Teacher's Perceptions of Translanguaging as a Pedagogical Strategy in Multilingual Classrooms in Universities of Sindh

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
  OPEN ACCESS	*The study examines development of translanguaging through the lens of multilingualism. Teachers use translanguaging as an educational strategy that secures positive results by enhancing cognitive development among students in multilingual educational settings. The research investigates university instructor views about translanguaging practices within multilingual learning environments of Sindh Pakistan given that higher education there displays extensive language heterogeneity. University instructors from multiple academic fields participated in the study which used surveys and semi-structured interviews as data collection methods. The researchers studied how teachers perceived translanguaging while discovering their knowledge about benefits against challenges alongside their practice implementation levels. Research indicates that college instructors acknowledge translanguaging as an effective method to improve student learning but institutional language rules together with insufficient professional training prevent its adoption. Educational professionals demand specialized developmental training to provide teachers with translanguaging methods for effective management of multilingual classrooms. The study adds to current research about language education policies by demonstrating methods through which translanguaging can enhance results for multilingual university students.*

Background of the Study

Higher education institutions across Sindh, Pakistan maintain multilingualism as their primary characteristic because they use Sindhi, Urdu, English and native dialects during academic

activities. Since Cen Williams (1994) introduced *trawsieithu* for bilingual classroom language alternation, translanguaging has come to describe both bilinguals' fluid language use and related pedagogical approaches. The research area of language education has focused on translanguaging as an educational practice enabling students to utilize their complete linguistic resources for meaning creation (García & Wei, 2014). Translanguaging overcomes educational monolingual views by supporting students' language transitions to improve their classroom understanding and participation together with enhanced critical thinking (Li, 2018; Cummins, 2007). Research about bilingual education established translanguaging and scientists widely explore its functions for multilingual student support (Canagarajah, 2011). According to Vogel and García (2017) and other scholars translanguaging enables students to achieve deeper comprehension of academic materials through their comfort language while building their target language skills. The use of translanguaging enables fair learning access in English-instruction higher education institutions especially within the multilingual environment of Sindh (Manan & David, 2021).

The adoption of translanguaging practices remains undeveloped in Pakistani universities since English language policies control instructional methods (Rahman, 2020). Teaching staff perceptions directly link to how extensively translanguaging enters into their educational instructional methods. Teachers show contrasting perspectives about translanguaging because some view it as a learning tool yet others view it as formal academic standards diversion (Mazak & Carroll, 2016). The research into how teachers perceive translanguaging in multilingual classrooms helps create universal language policies which enhance teaching approaches in universities (Lin & He, 2017).

The research evaluates university instructors' pedagogical viewpoints about translanguaging practice utilization in classrooms which contain multiple languages within Sindh province. The research examines teachers' three dimensions of translanguaging practice implementation from awareness through experience to obstacles to explain their impact on higher education language policy development and pedagogical transformation.

Statement of the Problem

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A research project evaluates university instructors' pedagogical viewpoints about translanguaging practice utilization in classrooms which contain multiple languages within Sindh province. The research examines teachers' three dimensions of translanguaging practice implementation from awareness through experience to obstacles to explain their impact on higher education language policy development and pedagogical transformation.

Research Questions

1. What are university teachers' perceptions of translanguaging as a pedagogical strategy in multilingual classrooms in Sindh?

2. What challenges do university teachers face in implementing translanguaging in their classrooms?

3. How do university teachers perceive the impact of translanguaging on students' learning, engagement, and academic performance?

Literature Review

Multilingual learners can develop their comprehension together with communication skills along with cognitive development through the translanguaging method which makes use of their full linguistic system (García & Wei, 2014). The translanguaging method goes against conventional language partitions inside classrooms by supporting flexible language connections (Li, 2018). Translanguaging strategies in multilingual academic settings enable students to build meaning through their combined linguistic capacities which leads to improved schoolwork results and classroom involvement (Canagarajah 2011; Wang, 2019).

The adoption of translanguaging strategies in higher education leads to better inclusivity and equity within diverse language environments according to the work of Mazak and Carroll (2016). Students can connect with target language material through translanguaging by using their native language as well as the target language thus creating effective learning relationships (Vogel & García, 2017). University classroom acceptance and implementation of translanguaging depends on the beliefs of teachers together with institutional guidelines and language ideologies and practices (Manan & David, 2021).

The decision to employ translanguaging techniques in the classroom significantly depends on teacher beliefs about the methodology. Educators hold opposing positions about translanguaging as they see it both as a beneficial method for active student learning and as a possible degradation of language competence and higher learning standards (Lin & He, 2017). The perceptions of translanguaging by teachers derive from their language ideologies along with their pedagogical training and the institutional expectations according to Turnbull (2019).

