Perceptions and Practices of Translanguaging in Malaysian Primary ESL Classroom among In-service ESL Teachers

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Abstract : *English is taught as a second language in the Malaysian educational system, but for some students, this may not be the case. As a result, translanguaging among bilingual teachers is unavoidable because it is a technique used to preserve communication when L1 and L2 are employed in ESL classrooms for disparate objectives. Only a few studies were done to discover the practices of translanguaging as well as the perceptions among in-service teachers in ESL classrooms which lead to aims of the present study. Translanguaging is beneficial in ESL classrooms and teachers should know when and how to it is best used. This is a survey study that utilized questionnaires as an instrument to collect data. A total of 45 in-service primary school ESL teachers in Selangau were chosen as participants. The participants are chosen through purposive sampling because they are all English teachers teaching in ESL classrooms in Selangau. The results suggested that when instructing ESL, teachers used translanguaging for pedagogical, instructional, managerial and social-emotional benefits to aid young pupils' acquisition of the English language, which was in line with the study's objectives. This study could help to clarify the use of translanguaging and shed light on the actualities of instruction and learning in Malaysian ESL classrooms. Future research should focus on determining the correlation between teaching experience and the use of translanguaging.*

I.   INTRODUCTION

As a result of their diversified upbringings, majority of Malaysians are bilingual, if not multilingual. Since Malay has been the nation's and government's official language since Malaysia gained its independence, its duties and purposes are unquestionable. Additionally, many Malaysians, particularly Malays, speak it as their mother tongue. Those of other races, meanwhile, speak a different L1 depending on their ancestry and ethnicity. English is taught as a second language in the Malaysian educational system, but for some students, this may not be the case. In Selangau, in which this study is conducted, is a district in Sarawak where it is dominated by the Iban community, for example, a learner from the Iban ethnic group first learns their native tongue at home before acquiring Malay from school. It demonstrates that English is not a second language for him or her.

Due to the fact that various language learners have different amounts of exposure to English, this can further provide challenges for language learning (Ilber, 2016). Learning a new language that is morphologically and syntactically distinct from the learner's L1 is a difficult task. When learning a second or foreign language, it is nearly impossible to do so without using the first language as a reference point or a compass. Manara (2007) stated that the mother tongue of the learners serves as a resource for them to acquire knowledge before they take on the new language. She went on to explain how using L1 as a learning strategy could reduce emotional barriers to L2 acquisition and reduce learners' anxiety, allowing them to make good progress with their L2 studies.

Thus, many bilingual language pedagogies, like translanguaging, have developed in response to the idea that people's native language usage enhances their proficiency in a second or foreign language. This phrase refers to the systematic employment of two languages in a specific language action rather than just switching between two languages. Cen Williams coined the term "translanguaging" (TL) in the 1980s to describe the act of switching between languages, frequently within and between sentences, for the purpose of systematic lesson teaching and learning. According to David & McLellan (2014) and Kärchner-Ober (2011), Malaysians are generally thought to have a larger language repertoire available to them for both interpersonal and internal expression of feelings, ideas, and thoughts. This might be the result of factors brought on by Malaysia's localization of languages as seen in the country's media, linguistic environment, and society.

Despite the alleged advantages of translanguaging, there are disparities in teachers' perceptions and attitudes toward it that have created ideological barriers and prevented the inculcation of translanguaging in its entirety (Rajendram, 2021). In the Malaysian context where this study took place, research on translanguaging is still in its early stages. (Rajendram, 2021). As a result, this study seeks to investigate how in-service ESL teachers who are teaching in national primary schools in Selangau perceive and practice translanguaging in their ESL classrooms.

BACKGROUND OF RESEARCH

As a result of their diversified upbringings, majority of Malaysians are bilingual, if not multilingual. Since Malay has been the nation's and government's official language since Malaysia gained its independence, its duties and purposes are unquestionable. Additionally, many Malaysians, particularly Malays, speak it as their mother tongue. Those of other races, meanwhile, speak a different L1 depending on their ancestry and ethnicity. English is taught as a second language in the Malaysian educational system, but for some students, this may not be the case. In Selangau, in which this study is conducted, is a district in Sarawak where it is dominated by the Iban community, for example, a learner from the Iban ethnic group first learns their native tongue at home before acquiring Malay from school. It demonstrates that English is not a second language for him or her.

