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## TRANSLANGUAGING IN ACADEMIC WRITING CLASSROOM: A CASE STUDY OF EFL PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS' PERCEPTION

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**Abstract:** This case study explores the perceptions of translanguaging in the academic writing process of pre-service teachers. Drawing upon the theories of forms translanguaging (Baynham & Lee, 2019; Garcia & Lin, 2016; Hua & Wei, 2022) and the stages of writing proposed by Hyland (2003), this research delves into how pre-service teachers perceive and utilize translanguaging in their writing. The study integrates observations, interviews, and artifact analysis involving pre-service teachers to understand their engagement with translanguaging as both a communicative and pedagogical strategy. The findings show that pre-service teachers not only view translanguaging as a method for effective communication but also as a crucial tool for enhancing their engagement

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with academic content, particularly in the stages of topic selection, pre-writing, writing, and feedback. In addition, the significant use of translation, code-mixing, and code-switching underscores their linguistic adaptability in a multilingual academic context. This research contributes to the academic discourse by providing insights into the role of translanguaging in the academic writing process and its implications for future teaching practices.

**Keywords:** *academic writing, perceptions, pre-service teachers, translanguaging*

## INTRODUCTION

Translanguaging has emerged as a pivotal concept in bilingual education, challenging traditional notions of language separation and promoting a fluid and dynamic approach to language use (Baker, 2011; Garcia, 2009). Translanguaging covers a wide range of language forms, including translation, code-switching, code-mixing, and transliteration (Baynham & Lee, 2019; Garcia & Lin, 2016; Hua & Wei, 2022). This linguistic flexibility is especially pertinent in academic settings, where the ability to navigate multiple languages can enrich the learning experience (Creese & Blackedge, 2015; Lewis et al., 2012). In multilingual contexts like Indonesia, the integration of translanguaging strategies could significantly enhance this proficiency, supporting both cognitive development and sociocultural engagement (Cummins, 2007). This approach, views learning as inherently social and language as a key tool for intellectual development. This aligns with contemporary views on language learning that advocate for a dynamic, user-centered approach to bilingualism (Li, 2017). Despite the growing body of research on translanguaging in educational contexts, less attention has been paid to its specific impact on academic writing, particularly among pre-service teachers (Garcia & Lin, 2016). The complexity of academic writing, a critical competency for educators, necessitates innovative instructional approaches that embrace linguistic diversity (Zhao & Dixon, 2017).

The proficiency in academic writing is crucial for pre-service teachers, affecting their future effectiveness in the classroom (Darling-Hammond, 2006). Translanguaging, as a fluid and dynamic language practice that involves the strategic use of multiple languages for communication and meaning-making, can both positively and negatively impact pre-service teachers' academic writing experiences. Translanguaging may serve as a valuable resource for pre-service teachers in their academic writing endeavors. By drawing upon their entire linguistic repertoire, including their native language(s) and additional languages learned, pre-service teachers can effectively convey complex ideas and articulate their thoughts with clarity and precision (Garcia & Lin, 2016). Translanguaging practices may enhance the richness and depth of their writing, allowing them to express nuances and cultural perspectives that may be difficult to convey using a single language (Canagarajah, 2011).

However, the application of translanguaging within the academic writing process of pre-service teachers remains underexplored. Research in this area could provide valuable insights into how translanguaging could be employed to facilitate academic writing and prepare teachers for increasingly diverse classrooms (Canagarajah, 2011). Recognizing the multilayered benefits of translanguaging, from enhancing cognitive engagement to fostering cultural inclusivity, underscores the urgency of this inquiry (Palmer et al., 2014). Hyland (2003) proposed numerous writing processes for publishing good Academic Writing products, such as selecting topics, prewriting, composing, and revising.

This study aims to fill this gap by investigating Indonesian pre-service teachers' perceptions, experiences, and future pedagogical intentions regarding translanguaging in academic writing. Addressing the lacuna in research on translanguaging's impact on academic writing, particularly within the teacher education domain, is vital for developing effective instructional methodologies (Reynolds et al., 2020).

