TRANSLANGUAGING BELIEFS OF DYNAMIC BILINGUALS IN AN EFL CONTEXT

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Abstract: The dynamic view of bilingualism has challenged 'monoglossic' perspectives in language teaching. It asserts that people have a single language repertoire and can use all their linguistic and semiotic resources as the situation requires. Translanguaging is the ability of dynamic bilinguals to shuttle between the languages. This ability can be activated for communicative and learning purposes. Translation and code-switching are two types of actions that are done thanks to this ability. Although they are not encouraged in most English language teaching methods with parallel monolingualism, recent studies have presented the need to develop this ability. Code-switching and translation could be considered forms of translanguaging, and they might be organic, authentic, and naturally occurring language practices in a language classroom. Therefore, the proposed study reveals 56 intermediate-level dynamic bilinguals' translanguaging beliefs in an EFL context with five dimensions; code-switching for clarity, efficacy; language skills; psychological factors, and the frequent translingual actions performed by learners in the class. The findings revealed that learners frequently do translingual activities in classes with their peers. They prefer translanguaging for the efficacy of the class most. Although they are neutral for translanguaging to learn four language skills, they prefer their teachers and friends to translanguage for specific purposes. These findings might indicate a possibility to integrate translanguaging in language classes for the effectiveness of learning and teaching processes. In a 'translanguaged' EFL class, the learners might bring their diverse funds of knowledge, use their linguistic or cultural resources strategically, and develop language and academic skills together.

Keywords: translanguaging, translanguaging pedagogy, learner beliefs

INTRODUCTION

In a language class with translanguaging pedagogy, code-switching might be a necessary practice. Code-switching is based on the monoglossic view (Garcia, 2009), which considers bilinguals to have separate linguistic systems. However, the translanguaging view takes a more heteroglossic view (Bakhtin, 1981). It suggests that the linguistic behavior of multilinguals is always dynamic and consists of one integrated linguistic system (Garcia & Lin, 2017). Garcia and Lin (2017) propose the 'weak form of translanguaging' for situations in which speakers acknowledge the existence of different languages as separate but still soften the boundaries between languages. In this view, code-switching might be a frequent practice. Similarly, Bonacina-Pugh et al. (2021) put forward two approaches for studying translanguaging; 'the fixed language approach' and 'fluid languaging approach'. The key tenet of the former is using different languages in the classroom in a planned way and strategically for better teaching and learning. However, the latter approach considers different languages as fluid and dynamic without any boundaries between them and using all semiotic resources in addition to the linguistic ones is included. The origins of pedagogical translanguaging are based on the fixed language approach (Williams, 1994; Baker, 2011). The fluid languaging approach became popular with an epistemological turn in sociolinguistics (Bonacina-Pugh et al., 2021). As

knowing learners' beliefs about translanguaging and code-switching is significant for planning language classes with translanguaging pedagogy, this study aims to reveal learners' beliefs for translanguaging with four dimensions; clarity, efficacy, translanguaging for different language skills, psychological factors and frequent translanguaging practices of learners.

METHOD

Learners' beliefs about translanguaging were collected through the questionnaire prepared by Coskun Yaşar and Yıldız (2018). There are four dimensions: clarity, efficacy, language skills, and psychological factors. The clarity section aims to reveal students' beliefs about code-switching to make learning and teaching processes easier to understand and less confusing. Efficacy is about whether code-switching enhances the efficacy of teaching and learning processes and whether it makes learning and teaching processes easier. The third dimension is language skills, and it is about students' beliefs whether code-switching affects listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills negatively. Finally, the psychological factors section aims to reveal the affective dimension. The researcher added items 32 and 33 without damaging the sentence structure of the previous items. Section six with six items was added by considering Dykhanova's (2015) and Van der Walt's (2006) studies. Instead of a 5-point Likert-Scale, 4 point frequency scale with frequency adverbs (Never-Sometimes-Often-Always) was used.