Despite the alleged advantages of translanguaging, there are disparities in teachers' perceptions and attitudes toward it that have created ideological barriers and prevented the inculcation of translanguaging in its entirety (Rajendram, 2021). In the Malaysian context where this study took place, research on translanguaging is still in its early stages. (Rajendram, 2021). As a result, this study seeks to investigate how in-service ESL teachers who are teaching in national primary schools in Selangau perceive and practice translanguaging in their ESL classrooms.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

A more bilingual method of instruction, where L1 is used appropriately in L2 classrooms, has gained support from more academics and educators in recent years. In order to become proficient in the target language, teachers and pupils now use translanguaging as one of their language learning strategies. The translanguaging phenomenon began at that time and persisted through adulthood because Malaysia practices bilingual education and requires the teaching of Malay and English as core subjects beginning in preschool. Translanguaging is viewed as an illustration of a method that can take into account and embrace the linguistic resources of learners. Chin (2021) asserts that translanguaging strategies advance the notion that students' native languages play a significant role in their language repertoire. Teachers can close linguistic gaps and support the learning of second languages by implementing translanguaging strategies in their teaching pedagogy. Nevertheless, despite the alleged advantages of translanguaging, there are disparities in teachers' perceptions and attitudes toward it, which have created ideological barriers and prevented the inculcation of translanguaging as a whole (Rajendram, 2021). In the Malaysian context where this study is based, translanguaging research is still in its infancy (Rajendram, 2021). The goal of this study is to investigate the perceptions of ESL teachers in national primary schools in Selangau towards the practice of translanguaging in their ESL lessons.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The study is conducted for the following objectives:

1.   To look into how Malaysian primary ESL teachers perceive the use of translanguaging in their classrooms.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS
This research is guided by the following research questions:
1. What are in-service teachers' perceptions on the use of translanguaging in primary ESL classrooms?
2. When is it appropriate to apply translanguaging in the primary ESL classroom?
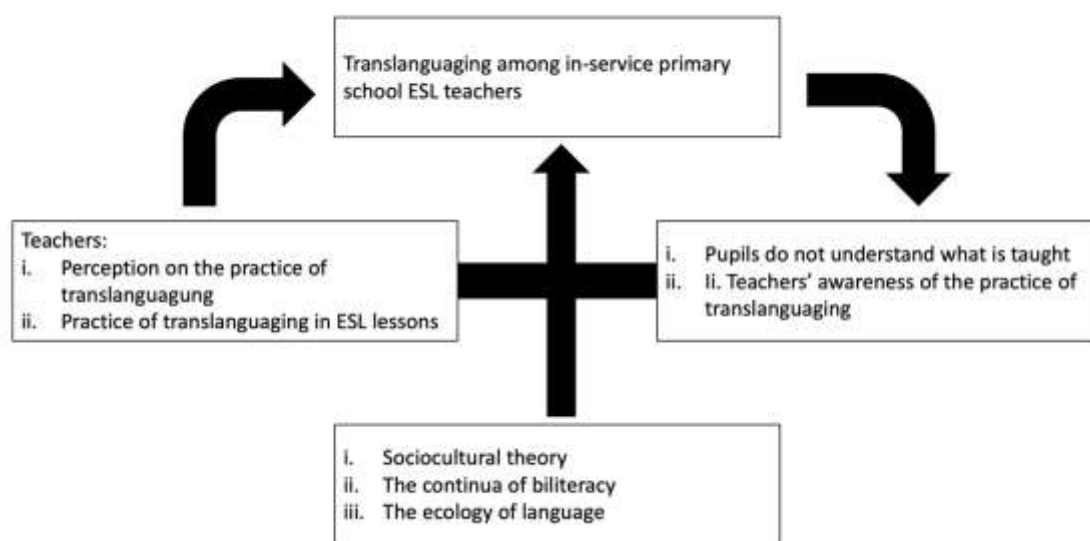

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

In the ESL classroom in particular, translanguaging has become a popular educational strategy (Akbar & Taqi, 2020). A growing body of recent research, according to Allard (2017), has demonstrated that translanguaging is a common and distinctive practice of bilinguals and has exciting potential as a pedagogical tool. In order to create more equitable learning experiences, teachers who use a translanguaging pedagogy incorporate students' various linguistic practices into the classroom (Garcia & Wei, 2014). It offers a new perspective on language acquisition by encouraging and utilizing different language practices that comprise learners' unified language repertoire as learning resources (Rajendram, 2019, 2021). The adaptable and dynamic nature of translanguaging also enables it to be applied in a variety of contexts and educational settings to aid students in learning languages (Chin, 2021). It encourages a deeper understanding of the subject and strengthens the weaker language by scaffolding with the dominant language (Garcia & Wei, 2014). Translanguaging is encouraged because it enhances knowledge processing and comprehension in ESL students (Akbar & Taqi, 2020; Yuvayapan, 2019). In light of the significant advantages it brings to enhancing the learning process of ESL learners, this demonstrates the considerable attention this topic has received from a variety of scholars.

