EXPLORING TRANSLANGUAGING PRACTICE IN EFL CLASSROOM TALK

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Abstract

There have been debates on how different languages should be treated in a language learning class especially in EFL classroom context, where students have limited access to target language use and exposure outside the classroom. The monolingual approach promotes English-only classroom in order to provide students with linguistic input and language arena to which they expose themselves to target language. However, the current trends have voiced challenges to monolingual classroom due to the fact that English-only classroom might seem a bit unrealistic especially for several students and the use of students' native language potentially helps students during the learning process. Therefore, they suggest that language learning classroom should also consider the use of the non-target languages. Such practice is known as translanguaging, in which teachers and students use their whole language repertoire in the interaction during the learning process. This study attempts to explore how students' and teachers' language repertoire is exploited through translanguaging in the classroom talk and what functions it brings to the learning process. To that aim, several meetings of EFL classroom interaction were recorded to obtain the language use from both teacher and student talk. The data from teacher's and students' utterances were then analyzed to classify their language repertoire used in their talk and to identify the purposes of the translanguaging. The research findings indicate that teacher's and students' language repertoire exploited in EFL classroom talk include the local language, national language, and target language. Local language was mainly used for non-instructional purposes in this case making jokes while local and target language were mainly used for instructional purposes such as explaining material, giving clarification, and managing classroom.

Keywords: EFL, Classroom Talk, Translanguaging, Language Repertoire

Introduction

The language used by teachers and students during the learning process is referred to as classroom talk. It is a distinctive type of discourse that occurs in the classroom and an institutional talk whose speech exchange system is different from the talk in an ordinary context (1). The most notable forms of speech exchange system is known as IRF pattern. This exchange system is composed of three moves: initiation (I), response (R), and follow-up (F). In addition to its distinctive speech exchange, classroom talk also has its own directions of communication. Hetelein (2) classifies three directions of EFL classroom talk based on the interaction both between the teachers and the students and among the students themselves. These three directions are teacher-student, known as teacher talk and student-teacher as well as student-student, also known as student talk. As the classroom talk in the EFL setting takes place in the area in which English is not widely spoken outside the classroom context, EFL teachers and students speak languages other than English in their daily life, which they inevitably bring to the classroom interaction. However, there have been debates on how the non target language or students' L1 should

be treated in EFL classroom. The proponents of monolingual classroom asserts that the ideal classroom situation is the one in which English is fully used. In other words, the use of students' L1 should be discouraged and the classroom talk in EFL context should be carried through English. Cook & Moore in Nambisan (3) suggest that in most english language learning classroom whether it is in ESL or EFL context, an endorsement for monolingual practice with English as the only language used in the interaction has become increasing so common that it makes the teachers feel guilty if they allow their students to use their L1 in the classroom.

Contrary to the previous ideas, the use of students' native language should be promoted in language learning since it is beneficial for them. Cook proposes that it is vital and essential for students to be given the opportunity to use their mother tongue in order to make connections between their dominant language and the one they are learning as well as to build the linguistic knowledge that has been available to them in order to become good communicator in English. In addition, Cummin (4) mentions that the exclusionof students' L1 will prevent them from being able to activate previously existing structure and knowledge from their first language and utilize these in their English development. He further claims that students' L1 not only help them in understanding the target linguistic knowledge but also in acquiring vocabulary. Auerbach (5) highlights that the use of L1 in EFL classroom help students to understand several tasks such as language analysis, grammar rules, cross-cultural issues, instruction, error explanation and comprehension checking. In line with this Idea, Tian and Macaro (6) reveal that students who received

language input in their native language from their teacher during vocabulary acquisition benefitted more than those who received input only in the target language. The practice of using both target language and other languages is known as translanguaging. It is "the movement between communicative modes and features of different languages". (7) In other words, translanguaging allows teachers and students to use languages other than English in the classroom interaction. It gives classroom participants the opportunity to utilize their full language repertoire to achieve academic success. This notion support the previous ideas that the use of the students' native language in addition to the target language can help students gain mastery. It is probably due to the fact that students' can easily understand if the materials are explained in their first language, and they can avoid the language anxiety causing by the lack of linguistic competence, which they might encounter in the monolingual classroom.

