

A CASE STUDY ON TRANSLANGUAGING IN ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL) CLASS AMONG PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS THROUGH THE LENS OF LANGUAGE TEACHERS

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Abstract— The purpose of this case study was to explore and describe the practice and implications of translanguaging in English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, specifically focusing on public high schools through the perspective of the language teachers in the schools division of Davao Oriental, Philippines. Utilizing a qualitative research design, this case study captured comprehensive insights from the 10 participants through face-to-face in-depth interviews. The data gathered from the interview were then analyzed through thematic analysis. Based from the results, four themes were identified on the language teachers' description of translanguaging in ESL, namely: process involving translation, opportunity to use mother tongue, way to gain confidence, and ability to communicate using different languages. With regards to the reasons why language teachers use translanguaging, five themes emerged: being student-centered, ensuring comprehension, encouraging student participation, acknowledging cultural and linguistic diversity, and catering to diverse learning needs. In the benefits and drawbacks of translanguaging arise six themes; under benefits: scaffolding learning, benefits on group collaboration; and under drawbacks: dependency on native language, ineffectiveness in developing writing skills, limited exposure to the English language, and inconsistency with language competency. Moreover, on the description of the English language development, four themes were identified: need for further development, average competence level in English, observed improvement, and hampered learning. Lastly, on the insights of the language teacher on translanguaging, four themes were discovered: necessity of regulating translanguaging, conflicting view on translanguaging, support for inclusive learning, and aid for learning assessment. With the results revealing the duality of standpoints on translanguaging practice in ESL classes, a need for a balanced and strategic use of translanguaging should be sought as to ensure that it improves, rather than hinders, students' language learning experience.

Keywords— translanguaging, language teachers, English as Second Language (ESL), multilingual classroom, mother tongue, high school students

I. INTRODUCTION

The term translanguaging is a concept that had gained currency at the onset of the 21st century which was first coined in the 1980s by Williams from the Welsh word *trawsieethu* that depict teaching procedures that he observed in Welsh revitalization activities. In an English as Second Language (ESL) classroom, translanguaging is seen as a common practice. In this context, translanguaging occurs when both learners are given the chance to use their first and second language alternately to better learn English (Cenoz & Gorter, 2020; Juvonen & Källkvist, 2021). However, this very concept is not without its issues as conflicting stance on the choice of language, whether strict implementation of the use of the target language or the incorporation of translanguaging should be adhered, has continued to be a subject of debate in our educational system (Casalan, 2022).

Whilst it is true that there is a rich literature supporting the myriad benefits of translanguaging in an English as a Second Language (ESL) classroom, existing literature have also revealed constraints with regards to its implementation. For instance, a study conducted by Yusri, Huzaimi and Sulaiman (2022) in Malaysia revealed that the process of translanguaging may become impractical without the teachers' understanding of how to utilize the strategy in making meaning of the target language in the language classroom, a challenge that was also discussed by Omidire and Ayob (2022). Similarly, Ha et al. (2021) in their study on Vietnamese students pointed out that in order for translanguaging to be successful, teachers needed to be formally trained in using translanguaging, aligning their method of instruction to recent language policies and programs. Many studies also looked into how language policies centered on monolingual ideologies have become a roadblock that challenges the use of translanguaging in classrooms (Fang & Liu, 2020). In Indonesia for instance, an ongoing dispute between the use of translanguaging and English only policies still puts educators in disparity (Emilia & Hamied, 2022).

In the Philippine context, the problem on the use of translanguaging for the most part is due to the monolingualistic policies that have long dominated the teaching of English in ESL class (Belvis & Gutierrez, 2019). The Republic Act 10533 or the K to 12 Law reiterated that English should be the language of instruction of students in English. In addition, the Bilingual Policy in the Philippines only acknowledges Filipino and English as the languages of instruction (Department of Education, 1987). These very policies have long posed problems to multilingual students whose mother-tongue is neither Filipino nor English, yet the Department of Education substantiated the use of English for classroom mode of instruction with the issuance of DepEd Order 60, series of 2008 that establishes the policy to strengthen the use of the English language as a medium of instruction, reiterating the use of English to be not less than 70% of the total time allotment for learning areas in the secondary level. Due to the extensive dependence of English in pedagogy, translanguaging as both a theory and a strategy in teaching and learning language is often disregarded.

The realities in the field however reflects a deviation from these policies. In the schools division of Davao Oriental, while it is observed that English continues to be the medium of instruction in ESL classroom, in the context of rural schools such as in our school where students' demographics largely vary in terms of heritage language and culture, the apparent struggles that students face when they are required to present, report or verbalize their opinions in class using the English language is being addressed by teachers through the use of translanguaging (Villanueva et al., 2023). Allowing the students to freely use the language or languages that they are most comfortable with is seen as one solution by teachers to address the dilemmas of learners with low level of maturity in the English language (Perfecto, 2020; Zhou, Li & Gao, 2021).

Despite the ever-growing interest on translanguaging all over the globe, its practice has rarely been explored in the context of Philippine schools. There are several researches in the subject of translanguaging in the Philippines (e.g. Perfecto, 2020; Gatil 2021) yet despite the fact that language teachers are incorporating translanguaging in ESL classrooms, there is still a deficit studies that tackles translanguaging pedagogy in ESL classrooms (Ooi & Azis, 2021). With the scant research on the implications of translanguaging in public high schools, this research seeks to provide explanations about the translanguaging process in an ESL environment thus filling the gap on the body of knowledge that we still have little knowledge of.

II. METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a qualitative design, specifically case study in an attempt to understand and provide an in-depth analysis on translanguaging practices in ESL class from the perspective of High School English teachers. The participants of this study were ten (10) High School English teachers teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) subjects from five (5) different High Schools in the Schools Division of Davao Oriental, Philippines.

The primary source of data for this research is gathered through in-depth interview using a validated questionnaire with five (5) main research questions. The data from the interviews was gathered, reviewed and then analysed to form the findings, conclusions and recommendations of this study. Coding and thematic analysis were the key mode of analysis for this study.

In making sure that the data gathering procedure is ethically sound, the ten dimensions based on the National Ethical Guidelines (2017) were adhered.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

There were five (5) research questions in this study where each research question includes several sub-questions that served as guides in the conduct of the in-depth interview with the participants. The first question revolves around the description of language teachers to translanguaging in their ESL class in the context of public high schools while the second question delves on the reasons why they facilitate translanguaging in their ESL class. The third question asked for the benefits and the drawbacks of translanguaging in ESL in the context of public high school. The fourth question on the other hand tackles how the participants, as language teachers, describe the English learning development of the students in their ESL class in relation to their use of translanguaging. Lastly, the last question comprised of the language teachers' insights on translanguaging in ESL in the context of public high schools which they wanted to share to others.

Description of Language Teachers about Translanguaging in English as Second Language (ESL) Class in the Context of Public High Schools

Based from the analyzed responses of the ten (10) participants on the first research question that delves on the description of translanguaging in ESL in the context of public high school, four (4) themes were discovered. The language teachers describe translanguaging as: a) Process Involving Translation; b) Opportunity to Use Mother Tongue; c) Way to Gain Confidence; d) Ability to Communicate Using Different Languages.

A Process involving Translation

Base from the responses of the participants, they consider the use of translation as a big part of the translanguaging practice in ESL classrooms. To them, translanguaging often entails delivering instructions in English and subsequently translating those instructions into students' native languages, commonly into Bisaya, sometimes in Mandaya or Kagan, when comprehension issues arise. According to the participants, translating from English to language or dialects which are commonly used by the students creates a space of understanding where students are allowed to make use of languages familiar to them to aid them comprehend lessons in the English subject.

This method of translating phrases in the students' native ensures that students can follow the lesson, even when their English proficiency is limited (Yusri, Huzaimi, & Sulaiman, 2022). Essentially, translanguaging acts as a translation mechanism, making instructional content accessible and clear on the part of the learners. Macawile and Plata (2022) observed that teachers use translanguaging as an extension of help which is used together with translation. From her research, it was discovered that teachers resort to using the students' native language to facilitate comprehension and expression when they struggle to understand and articulate their thoughts. The study indicates that translation can effectively address students' challenges during in-class discussions or activities.

Furthermore, Teachers frequently employ translation to explain complex concepts, such as in storytelling, where translating the content into students' native languages is done to ensure understanding is achieved by the students (Baynham & Lee, 2020). This approach is not merely about finding parallel words from either of the used languages but involves processing and relaying contextual meaning, highlighting the depth of translation to achieve mutual understanding of the lesson (Halberg, 2022).

Aside from that, translation, as a translanguaging practice, serves multiple pedagogical purposes. It aids in clarifying new concepts (Yuvayapan, 2019) and develops bilingual or biliterate skills (Halberg, 2022). Nyimbili and Mwanza (2021) observed that the students translate words for the teacher, and the teacher translates for the students, making the learning process a reciprocal effort. Such practices not only improve proficiency in both languages but also contribute to the development of spontaneous biliteracy (Halberg, 2022). This dual proficiency is crucial for ESL learners, as it reinforces their linguistic capabilities in a holistic manner.