Recent scholarship has highlighted the potential of translanguaging to foster metalinguistic awareness and enhance learners' engagement with academic content (García & Lin, 2016). For pre-service teachers, the ability to effectively employ translanguaging strategies in their writing is

not just a matter of linguistic proficiency but also a pedagogical skill that can support diverse learners. Despite its importance, there is a scarcity of studies focusing on how these future educators navigate and apply translanguaging in their academic writing (Baker, 2011; Creese & Blackedge, 2015). Therefore, this research explores the perceptions of participants who are also pre-service teachers at a university in Indonesia to find out their knowledge and experience regarding translanguaging to be used as a basis for designing translanguaging-based activities, especially those related to the academic writing process in the future.

Addressing this gap, the present research explores three main questions: (1) How do pre-service teachers in Indonesia perceive translanguaging within academic writing? And (2) What forms of translanguaging are engaged with during their academic writing processes? This investigation is crucial for understanding the role of translanguaging in teacher education and its potential to enhance teaching and learning in multilingual settings (Ali et al., 2023).

The significance of this study extends beyond theoretical contributions, offering practical implications for the design of teacher education programs that embrace linguistic diversity (García, 2009; Lewis, Jones, & Baker, 2012). By examining translanguaging practices among pre-service teachers, this research aims to inform curriculum development and pedagogical strategies that support multilingual education.

## **METHOD**

### **Research Design**

This study employed a qualitative research design to explore the perceptions and experiences of pre-service teachers regarding translanguaging practices in an Academic Writing class within a university in Indonesia (Maxwell, 2012). The aim was to gain in-depth insights into how translanguaging is integrated into the academic writing process and its perceived impact on teaching and learning.

### **Research Participants**

The participants of this study were three pre-service teachers majoring in English education at a university in Indonesia, aged 19 to 20

with different levels of writing proficiency (high, middle, low). The researcher specifically looked at their writing scores from the previous semester to determine their writing proficiency level. They were interviewed to gain data to answer the first research question about the EFL pre-service teachers' translanguaging.

### **Data Collection and Analysis**

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews to answer the first research question while classroom observations and analysis of written artifacts were employed to collect the data to answer the second question of this study. Conducted at two points during the semester, the interviews aimed to capture the participants' perceptions, experiences with translanguaging, and their future intentions for using translanguaging in teaching. Interview questions were designed to elicit detailed responses about their academic writing process and the role of translanguaging within it. Additionally, observations were carried out in both online and offline settings to note the real-time use of translanguaging practices during academic writing tasks. A specific focus was placed on identifying instances of code-mixing, code-switching, translation, and transliteration. Students' written assignments and feedback sessions as research artifacts were analyzed to further understand the application of translanguaging strategies in their academic writing. This included examining the use of multiple languages for concept clarification, argument development, and feedback incorporation.

### **FINDINGS**

This study set out to explore pre-service teachers' engagement with translanguaging in an Academic Writing course at an Indonesian university. Through systematic data collection via observations, interviews, and the examination of artifacts, this investigation has unearthed rich, layered insights into the nuanced ways in which these future educators perceive and employ translanguaging, as well as their plans to integrate such practices into their teaching.

## **Pre-Service Teachers' Perceptions of Translanguaging**

Analysis of interview data revealed that pre-service teachers' perceptions of translanguaging were deeply intertwined with their prior learning experiences and educational contexts. These perceptions have been sculpted by the interplay of their knowledge acquisition and personal beliefs about language use in academia. They acknowledged translanguaging as an effective academic strategy, mirroring Beijaard et al. (2004) notion of a complex interaction between learning experiences, knowledge, and personal opinion.

### *Experiences with Translanguaging*

This subchapter presented three participants' (Putri, Gadis, and Putra) direct experiences with translanguaging in their academic contexts, providing insights into how this strategy affected their learning and writing processes.