The research conducted by Sahan and Rose (2020) demonstrated teachers who accepted translanguaging learned to use it as a method which helps multilingual students acquire complex academic content. The authors maintain that translanguaging helps students develop comprehensive knowledge through native language processing which prepares them for target language acquisition. According to Manan and David (2021) teachers at South Asian multilingual universities, who understand translanguaging benefits, face challenges implementing it because strict English-only language policies are in place.

Numerous instructors have raised worries about overusing native languages during instruction since this could potentially lead to weaker proficiency in academic language standards as reported in Mazak & Carroll (2016). Educational professionals who lack multilingual teaching training show unwillingness to adopt translanguaging because they fear this practice diminishes their students' exposure to target language content (Rahman, 2020). The effectiveness of translanguaging practice in university settings depends significantly on teacher acceptance along with their alertness and institutional backing.

The use of translanguaging techniques in higher education encounters various obstacles when applied in practice. Many universities throughout Sindh and Pakistan where English dominates the instruction method present a primary challenge to translanguaging implementation according to Rahman (2020). The policies of educational institutions prevent students from using their local

languages during academic discussions which creates a resistance among teachers to use translanguaging practices according to Lin and He (2017).

Educators encounter difficulties since they lack proper training about implementing translanguaging approaches effectively in their teaching practice (Turnbull, 2019). Higher education teachers along with many others lack effective skills needed for creating a multilingual learning environment (Mazak & Carroll, 2016). Students from diverse backgrounds with their different language abilities pose challenges to classroom managers who attempt to implement translanguaging methods (Manan & David, 2021).

Higher education institutions in Sindh are characterized by multilingualism where students and teachers with diverse linguistic backgrounds interact with each other in classrooms. Translanguaging, a pedagogical approach that permits the use of multiple languages in a strategic way for making meaning, has emerged as an area of focus in multilingual classrooms and increasingly been viewed as an inclusive teaching strategy (García & Wei, 2014). Such an approach defies the monolingual norm and instead acknowledges the dynamic uses of language a student might draw on and uses these skills in their repertoire as resources for learning (Vogel & García, 2017).

The effectiveness of translanguaging, where languages like Sindhi, Urdu and English are learnt side by side in classrooms of Sindh, is further dependent on the perceptions and choices of teachers. Such translanguaging serves either as an asset, or else is dampened due to institutional policies that position English as the dominant language of instruction (Canagarajah, 2011). Studies show that translanguaging acts to promote better understanding, to cross linguistic borders, and to act inclusively in multilingual settings (Creese & Blackledge, 2010). Nonetheless, its use in higher education is controversial: many educators see this as an infringement upon standard normative language practices (Makoni & Pennycook, 2020).

The Pakistani higher education system adopts English as its main teaching language above Urdu and Sindhi while neglecting these native languages (Rahman, 2020). The widespread linguistic diversity in Pakistani culture does not translate into an effective use of translanguaging instructional methods throughout university education. The recognition of student linguistic assets stands high among Pakistani university educators but they face implementation challenges because of institutional barriers and deficient policy support (Manan & David, 2021).

University teachers in Sindh struggle to manage linguistic diversity alongside English-medium instruction because the region uses both Sindhi and Urdu along with English according to Mustafa and Younas (2022). Educational staff maintain different perspectives about native language usage in classrooms because while some see benefits for comprehension and critical thinking skills others believe it interferes with English language mastery. Educational research should expand its assessment of translanguaging from teachers' points of view because it reveals the multiple influences on their acceptance of translanguaging as a classroom practice.

Research about translanguaging in worldwide multilingual environments extends broadly but few examinations concentrate on Sindh Pakistani university instructors' perspectives. Research into how teachers in this region of linguistic diversity perceive translanguaging practice assists in identifying effective methods in higher education environments. The perspectives of educators concerning translanguaging's advantages along with difficulties help create modern policies and methods beneficial for multilingual classroom learning (Cenoz, 2019).

The research investigates how Sindh university teachers view translanguaging practice as an instructional method within their multilingual educational environment. The research investigates teacher perspectives on translanguaging along with their barriers and experiences to enhance Pakistani discussions on multilingual education and language policy requirements.

