local languages are utilized as resources to promote the target language like English and English is used to support the revitalization and maintenance of local languages.

Research Method

My research falls into the *critical auto-ethnographic approach.* The term *critical* comes from the way I research my own class which includes post-structural components such as politics, identity, and ideology (Pennycook, 2010) and the deconstruction of the dominant monolingual discourse (Yazan, 2018). My research is *auto-ethnography* as it deals with memories and experiences (Wahyudi, 2016) as well as the interplay between the culture and the self through writing the creative resources (Canagarajah, 2012). This approach makes use of multiple data sources (Wahyudi, 2021a) to enhance the robustness of the research. In analyzing the data, I will employ *critical reflexivity* and *story-telling* (Choi, 2013). I will also integrate teaching and research by making use of "teaching tools to do research and research tools to teach" (Jain, 2013, p. ii). In this regard, I position myself as *a practitioner* and *researcher*.

In this chapter, I will discuss selective examples of my uses of language as recorded via voice-note explanations available from our WhatsApp group. I transcribed my

uses of *spontaneous* translanguaging (Lin, 2020) (through a verbatim manner) for data analysis, which was based on: the *different contexts* in which my translanguaging emerged, the kind of *emotions* I felt when engaging in translanguaging practices, and their relation with *agency* and *pedagogical considerations* which triggered my translanguaging practices in those particular situations. In addition to analyzing the transcribed talk, I also explain *the reasons* why I used translanguaging in written texts *during the online class* (when giving instructions) as well as *when allowing students* to use the Indonesian language during discussions in the IAL class exam for 25% of the class time.

Moreover, I present case studies of two representatives of my former students (with their consent) who used translanguaging practices in their exam answers. I asked these students' opinions about my *translanguaging pedagogy* in the classroom (whether or not it was helpful for their classroom learning), their opinion when being permitted to use 25% Indonesian and 75% English in the midterm and final test, and their *emotions* and (agency) when practicing translanguaging in their answers. My research involves students' engagement which can be categorized as *a classroom-based study* (Storch, 1998).

Translanguaging Pedagogy as an Effective Teaching Strategy

To enhance students' understanding in the IAL course, a translanguaging mode is compulsory because the students can better understand the points being delivered in their own language (e.g., Indonesian) in addition to English. Garcia and Li (2014) defined translanguaging as "*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" (p. 21). It is when lecturers' and students' experiences, located in their histories, match and create an engagement in the classroom. Vogel and Garcia (2017, p. 4) outlined three core premises of translanguaging theory:

- It posits individuals select and deploy features from a unitary linguistic repertoire in order to communicate;
- It takes up a perspective on bi- and multilingualism that privileges speakers' own dynamic linguistic and semiotic practices above the named languages of nations and states;
- It still recognizes the material effects of socially constructed named language categories and structuralist language ideologies, especially for minoritized language speakers.

In this chapter, I contextualize translanguaging theory in the broader term not for minoritized languages but to refer to Indonesian and local languages which are seen as undesirable to use in the dominant monolingual English ideology. Next, I present some examples of how translanguaging pedagogy was used in my classes and how it contributed to students' better understanding of the course content and discussions.

Translanguaging is Used to Problematize Deficit Thinking

There are different aspects entangled in translanguaging practices in a classroom such as emotions, agency, and pedagogical considerations. Following is the introductory explanation I provided to my students at the beginning of the semester and before exemplifying translanguaging as a practice.

> Thanks for the students who have answered my questions on (unfinished sentence).... I think some of you have been very careful in answering that that's not always the case. In some of the cases, yes, that Applied Linguistics can solve related problem. I can give you the example that Applied Linguistics can solve. This is especially for Critical Applied Linguistics, when we learn Critical Applied Linguistics, we can see for example the way we learn English language sometime yes, *yes of course learning language (English) is good but sometimes it goes beyond than that it has sometime a negative what's so called a negative impact*. For example, if you learn English and you have a good English, it is good *but when you have a kind of attitude to look down the Indonesian and local languages that's a kind of problem, that's a kind of attitude marginalizing local languages, national languages which we need to be very proud of*.