*"Yes, I liked receiving feedback and certainly tried to learn from the differences in knowledge" (Putri, interview 1)*

Putri valued the feedback process in her academic learning, utilizing it as a tool for intellectual growth. Her experience of encountering no major obstacles in using translanguaging indicated good adaptation to the method, although she had to be careful to avoid unintentional language "misses." On the other hand, Gadis, the other participant, showed another perception about the topic.

*"That is what I know, like mixing and combining languages..." (Gadis, interview 2)*

Gadis demonstrated a basic understanding of translanguaging as language blending, reflecting a contemporary approach to communication that embraces linguistic diversity.

The last participant, Putra, also his experience regarding the use of translanguaging.

*"The majority of sources I used were in English, but sometimes I looked for Indonesian sources for better understanding." (Putra, interview 3)*

Putra used resources in both English and Indonesian to gain a better understanding, demonstrating a practical approach to accessing knowledge. His choice to use translanguaging to search and develop topics based on personal interests highlighted his openness to different sources of inspiration and information.

The conclusion of this subchapter underlined that these learners' translanguaging experiences were diverse but shared a common theme: the utilization of translanguaging to enhance understanding and expression in academic contexts. Putri, Gadis, and Putra indicated that translanguaging enabled them to more effectively navigate the subject matter and fit new knowledge into existing understanding.

### *Knowledge of Translanguaging*

This subchapter discussed how knowledge of translanguaging had influenced the way Putri, Gadis, and Putra accessed, understood, and utilized resources for Academic Writing.

*"Yes, when writing the Academic Writing task recently, it helped me a lot..."*  
**(Putri, interview 1)**

Putri demonstrated a clear understanding of translanguaging and recognized its direct benefits in Academic Writing. Her strategic use of sources in multiple languages showed how translanguaging could facilitate access to wider knowledge and support deep learning.

*"Yes, I gained new knowledge,"* **(Gadis, interview 2)**

Gadis valued translanguaging as a way to acquire new knowledge, especially through feedback. Her experience showed that translanguaging not only helped in understanding the material but also in developing academic and critical skills.

*"Because feedback from lecturers and friends could also provide new perspectives that I didn't know before."* **(Putra, interview 3)**

Putra recognized the importance of feedback in providing new perspectives, underlining how translanguaging could enrich the learning process. He also emphasized the importance of quality academic resources, such as reputable journals and databases, in developing new understanding and ideas.

The conclusion of this sub-chapter shows that an understanding of translanguaging not only enriches the Academic Writing process but also accelerates intellectual growth. The approaches taken by Putri, Gadis, and Putra demonstrate how translation can be an important tool in acquiring and expanding knowledge in an increasingly global and multilingual academic environment.

### *Opinions on Translanguaging*

This subchapter focused on the personal perceptions of preservice teachers regarding the effectiveness of translanguaging in academic learning and writing. By incorporating their opinions, a richer understanding of how translanguaging was received and applied by multilingual learners had developed.

*"Yes, I thought translanguaging was really useful for writing academic assignments." (Putri, interview 1)*

Putri not only valued feedback as a tool to improve her Academic Writing but also expressed a strong belief in the benefits of translanguaging. This reflected the recognition of translanguaging as a practice that enriched the expression of ideas and conceptual understanding in the learning process.

*"It affected me, because if it was full English, I was still confused." (Gadis, interview 2)*

Gadis highlighted how translanguaging enabled her to maintain clarity and effectiveness in her Academic Writing. This recognition proved that the use of language blends could be an important cognitive tool that helped learners overcome linguistic barriers and enhance their learning.



*"Because sometimes there were concepts that were easier to understand or explain in more than one language." (Putra, interview 3)*

Putra identified translanguaging as a factor that enhanced creative processes and self-learning, suggesting that the ability to move between languages not only facilitated communication but also supported deeper understanding. His belief in translanguaging as a pedagogical tool highlighted the need for more flexible and inclusive teaching approaches.

In conclusion, the opinions expressed by Putri, Gadis, and Putra confirmed that translanguaging was not only considered beneficial but also necessary in multilingual education. By effectively utilizing their linguistic abilities, learners could improve their academic skills, including understanding of concepts and communication of ideas. This approach significantly affected the way they saw their potential as learners and as writers in the academic environment.