The adapted questionnaire was answered by 56 intermediate-level English preparation class students in one of the Turkish universities. All the descriptive analyses were conducted by using SPSS 22. Reliability analysis was conducted, and the questionnaire was found to be reliable with a Cronbach's Alfa score of 0.95.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Central Tendencies for each Section

	Clarity	Efficacy	Language Skills	Psychological Factors	Practices
M	3,69	3,72	2,91	3,15	2,72
N	56	56	56	56	56
SD	0,59	0,94	1,07	1,12	0,32
Mdn	3,76	3,75	2,83	3,33	2,83

As Table 1 indicates, the highest mean score might indicate that learners consider translanguaging valuable for the efficacy of learning and teaching processes. The second highest mean score is for the clarity. These findings for the two sections suggest using translanguaging for efficacy and clarity of teaching and learning processes and verifying other research findings. The standard deviation scores of the two sections are relatively low, indicating similar ideas of learners. The lowest standard deviation score was for the translanguaging practices, indicating similar translanguaging use of learners in class. The mean score of 2, 72 out of 4 indicates that learners often or always do translanguaging. The mean and median scores of the language skills section that asks for translanguaging for different language skills indicate learners' neutral ideas. A high standard deviation might be due to a lack of experience of translanguaging. The median and mean scores of psychological factors for translanguaging might indicate students' neutral ideas, and the highest standard deviation has been found in the section.

Table 2. Translanguaging regarding Clarity of Learning-teaching Processes

	M	*Mdn*	*SD*
1. Teachers can use Turkish when they emphasize significant points.	4,28	4	0,70
2. Teachers can use Turkish when we are distracted.	3,92	4	0,93

3. Teachers can use Turkish when we are reluctant for the lesson.	3,08	3	1,14
4. The use of Turkish is necessary to clarify whether a subject has been understood.	4,08	4	1,03
5. Teachers should use Turkish when they teach subjects that are difficult.	4,05	4	1,01
6. Teachers should use both English and Turkish to motivate us.	3,87	4	1,07
7. Teachers' use of Turkish can be efficient in explaining the differences between Turkish and English.	4,26	4	0,75
8. We can use Turkish to make sure that we have understood the things the teacher has taught.	4,03	4	0,88
9. The use of both English and Turkish is a problem-solving strategy.	3,82	4	0,95
10. Turkish can be used when describing a term or a subject of a field.	4,03	4	0,80
11. Teachers should use Turkish when they make explanations about exams.	4,07	4	1,10
12. If the subject covers culture and history topics, Turkish can be used.	3,32	3	1,10
13. Teachers should use Turkish when they cover a writing subject.	3,23	3	1,26
14. We keep up with the class more easily when both English and Turkish are used.	3,67	4	1,17
15. Teacher should tell the Turkish equivalents of the keywords, not all of what they say.	4,19	4	0,99
16. Teachers can use Turkish when they discipline the class.	3,35	4	1,10
17. The use of both English and Turkish when teaching grammar makes learning English easier.	3,69	4	1,11
18. The use of Turkish allows us to explain each other for educational purposes.	3,55	4	1,00
19. Teachers should use Turkish while making jokes in the lesson.	2,98	3	1,16
20. The use of both English and Turkish helps us enjoy the classes.	3,64	4	0,99
21. Teachers should use both English and Turkish to explain what is to be done in activities.	3,60	4	1,13
22. The use of Turkish by the teachers can be efficient in explaining the similarities between Turkish and English.	3,85	4	0,90
23. Turkish should be used in teaching abstract words.	3,73	4	0,94
24. Teachers should use Turkish to attract our attention to the subject.	2,98	3	1,10
25. The use of both English and Turkish saves time.	3,10	3	1,23

The highest mean scores with low standard deviation indicate that students prefer teachers' translanguaging for clarity of teaching and learning processes (Items; 1; 7; 15; 11; 5). According to the findings, teachers could do translanguaging whey they emphasize significant points, explain differences between Turkish and English, describe the Turkish equivalents of keywords, make explanations about exams, and when they teach subjects that are difficult to understand. The other items with a higher mean score than 4 are items 4, 8, and 10. These items are for learners' translanguaging with their peers and teachers. According to the findings, learners think that translanguaging is beneficial when they want to clarify whether a subject has been understood, to make sure everything taught has been understood with their peers, and when they want to describe a term or subject of a particular field. The lowest mean scores with higher standard deviation have been found for items 19, 24, 3, 25, 13, 12, and 16. The mean scores indicate that learners do not disagree; however, they are closer to neutral for these items. According to the findings, learners are more neutral about teachers' translanguaging when they make jokes in the lesson, attract learners' attention to the class, when learners are reluctant for the class, when the class covers a writing subject and when they discipline the class. These findings might indicate that learners are more neutral about teachers' translanguaging for disciplinary issues and when they make jokes or teach writing skills. The other low mean scores were found for items 25 and 12, and these are for both learners' and teachers' translanguaging. According to the findings, learners are neutral about whether translanguaging saves time and studying history and cultural topics through translanguaging. These findings might indicate that translanguaging could take more time than monolingual approaches, and learners might prefer to learn culture and history topics in the target language.