Moreover, the use of translation within translanguaging pedagogy aligns with the sociocultural theory of learning, which emphasizes the importance of scaffolding. The language teachers resort to the use of translation in order to aid and scaffold the students' understanding. Rajendram's (2019) study agreed that translation provides cognitive scaffolding, enabling students to leverage their existing linguistic knowledge to acquire new language skills. More to this, the use of translation in ESL class is also proven to develop metacognition of the students.

As Macawile and Plata (2022) discussed, in addition to simple translation, from English to the native language or vice versa, students use their native language to structure their thoughts before translating and expressing them in English. This suggests that students significantly employ their native language in their metacognitive processes to develop their ideas before communicating them in English. In relation to this, the

practical application of translation is also seen as multifaceted as Perfecto (2020) also noted that teachers employed visual aids, direct translation, code-switching, and metalinguistic explanations to scaffold and clarify the subject matter to the students. The incorporation of translation in ESL, therefore, create a supportive learning environment that bridges the gap between students' current language abilities and the target language which is English (Bolkvadze, 2023).

Opportunity to Use Mother Tongue

Translanguaging in ESL classrooms offers students the opportunity to use their mother tongue, which is a crucial aspect of creating an inclusive and effective learning environment. Participants in this study expressed that allowing students to use their native languages, which in this case are Bisaya, Mandaya and Kagan, significantly enhances their participation and engagement. This practice addresses the challenge of encouraging student participation when the sole use of English might inhibit students' willingness to engage. As one participant noted, no students would participate if only English were used, highlighting the necessity of incorporating the mother tongue to foster a more responsive and active classroom environment.

The use of translanguaging as a pedagogical strategy is particularly beneficial for students who struggle to acquire the English language quickly. It serves as a transitional mechanism, enabling students to gradually build their proficiency in English by first leveraging their mother tongue. This step-by-step approach facilitates a smoother transition to English, allowing students to develop a stronger foundation in their native language before fully engaging with the target language. This perspective aligns with Larsen-Freeman's (2019) assertion that translanguaging helps learners maintain and develop their heritage languages while providing learning opportunities grounded in their lived experiences and identities.

Moreover, for the language teachers, translanguaging also creates a more inclusive learning environment where linguistic diversity is valued and respected. By allowing the use of the mother tongue, teachers can better cater to the individual needs of students and foster a sense of belongingness in the classroom. This inclusive approach not only validates the students' linguistic backgrounds but also encourages them to actively participate in the learning process. According to García and Kleifgen (2019) and Tai and Wong (2022), translanguaging challenges monolingual ideologies and provides students with the freedom to use their entire linguistic repertoire for thinking and learning, thereby enhancing their overall educational experience.

In the context of public high schools, where students may not immediately grasp English, the use of the student native language is particularly helpful. Teachers recognize that while they are expected to model English usage, it is often impractical to enforce a strict English-only policy. Allowing students to use their mother tongue helps address their linguistic backgrounds and facilitates better comprehension and participation. This approach is supported by Tabatabaei's (2019) findings, which indicate that students frequently use their first language to better understand the target language, thus underscoring the practical benefits of translanguaging in educational settings.

Furthermore, the integration of translanguaging in ESL classrooms not only aids in language learning but also supports students' emotional and psychological well-being. When students are permitted to use their mother tongue, they feel more comfortable and confident, reducing anxiety and promoting a positive learning atmosphere. Thongwichit and Ulla (2024) highlight that allowing students to express themselves in their local language enhances their sense of inclusion and belonging, which is essential for effective learning. By valuing students' linguistic diversity and incorporating their native languages into classroom instruction, translanguaging provides a holistic and supportive framework that benefits both language acquisition and overall student development.

Way to Help Learners Gain Confidence

According to the participants in this study, one of the most vital benefits of translanguaging is its ability to help learners gain confidence. They greatly believe that with translanguaging, a supportive linguistic environment where learners can employ their L1 is formed, thereby reducing the anxiety associated with speaking in a second language. Participants noted that when they allow students to use translanguaging in their ESL class, they observe students to be at ease due to the familiarity of the language they use in class, often expressing more enthusiasm to participate in the discussion because of translanguaging.

This confidence stems from the ability to fall back on their native language when needed, which boosts self-esteem and encourages participation (Muguruza, Cenoz, & Gorter, 2020). For many students, their native language represents a comfort zone that enhances their understanding and engagement. When translanguaging is utilized, learners are more relaxed and participative, which is crucial for effective learning. This finding aligns

with the insights of Tabatabaei (2019), who noted that students might experience language anxiety when they are not allowed to use translanguaging, thereby highlighting the importance of this practice in reducing stress and promoting a positive learning atmosphere.

Furthermore, translanguaging enables students to communicate freely and comfortably in both their native language and English. This dual-language approach allows students to feel more relaxed during English lessons, increasing their confidence and willingness to engage. As observed by the participants, students appear more relaxed and are more willing to participate when they are allowed to use translanguaging, indicating a direct correlation between the use of their native language and their comfort levels in the classroom (Im, 2020). This comfort, in turn, facilitates a more effective and enjoyable learning experience.

In addition, the ability to switch between languages helps students overcome the language barrier that often impedes their participation in class. When students are required to use only English, they may struggle to comprehend and respond, leading to a lack of engagement. However, when translanguaging is permitted, students can express their ideas more confidently and comprehensively. This practice not only aids in understanding but also empowers students to take an active role in their learning. García and Kleifgen (2020) emphasize that creating opportunities for multilingual students to engage in lessons through translanguaging can deepen their understanding and develop their 'confianza,' or confidence.

The integration of translanguaging into ESL classrooms not only fosters confidence but also reduces learner anxiety, thereby enhancing their overall language proficiency. Akbar and Taqi (2020) noted that learners who practice translanguaging are able to cultivate confidence and reduce their anxiety, which subsequently activates their ability to process information using all of their language resources. This holistic approach to language learning encourages students to feel comfortable and confident while alternating between their native language and English, ultimately leading to a more successful and inclusive educational experience (Thongwichit & Ulla, 2024).

Ability to Communicate Using Different Languages

The participants describe the concept of translanguaging in ESL classrooms as the dynamic and fluid use of multiple languages by individuals or communities to communicate, understand, and interact effectively. Based on their responses, it involves seamlessly blending languages, dialects, and various linguistic resources to convey meaning and express ideas, embracing linguistic diversity and recognizing the richness that multilingualism brings to communication and expression. This approach highlights the adaptability of students in using their entire linguistic repertoire to navigate and construct meaning within an educational setting.

In practice, translanguaging allows for flexible use of multiple languages in ESL classrooms, which is crucial for students who are not yet proficient in English. Ooi and Azis (2021) noted that translanguaging practices are feasible and beneficial when learners are permitted to use other languages alongside English to make sense of the target language content. This flexibility reduces the cognitive load associated with learning a new language and enables students to participate more fully in classroom activities.

Moreover, translanguaging in ESL classrooms assists with language learning by drawing on learners' existing knowledge on varied languages, which in the participants' case are Filipino and Bisaya and for some, includes Kagan and Mandaya, to build proficiency in English. Mahmoud and Galante (2020) emphasize that this approach allows students to leverage what they already know in their native languages to understand and acquire new content in the language being studied. For instance, allowing students to use Bisaya or Tagalog alongside English helps them share ideas more effectively, especially when they encounter difficulties in expressing themselves solely in English.

Moreover, translanguaging in the classroom enables learners to make meaningful connections between the varied languages that learners know and that of the target language. In the same way, the study of Ting and Jintang (2020) observed that Malaysian learners were able to process and apply new language content by using their existing linguistic knowledge in both Malay and English. This bilingual approach enriches the learning experience, as students can compare linguistic structures and vocabulary across languages, thereby deepening their understanding of both. By encouraging learners to bring texts in other languages and make comparisons, teachers can create a more linguistically diverse and enriched educational environment (Mahmoud & Galante, 2020).

Reasons Why Language Teachers Facilitate Translanguaging in English as Second Language Class in the context of Public High School

On the second research question, the language teachers interviewed have varied reasons behind their implementation of translanguaging in their ESL classes. After thorough analysis of their responses, the language teachers revealed the following motivations on their incorporation of translanguaging, these are: a) Being Student-centered; b) Ensuring Comprehension; c) Catering to Diverse Learning Needs; d) Encouraging Student Participation; e) Acknowledging Cultural and Linguistic Diversity.

Being Student-Centered

According to the participants, the implementation of translanguaging in ESL classrooms fundamentally aligns with student-centered educational philosophies, notably constructivism and progressivism, which emphasize the importance of catering to students' individual needs and interests. This approach requires teachers to facilitate learning rather than dictate it, enabling students to construct their own knowledge and understanding. As the participants noted, the classroom should cater to students' needs and interests, allowing them to construct their own ideas and learning through the aid of translanguaging. Such a perspective underscores the necessity for teachers to act as facilitators, creating an environment where students are encouraged to engage actively with the curriculum.