### **Identified Forms of Translanguaging**

This study revealed four types of translanguaging covered a wide range of language forms, including translation, code-switching, code-mixing, and transliteration (Baynham & Lee, 2019; Garcia & Lin, 2016; Hua & Wei, 2022). The result in Figure 1 below showcased the frequency of the use of translanguaging forms in the writing process conducted by the EFL pre-service teachers.

As shown in Figure 1, the most used form is code-mixing with 50 times, followed by code-switching with 42 times, translation with 16 times and only once used transliteration in the writing process. These findings indicated that most participants often use code-mixing in their writing activities since this kind of translanguaging form allows language users to combine two or more languages or language varieties in a sentence or utterance. They can utilize English terms such as "co-host" and "share screen" in their online writing process with their lecturers alongside predominantly local language expressions to highlight their limited vocabulary.

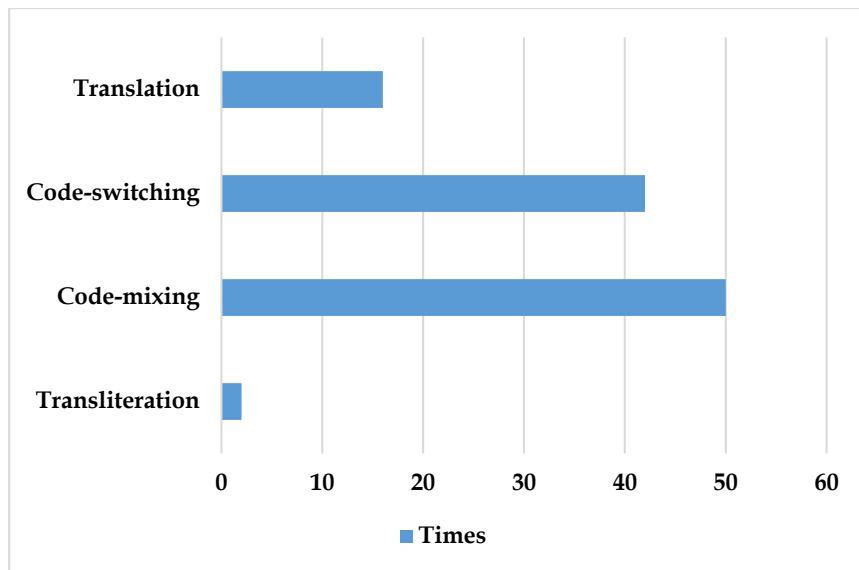


Figure 1. Frequency of translanguaging forms used

Additionally, the use of code-switching by the participants indicated that they tend to start a sentence in English and finish it in the Indonesian language or vice versa. The example of this practice happened in the utterances *"Baik pak (Alright Sir), thank you"* and *"Okay, I would like to try review kelompok empat (group four)"* conveyed by the participants during observation. This choice may have occurred due to the perceived appropriateness or formality associated with English expressions of gratitude in certain contexts. In addition, it could be seen as "linguistic convenience," since the English term 'review' was commonly used in academic contexts, while the group's name was likely better known in the local language.

The next finding displayed that translation form occurred 16 times. This process enables someone to completely translate a sentence or utterance from one language to another. In this study, the use of translation mostly happened during classroom activities such as discussion sections. The utterance *"Any question? Apakah ada pertanyaan?"* was used by the lecturer to make it more likely that students would engage and ask questions if they had any. Furthermore, transliteration is only used in one meeting, which is the alphabet transition from Arabic to Indonesian. The reason Transliteration only appears in that meeting is

due to socio-cultural factors. Transliteration also only appears in online learning.