Research Methodology

The qualitative method was used to investigate university instructors' attitudes regarding translanguaging practice as an instructional technique for multilingual classroom environments in Sindh. Using phenomenology researchers studied teachers' personal experiences along with their beliefs and attitudes regarding translanguaging practices. Research design selection presents an appropriate option because it delivers extensive knowledge about teaching practices and contextual elements affecting instructors' pedagogical behavior (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The study selected university teachers across public and private institutions in Sindh to conduct research about multilingual classroom teaching. Participants were selected through purposive sampling as they had experience of teaching different languages and knew about translanguaging approaches. The research analyzed between 15 university instructors representing multiple academic areas in order to grasp complete views about translanguaging practices (Patton, 2015). The current research obtained qualitative data through both semi structured interviews and classroom observation sessions.

Semi-Structured Interviews

The researchers conducted individual interviews with participants to learn about their translanguaging understanding behaviors and related experiences and attitudes. Through open-ended questions the interview participants shared their thoughts according to Bryman (2016).

The researchers conducted interviews by utilizing face-to-face meeting or online interaction based upon participant scheduling preferences. A combined length of 30-45 minutes determined the duration of each interview session that was audio recording for future transcription and analytic purposes.

Classroom Observations

Teachers who met the specific criteria were included in classroom observation to identify the current practices of translanguaging the interaction dynamics between teachers and students. Data collection consistency was ensured through the use of an observation checklist.

The analysis of gathered data proceeded through thematic analysis per Braun & Clarke (2006). Several consecutive steps were performed throughout this process.

1. The researchers performed literal transcription of all interview data.
2. The data received coding procedures which aim to detect frequent patterns and major concepts and recurring themes.
3. The analysis grouped emerging categories about teachers' perspectives on translanguaging together with their encountered obstacles and methods for implementing translanguaging.
4. The researchers evaluated the results against previous scholarly works and theoretical studies about translanguaging.

Ethical Considerations

This research study maintained ethical research practices that protect participant confidentiality and rights according to Flick (2018). All participants agreed on written consent that explained the study goals along with operational methods and freedom to leave without penalty during any research period. Their personal information was received through anonymization procedures that served to safeguard the participants' confidentiality. Participants understood that the research required their full voluntary participation and possess the right to skip any questions they find unsuitable.

Reliability and Validity

The research team has established multiple strategies to guarantee trustworthiness in the study. Data credibility benefits from the combination of interviews and classroom observation methods as stated by Denzin (2012). Participants also checked the accuracy of their interview transcripts through Member Checking. Participants received peer reviewer assessments from academia who confirmed interpretation accuracy and lessen researcher bias effects.

Data Analysis, Results, and Discussion

Researchers linked the gathered results to corresponding academic studies. The findings of the study were developed from the interviews and classroom observation sessions held with Sindh university instructors. A thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was applied to examine the study findings that are mentioned in this section.

Responses of Interviewees

Translanguaging theory and practice

Q: How would you assess your knowledge of translanguaging as a teaching strategy in a multilingual classroom?

Participant 1 (Senior Lecturer, Public University): "To me, translanguaging is a means of enabling students to utilize their full linguistic capacity in the learning process. Rather than forcing them to keep their nuanced comments in English, I've encouraged them to express their thoughts using Sindhi or Urdu first — and put it in English second. That way they don't feel constrained by language barriers."

Participant 2 (Assistant Professor, Private University): "I see translanguaging as more than just code-switching. A strategic process where languages are used, through the device of translation, by students and teachers in various ways in order to enrich understanding. In my classroom when students spontaneously group-discuss, they code-switch between Sindhi and Urdu or English to elucidate a point, which ends up leaving them confused."

Classroom Translanguaing Practices

Interviewer: Do you have translanguaging practices in your classroom?

Participant 3 (Junior Lecturer, Public University): "I begin with English and let them (students) ask me questions in the language of their choice. When students find it difficult to understand something, I explain it in Sindhi or Urdu. This makes it easier to learn."

Participant 4 (Senior Lecturer, Private Institution of Higher Education): "For essay writing activities, I ask students to brainstorm in their own language before writing the essay in English. That way, they can write their thoughts out properly."

Issues in the Application of Translanguaging

Interviewer: Have you encountered any challenges with translanguaging in your classroom?

Participant 5 (Assistant Professor, Public University): "Yeah, one struggle i think is that some students are so reliant on their native language that they have difficulty transitioning to English. Translanguaging is useful and all but I also need to make sure they get a real grasp on their English too."

Participant 6 (Junior Lecturer, Private University) had the intervention to say that, "Another challenge is... the institutional policy. Others are strictly English-medium instruction, and may discourage other languages. But I still translanguage in informal conversations to help students engage more."

Perceptions Toward Translanguaging in Higher Education

Interviewer: In general, what are your thoughts about translanguaging as a pedagogical tool at the university level?