My introductory explanation is important to mention as it provides a particular context where translanguaging in my IAL classroom does not merely function as code-switching, but it is political (Flores, 2014) in that I encouraged the students, despite their language proficiency, not to marginalize local languages or a national language in educational spaces. At the same time, my explanation facilitated multilingual ecology (Wahyudi, 2021b) and functioned as a goal for multilingualism (Turner, 2019).

Translanguaging is Used to Deconstruct/Decolonize Dominant Concepts

Translanguaging can be helpful in the better explanation of difficult or complex concepts to students. As the content I was teaching was part of Critical Applied Linguistics materials inspired by Bunce et al. (2016), spontaneous translanguaging, as demonstrated in the excerpt below, was useful to develop students' understanding of the text as this pedagogy "deepens multilingual students' understanding of texts" (Garcia & Kleifgen, 2019, p. 1). But, at the same time, I used spontaneous translanguaging to exert my agency to deconstruct the usual emerging attitude of seeing languages (e.g., local languages) other than English as less significant (Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas, 2013; Wahyudi, 2018). My exercise of agency is facilitated by the acceptance of the creativity and active transfer, resemiotization and re-contextualization of "*pluri-versal* knowledge, thinking and being in diverse sociocultural context" (Lau, 2020, p. 10).

Jadi kalau Applied Linguistik itu solve language related problem[1] itu iya betul itu dalam beberapa sisi iya tapi tidak selalu. Contohnya, solve related problem kita jadi tahu kalau di Critical Applied Linguistics for example kita belajar Bahasa Inggris itu bagus, bahasa Inggris kita bagus itu bagus, tetapi ketika itu memunculkan sebuah attitude untuk dan melihat Bahasa Indonesia and Bahasa lokal itu inferior a yang bahasa yang rendah daripada Bahasa Inggris itu adalah attitude yang tidak bagus and that's problem itu juga problem.

[If Applied Linguistic is to solve language related problem that is right but it is not always. The example of to solve related problem is we can understand that in Critical Applied Linguistics for example to have good English is good but if it can arouse an attitude to see Indonesian and local language(s) as inferior that is a problem].

As for my act of *deconstruction* through the problematization of the common attitude to marginalize local languages, it resonates with the spirit of translanguaging to legitimize the use of minority languages (Flores, 2014) or, in my case, the unlegitimized use of Indonesian and/or local language in the English classroom. My use of translanguaging as a way to deconstruct these dominant practices is in line with the use of translanguaging to decolonize inequality and marginalization (Liberali & Swanwick, 2020) and teachers' acceptance of translanguaging in the postcolonial context of Malawi where translanguaging is used as a part of a decolonization project (Lau, 2020). Furthermore, my *deconstruction* act through translanguaging above addresses the call for translanguaging to maintain the political spirit (Flores, 2014) and remain situated within critical pedagogy. This is important because, as Poza (2017) argued, translanguaging is often simply misunderstood as code-switching.

Translanguaging can also be used to problematize deficit thinking about the role of AL as a field that deals with language-related problems only (Cook, 2003). In the excerpt below, I used translanguaging to problematize this misconception. This part also shows my critical position to not only take for granted the given lessons but also provide alternative explanations (see Wahyudi, 2021c). In that regard, I made use of translanguaging as a critical political project, disrupting the dominant understanding that AL is restricted to addressing language-related problems only (Cook, 2003).

Nah…but, the use of…the area of AL does not always relate to language related problem for example my student and I in the past Ahmar Muhammad Qadafi salah satu murid saya meneliti iklan rokok gitu ya dari kajian bahasa pragmatic dan itu Applied Linguistics dan itu sebenarnya tidak ada language related problem disitu tetapi itu adalah penelitian seperti itu jarang dilakukan dalam konteks Indonesia, itulah kenapa kita penelitian melakukan penelitian misalnya yang dilakukan Qadafi murid saya itu karena belum pernah dilakukan, tidak harus itu berkaitan dengan masalah. Kita ingin menjelaskan suatu fenomena kebahasan secara ilmiah walaupun tidak ada masalah yang ya itu bagus-bagus saja, Jadi AL pada satu sisi ia berkontribusi to solve language problem but in other aspect it does not have to be so.