In EFL classroom, translanguaging is realized through various ways of communication. Adinolfi & Astruc (7) identifies three realizations of translanguaging in EFL classroom talk. The first one is inter-sentential codeswitiching which occurs within discourse level and within each turn. In other words, classroom participants makes language shift within different sentences. The second realization is intra-sentential which occurs within syntactic level or within each sentence. In other words, classroom participants make language shift in the same sentences. The third realization is the one in which classroom participants use either target language or other languages fully. Besides these three realizations, Garcia & Wei (8) and Mwinda & Van dew

Waldt (9) add that translation can also serves as one of strategies of translanguaging. Through translation, classroom participants do translanguaging by translating their ideas or expression from one language to another.

Translanguaging is used for various functions in EFL classroom. Yuvayapan (10) suggests that translanguaging functions as a means of giving instruction. Giving instruction is commonly done in either L1 or L2, but it is most commonly in L1 to ensure that all students understand what they are expected to do. The second function is reviewing languaging. Reviewing language is commonly done by providing students with L2 expression or ideas and explain or discuss it with either L1 or L2. The third function is eliciting language. In its function, translanguaging is used by teachers to ask students for the L2 equivalent of an L1 expression with more open-ended condition. The next function is setting up dialogue. Moreover, Garcia & Wei (8) also suggests how translanguaging functions in classroom. First, teachers use translanguaging to involve and give voice. In this case, teachers invite students to participate and to involve in the learning process using languages they understand. Second, translanguaging enables teachers to give clarification for students. The last function of translanguaging for teachers is to ask questions.

There have been several studies about translanguaging conducted in Indonesian EFL classroom context. Rerung & Kartikasari (11) found in their study that students preferred the use of Indonesian language when teachers gave them instruction and explained complex theories. Moreover, Teachers, despite their reluctance to use Indonesian language, tolerated students' to use Indonesian language to make feel comfortable in learning. The similar study was also conducted by Budiman & Kristfani (12) who found that most students wanted their teacher to use their L1 in the learning process because they felt more motivated, comfortable, and secured to express their ideas and to understand the material. Khairunnisa & Lukmana (13) also conducted a study on perspective on translanguaging practice. Their study indicated that most Indoensian EFL teachers showed positive attitude towards the use translanguaging in their classroom.

Most of the research on translanguaging practice in EFL classroom have mainly focused on the aspect of attitude and perspective on translanguaging. In other words, there have been few studies which concern on how translanguaging practice really occurs in EFL classroom talk, especially in West Sumatra context. Therefore, this present paper will make an attempt to explore translanguaging practice in West Sumatera EFL classroom, speficially the realization of language repertoire through translanguaging as welll as the function it serves during the teaching learning process.

Methodology

In conducting the research for this study, the researcher employed descriptive research since the aims of this research is to describe the factual phenomena of translanguaging practice as it occurs in EFL classroom talk. The data for the research were collected from classroom talk in which the researcher recorded three EFL classroom meetings to obtain the utterances spoken by both teacher and students. The collected data in form of teachers' and students' utterances were then transcribed and analyzed by paying attention to the

translanguaging. Especially, the realization of translanguaging was identified, and its function was also identified by paying attention to the meaning and the purpose of the utterances in which translanguaging was found.

Findings and Discussion

The result of transcription analysis reveals that the teacher and students used the language repertoire during the classroom talk. The language repertoire identified were local language in this case Minangkabau language, national language in this case Indonesian language, and the target foreign language in this case English. Of these three languages, Indonesian language was the most dominant language used in the classroom talk followed by English. In other words, the local language of Minangkabau was the least frequently used language. In fact, there were only three utterances spoken in this local language as illustrated below:

> ....
> T: How are you today?
> Ss:Fine
> T: Fine?
> S: Not really good
> T: Kenapa not really good? Udah makan? Lah makan kan?
> Ss: Udah (laugh)
> T: Jadi dimana not very goodnya?
> ....
> ....
> T: Number one, please Hanum nomor satu. What is your answer?
> S: Ummm I think it's B
> T: B? Kenapa B? Kenapa B jawabannya Hanum? Karena bagus kedengarannya. Rancak se bunyinyo mode tu? (laugh)
> S: (Laugh) Iya
> ...

