EXPLORING THE CORRELATION BETWEEN EFL STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF TRANSLANGUAGING AND WILLINGNESS TO COMMUNICATE: A MIXED-METHODS STUDY

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Article Info	Abstract
Article History Received: October 2024 Revised: November 2024 Published: January 2025 **Keywords** Students' perception; Translanguaging; Willingness to communicate; L2 classrooms;	*Translanguaging offers potential significance in assisting EFL students' engagement in L2 communication, making it valuable to investigate whether students' perception of translanguaging correlates with their willingness to communicate in a second language. This mixed-methods study explores the relationship between students' perception and L2 willingness to communicate in classroom communicative settings. 65 participants from two universities enrolled in an English education program participated in this study. The quantitative data were collected using 5-Likert scale questionnaires and qualitative data through in-depth interviews with subset participants. The quantitative data, including descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression analysis, were formulated in SPSS 26. Meanwhile, the interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings showed that students' perception of translanguaging correlates significantly and positively to their L2 WTC (r = .587). Based on the qualitative data, key themes related to the significance of translanguaging, such as facilitation of understanding, self-confidence improvement, reduced anxiety, and promotion of a positive classroom environment emerged as factors contributing to the students' increased L2 WTC. These findings suggest that students' perception of translanguaging influences their attitudes toward L2 communication, leading to a decreased or increased WTC level. Thus, translanguaging should be encouraged as an alternative strategy in L2 classrooms to enhance communication in EFL settings, particularly by maximizing L2 understanding and fostering an emotionally safe learning environment.*

INTRODUCTION

Willingness to communicate (WTC) is pivotal for effective second language (L2) learning and communication. It contributes significantly to participation in L2 interaction/communication (MacIntyre et al., 1998; Kang, 2005) and second language acquisition (Robson, 2015; Darasawang & Reinders, 2021). Despite the importance of WTC in L2 programs (Amalia et al., 2019), fostering it in EFL contexts, particularly where English is not a daily necessity, is challenging. However, translanguaging, the strategic use of multiple languages, presents a promising solution. Translanguaging refers to a deliberate and systematic approach involving the use of two languages in the same lesson to facilitate teaching and learning for effective communication (Baker, 2001; Lewis et al., 2012). It posits that students' first language (L1) is intricately connected to their L2 learning, suggesting that isolating the two can hinder the language learning outcomes. Given the interconnectedness of students' linguistic repertoires, translanguaging emerges as a crucial strategy for enhancing L2

instruction. The use of translanguaging in multilingual and multicultural contexts in EFL settings, like in Indonesia, where students learn English alongside their local and national languages (Zein, 2018; Liando et al., 2023) is worth researching. It is crucial for navigating the complexities of multilingual classrooms, offering both challenges and opportunities for language learning.

For higher education students studying English, translanguaging has been proven essential to facilitate their L2 learning (Moody et al., 2019; Rahmadani, 2023; Liando et al., 2023). Despite being taught in English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) throughout their studies, many of these students continue to exhibit reluctance in L2 WTC (Amalia et al., 2019), such as due to difficulty in speaking skills (Shen & Chiu, 2019; Islam et al., 2022), a challenge that is particularly pronounced in their first year of study (Islam et al., 2022). This emphasizes the complex learning of L2 communication even for those higher education students majoring in English, thereby highlighting the potential use of translanguaging as an alternative strategy to address these challenges.

Previous studies illustrate the dynamics of using translanguaging to enhance language learning and participation. For example, studies showed that translanguaging contributes to enhancing students' learning experiences and positive attitude towards linguistic diversities (García & Kleyn 2016; García-Mateus & Palmer, 2017), creating effective learning (Zhou & Mann, 2021; Leung & Valdes, 2019; Rahmadani, 2023), increasing students' engagement in classroom communication (Poza, 2019; Rabbidge, 2019; Ticheloven et al., 2021), and maximizing comprehension (Fang & Liu, 2020; Rahmadani, 2023; Liando et al., 2023).