In the context of ESL educational settings, prior studies have argued for the significant influence of translanguaging. Reyes (2019) emphasized in his study that teachers who used translanguaging were better able to deliver their lessons, guide classroom discussions, improve student comprehension, and manage student behavior. The main finding of this study was that participants used translanguaging either explicitly or implicitly to mediate their communicative functions, which are crucial in ESL classrooms. In a similar vein, Rajendram's study's findings from 2021 emphasize the communicative and collaborative benefits of translanguaging in ESL classrooms as it fosters the development of students' translinguistic language practices. The analysis of the students' classroom interactions revealed that, despite the teacher's repeated instructions to the contrary, every

collaborative small group activity that the students engaged in involved translanguaging agentively (Rajendram, 2021). It's important to realize that translanguaging happens naturally for these students, which means it can't be fully controlled (Canagarajah, 2011). This concurs with a number of previous studies that claim that while improving students' English proficiency is the main goal of ESL classrooms, attempts to enforce an English-only environment should be avoided (Akbar & Taqi, 2020; Rajendram, 2021).

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Translanguaging is understood as a linguistic practice that incorporates additional linguistic resources according to a pedagogical tenet that purposefully draws on the students' plurilingual abilities. Such linguistic behavior is anticipated to have a positive impact on the retention of learned material and ongoing language proficiency development across the board (Romanowski, 2019). Despite the purported benefits of translanguaging, differences in teachers' perceptions and attitudes toward it have led to ideological barriers and prevented the full inculcation of translanguaging (Rajendram, 2021). Hence, this study is significant because it gives a broad overview of the translanguaging phenomenon in Malaysian ESL primary classrooms.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study involves the investigation of perceptions and practices of translanguaging among in- service ESL teachers in national primary schools in Selangau, a small district in Sarawak. Thus, it is crucial to recognize the limitations of this study, which include the inability to generalize the findings due to the possibility of varying translanguaging practices among English teachers working in various types of educational institutions. In order to expand the body of research on this topic, it is recommended that future studies use additional sample sets like teachers from urban areas or teachers teaching in vernacular schools

II.   LITERATURE REVIEW

(i)   Shift from code-switching to translanguaging

In the 20th century, communities that speak multiple languages were first where the idea of codeswitching was first seen as a language practice outside of the classroom (Lewis et al., 2012). Code-switching ideologies, also referred to as diglossia, see multilingualism or bilingualism as the usage of languages in separate contexts where language systems do not overlap and are employed according to various objectives set by the individual or community. Furthermore, codeswitching upholds a monoglossic perspective on languages, wherein monolingualism is considered the norm, and an unfair distinction between named languages is used by multilinguals to determine linguistic superiority, elitism, or competency (Lewis et al., 2012). Researchers felt bound by codeswitching's principles since it generally observed the exchange of languages within and between sentences with respect to linguistic structures; as a result, codeswitching was subsequently incorporated into language learning research (Lewis et al., 2012). Creese and Blackledge (2010) argue that code-switching in the classroom has not been adequately established for pedagogical reasons, and is instead often referred to as a form of learning interference that fails to take into account students' linguistic origins and incorrectly assumes that L1 use is a barrier to language acquisition.

Williams (1994, 2000) then developed translanguaging through study on bilingualism in Welsh-English schools in Wales. For effective target language development, translanguaging treats all languages used in instruction as heteroglossic and linked. This beyond the boundaries of what is considered code-switching. Goodman and Tastanbek (2021) provided a comprehensive framework for academics and teachers to transition from code-switching to translanguaging by emphasizing the similarities and differences between the two concepts. Code-switching and translanguaging, according to the concept, include blending of known languages when spoken by multilingual people, whether in or out of the context of the classroom. They might happen accidentally or on purpose to impart knowledge. Teachers and students all across the world are adopting attitudes and using concepts that challenge the supremacy of English and monolingual traditions. Changes in the social or pedagogical climate may result from these attitudes and practices. Unlike the distinct codeswitching qualities also present in the framework (e.g., Del Valle, 2000; Lewis et al., 2012), translingualism is heteroglossic and views all signs or forms aiming to convey meaning as interconnected languages. All

languages are valuable because they help multilinguals process their linguistic experiences in different ways, allowing them to build a solid sense of self while expanding their horizons and opportunities. As proposed by Garcia (2009) and Goodman & Tastanbek (2021), this research analyses translanguaging activities to capture the dynamic and progressive disposition of language mixing, alternations, fusion, and hybridity by multilinguals in education.