[Nah…but, the use of…the area of AL does not always relate to language related problem for example my student and I in the past Ahmar Muhammad Qadafi one of my former student researched a cigarette advertisement from the perspective of Pragmatics, a branch of Applied Linguistics. There is no English related problem [in our research as is understood in Guy Cook's (2003) book], but our research was rarely done in the Indonesian context. That's why we did it. We wanted to explain the phenomena of [advertising] language scholarly so AL

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[1] When explaining the function of Applied Linguistics in solving language related problem as written in the mainstream book (see Cook, 2003).

in one side contribute to solve language problem [as mentioned earlier] but in other aspect it does not have to be so [the problem solver].

To clarify the difference between translanguaging and code-switching and to reinforce the significance of translanguaging as a legitimate practice (Li, 2017), it was purposively demonstrated during lectures. This allowed both the lecturer and students to become more agentive and interactive due to the dynamic and creative linguistic practices that translanguaging promises, where multiple languages are included in classroom discourse (Creese & Blackedge, 2010; Flores, 2014; Garcia & Li, 2014).

> Mari kita bahas yang pertama ya Translanguaging itu adalah penggunaan bahasa lebih dari satu misalnya dua bahasa tiga bahasa dalam kehidupan ini tanpa harus tersekat sekat ya jadi pemahaman sebelumnya itu misalnya code-switching itu dalam pemahamannya, orang berpindah dari satu bahasa ke bahasa lain kalau menurut translanguaging terjadi secara otomatis, batasan satu bahasa dengan bahasa lain itu ya fluid saja cair contoh saya kalau ngajar, bahasa Inggris, bahasa Indonesia, bahasa Jawa ini ini yang bisa terjadi secara otomatis dengan mudah, if I can use English, Indonesian and also local language, *translanguaging means going beyond the boundary* means that there is no rigid boundary from one language to another language. Nah itu fenomena dalam kehidupan sehari-hari…
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> [Let's discuss the first translanguaging is when we use more than one language, two or three in the real life without clear boundaries among the languages. It is unlike code-switching [which regards that there is a clear boundary between languages], so in translanguaging, the shift from one language to another happens automatically, fluid, for example I use English, Indonesian and a local language happen automatically with ease. if I can use English, Indonesian and also local language, *translanguaging means going beyond the boundary* means that there is no rigid boundary from one language to another language. Nah, that's the phenomena in daily live.

Using Translanguaging to Express Emotions, Identity, and Agency

Unlike previous explanation where translanguaging was used to bridge student's understanding toward a critical concept, the practice of translanguaging in this chapter is also presented to explain how it helped express *unhappy feelings* because many of my students were not contributive to classroom discussions. For example, they would write their names on the WhatsApp Group to mark themselves present in class but would not respond to my questions or contribute to in-class discussions. To give *a strong reminder* that their passiveness is discouraged in the class, translanguaging, as shown in the excerpt below, was utilized to express feelings of dissatisfaction. This further strengthens the argument that translanguaging is closely related to emotionality (Dovchin, 2021). Expressing unhappy feelings through translanguaging in my online class partly supports Mujiono's (2016) study which found that translanguaging was used to express *anger*. More than just showing unhappy feelings or anger, my *translanguaging instinct* (Li, 2018) emerged to show that I am *a firm lecturer*. This act of translanguaging represents an act of identity, the *space* created through translanguaging (Li, 2011).

Terimakasih anak-anak yang sudah menjawab, saya lihat di login e-learning sudah banyak anak yang login tapi tidak semua anak aktif, saya anggap tidak aktif ya karena tidak muncul, dan itu *sangat mengurangi nilai kalian nanti diakhir semester*, itu sudah seringkali saya tekankan ini saya ada 50 dalam satu kelas, saya tidak mungkin memanggilnya satu per satu *too long* (*kesuwen*) itu kalau dalam bahasa Jawa.

[Thanks for the students who have answered my question. I see from the e-learning login that there have been many students login but not all the students are active. I consider not active because they do not pop up (join) the discussion and that would really decrease your mark at the end of the semester. I have often emphasized this. There are 50 students in a class. It is impossible to call it one by one [too long = kesuwen[2]] in Javanese language.