Studies indicate that students' perceptions of translanguaging can significantly influence their WTC and classroom engagement. Moody et al. (2019) found that university students showed positive perceptions towards translanguaging and highlighted its significance for acquiring L2 and boosting L2 communication engagement. This underscores the potential role of positive perception of translanguaging in increasing L2 WTC. Furthermore, students with low WTC often struggled due to their negative perception of their L2 ability (Sato, 2023), highlighting that a positive perception of translanguaging may relate to their increased WTC. Meanwhile, a deeper understanding of the materials resulting from students' engagement in translanguaging influences their positive attitudes in L2 classrooms (Liando et al., 2023). Moreover, the positive perception of translanguaging facilitates students' learning, as students may address their perceived L2 inadequacies by enabling them to utilize their whole linguistic repertoire (Otheguy et al., 2015; Ibrahim, 2019) and deal with psychological issues related to their limited language skills, such as anxiety or the fear of speaking (Mari & Carroll, 2020; Ha et al., 2021). In short, having a positive perception of translanguaging effectively enhances students' motivation to employ it as a strategy that can reduce foreign language anxiety, making students more comfortable and willing to communicate.

Although numerous studies have explored the significance of translanguaging for L2 learning in Indonesian higher education contexts, specific investigations on how students perceive translanguaging and its correlation with their L2 WTC remain scarce. There is a notable gap in understanding how students' view of translanguaging may predict their WTC in English, especially for those who major in English. Investigating this relationship can provide empirical evidence on potential factors influencing students' engagement in English classes in EFL contexts. Thus, this present study aims to fill the gap by exploring the correlation between students' perceptions of translanguaging and their L2 willingness to communicate. To achieve the aim, several questions are formulated in this study, such as: Is there any correlation between students' perceptions of translanguaging and their L2 WTC? And How do students perceive the role of translanguaging in their L2 WTC?

Literature Review
L2 WTC and Its Influential Factors

L2 WTC is conceptualized as the readiness to communicate at a certain time with individuals by using a second language (MacIntyre et al., 1998). This WTC is influenced by affective factors, including self-confidence, motivation, and language anxiety (Peng & Woodrow, 2010; Eddy-U, 2015; Alqarni, 2021). MacIntyre (2020) contends that students who are willing to communicate may experience self-confidence in their responses and discussions. Sato (2019) found that the increased WTC among highly L2 speakers was influenced by the opportunity to express oneself and one's opinion, a sense of responsibility, and being challenged to communicate. He also discovered that apprehensions of the accuracy of English explanations and a lack of confidence significantly influenced the decrease in WTC. This implies an increased WTC is influenced by students' awareness of their attitudes toward L2 learning, especially when they can maintain positive affective factors.

Numerous studies have examined the correlations between WTC and specific affective factors, such as foreign language anxiety and classroom environment (Khajavy et al., 2018; Dewaele, 2019; Wang et al., 2021; Li et al., 2022). Khajavy et al. (2018) found that higher levels of foreign language classroom enjoyment and reduced levels of language anxiety were associated with higher WTC, suggesting that enjoyment plays a role in predicting WTC. Similarly, EFL students often experience anxiety in L2 communication, which can be influenced by their self-perception and belief in having low L2 proficiency (Malik et al., 2018; Bai, 2023). This indicates that students' perception of their competence also known as perceived competence plays a crucial role in how they enhance their communication, as perceived competence in L2 also correlates with students' WTC (Bahadori & Hashemizadeh, 2018; Nadeem et al., 2023). Thus, increasing perceived competence and reducing language anxiety can foster L2 WTC. This can be achieved by providing an environment of L2 communication where students have a positive perception and attitudes towards L2 communication.

Translanguaging in EFL Settings

The use of L1 in EFL classrooms, known as translanguaging, raises the question of whether it helps or hinders students' foreign language learning. Some researchers argue the use of L1 may hinder students' language learning, as the role of L1 is not that crucial in EFL classrooms (Ellis, 2008; Pan & Pan, 2010). Pan and Pan (2010) argue students should minimize their L1 use when learning the target language to eliminate errors caused by L1 interference. This enables students to focus on the target language by maximizing their L2 acquisition within its context. Several studies on this topic also found using L1 in EFL classrooms was often seen as problematic, as it can hinder students' English learning by limiting their practice opportunities and reducing exposure to English (Pan & Pan, 2010; Sa'd & Qadermazi, 2015; Orfan, 2023). Furthermore, Orfan (2023) found that teachers believed L1 use caused students to become reliant on their L1 and hindered their ability to fully think in English. This suggests that students should use more English to improve their learning and get better immersed in the language. Conversely, other researchers highlight the prominent role of L1 in facilitating the success of L2 learning. Sato (2023) asserts that incorporating L1 in L2 classroom is essential since the monolingual approach has gained significant challenges in the L2 field. This indicates that L1 should always be promoted in the EFL teaching and learning process, as it can support language learning in ways that the exclusive use of the target language might not achieve (Pan & Pan, 2010). Cook (2001) suggests that teachers should use L1 to efficiently explain complex concepts, support learning, build rapport, and address real-world needs, as these factors can enhance language acquisition and better prepare students for their careers. Similarly, Orfan (2023) found L1 served several purposes in EFL classrooms, including language, management,