The above excerpt from the transcription of the classroom talk illustrate the use of local language by the teacher. In the first excerpt, the teacher translate the question *udah makan* in Indonesian language into *lah makan kan*in Minangkabau language.

The use of this local language incited laughter response from the students. In addition, in the second excerpt, the teacher also roughly translate the question *karena bagus kedengarannya* into *rancak se bunyiyo mode tu*. Similar to the previous talk, the use of local language in this talk also led to the laughter response from the students. In other word, the use of local language through translanguaging practice in this EFL classroom talk occured through translation, and it serves as the intermezzo or to make a joke rather than learning related context.

Indonesian language and English respectively were the most prevalent language repertoire exploited through translanguaging practice in EFL classroom talk. The movement among this repertoire was realized through intersentential code switching, intrasentential code switching, full translanguaging, and translation. The following transcription illustrates the realization of this translanguaging.

> ...
> T: jadi mana jawabannya yang benar? Please show me.
> Ss: ummm B
> T: Is it B? Coba diread dulu. Apa yang dibutuhkannya disana?
> S: Subject dan Verb
> T: Are you sure? Apakah kalimatnya tidak punya itu?
> S: Ada, Sir.
> T: Berarti udah complete dia kan
> ...
> ...
> T: Tadi kan kita udah bahas bentuk-bentuk kata kerja. Now let us discuss
>   how to use each form of verb. Tapi, sebelumnya ada pertanyaan tidak?
> Ss: No, Sir
> T: Is it clear enough? Atau tidak mengerti sama sekali (laugh)
> S: Cukup jelas, Sir
> T: Okay, now let us move on to the next one.

...

The above excerpt from the transcription of the classroom talk illustrates the use of Indonesian and English by the teacher. In the first excerpt, the teacher made a movement from English to Indonesian language repertoire vice versa through intersentential code switching in *jadi mana jawabannya yang benar? Please show me* and in *Are you sure? Apakah kalimatnya tidak punya itu?* Similar to the previous talk, the teacher made a movement from English to Indonesian language repertoire vice versa through intersentential code switching in *tadi kan kita udah bahas bentuk-bentuk kata kerja. Now let us discuss how to use each form of verb. Tapi, sebelumnya ada pertanyaan tidak?* and in *Is it clear enough? Atau tidak mengerti sama sekali (laugh).*

...

S: Karena dua connector subject dan verbnya hmmmmm
T: Iya . berlebih connectornya ya, so we need to remove salah satu dari
    connectornya
S: Iya
T: Iya, apa namanya? Biar seimbang biar balance structurenya
S: Iya
T: Okay, number thir... empat belas
S: Hmmmmm correct
...

...
T: So, verb tiga itu kita gunakan with to be or have, has, had. Without them,
    verb three belum sepenuhnya bisa jadi verb of the sentence. Question?
Ss: No
T: Now, coba lihat the example nya. Kira-kira sudah benar belum itu. The
    book written in Arabic.
S: Belum Sir
...

The above excerpt from the transcription of the classroom talk illustrates the use of Indonesian and English by the teacher. In the first excerpt, the teacher made a movement from English to Indonesian language repertoire vice versa through intrasentential code switching in *Iya berlebih connectornya ya, so we need to remove salah satu dari connectornya* and in Iya, apa namanya? Biar seimbang biar balance structurenya Similar to the previous talk, in the second excerpt, the teacher made a movement from English to Indonesian language repertoire vice versa through intersentential code switching in *so, verb tiga itu kita gunakan with to be or have, has, had. Without them, verb three belum sepenuhnya bisa jadi verb of the sentence. Question?* and in *now, coba lihat the example nya. Kira-kira sudah benar belum itu. The book written in Arabic.*

In addition to intersentential and intrasentential code switching, the use of language repertoire through translanguaging practice was also realized through translation as follows:

....
T: So, Eka belum datang ya?
S: Iya
T: Any news from her? Ada kabar dari dia?
Ss: Belum
T: Did she come on last meeting? Datang dia minggu kemaren?
S: Datang. Dia lagi di jalan
T: Oo masih di jalan, okaySo, what did we discuss in the last meeting? Pertemuan
    terakhir kemaren kita bahas apa?
...