A student-centered approach is deeply rooted in the principles of constructivism, where learners are given the autonomy to explore, interact, and engage with the content in meaningful ways. This approach is reflected in the practice of allowing students to use their mother tongue or Bisaya in the classroom, as it facilitates better understanding and active participation. This approach not only enhances comprehension but also promotes a positive and less intimidating learning environment (Yusri, Huzaimi, & Sulaiman, 2022). By integrating students' native languages into the learning process, educators not only make the content more accessible but also validate the students' cultural and linguistic identities, which is crucial for fostering a supportive and inclusive learning environment.

Aside from constructivism, the integration of translanguaging into classroom practices supports the progressivist approach, states one participant, where he emphasizes the active involvement of students in their learning journey. It was also highlighted that there is a necessity of using translanguaging to ensure that learners are actively participating in discussions and activities, thereby enhancing their engagement and learning outcomes. This approach is corroborated by Mahmoud and Galante (2020), who argue that contemporary teaching methods should empower learners to take risks and mediate their learning through collaborative activities. Such methods shift the focus from teacher-centered instruction to a more dynamic, learner-centered model.

In addition, for the language teachers, linguistic inclusivity and cultural relevance are paramount in a student-centered classroom. Translanguaging allows teachers to honor and embrace the linguistic diversity of their students, thereby creating a more inclusive atmosphere where all students feel valued and empowered. This method aligns with the findings of Wong and Yoong (2019), who suggest that translanguaging enables teachers to better connect with students, thereby improving language proficiency and increasing student motivation and engagement. The flexibility to use native languages within the classroom helps bridge gaps in understanding, making the learning experience more meaningful and effective.

In the context of 21st-century education, the use of inductive methods and constructivist approaches positions teachers as facilitators who encourage students to explore topics and express their understanding through translanguaging. This pedagogical shift is essential for developing students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills, as it allows them to engage deeply with the content and construct their knowledge. Kleyn and García (2019) emphasize the importance of flexible classroom language practices that position students at the center, ensuring that they remain active participants in their learning.

Ensuring Comprehension

Base from the responses of the participants, the use of translanguaging in ESL classrooms is a critical strategy for ensuring students' comprehension of the subject matter. This approach recognizes that understanding the lesson content is paramount, often taking precedence over strict adherence to using only English in the class. The language teachers believe that the use of translanguaging in their class centers on the idea that students need to understand in order to learn which means that ensuring that comprehension happens is of greater importance than using the English language which students may have difficult time speaking and even understanding due to the low mastery of the learners in the language. As participants noted that comprehension

is vital, as ineffective communication of lessons in fluent English can render instruction futile if students do not grasp the concepts being taught.

In addition, translanguaging is also seen as particularly beneficial in classrooms where students have varying levels of proficiency in English. By incorporating students' native languages, teachers can facilitate a deeper understanding of the subject matter regardless of their proficiency level. Teachers who employ translanguaging can effectively navigate language barriers that might otherwise hinder understanding, thus making the learning process more accessible for students who struggle with English (Sahan & Rose, 2021). This approach is essential for achieving the primary aim of teaching: to ensure students comprehend the lesson. The strict rule of only speaking English can be counterproductive, as it may lead to confusion and misunderstanding, thereby defeating the educational objectives (Azhar & Gopal, 2021).

The complexity of the English language, with its challenging terminology and concepts, often necessitates the use of translanguaging. For many students, encountering difficult words or grammatical structures can impede their learning progress. As the ESL teachers pointed out, not all students are proficient readers, and translanguaging provides a necessary bridge to understanding. This method allows students to grasp difficult concepts by relating them to their native language, thereby facilitating a clearer and more comprehensive understanding. Zulfikar (2019) supports this, noting that the use of L1 can help clarify complex instructions and save valuable classroom time.

Akbar and Taqi (2020) assert that the use of translanguaging enhances the overall communication process and comprehension within the classroom. It allows students to express complex ideas and concepts more accurately, leveraging their full linguistic repertoire. The flexibility of translanguaging enables teachers to clarify concepts using students' native languages, thus providing the necessary clarity and facilitating deeper understanding. Kleyn and Garcia (2019) affirm that students gain more advanced knowledge processing abilities when given the opportunity to translanguage.

In sum, ensuring comprehension through translanguaging is a fundamental aspect of effective ESL teaching (Ting & Jintang, 2020; Hu, 2020; Kleyn & Garcia, 2019). This approach prioritizes students' understanding of the lesson, making it a crucial strategy for overcoming language barriers. As the evidence suggests, translanguaging not only improves comprehension but also boosts students' confidence and engagement, making the classroom a more inclusive and effective learning environment. The findings from various studies underscore the importance of using students' native languages to enhance comprehension and facilitate better learning outcomes (Putri & Rifai, 2021; Tabatabaei, 2019).

Catering to Diverse Learning Needs

For the language teachers interviewed, translanguaging in ESL classrooms is a dynamic and inclusive approach that significantly enhances the learning experience for students with diverse linguistic backgrounds and varying levels of English proficiency. The necessity of catering to diverse learning needs was highlighted by employing methods that allow students to grasp lessons more easily. In a heterogeneous classroom, where students' abilities and language proficiency vary widely, translanguaging is perceived as an effective tool to bridge these gaps and ensure that all learners can keep pace with the curriculum, regardless of the level of proficiency of the students and their needs.

Burton and Rajendram (2019) observed that teachers often use translanguaging as a temporary tool to achieve specific educational objectives, particularly with students who have lower English proficiency. They shared that this improves lesson comprehension and at the very same time, also creates an environment where students feel comfortable participating in language-related activities.

Moreover, the flexibility offered by translanguaging allows teachers to adapt their instructional strategies to meet the needs of their students. The participants emphasized the importance of being flexible and modifying teaching strategies to allow students to express their ideas effectively. This adaptability is crucial in addressing the diverse academic and linguistic needs of students, as Khairunnisa and Lukmana (2020) found in their study of ESL classrooms in Indonesia. They noted that teachers favored translanguaging to support low-proficiency learners, using vernacular languages to aid comprehension and learning.

Translanguaging also plays a vital role in boosting students' confidence and willingness to engage in classroom activities. By providing a supportive environment where students can use their full linguistic repertoire, teachers can reduce the anxiety associated with learning a new language. As Samar and Patham (2023) noted, the use of L1 in the classroom is particularly common for enabling participation among lower proficiency students. This practice helps students feel more at ease and encourages them to participate actively, which is essential for language acquisition and development.

The implementation of translanguaging as a teaching strategy underscores the importance of recognizing and valuing the linguistic diversity of students and also their diverse needs. According to Burton and Rajendram (2019), despite the challenges teachers may face, they often create opportunities for translanguaging to meet their students' needs. This approach aligns with the perspective that learning should not be confined to a single language, especially in a diverse classroom setting. Through leveraging the linguistic resources that students bring to the classroom, teachers can enhance the overall learning experience and support the development of both English proficiency and academic skills, thus, catering to their needs as individuals in the classroom, rather than a group of people learning one language.

Encouraging Student Participation

The language teachers' responses revealed that the implementation of translanguaging in ESL classrooms plays a crucial role in encouraging student participation. According to the participants, students who struggle to articulate their thoughts in English are more likely to share their ideas when allowed to use Filipino or Bisaya. With the use of translanguaging in their classrooms, the language teachers noted that it facilitates a more relaxed and supportive classroom atmosphere where students can be themselves, using the language/s that are comfortable with which in turn allows them to be actively participating in class.

This pedagogical strategy allows students to express their ideas in their native languages which is a way that reduced the effects of linguistic barriers that often inhibit participation (Samar & Patham, 2023). Moreover, teachers also revealed that they often observe the learners' body language which often signals anxiety in speaking English, recognizing their need to use their native language. By allowing students to communicate in Tagalog or Bisaya the teachers see a boost in their confidence. This practice aligns with the findings of Hu (2020), who noted that translanguaging helps establish a positive learning environment that improves the participation of learners in class. More than that, the confidence gained from translanguaging also extends beyond classroom activities to overall classroom dynamics. The participants revealed that when students are allowed to translanguaging, they are more likely to participate in discussions, ask questions, and interact with their peers. This active participation not only enhances their learning experience but also contributes to better classroom management and a reduction in disciplinary issues (Holi Ali, 2020). The positive correlation between translanguaging and student participation is further emphasized by Neault (2020), who suggests that understanding and implementing translanguaging can lead to more active classroom engagement and improved academic performance.

In addition, the flexibility of translanguaging also enables students to participate in activities they might otherwise avoid. For instance, the participants pointed out that during presentations or role-playing exercises, students may struggle to express complex concepts in English. By permitting the use of their native languages, teachers can ensure that all students engage fully in these activities. This inclusive strategy is supported by Zhou and Mann (2021), who argue that using students' L1 fosters a more inclusive and supportive learning atmosphere, empowering students to participate according to their linguistic proficiency.