Table 3. Translanguaging regarding the Efficacy of Learning-teaching Processes

	M	Mdn	SD
26. Teachers' use of both English and Turkish increases the efficacy of teaching.	3,73	4	1,05
27. Teachers' use of both English and Turkish makes the English learning process easy.	3,57	4	1,23
28. Teachers' use of both English and Turkish confuses us.	2,03	2	0,99
29. Transitions to Turkish hinder foreign language learning.	2,37	2	1,21

Table 3 indicates that learners believe that teachers' translanguaging might be beneficial for the efficacy of learning and teaching processes. Learners think that teachers' translanguaging might increase the efficacy of teaching and makes the learning process easy. Items 28 and 29 are negative items for the others. The low mean scores indicate supporting ideas of learners for translanguaging in that it does not confuse them and does not hinder foreign language learning.

Table 4. Translanguaging regarding the Use of Language Skills

	M	Mdn	SD
30. The use of Turkish negatively affects our listening skills.	2,82	3	1,11
31. The use of Turkish negatively affects our speaking skills.	3,14	3	1,25
32. The use of Turkish negatively affects our reading skills.	2,81	3	1,24
33. The use of Turkish negatively affects our writing skills.	2,80	3	1,29
34. The use of Turkish in group activities negatively affects my English.	3,14	3	1,28
35. Our use of Turkish can become a habit over time.	3,75	4	1,25

Low mean scores for the negative items indicate that learners are supportive for translanguaging. Medium mean scores close to 'neutral' might indicate that students might not have clear ideas for translanguaging to learn different language skills. The mean scores for translanguaging for listening, reading, and writing are very close with similar standard deviation scores; that might indicate that students are somewhere between 'disagree' and 'neutral' for the negative effect of translanguaging. Item 34 indicates that students might consider activities with their peers an opportunity for practice in the target language. The highest mean score is for item 35, and it might indicate that students might be distant for translanguaging for fear of developing a habit to use the native language.

Table 5. Translanguaging regarding Psychological Factors

	M	Mdn	SD
36. Teachers' use of only English demonstrates their trust in our ability.	3,49	4	1,18
37. The significance of English should be indicated to us by using English.	3,00	3	1,26
38. The use of only English gives us a sense of success.	2,96	3	1,29

Table 5 indicates that learners might support teachers' use of only English with high mean, median scores. For items 37 and 38, learners are neutral. Although a higher standard deviation score might indicate different ideas, learners might support translanguaging as they are neutral for using merely English and for the idea that using merely English gives them a sense of success.

Table 6. Translanguaging Practices of Learners

	M	Mdn	SD
39. I take notes in Turkish regardless of the language used by the instructor.	2,07	2	0,69
40. I take notes in the language used by the instructor in the classes.	2,67	3	0,79
41. While taking notes in the class, I realize that I switch from English to Turkish (or vice versa) without noticing.	2,00	2	0,88
42. I use my native language with my friends when I explain a new concept in class.	3,14	3	0,70
43. I use my native language with my friends when I feel the need to ask a concept.	3,29	3	0,68

44. I use my native language when it is necessary to check the meaning of a concept	3,18	3	0,79

Table 6 indicates that learners often or always do translanguaging in their classes. Low standard deviation scores for the items indicate similar ideas of learners. According to the findings, learners most frequently do translanguaging to ask a concept to their friends when they need to check the meaning of a concept or a word and explain a new concept. Note-taking through translanguaging is a frequent practice in translanguaging pedagogy. Still, a higher mean score for item 40 might indicate that learners prefer to take notes in the language used by the instructor. They might sometimes take notes through translanguaging.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The study's findings have revealed that translanguaging might be a frequent practice of learners in language classes (Garcia & Li, 2014). The learners do translanguaging when they need to ask or explain a concept to their peers. They prefer their teachers' translanguaging for keywords in the task and teaching about a difficult subject. They want to learn the differences between the target and native languages through translanguaging. The highest mean scores were found for the efficacy of learning and teaching processes; therefore, it can be concluded that translanguaging might increase the efficacy of language classes (Garcia, 2009). The learners are more neutral about teachers' and students' using only the target language in class and translanguaging to learn and practice four language skills. That might indicate a lack of experience and not knowing how to do translanguaging efficiently. Learners' biggest fear was developing a habit of using only the native language. These findings indicate that designing an efficient translanguaging class might be possible through strategic and limited use of the native language. The logic of translanguaging could be explained to learners, and sample tasks should be conducted before planning and conducting classes with a translanguaging perspective.

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