Participant 7 (Senior Professor, Public University): "I believe translanguaging should be promoted, particularly in multilingual domains, such as Sindh. It engages students in the learning process without exclusion based on language."

Participant 8 (Assistant Professor, Private University): I see the positive side of it, yet think it should be done strategically. Overreliance may impede students' ability to operate in professional English-speaking settings."

Theme 1: Translanguaging as a Facilitative Teaching Strategy

Findings

Eighty percent of participants confirmed that translanguaging created better understanding conditions particularly among English language learners. Teachers employed *Sindhi* together with Urdu and English interchangeably for describing concepts and providing classroom instructions and managing classroom interaction. One participant noted:

Almost all students have difficulty understanding advanced academic vocabulary in English. Students understand concepts taught in Sindhi and Urdu more easily and they join in discussions with increased engagement.

Observations

Teachers observed during classroom time alternated between languages multiple times to help students understand lessons better while getting everyone involved in lessons.

Discussion

The research supports the notion that translanguaging enhances understanding and involvement in contexts requiring multiple languages (García & Li Wei, 2014). Teachers who incorporated their

students' native languages developed learning spaces which allowed enhanced anti-social and intellectual development and promoted inclusion.

Theme 2: Conflicting perspectives

Educational professionals exhibit conflicting perspectives towards translanguaging as the second theme emerges from this research.

Findings

Forty percent of teachers demonstrated uncertainty about translanguaging regarding its connection to English language proficiency growth and were skeptical that it would restrict students from achieving academic proficiency in English. One teacher remarked:

Students must learn through English only in higher education since their professional success depends on fluent English.

Observations

Academic instructions were delivered in pure English by certain teachers alongside flexible translanguaging practices among the others. Teaching practices differed because certain departments and educational policies impacted this difference.

Discussion

The study demonstrated that the current interests in translanguaging research as discussed by MacSwan (2017). Some academic experts support translanguaging as an effective learning method yet certain researchers maintain that extensive use of local languages can impede English-medium instruction (Creese & Blackledge, 2010). The data support the need for teacher training programs to teach effective methods of translanguaging.

Theme 3: Challenges in Implementing Translanguaging

Findings

Teachers identified several challenges that include institutional policies favoring English-only instruction, resistance from colleagues and administrator and the perception that translanguaging undermines academic rigor.

Teachers experienced difficulties because of their lack of proper instruction in translanguaging pedagogical methods.

One participant explained

The educational institution demanded teaching exclusively through English. Admin staff may interpret instruction in Urdu or Sindhi as a reduction of academic quality.

Observations

Teachers implemented translanguaging techniques during casual classroom exchanges and student-to-student interactions though they refrained from utilizing it while conducting standardized lectures.

Discussion

The educational hurdles match previous scholarly findings which show that educational institutions typically enforce rules against translanguaging while it provides valuable instructional potential (Canagarajah, 2011). The solution demands policies which accept existing multilingual practices throughout Sindh's educational institutions.

Theme 4: Student Engagement and Academic Performance

Findings

The education method utilizing translanguaging showed positive results in terms of enhanced student involvement along with improved participation. Students exhibited increased confidence in idea-sharing because the use of multiple languages within their educational environment was allowed. One teacher stated:

Students better understand their English thoughts after discussing their language-based ideas then translating them for English communication.

Observations

The permission to utilize Sindhi and Urdu together with English by students led to an elevated level of participation in discussion while their course material understanding improved.

Discussion

Results demonstrate that Sindh university teachers acknowledged translanguaging's positive impact on pedagogy yet institutional restrictions together with ideological factors prevented its practical application. Teachers who involve a wide range of languages as educational tools enabled student empowerment that lead to improved academic performance. Research evidence also supports translanguaging as an effective method to develop critical thinking and active learning (García & Lin, 2016; Baker & Hüttner, 2019). The research demonstrates the requirement for three main elements: educational programs for teachers should establish translanguaging as a proven pedagogical teaching technique; educational institutions need new language policies for promoting multilingual teaching instruction methods and further research can identify its impact on students' English proficiency coupled with their academic success throughout the years. Universities in Sindh may establish a more efficient learning space for multilingual students by taking action on these matters.

The study sheds light on university teachers' perceptions of translanguaging as a pedagogical tool for multilingual classrooms in Sindh. The findings indicate that even though teachers acknowledge the advantages of translanguaging in helping them understand and engage with their students, challenges including institutional policies, students' over-reliance on their first languages, and the view of English as the dominant academic language constrain the practice.