With regards to the teachers' attitudes towards translanguaging, it is generally positive as it recognizes its potential to increase student engagement and participation. This is in support the study of Samar and Patham (2023), where it is found out that most teachers of ESL believe that allowing the use of students' native language in the classroom can significantly boost participation. This view is echoed by Yusri, Huzaimi, and Sulaiman (2022), who highlight the necessity of employing students' L1 to promote their engagement in class activities. Thus, translanguaging is not only a practical tool for ensuring comprehension but also a vital strategy for fostering an inclusive and participatory classroom environment for learners of ESL.

Acknowledging Cultural and Linguistic Diversity

The responses revealed that translanguaging in ESL classrooms serves as a significant tool for acknowledging and embracing cultural and linguistic diversity. Language teachers state that this approach fosters a sense of belonging and respect among students by validating their cultural identities within the context of learning English as a second language. In the context of their ESL classrooms, which is characterized by linguistic diversity, participants observed that their students bring with them a rich variety of languages, customs, and traditions. Teachers have shared that their learners come from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Some speaks Kagan while others were Mandaya, however, majority of their learners were Bisaya that is why it is important for them to consider the use of translanguaging in their class to address the multicultural background of the learners.

This practice aligns with Mahmoud and Galante's (2020) assertion that accessing students' communicative repertoires allows teachers to better understand and connect to their culture, history, and values. As teachers, they share that they incorporate this diversity into their instructional strategies through the use of translanguaging to demonstrate respect for their students' backgrounds, which in turn fosters mutual respect within the classroom. As such, this approach is supported by Deroo and Ponzio (2019), who found that translanguaging provides opportunities for collaboration between students and teachers, facilitating a deeper understanding of English learning while making use of their cultural and linguistic identity as a valuable resource for learning.

More to this, translanguaging also enables students to engage with English language materials through the lens of their own cultural experiences. This engagement promotes cultural relevance and appreciation in the classroom, as students can relate new information to their existing knowledge and cultural contexts. This perspective is echoed by Ooi and Azis (2021), who emphasize the importance of educators understanding learners' native language to communicate effectively and develop both intracultural and intercultural competencies. They also emphasized that such competencies are crucial for managing diverse individuals in ESL classrooms.

Language teachers also mentioned how the use of translanguaging in the classroom not only acknowledges students' cultural backgrounds but also taps into their creative and critical thinking abilities. Thongwichit and Ulla's (2024) findings on their study highly supports this idea in which they have discovered that by embracing linguistic diversity, teachers can better assess and support students' speaking, writing, reading, and other language skills.

Benefits and Drawbacks of Translanguaging in an ESL class in the Context of Public High Schools

The data gathered from the responses of the participants on the third research question revealed the following themes, subdivided into two, the benefits being: a) Scaffolding Learning; b) Benefits on Group Collaboration; and drawbacks: c) Dependency on Native Language; d) Ineffective in Developing Writing Skills; e) Limited Exposure to the English Language; and f) Inconsistency with English Language Competency.

Scaffolding Learning

The participants believe that translanguaging in ESL classrooms serves as a powerful scaffolding mechanism, aiding both teachers and students in teaching and learning a second language. The language teachers acknowledge the fact that some of their learners have not yet achieved proficiency in English and because of this, translanguaging served as the bridge to connect that gap.

In line with this, Eisenstein Ebsworth *et al.* (2018) agreed that pedagogical approaches for ESL translanguaging should enable learners to use all their linguistic resources to understand and connect with the English language content being taught. They believe that learners learn more when they are given the chance to link their innate mastery of their mother tongue and other language to learning a second language.

Aside from that, the students' diverse linguistic capabilities and their difference in academic level among other factors necessitate a flexible approach to language instruction as participants described translanguaging as a 'blessing' that addresses the different levels of academic excellence, confidence, and adaptability among students. This perspective is echoed in the work of Burton and Rajendram (2019), who emphasize that translanguaging serves as a scaffolding technique, enabling students to leverage their pre-existing linguistic abilities to enhance their proficiency in English. By doing so, teachers can create a more supportive learning environment.

Furthermore, participants also declared that the ultimate goal of teaching is to facilitate learning in the most accessible manner possible. This sentiment aligns with the findings of Thongwichit and Ulla (2024), who suggest that translanguaging helps bridge the gap between students' current language abilities and the target language, thereby enhancing overall comprehension and engagement. Translanguaging also addresses the linguistic gaps that many students face, highlighting the role of translanguaging as a revolutionary tool for educators, enabling them to better support students in overcoming their learning challenges.

Aoyama (2020) also supports this view, seeing translanguaging as a scaffolding technique that can be employed strategically to identify and address situations where students rely on their complete linguistic repertoire to make sense of English content. That is why the strategic use of students' first language (L1) as a scaffolding mechanism is crucial in helping them understand complex English concepts. Turnbull (2017) posits that translanguaging may be more frequently needed among beginner ESL learners and can gradually decrease as

students gain proficiency in English. This targeted use of the learners' native language helps scaffold learning, allowing students to build on their existing knowledge while gradually increasing their exposure to and use of the target language.

Finally, when translanguaging is used as a temporary scaffold, it helps maintain the focus on mastering English while acknowledging and leveraging students' multilingual abilities. Kleyn and García (2019) argue that treating translanguaging as a temporary scaffold ensures that teaching and learning remain centered on English proficiency, rather than simply developing multilingualism. This approach aligns with the sociocultural theory's framework, which positions scaffolding as a core concept in supporting language learning (Rajendram, 2019). By adopting a strategic and balanced approach to translanguaging, educators can effectively scaffold learning, supporting students in their journey towards English proficiency.

Benefits on Group Collaboration

Translanguaging in ESL classrooms offers significant benefits particularly in group collaboration and discussions. The language teachers often observe that students struggle to express complex ideas in English, and translanguaging becomes a vital tool in facilitating understanding and communication in the class. During group work and brainstorming sessions, students often resort to their native languages to clarify difficult concepts and instructions, enabling them to grasp the material more effectively. This occurs not only when the students interact with each other but also when communicating with the teachers as well.

In the study conducted by Thongwichit & Ulla (2024) in Thailand, it was found out that collaborative classroom tasks such as group work are effective environments for translanguaging. Implementing group activities within a translanguaging framework acknowledges the diverse language proficiency levels among students and fosters a supportive atmosphere. This environment enables students to confidently express their thoughts and engage in meaningful discussions. Consequently, this approach not only improves language acquisition but also promotes confidence and active participation in the language classroom.

In addition, the study also demonstrated that translanguaging pedagogy provided linguistic support for students, particularly during group work and discussions, enabling them to express themselves more effectively (Thongwichit & Ulla, 2024). For the language teachers, the ability to switch between Bisaya, Filipino and even in English allows students to articulate their thoughts more comprehensively. For instance, when a student leader struggles to express ideas in English, they can translanguage to ensure their group members understand the task at hand showing the power of L1 in group interaction. In congruence, Zulfikar (2019) posits that employing the first language (L1) can assist learners in elucidating or clarifying concepts, tasks, assignments, instructions, or activities. He argues that L1 usage can foster collaborative dialogue and even streamline classroom time.

It was also discovered that teachers often implement translanguaging strategies to promote peer learning and interactive activities in the ESL class. By pairing students from different linguistic backgrounds, ESL teachers can involve students in multilingual group discussions, encourage them to brainstorm ideas for pre-tasks, and enable them to use their cultural backgrounds to collaboratively build knowledge (Hasan, Islam, & Shuchi, 2020). Ooi & Azis (2021) also believe that utilizing the students' native language as a resource for ESL learning incorporate their cultural backgrounds into the classroom environment. This shows that the use of translanguaging in group collaborations also highlights the importance of cultural relevance in language learning.

Furthermore, collaboration does not only happen between students but also with the teachers. In line with this, Mahmoud and Galante (2020) noted that with the use of translanguaging, teachers have moved away from teacher-centered practices and no longer expect students to view them as the sole source of knowledge. Instead, they encourage students to develop agency by engaging in collaborative activities, taking risks, and facilitating learning with their peers and the resources available in the classroom.

Moreover, a discourse analysis conducted by Deroo and Ponzio (2019) among in-service teachers in the United States revealed that translanguaging creates valuable opportunities for collaboration between students and teachers. This collaborative approach allows both parties to work together to better understand and make sense of the English learning process. Through translanguaging, students and teachers can bridge language gaps, enhance comprehension, and foster a more inclusive and effective learning environment. This method is proven to aid language acquisition and also promotes mutual support and shared responsibility in the educational journey.

Dependency on Native Language

Although the participants consider translanguaging as beneficial in many aspects of second language acquisition in ESL, they also observe that it poses significant risks when students become overly dependent on their native language. Based on their responses, this dependency can impede the effective acquisition of the target language, in this case, English, as it reduces the necessity and opportunity for students to practice and internalize English. The participants believe that when students are allowed to frequently switch back to their L1, they may become less motivated to practice English, knowing that they can always revert to their more comfortable language, noted the participants.