(ii)   Translanguaging in ESL Classroom

Historically, translanguaging was not explicitly included in language teaching for ESL due to its lack of pedagogical potential, even though some classic ELT techniques would tolerate the use of L1 when teaching learners L2 (Akbar et al., 2020). Some pedagogical approaches, however, warned against instructors continuing to use the L1 in conversational contexts or as a means of communication other than translation. Methods such as the Grammar Translation Approach, the Communicative Approach, and the Natural Approach are examples (Akbar et al., 2020; Matamoros-Gonzalez et al., 2017). They argued that using the L1 in the classroom improved language acquisition outcomes such as assessment, interaction, and understanding. Forbidding teachers to educate in students' native tongues in favor of language immersion, MatamorosGonzález et al. (2017) went on to describe audiolingualism, while also discussing measures to increase students' English-speaking skills.

Translanguaging can be seen as a rising trend in the teaching of English as more students who speak more than one language enroll in language courses. Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL), Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), and Teaching English as a New Language (ENL) could all benefit from adopting the translanguaging practices proposed by Kleyn and Garcia (2014) as a response to the need to reform monolingually based approaches to English language teaching and learning. Additionally, they utilized the full extent of bilingual and multilingual speakers' linguistic resourcefulness, recognizing the distinct learning styles of those groups. The effectiveness of translanguaging strategies in the classroom for teaching English to non-native speakers can be seen and experienced when students are given the opportunity to learn or generate English through the flexible use of other languages while simultaneously making sense of content presented in the target language. Garcia et al's., (2014) translanguaging framework for educators suggests that bilingual and multilingual students may be able to access multilingual materials, ask questions, or express themselves using their language repertoire before, during, or after English-language reading, writing, speaking, and listening activities. After engaging in such pursuits, this may happen. The likelihood that students will understand and relate to the content of the four English language skills can be increased through teachers providing multilingual instructions or feedback, creating a safe environment for multilingual interactions, modelling translanguaging for the students, allowing the students to explain themselves using their own language resources, and assigning peer support for translanguaging (Kleyn & garca, 2019).

Ting and Jintang (2020) did research in Malaysia where they saw how 15 toddlers interacted with two teachers who spoke Malay, Chinese, Bidayuh, and Iban as their first languages. When teaching English to young children, it is helpful to incorporate creative uses of the students' native languages into the lesson plan so that students can improve their proficiency in both languages at the same time. Teacher-student dialogues that involve translanguaging have been shown to benefit classroom management, student-teacher communication, and student learning (Ting & Jintang, 2020). Translanguaging activities are beneficial to preschoolers' brain development because of their pleasant and natural responses.

Ponzio & Deroo (2019) did a discourse analysis with in-service teachers to learn more about their perspectives on translanguaging in the US. Data gathered and analyzed over six weeks from five teachers showed that bilingual and English-only teachers supported multilingualism and translanguaging practices. Exposure to translingual theories or practices is supposed to eliminate prejudiced monolingual beliefs that claim they are the ideal or standard way to teach ESL. Translanguaging concepts are essential for valuing the contributions of bilinguals and multilinguals in the classroom since they help to improve both students' proficiency in their native language and teachers' capacity to communicate with students in their native

language. Translanguaging in ESL instruction requires the support of educators, administrators, communities, and policymakers.

Akbar and Taqi (2020) have investigated the impact of translanguaging on the proficiency and acquisition of a second language among 34 collegiate bilinguals. There were slight enhancements in students' linguistic fluency and comprehension of conceptual basics as well as noticeable enhancements in students' ability to infer and elaborate on material. In other words, translanguaging may be more effective in fostering the development of learners' language skills and higher-order cognitive abilities simultaneously. However, the research also showed that translingual students were able to increase their confidence and decrease their anxiety while taking English as a Second Language lessons, which in turn triggered their ability to absorb knowledge using all of their linguistic resources.

The author of the article "Translanguaging in EFL/EFL Classes: A Review Paper" (Hu, 2020) conducted a literature review on previous research papers pertaining to translanguaging that were published between the years 2009 and 2019. The seven studies that were examined all agreed that the three main goals of translanguaging were to control the classroom, explain linguistic material, and provide a supportive learning environment. Reluctance to use translanguaging was attributed to strict monolingual government language policy and worries about students' inadequate second-language skills. Some recommendations for further research were made, including the use of quantitative assessments to demonstrate the development of language abilities and longer or more in-depth study terms on the impacts of translanguaging in ESL instruction.