## DISCUSSION

This study's findings highlight the perception of Indonesian EFL pre-service teachers regarding translanguaging in academic and linguistic identity formation. Pre-service teachers' perceptions of translanguaging were deeply intertwined with their prior learning experiences and educational contexts, as evidenced by the findings of this study. Building upon Beijaard et al.'s (2004) notion of the complex interaction between learning experiences, knowledge, and personal opinion, it became apparent that pre-service teachers' attitudes towards translanguaging were shaped by their educational backgrounds, language learning histories, and exposure to diverse linguistic practices. Those who had been exposed to multilingual environments or had positive experiences with translanguaging in their own language-learning journeys tended to view translanguaging as a natural and effective communication strategy (García & Li, 2016). Conversely, pre-service teachers who had been immersed in monolingual educational settings or had received explicit instruction against language mixing often exhibited more resistance or skepticism towards translanguaging practices (Canagarajah, 2011). Moreover, the institutional norms and policies within their teacher education programs played a significant role in shaping pre-service teachers' perceptions of translanguaging, with some programs explicitly promoting multilingual pedagogies while others adhered to more traditional monolingual approaches (Garcia & Kleyn, 2016). These findings underscore the importance of considering pre-service teachers' prior learning experiences and educational contexts when designing language teacher education programs and promoting translanguaging pedagogies. By acknowledging and building upon pre-service teachers' existing knowledge and beliefs, educators can create more inclusive and responsive learning environments that support the development of effective translanguaging practices.

Moreover, the data indicates that translanguaging goes beyond mere code-switching or code-mixing, aiding in the comprehensive

understanding of complex academic material and encompassing a holistic approach to language use that integrates linguistic resources seamlessly to construct meaning and communicate effectively (García, 2009; Canagarajah, 2011). This study contributes to this discourse by highlighting the multifaceted nature of translanguaging practices among Indonesian pre-service teachers, who navigate diverse linguistic landscapes in their academic and professional contexts. By transcending the limitations of traditional binary frameworks that separate languages, translanguaging allows individuals to harness the full potential of their linguistic repertoires to express complex thoughts and negotiate understanding (García & Lin, 2016). Through translanguaging, pre-service teachers demonstrate agency and creativity in their language use, actively shaping their academic and linguistic identities through dynamic interactions with peers and instructors (García & Kleyn, 2016).

The synthesis of academic and linguistic identities suggests a dynamic, ongoing process where pre-service teachers draw from their multilingual repertoire to construct a unique academic persona. Their perceptions and anticipated use of translanguaging in teaching demonstrate a thoughtful engagement with Adler's (1982) two-part process of goal setting and strategic planning in their future professional practices. Moreover, the variability in translanguaging forms and the corresponding impact on academic community engagement underscore the adaptability of these practices. This variability not only reflects the linguistic complexity of individuals' repertoires but also highlights their strategic use of language to negotiate meaning and establish connections within academic communities (García & Lin, 2016). By embracing translanguaging practices, pre-service teachers demonstrate their ability to navigate linguistic diversity and bridge communication gaps, thereby fostering a sense of belonging and inclusion within their academic communities (García & Kleyn, 2016). The participants' strategic balance between English and Indonesian, as projected for their future teaching, reflects a sophisticated understanding of the pedagogical utility of each language in fostering inclusive learning environments.

The study's observation of translanguaging as a pathway to critical pedagogy is particularly significant. By using multiple languages

to dissect and critically analyze academic content, pre-service teachers are moving towards a transformative educational paradigm where linguistic diversity is viewed as a rich resource rather than a challenge to overcome.

## CONCLUSION

The study reaffirms translanguaging as a multifaceted phenomenon that is pivotal in shaping the academic identities of pre-service teachers and in facilitating entry into academic discourse communities. The documented forms of translanguaging, characterized by a preference for code-mixing and code-switching, highlight its embeddedness in the participants' academic culture and its potential as a cognitive and linguistic resource.

The pre-service teachers' projections of translanguaging in their future teaching practices reveal a commitment to fostering pedagogical adaptability and embracing a critical pedagogy framework. These practices are seen not only as a method to understand the subject matter but also as a strategic approach to promote a more inclusive and equitable educational landscape.

Overall, this study provides compelling evidence of the central role of translanguaging in contemporary academic settings and offers a nuanced perspective on its potential to shape the future of language education in multilingual contexts.

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