Aligned with this, Thongwichit and Ulla (2024) highlight that while it is essential to recognize the importance of students' first language in learning, excessive reliance can be detrimental. This is especially true in contexts where English is not widely spoken outside the classroom, limiting students' exposure and practice in their real-life situations such as interaction at home and in the community.

Another major drawback of translanguaging is that it can lead to students' reluctance to engage fully with the target language. Samar and Patham (2023) have stated that such behavior indicates a comfort zone that hinders full engagement with English, thus slowing down their language development. Further, this over-reliance is evident in classroom scenarios where students habitually request to use their native language during oral recitations and discussions, as noted by several educators.

More to this dilemma, the effectiveness of translanguaging is also undermined when students do not make a concerted effort to use English in the class. As one teacher pointed out, students often do not strive to improve their English skills because they anticipate that translanguaging will be permitted. Yusri, Huzaimi, and Sulaiman (2022) noted that this lack of effort can become habitual, making it difficult for teachers to enforce the use of English consistently. Consequently, the students' language proficiency may remain stagnant, and their confidence in using English independently may diminish overtime.

The socio-cultural context also plays a critical role in this dependency. In environments where English is not the dominant language, students may not see the practical necessity of mastering English. Thongwichit and Ulla (2024) emphasize that while teachers recognize the importance of L1 in understanding and addressing learning challenges, this does not mean L1 should dominate the classroom. Balancing the use of L1 and English is crucial to prevent the former from overshadowing the latter, ensuring that students still prioritize learning the target language.

In addition, the dependency on the native language often leads to increased reliance on the teacher for translations and explanations as observed by several participants of the study where students often ask their teacher for translations and explanations in their first language. Yusri, Huzaimi, and Sulaiman (2022) emphasized that this dependency not only hampers students' ability to learn independently but also places additional burdens on teachers to constantly bridge the language gap. This dynamic can stifle students' potential, as they become accustomed to seeking immediate assistance rather than attempting to grapple with the language independently.

Ineffectiveness in Developing Writing Skills

While it is undeniable that the use of translanguaging in ESL classrooms has garnered significant attention for its potential benefits in facilitating comprehension and verbal communication, however, participants believe that its efficacy in the development of writing skills remains a question. The integration of native languages into the learning process, while beneficial for oral skills, appears to be less effective when applied to writing. Teachers often refrain from allowing students to use their native languages in written outputs, focusing instead on English for such tasks. The participants noted that they do not usually apply translanguaging in written outputs, highlighting the perceived incompatibility of translanguaging with the rigorous demands of written English.

The ineffectiveness of translanguaging in writing is further compounded by students' limited vocabulary and grammatical proficiency. Despite extensive use of translanguaging in verbal interactions and classroom discussions, students often struggle to translate these skills into their writing as participants remarked that students have not yet attained proficiency in terms of vocabulary and grammar. This suggests that while translanguaging can aid in immediate comprehension and verbal expression, it does not necessarily translate into long-term improvements in written language proficiency. Empirical studies support these observations, indicating that students frequently face challenges in writing in English, even when translanguaging is employed for other language skills. For example, Muguruza, Cenoz, and Gorter (2020) reported that students struggle to

follow teachers' explanations and to actively use English in both oral and written forms. This underscores the need for focused and sustained practice in writing exclusively in the target language to achieve proficiency.

Furthermore, the constraints of translanguaging in writing are evident in classroom practices where teachers often prohibit the use of native languages for written assignments. According to Yusri, Huzaimi, and Sulaiman (2022), most participants discourage the use of L1 in group presentations or written tasks, emphasizing the necessity of using the target language: English. This stems from a belief that writing in English demands a strict adherence to grammatical rules, proper syntax, and accurate orthography (Fang & Liu, 2020) in which areas where translanguaging offers little support.

The challenges associated with writing in a second language are also well-documented in literature. Anderson (2022) found that in India, English is predominantly used monolingually in written forms, while spoken interactions often involve a blend of languages. Similarly, Atta and Naqvi (2021) highlighted the difficulties Pakistani students face in reading and writing, including complex vocabulary, syntax, and grammar. In addition, Yusri, Huzaimi and Sulaiman (2022) also revealed that translanguaging is suitable for tasks such as in group discussion to build up knowledge on the topic discussed but in terms of language production such as in writing, the use of English highly preferred. These findings align with the concerns expressed by ESL teachers about the limitations of translanguaging in enhancing students' writing skills.

Limited Exposure to the English language

Another drawback identified by the participants with the use of translanguaging in ESL classrooms is that it limits students' exposure to the English language. They believe that the reduced exposure can hinder the development of fluency, as consistent immersion in the target language is essential for mastering skills in English., drawing on responses from educators and relevant literature. Moreover, for the participants, the frequent use of native languages in the classroom can lead to a lack of motivation to engage fully with English. As mentioned by the language teaches, students become reliant on their native language, knowing that teachers will translate for them, which limits their exposure and practice in English.

According to Alrabah et al (2015), when students frequently revert to their native language, they miss out on the immersive experience necessary for language acquisition. This limited exposure can slow their progress in developing essential language skills, undermining their overall communicative competence. This reliance on translation can create a comfort zone that impedes students from pushing their linguistic boundaries and actively improving their English vocabulary and grammar (Thongwichit & Ulla, 2024).

The effectiveness of translanguaging is further questioned when considering its impact on developing communicative competence. Brevik and Rindal (2020) mentioned that consistent and immersive practice in English is essential for students to gain proficiency. When translanguaging is overused, it can prevent students from being pushed to their limits and fully engaging with the target language.

As far as implementation is considered, the limitations of translanguaging in ESL classrooms are also evident during activities that require active language use. The participants revealed that limited use of English results in a restricted vocabulary, as students are not encouraged to use and practice new words in context. This observation underscores the importance of maximizing English exposure to enhance vocabulary acquisition and overall language proficiency (Akbar & Taqi, 2020). Balancing the benefits of translanguaging with the need for English language exposure remains a critical challenge for educators.

Thongwichit and Ulla (2024) further emphasize the importance of finding a harmonious balance that upholds the benefits of target language exposure while accommodating the linguistic diversity of students. This balance is crucial for ensuring that students receive adequate practice in English, essential for their academic and professional success. The goal is to integrate translanguaging strategically, allowing it to facilitate comprehension without compromising the immersive experience necessary for mastering English (Akbar & Taqi, 2020).

Inconsistency with English Language Competency

Another downside that the participants found on the use of translanguaging in ESL is that it can be misaligned with the goal of achieving English language competency, particularly in educational environments where proficiency in English is paramount. Drawing from their responses, the participants revealed that despite its advantages in supporting understanding and facilitating communication, among other things, translanguaging can be disadvantageous in a sense that it jeopardizes the competencies that should be attained by the students of ESL.

According to Macaro, et. al. (2018), in educational systems where high levels of English proficiency are required for academic or professional success, the heavy reliance on native languages can impede the development of essential English language skills. Furthermore, in tasks that require strict adherence to English, such as oral presentations or written assessments, the use of translanguaging can be counterproductive, as it does not provide the necessary immersion and practice in the target language (Yusri, Huzaimi, & Sulaiman, 2022). Aside from that, the reliance on translanguaging can undermine the objectives of English language learning. Participants explained that the use of translanguaging allows the learners to understand better however, the objectives of the lesson in English are often compromised because of this. While translanguaging can facilitate faster comprehension, it can also lead to gaps in the ability to communicate effectively in English, which is a critical goal of ESL education (Marshall, 2019). This often leads to language teachers to be caught up in between which language policy is better.

The differing perspectives on teachers' language choices in ESL settings have led to conflicting ideologies, fueling an ongoing debate about language preferences for teaching multilingual learners. This debate has further challenged the traditional monolingual "English-only policy" in the Philippines (Gatil, 2021). Thongwicht and Eula (2024) explicated that this inconsistency in language use policies can create an uneven learning environment, confusing students and making it challenging to prepare for real-world situations where English proficiency is expected.

Another research that would back up this is the research conducted by Burton and Rajendram (2019) which indicated that translanguaging appeared to hinder rather than facilitate the students' acquisition of English language skills, failing to attain the needed skills on the target language. This is the reason why language teachers are still grounded on their monolingual beliefs in agreement with Yuvayapan (2019) who noted that translanguaging in the classroom is limited due to teachers' expectations for English language proficiency. They believe that achieving this goal requires a monolingual approach to teaching English.

The goal, therefore, is to find a balance that leverages the advantages of translanguaging without compromising the immersive experience necessary for mastering English. Educators must strategically integrate translanguaging to support understanding while prioritizing targeted English language instruction to meet competency goals. By doing so, they can create a more effective language learning environment that supports the development of comprehensive language skills necessary for students' academic and professional success (Sahan, Galloway, & McKinley, 2022).