(iii)   Teachers' Perceptions of Translanguaging

Despite the lack of universally applicable teaching strategies for translanguaging in the classroom, various works of literature have expressed educators' perspectives on the topic in a variety of settings. The majority of survey respondents (teachers) had a favourable impression of students' use of translanguaging in the classroom (Yukseir et al., 2021; Garcia, 2016) . Yukseir et al. (2021) mixed-method research shows that educators generally believe that teaching in the home language has positive effects on students. According to the results of another study by Garcia (2016), using one's native language is essential, especially at the beginning stages of education. Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) have generally favorable attitudes towards translanguaging practices because they can aid students' learning by improving their comprehension of course materials. Despite teachers' generally good views on translanguaging, pupils' own views and attitudes are contradictory. For instance, Aoyama et al. (2020) found that translanguaging is not commonly used by students. This is because students who spoke languages other than English in their EFL classes felt ashamed and out of place. The participants insisted on learning the target language exclusively through the English language. Sidhu et al. (2016) likewise mentioned how Singaporean kids who spoke a language besides English in class felt ashamed and out of place. To ensure that translanguaging is useful for teaching the target language in an ESL/EFL classroom, teachers must first get an understanding of the concept.

In another study, Palfreyman (2018) looked at how future bilingual educators at an English-Arabic institution in the United Arab Emirates felt about translanguaging between languages and dialects when composing stories for bilingual young learners. The results show that aspiring educators possessed 'paradoxical' views of Translanguaging, with the country's linguistic beliefs playing a significant influence in shaping their acceptance or rejection of Translanguaging in a given writing task.

Teachers' perspectives on the necessity of translanguaging in ESL courses were revealed in the results of a focus group interview done by Lina (2020). First, it was emphasized that the necessity of this strategy varies according to the students' current degree of competence in the subject matter. If you have pupils in your class that are at a low language competency level, translanguaging may be a useful strategy to try out. The participants, however, agree that in order to best polish their pupils' language skills and keep them from becoming demotivated, teachers of advanced students should speak only English in class. Everyone participant recognized the importance of translanguaging in the classroom, particularly when dealing with pupils of low English competence. Teachers should incorporate the students' L1 into the class since pupils with low skill

levels have difficulty understanding lessons delivered in English (Lina, 2020). Participants stress the importance of teachers using translanguaging to help students better understand lessons presented in the target language (L2). Translanguaging helps students understand what their teachers are saying in English class, which in turn improves their ability to learn.

Students' disinterest in the English language, as revealed by the research findings based on their responses, further emphasizes the need to adopt translanguaging (Lina, 2020). The panelists discuss the difficult situation that has arisen since their students are unwilling to make any effort to learn or utilize the target language. This emphasizes the importance of translanguaging, or using the students' L1 in the classroom to increase student engagement. Restricting pupils' use of their L1 in the classroom, says P1, can kill their motivation to study. That's a big problem that could get in the way of their education.

The participants also identified various advantages of translanguaging in terms of lowering affective filters, which might impede language acquisition. The participants agreed that translanguaging in the classroom would increase students' engagement and enthusiasm for classwork (Lina, 2020). According to the survey respondents, this method also makes studying English in a classroom setting less daunting. When students feel safe in class, teachers can pique their curiosity and get them excited about learning the language.

In addition, the participants identify numerous advantages of translanguaging for lowering affective filters that impede language acquisition. The participants agreed that translanguaging would increase their students' enthusiasm for and engagement with classroom assignments (Lina, 2020). According to the survey respondents, this method also makes studying English in a classroom setting less daunting. When students feel safe in class, teachers can pique their curiosity and get them excited about learning the language.

Next, the interviewees' comments show that translanguaging is difficult and time-consuming, particularly when it comes to giving pupils straightforward explanations. Participants reported that there were several L1 words that did not have an equivalent in the L2 language (Lina, 2020). The participants agreed that if students don't grasp the word, it's difficult for teachers to provide them a clear explanation, which can impede the achievement of the learning objective.

(iv)   Practices of Translanguaging

Translanguaging has gained recognition as a valuable pedagogical approach in English as a Second Language (ESL) classrooms. Teachers play a crucial role in implementing translanguaging practices that support language development and academic achievement (Garcia, 2014).

Translanguaging was observed in a Qatari university during student group projects, according to Hillman et al. (2018). Only five of the 22 survey respondents (seven "rarely," six "sometimes," and four "often") stated that they never permit pupils to use Arabic to discuss academic subject with classmates in smaller groups. The fact that some educators seldom use class time for students to work in smaller groups may have an effect on this result. It was noticed that different student groups worked on their lab projects in different combinations of Arabic and English during the chemical engineering lab. If the instructor had any guidelines about the terminology that should be used during group projects, it was brought up during the interview. No, I let them be comfortable, the teacher retorted. I'll let them use whichever language they find easiest to communicate in. Students in the English class also spoke Arabic with one another while working in small groups to complete an APA worksheet.