...
T: What page? Halaman berapa?
S: Page Fifty two
T: Fifty Two? Okay lima dua ya?
Ss: Iya, Sir
T: Do you have any homework? Ada PR nggak?

Ss: Yes, Sir

T: Ok. Let us discuss it first. Kita bahas dulu ya. Setelah itu, baru kita lanjutkan

...

The above excerpt from the transcription of the classroom talk illustrates the use of Indonesian and English by the teacher. In the first excerpt, the teacher made a movement from English to Indonesian language repertoire through translation. In this case, the teacher translated *any news from her?* into *ada kabar dari dia?* and *did she come on last meeting?* into *datang dia minggu kemaren?* Similar to the previous talk, in the second excerpt the teacher also made a movement from English to Indonesian language repertoire through translation. In this case, the teacher translated *what page?* Into *halaman berapa?* and *do you have any homework?* into *ada PR nggak?* Unlike the previous two realizations which allow the movement from Indonesian to English and vice versa, translanguaging practice through translation occur from English to Indonesian but not the other way around and from Indonesian to Minangkabau as in the previous discussion.

Finally, the translanguaging practice was also realized through full translanguaging in which the teacher fully use students' L1 in the talk as given below:

...

T: Question?

S: No, Sir

T: Sekarang kita bahas pembagian kata kerja dalam bahasa Inggris ya. Jadi kata kerja

itu bisa berbentuk "to be" dan bisa berbentuk kata kerja utama. "To be" apa aja

coba?

Ss: Is, are ummmm was, am

T: Nah itu dia. ada is, am, are lalu was dan were serta be dan been. Nanti kita

lihat apa bedanya ya. Sekarang fokus dulu kalau "to be" dihitung sebagai satu buah kata kerja. Artinya pada contoh kalimat itu kata kerjanya mana?

Ss: is

T: Ya benar. Is ya, jadi kalimat itu ada kata kerja ya walaupun mungkin tidak kelihatan ada aktivitasnya.

...

T: Coba kita lanjut ke anak kalimat berikutnya adjective clause. Tetapi yang adverb

clause udah paham kan?

Ss: Sudah, Sir

T: Nah. Konsep adjective clause ini sama dengan adverb clause tadi yaitu anak kalimat ya yang memiliki fungsi seperti adjective. Adjective itu apa coba dan apa fungsinya

Ss: (no response)

T: Gak ada yang tahu. Adjective itu kata sifat dan fungsinya menerangkan kata benda. Contohnya smart student. Smart adalah kata sifat atau adjective yang menerangkan kata benda student. Coba kalau big house. Mana adjectivenya?

Ss: Big

T: Yup, dan dia menerangkan house. Sama juga, adjective clause juga berfungsi menerangkan kata benda dan posisi klausanya ada setelah kata benda yang dia terangkan.

...

The above two excerpts demonstrate the use of full translanguaging in EFL classroom talk. In this case, the teacher fully used Indonesian language in the talk without making any switch to English or local language. It is clear that full translanguaging in this context was employed by the teacher to explain learning materials to the students, the use of to be as a main verb in the first and adjective clause in the second. It will be much easire for the learners to understand the material if it is explained in the language they fully understand, in this case Indonesian language.

