

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. The Background of the Study

Indonesia is a multilingual nation, with many different regional languages spoken throughout its archipelago. With over 17,508 islands, Indonesia is home to 273 million people, making it the fourth most populous country in the world (Aji et al., 2020). There are 704 living indigenous languages in Indonesia, with Indonesian being the official language (Eberhard et al., 2023).

As a country with multilingualism, National Education System Law No. 20 of 2003 addresses language policy in Indonesia, stating that Bahasa Indonesia, as the country's official language, is the medium of instruction in national education. However, if specific knowledge and/or skills need to be taught in the early stages of education, the local language may be used as a medium of instruction. Additionally, a foreign language may be used as a medium of instruction to support the competency of the learners. Therefore, the law aims to promote multilingualism in Indonesia by focusing on three levels: local languages for tradition and identity, Bahasa Indonesia as the official national language, and foreign languages for global challenges, aiming to create multilingual individuals with local wisdom, nationalism, and competitiveness (Nursanti et al., 2020).

In addition to the national and regional languages, in Indonesia, foreign languages are given growth opportunities and are also taught at different educational levels to increase the country's proficiency (Setyabudi, 2017). According to Law No. 24 of 2009 on Flags, Languages, and Symbols of the Country

and the National Anthem, foreign languages may also be used as the primary language in the teaching process (Setyabudi, 2017).

There is an increasing trend in Indonesia towards the teaching of foreign languages, including English and Arabic, as the most particularly influential across all levels of education (Saud & Abduh, 2018). English is currently the world's most spoken language (Eberhard, 2023) and is also recognized as "the country's first foreign language" in Indonesia (Dardjowidjo, 2003, as cited in Rini, 2014). Dardjowidjojo emphasized that English was chosen as the first foreign language because science and technology are global cultures, and learning English is a must for Indonesians who want to stay up to date with scientific and technological advancements.

The learning of English language skills is essential for Indonesian students, as it not only enhances their language proficiency but also equips them to confront the current globalization era (Purnama et al., 2020). Because of the increasing necessity of English proficiency in this global era, Indonesia, a developing country, has made English a compulsory subject in secondary schools, junior and senior high schools, and higher education, but the effectiveness of teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) in Indonesia has been inconsistent (Sulistyo, 2015).

Truly understanding a foreign language is necessary to broaden the vocabulary, as vocabulary learning is an essential component of foreign language learning (Susanto, 2017). Also, the necessity of being able to speak a foreign language is to practice the language (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017). This ability still needs to be improved for students at school. As a result, teachers must be able to

nurture and encourage students about the necessity of studying various languages, particularly English as the major language used globally (Supriadi et al., 2021). Thus, teachers are important in Indonesia's English language learning process, as they act as the primary source for teaching and learning the foreign language (Sulistyo, 2016). Since the students are learning English as a foreign language, the teacher needs to determine suitable approaches to teaching English (Idris et al., 2020). Translanguaging is a feasible alternative in foreign language education (Witari & Sukamto, 2023).

Furthermore, teaching English in Indonesian upper secondary schools poses challenges due to limited English recognition, but translanguaging pedagogy can enhance learning by using students' native languages as a foundation (Triastuti et al., 2023). In response to that, Lestari et al. (2022) revealed that translanguaging is more suitable than the monolingual approach in Indonesian education, as students can use their native language (L1) without restrictions, allowing them to understand English materials. Translanguaging is the process by which a multilingual or bilingual speaker can switch between two languages and regard the various languages in their repertory as a single integrated system (Canagarajah, 2011).

Translanguaging, which is now a topic in educational approaches for teaching students in the classroom, continues to be explored and studied in the 21st century. Translanguaging is an effective way for learners to gain knowledge about language practices. For teachers, it is a powerful pedagogy that enables them to educate children holistically and teach all students in the classroom (Garcia and Wei, 2014: 89). During the observation of the hotel accommodation program, the researcher

noted that the English teacher at the vocational school used translanguaging that incorporated Indonesian, also the Medan language, a regional dialect spoken in the city of Medan, North Sumatera, into their medium instruction. The following are some of the utterances made by the teachers.