Description of Language Teachers on the English Learning Development of Students in ESL Class Using Translanguaging in a Public High School Setting

The data gathered from how the Language Teachers describe the English Learning Development of the students in ESL class using translanguaging is summarized into four (4) themes, namely: a) Need for Further Development b) Hampered Learning; c) Average Competence Level in English; and d) Observed Improvement.

Need for Further Development

The current study indicates that the implementation of translanguaging in an ESL classroom necessitates further development, particularly in the areas of vocabulary acquisition and grammar. The responses from the participants reveal that students exhibit limited vocabulary and grammar awareness, which are critical components of language proficiency. According to the participants, this is apparent during oral recitations where students often seek permission to switch to their first languages, such as Filipino or Bisaya, to express themselves more comfortably, often ignoring speaking in English.

In a similar study, Akbar and Taqi (2020) also share the same conclusion wherein they found out that the intentional application of translanguaging in ESL classrooms demonstrate its success in enhancing the comprehension and processing of information at various levels, though its effect on language proficiency remains limited. For instance, one language teachers have noted a significant number of grammatical errors in students' sentences, particularly in Grade 7, suggesting a gap in the effective application of translanguaging for grammatical development.

This problem is especially evident in the performance of learners during classroom activities, where they frequently require additional instruction or reinforcement to grasp the material fully. This indicates that their oral language development in English remains inadequate and necessitates further pedagogical intervention. In relation to this, Akbar and Taqi (2020) concluded that translanguaging in a bilingual classroom is effective for thoroughly understanding the topic and the provided information, but it does not contribute to improving

language proficiency. Despite the theoretical benefits of translanguaging, the practical outcomes in terms of language proficiency seem limited, underscoring the need for more targeted approaches (Vaish, 2018).

The struggle of students to express their realizations or insights after reading selections or poems further underscores the need for development. When students have difficulty articulating their thoughts, it signals that they have not yet internalized the content through translanguaging. This is primarily due to a restricted vocabulary, which hampers their ability to engage deeply with the material (Kim & Chang, 2020). In a similar study on ESL students in Pakistan, Atta and Naqvi (2021) revealed that students faced difficulties in reading and writing, such as encountering challenging vocabulary, complex sentence structures, difficulty in inferring implied meanings, non-standard grammar, and challenges with higher-order cognitive tasks. The feedback from teachers highlights the necessity for a more robust framework that supports vocabulary expansion and comprehension through the strategic use of translanguaging.

The results also suggest that translanguaging should be more than a remedial strategy for low proficiency students. While it is commonly utilized to facilitate participation among lower proficiency students (Samar & Patham, 2023), its potential to aid language development across all proficiency levels needs to be explored. Another study conducted by Taşci and Aksu Ataç (2020) similarly found that the use of the first language (L1) was deemed essential, especially during the learning process of beginner levels. Translanguaging is a beneficial strategy to employ in classrooms with students who have low proficiency levels, as it can aid in facilitating their learning process. Many of these students struggle to understand lessons delivered in English, underscoring the importance for teachers to incorporate their first language (L1) into the instruction (Yusri, Huzaimi, & Sulaiman, 2022). Translanguaging should therefore be integrated into a comprehensive language learning framework that supports vocabulary building, grammatical accuracy, and deeper comprehension.

Hampered Learning

The responses of the participants perceive the utilization of translanguaging in ESL classrooms to be beneficial in many respects yet they also acknowledge that it can also pose significant challenges that may impede their English language development. Specifically, one primary concern that language teachers believe that may impede English development is the over-reliance on translanguaging. As the participants shared, students often depend heavily on their first language to understand complex concepts, which in turn can reduce their motivation to engage fully in English.

Historically speaking, employing L1 in L2 classrooms was viewed as a prohibited practice that could impede the learning of the second language. This belief persists among many ESL educators who advocate for using the target language exclusively as the medium of instruction within the classroom (Oliver, 2020). As affirmed by Nyimbili and Mwanza (2021) The instructional language posed a significant challenge that obstructed the learners' acquisition of literacy within the translanguaging classroom. The teacher should thereby acknowledge that there existed a discrepancy between the language used for instruction and the learners' dominant and familiar language, which exacerbated the difficulties faced in achieving literacy.

In relation to this belief, Burton and Rajendram (2019) noted that despite instructors' perceived necessity to accommodate their students' first language (L1) in the classroom, the commercialization of English may influence the teachers to view L1 use as potentially detrimental to students' English language learning progress. This perspective is particularly prevalent among instructors who equate increased exposure to the target language with enhanced language proficiency.

The commercialization of English, which emphasizes its global economic importance, can lead to the belief that minimizing L1 use is crucial for maximizing the target language acquisition and thereby improve the students' proficiency levels. In the same study, certain participants view translanguaging as having a detrimental impact on students' learning, perceiving it as a hindrance rather than a beneficial resource. This negative perspective discourages the use of translanguaging, as these individuals believe it could impede students' ability to achieve proficiency in English (Rajendram, 2019). The issue of language dependency is exacerbated by the lack of consistent practice in the target language. Many students are not compelled to use English outside the classroom, as they default to their vernacular at home and in social settings. This lack of consistent exposure and practice in the target language hampers their ability to develop fluency and confidence in English.

Furthermore, while translanguaging can facilitate comprehension and make learning more accessible as it uses the students' mother tongue, it can also lead to a scenario where students focus more on understanding the content rather than improving their language skills. This dual-edged nature of translanguaging is highlighted by the participants who observe that while some students benefit from the practice by gaining a better understanding of the subject matter but totally neglecting the target language. In relation with this, Tabatabaei

(2019) stated that using the students' native language in ESL classrooms should be avoided as it can negatively affect L2 learning. Similarly, Yuvayapan (2019) emphasized that some educators are concerned that permitting L1 use could provide students with an easy way out, possibly reducing their motivation to actively engage in and achieve proficiency in the target language.

To mitigate these challenges, Brevik and Rindal (2020) emphasize that the central concern lies not in simply permitting the inclusion of languages other than English within the classroom but in effectively navigating the balance between providing ample exposure to the target language and addressing students' inherent needs for utilizing their native languages. This perspective underscores the complexities involved in language instruction, advocating for a nuanced approach that acknowledges both the benefits of target language immersion and the potential advantages of incorporating students' linguistic backgrounds into the learning process, making sure that translanguaging does not hamper the students' language development.

Average Competence Level in English

The implementation of translanguaging in ESL classrooms aims to leverage students' entire language capabilities to enhance language learning outcomes. However, despite efforts to integrate this approach, the participants note that their students' competence in English remains predominantly average. The language teachers report that while some students exhibit competence in speaking English, the majority of the students' overall proficiency often falls short, particularly in comprehending complex vocabulary and tackling higher-order thinking tasks, even with aid of translanguaging. A significant portion of students is also described as "just okay," indicating a need for substantial reinforcement in English language skills.

In our country, the Philippines ranks among the world's largest English-speaking countries, with English serving as one of its official languages. However, over the years, there has been a noticeable decline in English language proficiency among Filipinos, as indicated by the EF English Proficiency Index and the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) (Santos, Fernandez & Ilustre, 2022). In relation to this, in the study conducted by Racca and Lassaten (2016) among Grade 8 learners, it was indicated that a majority of Grade 8 students at the Philippine Science High School in Northern Luzon exhibit English language proficiency at a satisfactory level. This suggests that while their grasp of English is adequate for most academic purposes, there is still room for improvement to reach higher proficiency levels. Furthermore, their performance in English, although commendable, is rated as good rather than very good, indicating that the language development of the said students is in par with the perceived level of the students' competence in this study.

Moreover, the participants also revealed that a substantial segment of the student population demonstrates dependency on digital devices, impacting their engagement with language learning tasks and assignments. For Fontillas, Quintos and Ronquillo (2022), despite being members of Gen Z and influenced by various forms of media, both social and electronic, there remains significant potential for improvement in their proficiency with English. This is evident when students are able to understand the interviewer's questions but struggle to articulate their thoughts and ideas in English.

For Gimena (2022), the average level of language proficiency observed among students can be largely attributed to the insufficient language learning activities provided at the lower levels of education, which results in a lack of mastery. To address this issue, it is essential for teachers to be aware of the specific listening problems their students face. This awareness will enable educators to design and implement appropriate listening exercises and activities within the classroom, as well as recommend additional listening experiences outside the classroom. The average proficiency in reading is linked to difficulties in vocabulary and comprehension, hindering students' ability to fully understand and engage with texts. Furthermore, many students lack the necessary skills to effectively express themselves in written form, particularly in real-life contexts and situations. The findings reveal that the average writing proficiency among students indicates a pressing need to enhance their writing skills, as these skills are crucial tools for communication and self-expression.

Observed Improvement

Although the results showed that the language teachers see their students' English language development as something that needs improvement, however, the participants also believe that the integration of translanguaging in ESL classrooms represents a promising method in enhancing language acquisition, comprehension and reading among the ESL students. Evidence from classroom assessments suggests a gradual improvement in students' reading abilities, transforming them into instructional readers over time. Aside from that, the

improvement is also evident in the students' speaking abilities, particularly in their responsiveness during oral interactions.