Only two respondents to the study (Hillman et al., 2018) said they occasionally used Arabic to manage their classroom. Few respondents said they used translanguaging for classroom management. However, it was discovered from the interviews and observations that translanguaging is employed for classroom management. Some students appeared to have done something incorrectly while gathered around a beaker during the chemical engineering experiment. You need to be careful, the instructor ran forward and shouted in Arabic, "La!" (No), before continuing in English. She has now only spoken Arabic throughout the entire three-hour lab session. The

teacher explained, "It was urgent, and also, they're all Arabic speakers, and I thought the message will get quickly if I speak in Arabic, you know?" teacher's explanation for the unexpected use of an Arabic phrase. Instructions must be given clearly and promptly in settings like laboratories where there is a chance of hazard. In this particular case, the teacher believed that Arabic would be the most effective and efficient language to use to communicate the message among the class's shared linguistic resources.

According to a study by Jason, (2022), LEL-dominant language was also utilized by the majority of PTs to give learners simple spoken feedback (such as time reminders, praise; see Extract 2) and by one (Gajanan) to teach text subject through straightforward storytelling. Although other teachers used the MEL more often at these times, three made regular use of the LEL to develop schemata (e.g., by eliciting prior knowledge on a topic) and to carry out formative assessments of learning (e.g., by using questioning techniques to check understanding). According to the curriculum's monolingual expectations, learners' more formal written work (such as compositions, exercises, and test practice activities), typically only used English. However, informal writing assignments also incorporated the MEL, most frequently to document translations of new lexical terms that students were acquiring.

Kagwesage & Anne (2013) looked into the methods that students employed to assist learning and advance language proficiency. The study was conducted at a university in Rwanda where the predominant language of instruction was English. One of the most effective methods discovered was the use of translanguaging. Although Kinyarwanda, the primary language of teaching for Rwandan pupils, was not the official language of instruction, according to Garca, its mediating function and facilitation potential were given more consideration by allowing responsible code-switching and translanguaging.

According to data from (Han, 2022), all of the teachers used English as the medium of instruction when teaching Chinese to elementary school children who speak English as their first language. There were times when they both added Chinese to their English and occasionally shifted between English and Chinese. These were noticed most frequently when instructing students in a classroom setting or when emotionally engaging the students. For instance, Zhen transliterated the phrases "q l" (stand up), "qng zu" (please sit down), and "zài jiàn" (goodbye) used in her classroom practices. Yan gave the students comments by saying, "Excellent!" followed by, "bàng bàng da ()!" and giving both a thumbs up. Yu gave a high five and said, "Tài hǎo le (great)!" Tang's data contained a brief conversation: T: Hey everyone, good morning. Nǐ hǎo ma? S: Hěn hǎo! T: Excellent! "Jntin" (today) is the day we learn to talk about our relatives. These findings show that teachers translanguaged using code-switching and translation to provide material, guide students' physical activity, and provide encouraging comment.

III.   METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH DESIGN

The research questions and components of the study that interest the researcher will determine the data collection method to use. Therefore, the type of data that must be gathered in order to address the research questions determines the data collection method. The quantitative methods approach was chosen for this study. Data were gathered to learn more about the translanguaging procedures used in ESL classes. In this study, quantitative methods are employed, with each type of data helping to answer one or more of the research questions. A series of questionnaires were given out in order to collect the data for this study.

A close-ended 25-item 5-point Likert scale questionnaire was administered to the selected teachers. The items in the questionnaires were adopted from earlier research by Yeoh (2017), Chen & Maarof (2017), Selamat (2014), and Ferguson (2003). The set of questionnaires comprised general statements that were constructed to elicit the participants' perceptions and practices of translanguaging in ESL classrooms. Three sections made up the questionnaire. The teachers' personal data was gathered in the first section. The second component assessed how frequently teachers themselves admitted to using translanguaging in ESL classroom interactions. Teachers had to pick between 1 (never) and 5 (often) for each of the 15 items in the test. The third section of the survey asked 10 questions about teachers' perceptions on the practice of translanguaging, with the options ranging from 1 for strongly agree to 5 for strongly disagree.