Extract 1

T1: You make a survey, *kalian buat* survey in a small group. *Jadi kalau bisa sama miss mungkin satu kelompok tiga, okay ya. Misalnya gini*, Angel, Yoyo, Sifa, *tugasnya adalah menginterview your friends, wawancarai temanmu*, by asking these questions, these activities.

(then showing the slide on the TV screen, after that, the teacher rewrites the activities on the whiteboard to provide a clear explanation for students)



C Take a Survey

Sit in small groups. Ask your classmates in the group how many times they do the following activities:

You can say:

How many times a week/a month do you ...?

Activities	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
exercise				
eat healthy foods				
check your weight				
get 8 hours of sleep				
brush and floss your teeth				
wear sunscreen when you go outside				

T1: *Ok, contoh kelompok satu, Angel Yoyo Sifa, kita kayak role play gitu ya kak. Yang pertama, first person asks the question to your friend., jadi angel akan tanyak,*

T1: Angel, in your own book you make table, *masing-masing ya*, each student make a table like this.

(teacher writes on the whiteboard then give explanation)

T1: *jadi disini misalnya Angel wawancarai Yohana, kemudian disini Sifa, sama ya kak dibuat seperti ini juga. Never, sometimes, often, always, tidak pernah kadang-kadang- sering, selalu.*

And then, *supaya kalian bener-bener mengerjakannya, karena selama ini kalau disuruh tugas kayak gini kalian cuman ceklis ceklis tok, ga pernah nanyak, tidak latihan speaking.* So you have to record it, make a short video, *ok..buat sebuah video pendek kelen bikin*, when you interview your friend,

*Ketika kamu mewawancarai temanmu, ya... caranya **gimana** kak.. kerja sama..sama temannya.*

Based on the observation above, it was noticed that teacher T1 employed the translanguaging method by translating her words from English to Indonesian and mixing the utterances with a regional dialect, **the Medan language**. T1 used scaffolding strategies involving visual aids and the whiteboard, then applied translanguaging strategies, sometimes using Indonesian to clarify instructions. The scaffolding was not designed to achieve complete fluency in English but to help students understand academic content (Feller, 2020). Almost all of the lessons observed used this kind of instruction when imparting core discipline principles and guiding students on assignments (Triastuti et al., 2023).

To further expand research on translanguaging in ESP classrooms, this study explored translanguaging used in English classrooms, particularly in a vocational school in Medan. This research was grounded in translanguaging theory, which views language practices as dynamic and fluid, allowing students to draw on their entire linguistic repertoire to understand texts, explore content, and improve learning efficiency (Vyshnevskaya et al., 2021). In English classrooms, translanguaging served as a flexible strategy for these purposes.

B. The Problems of the Study

The problems of the study were formulated as follows:

1. How is the translanguaging approach used in English classrooms at SMK Telkom 2 Medan?
2. What pedagogical purpose emerges from using translanguaging in English classrooms at the SMK Telkom 2 Medan?

C. The Objectives of the Study

Concerning problems, the objectives of the study were:

1. To elucidate how the translanguaging approach is used in English classrooms at SMK Telkom 2 Medan.
2. To explore the pedagogical purpose of using the translanguaging approach in English classrooms at SMK Telkom 2 Medan.

D. The Scope of the Study

This study is focused on the translanguaging practices within the English classrooms at SMK Telkom 2 Medan. This study examined how the translanguaging approach is used by teachers to facilitate learning. Additionally, the pedagogical purpose associated with the use of translanguaging are explored. The study is limited to English language teachers.

E. The Significance of the Study

Regarding the background and objectives of the research, the findings had significant theoretical and practical implications.

1. Theoretically

The findings broadened knowledge about the practice of translanguaging in the context of education in Indonesia, especially in English classrooms in secondary schools. Additionally, they provided valuable insights for other linguistics researchers.

2. Practically, the findings were relevant to:

- a) Students: This research helped students better understand the phenomenon of language teaching, particularly pedagogical

translanguaging, and enabled them to utilize translanguaging practices during the learning process.

- b) Other researchers: The study served as a valuable reference for those investigating similar phenomena.
- c) Readers: The readers gained additional knowledge about translanguaging practices in English classrooms.

