

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The ability to speak multiple languages is increasingly recognized as a valuable asset in a globalized world, especially in the context of education. Multilingualism offers numerous cognitive, social, and academic benefits that can significantly enhance the learning process. Research has shown that multilingual individuals often exhibit superior cognitive flexibility, metalinguistic awareness, and problem-solving skills (Baker, 2011). These cognitive advantages make multilingual students well-equipped to engage in complex language learning tasks, particularly when they are encouraged to draw on their full linguistic repertoire.

In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms, translanguaging plays a crucial role in maximizing the benefits of multilingualism. Translanguaging has emerged as an innovative pedagogical approach that leverages the linguistic diversity of students to enhance both communication and learning within educational settings. Unlike traditional language instruction methods, which treat languages as separate entities, translanguaging allows students to fluidly switch between languages, enabling them to express their thoughts and ideas in the most effective way possible. This dynamic practice of utilizing multiple languages has shown significant promise in promoting inclusive classrooms and fostering learning environments that cater to the diverse linguistic profiles of students.

The importance of translanguaging in EFL classrooms cannot be overstated. It creates a more inclusive and supportive learning environment for multilingual students by validating their linguistic identities and promoting deeper engagement with English. Translanguaging allows students to bridge the gap between their

home languages and English, fostering a sense of comfort and confidence in their learning process. García and Wei (2014) emphasize that translanguaging not only supports cognitive development but also encourages students to use their L1 to understand complex English terms and concepts, leading to a more authentic and meaningful learning experience.

Research has increasingly recognized the benefits of translanguaging in bilingual and multilingual educational contexts. For example, Rahmadani (2023) conducted a study at an Indonesian public university, demonstrating that students majoring in English language education held positive attitudes toward translanguaging, highlighting its potential to improve learning outcomes. Similarly, Qashas et al. (2023) explored students' perceptions of translanguaging in English language teaching, emphasizing its positive impact on students' understanding of content and participation in lessons. Liando et al. (2022) examined translanguaging practices in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms, identifying various approaches and underscoring their benefits for language acquisition. In another study, Raja et al. (2022) investigated students' attitudes toward both teacher- and student-directed translanguaging in Indonesian EFL classrooms, revealing diverse responses and attitudes toward this approach.

While existing research has demonstrated the positive outcomes of translanguaging in diverse educational settings, there is a notable gap in understanding how students in specific contexts, particularly at Islamic senior high schools in Jambi, perceive and engage with this practice. This gap is significant because the use of translanguaging in such settings may differ from other educational contexts due to the cultural, religious, and linguistic nuances unique to

these schools. In addition to this, there is a lack of research addressing the practical challenges involved in implementing translanguaging in EFL classrooms, particularly in the context of multilingual classrooms at Islamic senior high schools in Jambi. Given the importance of tailoring language learning practices to the specific needs of students, it is essential to investigate how students in this particular context perceive translanguaging and what challenges they may face when engaging in such practices. These challenges could range from resistance to using the first language (L1) in the classroom to issues related to the adaptation of teaching strategies by educators who may be unfamiliar with the translanguaging approach. Understanding these practical barriers will help provide a more comprehensive understanding of how translanguaging can be effectively integrated into EFL classrooms and inform better teaching practices in similar multilingual educational environments.\

This research aims to explore students' attitudes, perceptions and challenges toward translanguaging within the context of an Islamic Senior High School in Jambi. Using a mixed-method approach that combines questionnaires and interviews, this study will examine the perceptions, attitudes, and challenges that students experience when engaging in translanguaging practices in EFL classrooms. By understanding students' views on the use of multiple languages in their learning environment, this research seeks to highlight the potential benefits and challenges of translanguaging, offering insights into its implications for language learning and academic success.

The findings from this study will contribute valuable knowledge to the field of education, particularly in the context of multilingual education in Indonesia. By

offering practical recommendations for educators and policymakers, this research aims to inform teaching practices, curriculum development, and student support strategies that embrace linguistic diversity. Promoting a classroom environment where students feel supported in using their full linguistic repertoire can help create more inclusive and effective learning spaces. Such an approach is essential for fostering an academic environment where all students, regardless of their language background, can thrive.