Translanguaging is Used to Create Space for Social Justice

The translanguaging pedagogy I practiced in the classroom promoted social justice in terms of language use. This is because Indonesian, the language I share with students, was not excluded. For instance, students' translanguaging in the midterm and final tests where they were allowed to use 75% English and 25% Indonesian helped them to strengthen their intended answers in a more flexible way. This is where both the students and I were able to exercise agency and create emotional engagement. Tian et al. (2020) argued that translanguaging as a multifaceted lens can foreground "strong social justice implications" because it has the potential to "dismantle English as a monolithic entity, native-speakerism as a pervasive ideology and English only as a pedagogical orientation" (p. 1). In addition to this, my rule above was to implement multilingualism as a goal (Turner, 2019) as my instruction in the midterm and final exams enabled the use of multilingual spaces.

In the quotes below, I present two female students' testimonies, marked with pseudonyms, on my use of translanguaging in the IAL course.

The fact that students were allowed to answer in English and Indonesian is the rule which eased students as all of them do not use English as their mother tongue. Through the rule, the students tended to have a freedom to convey what they wanted. Because what is implicitly in the brain and thoughts emerge in the mother tongue. Therefore that rule does not limit students' creativity space to convey their thoughts. In addition to that the use of 25% Indonesian in answering the questions can provide concrete and comprehensive understanding functioning as *penegas* (emphasis) for students' entire answer in the midterm and final exam. [Translated from Indonesian] (CA).

In the above quote, the student CA argues that in addition to facilitating students in answering the questions, the rule did not limit their creativity in expressing their ideas which could only be expressed through the first language. This signals that if the students were only allowed to use English, they could have been constrained in expressing their responses. This answer strongly suggests that translanguaging can promote social justice in terms of language use. This may refer to translanguaging as "languaging action that enacts a political process and subjectivity transformation which resists the asymmetries of power that language and other meaning making

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[2] Kesuwen is Javanese term (a local language) which means too long.

code... produce" (Garcia & Li, 2014, p. 43). The social justice in terms of language use is due to the fact that rather than seeing other language practices as deficit, translanguaging serves as a new framework to understand all language practices as equal (Creese & Blackedge, 2010; Flores, 2014). Similarly, when multilingual learners translanguage, this instance shows "their agency by using their linguistic resources to communicate more effectively" (Cenoz & Gorter, 2017, p. 313).

The second student HD said the following:

> Yes, that helped students. There are sometimes things that are difficult to elaborate even though we have mastered that language (e.g., English). Let alone when that is related to Indonesian or local socio-cultural contexts. So when the students were given a chance to use English and Indonesian, they could answer better [translated from Indonesian]. (HD)

In the above quote, HD said that the permission to use 25% Indonesian and 75% English in both the midterm and final exams helped students to provide better answers. For her, it was not easy to transfer all her ideas through English even though she had mastered the language (English). It was also sometimes difficult for her to translate particular concepts in the local language or from Indonesian to English. Therefore, translanguaging practice in the exam really helped her. The above quote confirms findings in the previous studies that translanguaging can enhance students' learning (Ennser-Kananen et al., 2021; Lau, 2020; Martin-Beltrand, 2014). Additionally, it points to the emergence of *uneasiness* of cultural translations from local or Indonesian language to English if translanguaging is not allowed.

Conclusion

Translanguaging, as shown in my class and from the testimonials from my students, can enhance student engagement in the learning process, boost teacher agency in teaching and deconstructing projects, foreground emotions (of both unhappiness and anger), and construct identity as a firm educator. It also facilitates students' effective communication and creates space for social justice for language use. The translanguaging exemplars presented in this chapter both confirm enhancing student's learning and add nuances (e.g., the use of translanguaging in relation to agency and identity, and deconstructive project) to previous translanguaging studies.

The benefits of translanguaging to enhance teaching and learning have been uncontested facts in many existing studies. However, the discussion of emotions such as unhappiness, anger, identity, agency, and decolonization/deconstruction project in spontaneous translanguaging is an under-explored area in the EFL context. I would argue that more research needs to be done by EFL teachers or lecturers followed by the enactment of more multilingual and ecological English classrooms. Furthermore, EFL teachers or lecturers need to be given a space to firmly ground their own research and to exercise the spirit of activism such as social justice. To put these into practice, the teachers and/or lecturers need to read widely and critically evaluate ELT readings to support their voices and their local aspirations to the global contexts. These

teachers and/or lecturers also need to build local and global alliances of EFL/ESL teachers and experts with similar visions to do *praxis*, a critical reflection and action (Kubota, 2021).

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