RESEARCH SAMPLE

The participants were chosen using a purposive sampling technique and were specifically employed at Selangau's primary schools. Participants in the study must meet the following selection criteria: a) an ESL primary school teacher employed in Selangau; b) have prior experience teaching in a Iban dominated classroom/ school where Iban language is the main medium of communication, and c) have prior experience instructing ESL using translanguaging.

RESEARCH PROCEDURE
Pilot Study

The results from the pilot study done showed that translanguaging would be used by ESL instructors who spoke the same first language as their students or were conversant in it when teaching English in their lessons rather than refraining from the practice in response to suggestions by education policy makers that stressed language use that is precise and appropriate when giving instructions in a classroom (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2013, 2017, 2020). Translanguaging was used by each of the 15 teachers who took part in the study, which is consistent with Lachmy Narayana & Nur Syuhada's (2018) findings that Malaysian ESL teachers and pupils frequently switch between L2 and other previously learned languages both inside and outside of formal ESL learning. Given the elements listed in Goodman and Tastanbeks' conceptual framework for translanguaging (2021), teachers' flexible use of linguistic fusion, switching, and mixing between L1 or other languages that students are accustomed to and L2 has shown that translanguaging practices are related to the heteroglossic view of translingualism, in which multilinguals work to express their intentions, communicate, develop their identities holistically, and find coherence in their languages. All of a teacher's and student's linguistic knowledge and resources can be used to accomplish the eight goals listed in the translanguaging discourse of ESL teachers.

INSTRUMENTS

A close-ended 32-item with 5-point and 3-point Likert scale questionnaire was administered to the selected teachers. The items in the questionnaires were adopted from earlier research by Yeoh (2017), Chen & Maarof (2017), Selamat (2014), Ferguson (2003) and Nambisan (2014). The set of questionnaires comprised general statements that were constructed to elicit the participants' perceptions and practices of translanguaging in ESL classrooms. Three sections made up the questionnaire. The teachers' demographic information was gathered in the first section. Subsequently, the survey incorporated multiple Likert scale inquiries aimed at evaluating the significance of translanguaging in the classroom (to investigate teachers' perspectives) and the frequency of its implementation (to scrutinise teachers' translanguaging techniques).

DATA ANALYSIS

The data for this study was analysed using the works of Ahmad (2009), Gregio & Gil, (2007) McMillen & Rivers (2011), Ooi, W. Z. et al. (2022) and Raki & Sulaiman (2021) as guidelines. The teachers' perceptions and practice of translanguaging were noted from the responds collected and frequency counts were done. The data was analyzed carefully and accordingly before the analysis of findings. Later, these topics were categorized with explanations for translanguaging in each topic is included.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Teachers were asked to indicate how often they saw or supported students using their first language (L1) in the classroom in the first Likert question on the main survey. The results are displayed in Table 1.

Reason to encourage pupils to use their native language	*Never %*	*Rarely %*	*Sometimes %*	*Always %*	*Often %*
To discuss content or activities in small	6.2	7.2	17.2	29.5	39.9

groups					
To provide assistance to peers during activities	2.6	3.5	8.1	33.7	52.1
To brainstorm during class activities	22.3	24.1	18.4	15.1	20.1
To explain problems not related to content	5.3	10.1	22.4	26.5	35.7
To enable participation by lower proficiency pupils	2.6	4.7	11.3	32.1	49.3
To respond to teachers' question To ask permission	24.1	18.4	20.1	15.1	22.3

Table 1: Teachers' frequency of observing or encouraging the use of pupils' L1 in the classroom

The most commonly observed usage of translanguaging in relation to this survey question was its use to provide assistance to peers during activities. To enable participation by students of lower proficiency levels was the second most common purpose. There was agreement on both of these uses in the responses to McMillan and Rivers (2011), suggesting that translanguaging can be used in both EFL and ESL contexts. The two uses that were not commonly documented in the literature that were witnessed the least were brainstorming during class activities and to ask permission in the classroom. Other less common uses of translanguaging in the classroom that have been documented in the literature on the subject in both EFL and ESL contexts are discussing content or activities in small groups and to respond to teachers' questions. This can point to a use that makes more sense in one situation than another and call for deeper investigation. The following question on the survey will report the importance that the participants attribute with each of these prospective uses of translanguaging.

Whereas the preceding question requested teachers to reply to the regularity with which they encourage the use of their pupils' native language in the classroom, for this item, participants were asked to respond about the level of priority they placed on prospective usage of translanguaging by pupils. The purpose of this question was to find out which applications of translanguaging the teachers who took part in the study thought were most important. The findings demonstrate that the frequency of practice in the classroom does not always translate into the priority attached to each application.