With regards to this, in a similar study conducted by Namrullah, Syawal, and Nasrullah (2020) in Indonesia, it was also revealed that there is a significant improvement in reading comprehension among students who use translanguaging in class. Aside from that, Yafele (2021) also conducted a study in Africa to address the challenge of reading comprehension among multilinguals. The study concluded that translanguaging helps to improve reading comprehension, concept knowledge, and brings awareness of different languages. Yusri, Huzaimi and Sulaiman (2022) also came up with a similar conclusion, stating that the participants of their study believes that translanguaging helps in building the learners' knowledge and understanding, specifically for learning vocabulary and reading comprehension. According to Khan *et al.* (2021), this can be attributed to how native language practice facilitate and improve competence of individual in learning language. This pedagogical strategy allows students to fluidly switch between languages, leveraging their linguistic repertoire to deepen understanding and facilitate communication (Tai & Wong, 2022; Aoyama, 2020; Mahmoud & Galante, 2020; Khote & Tian, 2019).

Moreover, this improvement is also visible on the students' ability to speak in English particularly in student responsiveness during oral interactions such as in presentations. Similarly, Akbar and Taqi (2020) found that translanguaging serves as an effective ESL learning strategy for developing learners' language skills and enabling them to articulate deeper levels of thinking in oral English exercises using their second language (L2). In general, perceptions of translanguaging in ESL contexts are typically positive, creating a somewhat favorable environment that enhances ESL students' confidence and promotes more advanced cognitive abilities, thereby enhancing their performance in tasks related to content processing (Akbar & Taqi, 2020).

The notable improvements observed, particularly in the ability of the students to share their ideas in class can be attributed to many factors of translanguaging as it garnered support in ESL pedagogy for its multifaceted benefits. Hu (2020) underscores its effectiveness in delivering classroom instructions efficiently, clarifying linguistic content, and fostering a supportive learning environment. This approach not only aids in comprehension but also cultivates a sympathetic atmosphere conducive to student engagement. Akbar and Taqi (2020) further emphasize translanguaging's role in promoting higher-order thinking skills among both teachers and learners, enhancing the depth of oral English exercises. Additionally, Burton and Rajendram (2019) highlight its potential in helping L2 learners shape their identities positively and maximizing overall learning outcomes. Scholars such as Graham, Eslami and Hillman (2021) and Zhou and Mann (2021) argue that translanguaging provides a valuable space for students to utilize their linguistic repertoire and draw on prior experiences, thereby enriching their understanding and knowledge acquisition in diverse subject areas. Together, these perspectives underscore translanguaging as a dynamic tool with significant potential to enhance ESL students' language learning experiences across various educational contexts.

Insights of Language Teachers on Translanguaging in ESL Class in the Context of Public High Schools

After thorough analysis of the responses by the language teachers, the following insights on the use of translanguaging in ELS classes have been revealed: a) Necessity of Regulating Translanguaging; b) Conflicting View on Translanguaging; c) Support for Inclusive Learning; and d) Aid for Learning Assessment.

Necessity of Regulating Translanguaging

Noting how translanguaging in ESL classrooms is seen as a contentious yet potentially beneficial practice, the participants emphasized the need for careful regulation and strategic implementation of its use to maximize its educational value. As teachers of ESL, they acknowledge the benefits of translanguaging, however, they also advocate for its application to specific tasks, contexts, and levels of proficiency to ensure that it is not abused since it may also pose negative effects to students' language development.

With this, Akbar and Taqi (2020) stated that translanguaging offers substantial benefits and can be a great asset in ESL classrooms and programs if utilized thoughtfully and under the careful supervision of teachers. For translanguaging practice in ESL to succeed, Amin *et al.* (2020) and Akbar and Taqi (2020) proposed that the implementation of flexible language policies is crucial for the success of translanguaging in ESL pedagogy. This approach aims to address linguistic disparities within educational systems by enabling authorities to meet the diverse linguistic needs and preferences of learners.

Additionally, the uncontrolled use of translanguaging poses significant challenges. The participants pointed out that over-reliance on native languages like Tagalog or Bisaya may hinder students' progress in mastering

English, which is essential for academic success and integration into global environments. To address this, Bolkvadze (2023) suggested that it is crucial to establish the precise role of the first language (L1) in second language (L2) classrooms, as the use of L1 can have dual implications in this setting since the unregulated use of L1 may detrimentally impact learners' interests and undermine their efforts for success.

Furthermore, Thongwicht and Ulla (2024) warned that teachers' recognition of students' first language (L1) may involve acknowledging its significance in the learning process, understanding the specific challenges students encounter, and implementing strategies to mitigate these challenges yet this acknowledgment does not imply that teachers should use the student's L1 as the predominant language of instruction. Instead, it often entails a nuanced approach, such as selectively integrating translanguaging pedagogy as necessary.

Educators advocating for regulated translanguaging practices highlight the importance of setting clear boundaries and guidelines with its use in the classroom. Teachers often experience tension when employing translanguaging techniques due to their apprehension that using languages other than English might hinder their objective of effectively preparing students for success in English-language environments (Tan, 2017). With this in mind, Turnbull (2017) urged that teachers must navigate a delicate balance, integrating translanguaging selectively to support learning without compromising English language learning objectives.

Conflicting View of Translanguaging

Translanguaging in ESL classrooms elicits both positive and negative perspectives among the participants, reflecting a conflicted view on its efficacy and drawbacks. The language teachers argue that translanguaging facilitates effective communication and expression among students, especially when discussing complex concepts in their mother tongue, such as Bisaya or Tagalog yet it also tolerates unproficiency in the target language. Some participants believe that ideally, the use of translanguaging should not occur in an ESL class noting that English should be taught in English, however, due to the realities in the classroom where majority of the students still does not master English, participants were rather forced to employ translanguaging for the sake of the students.

Within the Philippine context, Casalan (2022) highlighted that the role of language in the learning process has been a topic of considerable debate within the country's educational framework. This conflicted perspective has also divided language teachers of ESL. For instance, Akbar and Taqi (2020) stated that language educators have consistently debated whether to maintain students' native languages while gradually introducing the second language, immerse students completely in the second language for maximal exposure; on the other hand, the alternation between the native language and the target language in ways that support learning while preserving the community's linguistic identity is much more effective.

In addition, there are concerns that over-reliance on translanguaging may hinder English language development. In relation to this, the study of Thongwicht and Ulla (2024) revealed that in essence, although teachers might permit students to utilize their first language (L1) within the classroom, they acknowledge the necessity for students to also acquire proficiency in English. This requires a careful equilibrium between employing the L1 and ensuring comprehension of the target language. Such an approach might involve a more refined strategy, where translanguaging pedagogy is applied selectively and judiciously. This method aims to support students' understanding without compromising their exposure to and practice in the target language, thereby fostering a balanced bilingual learning environment.

One factor that affects this two-sided view is the language policy in ESL classes (Wang & Xu, 2023; Tai & Wong, 2022; Sahan & Rose, 2021). The study by Karabassova and San Isidro (2023) revealed that educators faced significant challenges in implementing translanguaging practices due to the strict monolingual language policies enforced by certain educational institutions. This conflict arises from the disparity between these policies and the communication-oriented pedagogies that many schools aim to adopt. Such policies often mandate the exclusive use of the target language, thereby limiting the flexibility teachers need to incorporate students' native languages effectively. Consequently, this tension influences how educators perceive and execute translanguaging, potentially hindering its benefits and making it difficult to balance between adhering to institutional policies and fostering an inclusive, communicative classroom environment. Yuvayapan (2019) also noted that the incorporation of translanguaging in the classroom is impeded by stakeholders' expectations regarding English language proficiency. According to their perspective, achieving mastery in English is believed to necessitate a monolingual approach to English language instruction.

Furthermore, more literatures revealed that although the general attitudes towards translanguaging were favorable, some educators articulated apprehensions regarding potential difficulties linked to its implementation. Their concerns primarily revolved around maintaining an equilibrium between the use of English and the

students' native languages. Teachers highlighted the challenge of ensuring that students receive sufficient exposure to English to develop proficiency while also acknowledging the importance of their native languages for comprehension and expression (Samar & Patham, 2023; Anderson, 2022; Brevik & Rindal, 2020).

Support for Inclusive Learning

The participants acknowledged the significance of translanguaging use in ESL in fostering an inclusive learning environment. Language teachers highlighted that translanguaging fosters greater inclusivity in ESL classrooms by improving comprehension, engagement, and cultural connections. They observed that permitting students to utilize their native languages creates a more supportive and dynamic learning environment where learners' identity is respected and valued as a part of the teaching-learning process.

According to Mahmoud and Galante (2020), providing learners with the chance to share their existing language knowledge and compare it with English transforms the ESL classroom into an inclusive and equitable environment where all students actively participate in the learning process. They emphasized that English can only be effectively learned when learners' identities are deeply involved in the learning process, and their communicative repertoire is respected and recognized as a fundamental aspect of their identity.