Most teachers considered translanguaging to be an effective pedagogical tool that deepens students' learning by enabling them to draw on their entire linguistic constellation. Participants mentioned that students find it challenging to articulate their thoughts in English, and allowing students to use Sindhi or Urdu in discussions, brainstorming sessions, or explanations helps overcome the linguistic hurdle. Findings support García and Wei (2014), who argued that translanguaging promotes deeper learning as it connects students' language resources. Past

observation has also been made in previous studies that translanguaging is used to create inclusive and participatory learning environment (Creese Blackledge, 2010).

Teachers shared different modalities that the translation in higher order thinking has permeated in their classes and in students' literacy practices—allowing students to discuss in whichever language they chose, using Sindhi and Urdu to sort out concepts, and permitting language learners to draft ideas in their full language before transcribing what they wrote in English. This dynamic approach may reflect Canagarajah's (2011) perspective towards translanguaging, wherein translanguaging is not merely an act of code-switching, but acts as a pedagogical tool that facilitates the process of making meaning.

Participants, however, voiced concerns about students growing too dependent on their native languages at this stage, which they believed could limit their development of English proficiency. This is corroborated by previous research showing that though translanguaging facilitates comprehension, overuse can delay students from acquiring English for academic and professional use (Makoni & Pennycook, 2020). Further complicating this are institutional language policies in some universities, where English-medium instruction is encouraged in increasingly strong terms. Participants mentioned that although translanguaging was helpful, the use of it sometimes had to be informal due to institutional constraints.

Translanguaging emerges as a significant pedagogical strategy for higher education, particularly in multilingual settings such as Sindh. Institutional policies must recognize the multiplicity of languages in education for it to work effectively. In addition, the impact of translanguaging could be amplified with more extensive teacher-training programs that balance the strategic integration of translanguaging without sacrificing English proficiency. Moreover, such a balanced approach — one that promotes translanguaging for conceptual clarity, and, at the same time, ensures gradual proficiency in English — could assuage concerns about students' dependence on native languages.

Recommendations

Based on this research, the following recommendations are suggested for encouraging translanguaging in the universities of Sindh for multilingual classrooms.

Higher education institutions may amend their language policies to recognize translanguaging as a legitimate educational practice supported at the institutional level. A well-structured language policy enables teachers to implement translanguaging strategies while ensuring that English proficiency goals remain uncompromised. Furthermore, educational institutions can conduct training sessions on translanguaging pedagogy to equip educators with effective multilingual teaching strategies. Additionally, teacher education programs should incorporate translanguaging methodologies to prepare future educators for linguistically diverse classrooms.

Additionally, course materials should integrate translanguaging strategies, allowing students to engage with content in multiple languages before transitioning to English. Moreover, assessments should permit multilingual responses when appropriate, fostering deeper comprehension rather than rote memorization of English content. Ongoing research can examine the impact of translanguaging on English proficiency and academic performance to address potential challenges. Additionally, universities should launch awareness campaigns to inform administrators, policymakers, and educators about the benefits of translanguaging in higher education.

Teachers should be encouraged to create inclusive classrooms where students can leverage their full linguistic repertoire for academic success. Peer learning programs that involve collaborative translation of concepts across languages should also be promoted to enhance student understanding. The educational landscape of Sindh can develop an inclusive educational setting which supports multilingual students through these proposed recommendations. English proficiency does not suffer from translanguaging practices because this strategic resource serves to improve learning comprehension in multilingual educational settings.

Conclusion

University teachers of Sindh participated in the study to share their views about translanguaging practice as an educational approach in language classrooms. The research data revealed that teachers acknowledge the student success benefits from translanguaging but institutional rules with ideological barriers prevent teachers from applying this pedagogical approach. Teachers acknowledged translanguaging as a learning method that boosts pupil understanding because students can utilize their complete linguistic skill set however some instructors feared it would impede students' mastery of English. Two major barriers that hinder translanguaging practice include institutional policies that promote English-only instruction and the insufficient training provided for translanguaging pedagogy.

Observations inside multilingual classrooms demonstrated that informal translanguaging emerges naturally as communication happens in an organic way. Educators combined English with Sindhi and Urdu language for both lesson explanation and discussion management and student engagement purposes. According to previous scholarly work translanguaging leads to both an inclusive environment of student interaction (García & Li Wei, 2014; Creese & Blackledge, 2010). The educational system requires support through the adoption of translanguaging as a pedagogical practice which teaching techniques ought to reflect. The analysis indicates teachers need policy-driven training programs which provide them effective translanguaging tools yet maintain proper language teaching practices.

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