Reason to encourage pupils to use their native language	*Not important*	*Neutral*	*Very Important*
	%	*%*	*%*
To discuss content or activities in small groups	4.8	10.9	84.3
To provide assistance to peers during activities	3.7	7.4	88.9
To brainstorm during class activities	4.6	11.1	84.3
To explain problems not related to content	2.5	8.7	91.3
To enable participation by lower proficiency pupils	3.7	8.8	87.5
To respond to teachers' question	5.2	9.5	85.3
To ask permission	6.2	11.7	82.1

Table 2: Teachers' perceptions on the importance of pupil's using their native language in the classroom

Teachers' opinions of how important they think particular translanguaging applications are, are shown in Table 2. The applications that were frequently thought to be significant were to explain problems not related to content, to provide assistance to peers during activities, and to enable participation by lower proficiency pupils.

Although the results on the previously listed uses aligned with the body of literature in the field, despite the priority that participants placed on this usage, translanguaging—or translating—for a student with a lower proficiency level has not been investigated; this may suggest a topic for future research. There is a disconnect between views and practices surrounding translanguaging, as seen by the fact that the uses that were deemed significant were not always the ones that the participating teachers' saw or were encouraged to utilise. For this question, participants were asked how frequently they use their pupils' native language in the classroom for various scenarios. The purpose of this inquiry was to learn more about the translanguaging strategies used by participants in their classrooms and to identify potential common uses.

I use translanguaging to:	Never (%)	Rarely (%)	Sometimes (%)	Aways (%)	Often (%)
To explain concepts	3.3	6.3	10.5	30.2	49.7
To describe vocabulary	2.6	3.5	8.1	33.7	52.1
To give directions	4.1	8.1	9.6	32.7	45.5
For classroom management	3.3	6.3	10.5	30.2	49.7
To give feedback to pupils	2.6	7.3	8.1	33.7	48.3
To praise pupils	2.6	7.3	8.1	33.7	48.3
To build bonds with pupils	2.6	4.7	10.5	32.1	50.1
To quickly clarify during activities	2.1	8.1	9.6	32.7	47.5
To help low proficiency pupils	2.6	4.7	10.5	32.1	50.1

Table 3: Teachers' frequency of practicing translanguaging in the classroom

The findings indicated that to build bonds with pupils was the most frequent use of the native language of their pupils. Apart from that, the teachers who took part in the study do not frequently employ the remaining uses in their classrooms. The purpose of this survey question was to gauge how much importance teachers gave to the translanguaging techniques they had indicated in survey questions 11 and 12. The results are displayed in Table 4.

I use translanguaging to:	Not important (%)	Neutral (%)	Very important (%)
To explain concepts	3.7	8.8	87.5
To describe vocabulary	2.5	8.7	91.3
To give directions	6.2	11.7	82.1
For classroom management	4.6	11.1	84.3
To give feedback to pupils	3.7	8.8	87.5
To praise pupils	5.2	9.5	85.3
To build bonds with pupils	3.7	7.4	88.9
To quickly clarify during activities	5.2	9.5	85.3
To help low proficiency pupils	3.7	7.4	88.9

Table 4: Teachers' perceptions on the importance of translanguaging in the classroom

Based on the results, participants in this survey felt that describing vocabulary was the most significant application. This reflects the overwhelming support in current literature about the use of translanguaging for teaching or describing vocabulary (e.g. Ahmad, 2009; Greggio & Gil, 2007; McMillan & Rivers, 2011; Tian & Macaro, 2012). The majority of participants believed that the teacher should utilise the students' original language for significant purposes, albeit some uses were more common than others. This was in addition to the use of translanguaging to describe vocabulary.

IV. CONCLUSION

This study on teachers' attitudes towards and practices of translanguaging in the classroom is limited, but it does indicate that some teachers believe this activity is crucial for students' acquisition of the English language. The results of this study indicate that more research is necessary because there is a significant gap in the literature regarding this technique in English as a Second Language classrooms. Although translanguaging has been studied in the context of teaching English as a foreign language, relatively little study has been done on its application in ESL classrooms. It is critical to recognise the value of pupils' native tongues as resources as opined by Manara (2007), the learners' mother tongue acts as a resource for them to get knowledge before they take on the new language. According to Garcia and Flores' paper, "...translanguaging can in fact enhance cognitive, language, and literacy abilities if properly understood and suitably applied in schools" (Garcia & Flores, 2014, p.155). Even though translanguaging seems like a very beneficial practice, it is necessary to investigate why practices that are thought to be significant are not being used in classrooms. More research in the field is required to facilitate and explore this, allowing English language learners to start reaping the benefits of translanguaging.

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