Furthermore, the impact of translanguaging in creating an inclusive ESL classroom is also rooted from the deep respect of their individual cultures. The participants recognized the diversity present in the classroom and the varied languages that students speak which is generally, Bisaya and Filipino, however, other dialects were also present such as Mandaya and Kagan. Poza (2019) noted that students from diverse ethnic backgrounds utilized translanguaging to navigate cultural differences, effectively bridging their native and host cultures. Macawile and Plata (2022) added that recognizing this diversity and differences among learners positively influences their comprehension of broader and varied realities. This acknowledgment can aid students in grasping concepts and perceiving their learning from a relatable perspective. They also revealed how translanguaging can bridge the gap between multiple languages in the classroom and promote the identity of Philippine culture.

Aside from that, language teachers also pointed out that when they give chance to the students to translanguage, students feel more confident, owing to how translanguaging decreases the affective filter of the students. The Affective Filter Theory, proposed by Stephen Krashen, posits that emotional factors significantly influence language acquisition. According to this theory, learners' emotions can either facilitate or hinder their ability to absorb and retain a second language (L2). When learners experience positive emotions such as motivation, confidence, and low anxiety, the affective filter is lowered, allowing for more effective language learning. Conversely, negative emotions such as fear, embarrassment, and high anxiety raise the affective filter, blocking input and impeding the learning process. According to Wang and Xu (2023) on their research on how L1 decreases the affective filter of students learning English, their observations indicate that incorporating L1 in foreign language classrooms can significantly lower students' affective filters, thereby enhancing their language learning outcomes. Additionally, strategies that utilize L1, such as translanguaging (TL) and code-switching (CS), are particularly effective in reducing anxiety and boosting motivation to engage with the material. By offering students a sense of security and familiarity, educators can foster a more relaxed and positive learning environment that encourages active participation and engagement.

Additionally, Wei (2023) stated that translanguaging pedagogy demands not only a change in practice but also a shift in mindset, requiring teachers and learners to reevaluate their roles and identities within the classroom. He argued that this approach is essential for fostering inclusion and social justice in linguistically diverse educational settings. When educators aim to develop both students' native language and ESL through translanguaging, learners can enhance their professional and personal growth by recognizing their cultural background. This approach offers meaningful opportunities to learn ESL by linking it to their native language and culture (Amin, et al., 2020). In conclusion, employing other languages in the classroom through a translanguaging approach can be highly beneficial as it helps to change the mindsets of both students and teachers towards achieving inclusivity not only within the classroom but also in broader contexts. This approach is strengths-based, allowing students to develop deeper knowledge and understanding of the world around them (Oliver, et al., 2021).

Aid for Learning Assessment

According to the participants, the benefit of translanguaging in ESL also extends to helping the teachers assess the learning of the students, specifically on their language development. Several participants shared that

the process of translanguaging aids them in knowing what the students learn, the students' level of competence and in identifying how far they have understood a certain content without the barrier of language.

Despite its integration into classroom teaching as an innovative element of pedagogical practice (see, e.g., Cenoz & Gorter, 2020; Lau & Van Viegen, 2020), translanguaging is seldom examined within the context of assessment (Wang & East, 2023). This might be because L2 assessment has traditionally relied on monolingual and uniform frameworks that exclude the influence of other languages. Permitting students to use their L1 compromises the intent of these assessments and may be perceived as unprofessional or unethical by numerous educational institutions and teaching professionals. Therefore, it is essential to investigate innovative methods that could unlock the transformative potential of translanguaging in L2 instruction and assessment frameworks. Crucially, integrating translanguaging into language assessment must adopt a student-centered approach to guarantee that these creative designs are welcomed by students and efficiently utilized to evaluate their communication skills (Wang & East, 2023).

According to Akbar and Taqi (2020) Translanguaging offers a more equitable assessment of students' knowledge by allowing them to demonstrate their understanding without requiring them to use linguistic features they have not yet mastered. That means, translanguaging allows learners to be just in terms of assessing the learners' language capabilities. Wei (2023) called this social justice. Holi Ali (2020) elucidated that translanguaging, when incorporating a student's first language (L1), serves as a cognitive strategy for summarizing, clarifying, emphasizing, and reiterating crucial academic content. This approach aids in reinforcing students' understanding and at the same time, also facilitates deeper cognitive processing of the material. By allowing students to explain content taught in L1, educators can gain a more accurate and comprehensive assessment of their learning. This method can be reciprocal, with teachers also assessing students' grasp of L2 content by having them translate and articulate it back in their L1. Such practices highlight the dual benefit of translanguaging: it enhances content comprehension while providing a fairer and more inclusive assessment framework. As such, considering assessment will guarantee that translanguaging becomes and stays a sustainable framework, enabling teachers to implement it with confidence throughout the entire learning process (Schissel *et al.*, 2019).

Multilingual learners possess literacy in their languages, and in assessment, it is essential to explore methods that tap into their linguistic capabilities and literacy to effectively evaluate learning processes. While numerical literacy scores are straightforward, they do not fully capture the depth of literacy knowledge that multilingual learners possess, which involves operating in two or more languages (Nyimbili & Mwanza, 2021).

IV. CONCLUSIONS

After thorough and careful analysis of the responses by the participants on the subject of translanguaging in public high school English as Second Language (ESL) class, it is discovered, base from the emergence of similar themes, that different language teachers share the same experiences, challenges and for the better part, insights and standpoint about the use of translanguaging in their ESL class. The generated themes indicated that translanguaging, as seen through the perspective of the language teachers, is considered as a double-edged sword as far as teaching English is considered.

Although majority of the participants considered translanguaging as a valuable strategy to help learners gain confidence, thereby, reducing the students' affective filter, and at the same time increase the students' comprehension and understanding on the subject matter while also acknowledging the students' culture and identity, on the contrary, it also found to also be disadvantageous on developing the students' language competence in the target language. Some disadvantages include over-dependency on the native language which causes students' limited exposure to English, its inefficacy on targeting writing skills development and most importantly, its misalignment to the language competency that ESL class tends to develop.

It is, therefore, important to use this awareness on the complicated relationship of benefits and drawbacks of translanguaging as basis for its implementation in the classroom. It is particularly important that incorporation of translanguaging in the classroom is achieved through a balanced implementation that maximizes educational advantages while minimizing potential disadvantages. A balanced approach to translanguaging is essential to ensure that students are able to leverage their native languages to aid understanding and expression without compromising their acquisition of English proficiency.

By acknowledging this dilemma, language teachers should incorporate translanguaging strategically to mitigate these concerns. A selective use of translanguaging, tailored to specific instructional contexts and learner needs should be done to address this problem. That means, the language teacher should take the responsibility of wisely planning translanguaging strategies in class by first mapping out competencies and

unpacking objectives that require its use in the classroom. Cautiously analyzing the lessons that requires the use of translanguaging and those that does not require it should be done prior to the conduct of the lesson.

Furthermore, a careful examination of the lesson's process and product should be done as translanguaging can be proven useful in the process of delivering the lesson such as in giving instructions, simplifying difficult concepts, conceptualizing relevant part of the lessons and evaluating students' comprehension by means of questioning where it helps the learners in processing their understanding of the subject. Meanwhile, in the attainment of competencies and the product that require students to speak, present, or produce outputs in the English language (e.g. oral presentations such as speeches, debates, presentations, role-playing, as well as written outputs such as essays, book reviews), translanguaging should be used minimally to ensure that the objectives and competencies of the ESL class are still achieved.

It is also important to note that the use of translanguaging should be based on the students' level, may it be on their language competency or grade. Translanguaging can be used to scaffold learning among lower years in high school such as on Grade 7 students, as one participant pointed out, yet for students who are already in Grade 10 and in Senior High School whose mastery in the English language is expected to have been already developed, the use of translanguaging should be limited to ensure that the students' mastery of the English language continue to be enhanced.

Aside from this, this study also recognized that the challenge of balancing translanguaging with English instruction is further complicated by institutional language policies as such is the case here in the Philippines where teachers are often divided by the polarity of language policies in ESL classes where the use of English-only policies in English classes is the norm. The majority of the language teachers still believe that English should still be taught in the English language often regarding the use of translanguaging as something that should be used when necessary. However, with the apparent inability of students to express themselves in the English language, language teachers are 'forced' to adopt translanguaging. Torn between their monolingual beliefs and adapting to the pressing needs in their classrooms, language teachers often feel conflicted with their view of both language policies. Therefore, there is a need to re-examine how our language policies, particularly in the context of the Philippine educational system, can be made flexible to better accommodate the dynamic linguistic landscapes of contemporary classrooms.

Surely, the implication of the use of translanguaging in ESL classrooms is complicated in nature, an intricate approach in teaching that goes beyond mere language policy. As teachers, it is therefore our complex task to make sure that we balance the scales to ensure that this strategy provides opportunities for learners to learn better.

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