1.2 Research Questions

To guide the analysis of the research, the study addresses three central questions:

1. What are the attitudes of students at an Islamic senior high school in Jambi toward the use of translanguaging in EFL classrooms?
2. How do students at an Islamic senior high school in Jambi perceive the impact of translanguaging on their understanding of subject matter and participation in lessons?
3. What challenges do students at an Islamic senior high school in Jambi experience in the implementation of translanguaging practices in their EFL classes?

1.3 Purposes of the Research

In line with the research questions, the purposes of the research are:

1. To examine the attitudes of students at an Islamic senior high school in Jambi toward the use of translanguaging in EFL classrooms.

2. To investigate how students at an Islamic senior high school in Jambi perceive the impact of translanguaging on their understanding of subject matter and participation in lessons.
4. To identify the challenges that students at an Islamic senior high school in Jambi experience in the implementation of translanguaging practices in their EFL classes.

1.4 Limitation of the Research

The research is limited to twelfth-grade students enrolled at an Islamic Senior High School in Jambi. This specific group was chosen to focus on the perspectives of students who are nearing the end of their secondary education and who have experienced various forms of language instruction. The participants consist of 129 individuals, 52 males and 77 females, distributed across two distinct academic programs: MIPA (Mathematics and Natural Sciences) and IPS (Social Sciences).

1.5 Significance of the Research

This research is significant for educators, policymakers, and researchers as it provides:

1. Insights into students' attitudes toward translanguaging in the context of an Islamic senior high school in Jambi, helping to fill a gap in the existing literature.
2. Practical recommendations for teachers to refine their teaching methods, ensuring that lessons align better with students' preferences, thus enhancing engagement and effectiveness.

3. A basis for formulating educational policies and curriculum strategies that accommodate the multilingual needs of students, particularly in language learning.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

In the context of this study, specific key terms are defined to ensure clarity and precision.

1.6.1. Students

In the context of the research, "students" refer to individuals enrolled in a senior high school in Jambi who are the focus of the study on their attitudes towards translanguaging practices in EFL classrooms. Students are learners actively engaged in the educational process, including language acquisition and academic development.

1.6.2. Students' Attitudes

In this research, students' attitudes refer to the emotional responses or evaluations that senior high school students have towards translanguaging practices in EFL classrooms. Attitudes reflect students' feelings of preference, support, or opposition to the use of both Indonesian and English during lessons. It captures whether students like, dislike, or feel neutral about translanguaging in their classroom environment.

1.6.3. Students' Perceptions

Students' perceptions in this study relate to how students interpret or understand the effects of translanguaging on their learning process. Perceptions are more cognitive and reflect the way students view the impact of using multiple languages on their comprehension of subject matter and their

participation in lessons. While attitudes deal with emotional responses, perceptions focus on how practical or helpful students believe translanguageing is in aiding their learning experience.

1.6.4. Translanguageing

Translanguageing, as explored in the research, denotes the pedagogical practice where students utilize their entire linguistic repertoire, including their first language and the language of instruction (English), to enhance communication, comprehension, and learning outcomes in EFL classrooms. It involves the fluid and strategic use of multiple languages to facilitate language acquisition and academic engagement.

1.6.5. EFL Classrooms

EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classrooms refer to educational settings where English is taught as a non-native language to students whose first language is not English. In the context of the research conducted in a senior high school in Jambi, EFL classrooms are the specific learning environments where translanguageing practices are examined to understand their impact on student's attitudes and language learning experiences.

1.6.6. Senior High School

A senior high school is an educational institution that provides secondary education to students typically aged between 15 and 18 years. In the research setting in Jambi, the senior high school serves as the specific context where students' attitudes towards translanguageing in EFL classrooms are investigated, focusing on the unique dynamics of language learning and instructional practices at this educational level.

1.6.7. Multilingual

In the context of this research, "multilingual" refers to the use of three key languages—Indonesian, English, and Arabic—in the classroom. Students in this school are proficient in these languages, and the study examines how these languages are integrated into the learning process, particularly in the context of translanguaging.

1.6.8 Superior Cognitive Skill

In this study, superior cognitive skill refers to the enhanced cognitive abilities exhibited by multilingual learners, including greater mental flexibility, problem-solving skills, metalinguistic awareness, and efficient management of attention across multiple languages. These skills facilitate more effective language learning and academic performance compared to monolingual peers (Baker, 2011; Bialystok, 2007). The concept also relates to the positive outcomes of translanguaging practices that enable students to utilize their full linguistic repertoire to improve comprehension and classroom participation.