The two functions of translanguaging practice have been identified as to provide intermezzo for students and to explain the learning materials. However, translanguaging practice also had other functions to give clarification as illustrated below:

...
T: Okay. Nine?
S: Tapi yang whomever kenapa ummmmm tidak pakai whoever?
T: Kan whomever kan ada he di sana
S: Oooo iya
T: Okay If it is, kalau whoever langsung aja ke verbnya. Itu beda who sama whom. Who itu kan langsung jadi subjek
S: O iya iya
...
...
T: Okay, anymore question?
S: Yes
T: Iya?
S: Kan connector ummmmm and itu termasuk gak?
T: And itu kan conjunction di sini ya. Sebagai penghubung ummmm ingat and itu bisa sebagai conjunction atau penghubung biasa serta clause connector ya, yang boysfan itu. Ok ada lagi pertanyaannya.
...

The above two excerpts demonstrate the use of translanguaging in EFL classroom talk, whose function is to give clarification. In this case, the teacher used Indonesian language in the talk to clarify students' misconception about the learning materials to the students, the differences between who and whom in the first and the use of and as conjunction and clause connector in the second.

Another function of translanguaging practice in EFL classroom talk is to help teachers manage the classroom interaction and learning process. It is highly related to how teacher arrange or organize the interaction and to discipline students' behavior as illustrated below:
...

T: All right. Tadi Group 1 sudah ya. Now, it's your turn Group 2. Now, I want you to tell us contoh-contoh yang sudah kalian siapkan. Sudah selesai kan
Ss: Sudah, Sir
T: Gak perlu-perlu panjang-panjang cukup satu orang jelaskan satu contoh saja. So, we will have three examples later yang mesti kamu jelaskan okay?
Ss: Okay, Sir
T: So, Group will explain the examples, yang grup 3 coba ditanggapi ya
...
...
T: Nah, jadi mudah saja ya. You just need to answer the questions from 1-10. Okay. Tetapi setelah itu, diidentify subject verbnya juga. Paham?
S: Sir, what about we find many subjects?
T: That's okay. Gak masalah. Intinya kalau bertemu lebih dari one subject pastikan saja dia balance.
...
T: So, have you done doing the exercise? Udah selesai?
Ss: Not yet, Sir
T: Kalau belum kenapa sudah ribut? Please do it by yourself. Nanti kita bahas kok.
Ss: (no response)
T: Nanti kalau jawabannya benar karena mencontek, kamu gak bakalan tahu salahnya dimana, and it is not good. Okay. Now, keep your voice down and do the questions.
....

The above two excerpts demonstrate the use of translanguaging in EFL classroom talk, whose function is to manage classroom. In the first excerpt, the teacher switched from English to Indonesian and vice versa to arrange students' group discussion in this case to invite one group of students to lead the discussion and the other to respond to it. In the first excerpt, the teacher switched from English to

Indonesian and vice versa to give direction and instruction for students regarding their task or what they have to do in their activity. Finally, In the first excerpt, the teacher switched from English to Indonesian and vice versa to discipline students' behavior when doing the exercise in which most of them made a noise and answer the questions with their friend rather than on their own.

The results of the transcription analysis indicate that teachers and students in EFL classroom interaction do make use of their language repertoire eventhough there seems to be differences in terms of its frequency. The language repertoire used in this context includes local language of Minangkabau, national language of Indonesia, and English, in which Indonesian language was the most dominant followed by English and local language. This findings is consistent with that of Rasman (14) who found in his study that local language of Javanese, Indonesian, and English were used in the classroom interaction in which the local language is the least frequent language used. Similarly, Anwar, Salija, & Abduh (15) whose study revealed that classroom participants used the local language of Buginese, Indonesian language, and English, in which the local language was the least dominant language

exploited in the classroom. In other word, there seems to be the reluctance among teachers and students to use the local language during the learning process eventhough they probably speak the language outside the classroom interaction. This phenomenon might stem the fact that the government have mandated the use of national language as the medium of instruction, which probably the inappropiate sense to use the local language in this context.

Conclusion

From the above findings, it can be concluded that the use various language repertoire through translanguaging practice can help the teacher run the learning process. The use of local, national, and target language can be realized in the classroom through intersentential code switching, intrasentential code switching, full translanguaging, and translation. In addition, translanguaging practice serves several functions both instructional and non-instructional related. Therefore, it is suggested that EFL teachers should exploit their language repertoire in the classroom through translanguaging rather than focusing on one language only.

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