and social functions. He highlighted that L1 was often used to elucidate intricate grammatical aspects, introduce unfamiliar lexicon, and elucidate challenging topics. In addition, according to Levine (2011), using L1 in the classroom is beneficial and efficient for L2 learning because by including L1, L2 learners become more actively involved, resulting in increased language acquisition. Thus, L1 use is expected to support L2 learning and communication engagement.

RESEARCH METHOD
Research Design
This study employed a sequential explanatory research design consisting of two phases: first, collecting quantitative data, and then followed by collecting qualitative data to clarify or expand upon the quantitative findings (Creswell & Clark, 2018). This design was chosen as it is suitable for the research goal to provide a comprehensive exploration of the complex relationship between students' perception of translanguaging and their L2 WTC. The quantitative phase specifically provides general patterns and measurement of the relationship between students' perception of translanguaging and L2 WTC, while the qualitative phase provides a deeper exploration of the correlation, specifying the role of translanguaging in L2 WTC.

In this study, translanguaging is identified as the use of L1 (Indonesian), and L2 for the target language (English). L1 is defined and limited to the use of Indonesian as the national language due to the formal communicative settings in the L2 classrooms, where students primarily use two languages (i.e., Indonesian and English) to facilitate learning. Thus, this study focused on two key variables, namely students' perception of translanguaging and their willingness to communicate in L2 (English). Data collection involved the use of a survey for quantitative data and in-depth interviews for qualitative data. The survey was administered online, aiming to collect data on students' perception of translanguaging and their L2 WTC in communicative settings. Meanwhile, an in-depth interview was conducted to explore students' perceptions of the role of translanguaging in their L2 WTC. The interviews were conducted in Indonesian language via the Zoom application which lasted approximately 40 minutes. The interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed, and translated for further thematic analysis.

Research Participants
The participants involved 65 English education students, aged 18-21, from two public universities in Indonesia. They were selected purposively due to the accessibility to conduct the study and the representation of two distant research sites. They were drawn from two classes in the first year of the semester that reflect communicative settings, specifically writing and speaking classes. The first-year students were chosen to gain nuanced insights into their initial adaptation to the English education major and how they perceive the use of translanguaging as a promising solution for their L2 WTC in the early stages. Meanwhile, the selection of the classes was intended to reflect the environments in which students actively participate in language use and communication, thus offering relevant insights into how their perceptions of translanguaging might influence their WTC. Then, out of the 65 participants who completed the questionnaires, 4 students (2 from each university) were selected for interviews. The selection was primarily based on their availability, to ensure representation of diverse perceptions from each university.

Research Instruments
The questionnaires were used as the first instruments and were administered online via G-forms. They consisted of the rationale of the study, adopted items from the perspective of translanguaging (Moody et al., 2019; Rahmadani, 2023), and adopted items of L2 WTC (Lee, 2020; Tai & Chen, 2023). The rationale section detailed the study's objective, the definition of translanguaging and WTC, the relevance of the study for the respondents, and the importance

of participants' voices. It also included the assurances of confidentiality, specifying that participation was voluntary and that all data would be anonymized and stored securely. The items of students' perception of translanguaging were categorized into frequency of translanguaging use, appropriateness of translanguaging, encouragement for translanguaging, the positive impact of translanguaging on learning, and translanguaging and inclusivity. The questionnaires used a five-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" for the 20 translanguaging items and from "very unwilling" to "very willing" for the 10 items measuring students' WTC in communicative settings. While these items had been used and validated in prior studies, they were also tested for validity and reliability using the collected data in SPSS 26. The results confirmed both the items used were valid and reliable in this research context, with $\alpha = .905$ for the items measuring the perception of translanguaging and $\alpha = .876$ for items measuring L2 WTC.

Additionally, the second instrument of the study used interview items focused on students' perceptions and attitudes regarding the role of translanguaging in their L2 WTC, which were developed based on the results of the quantitative data. These items were informed by the initial findings from the quantitative data to provide a deeper understanding and complement the quantitative results, specifically addressing the second research question. Informed consent was obtained to ensure participants' confidentiality and ethical standards.

Data Analysis

Prior to data analysis, the researchers simplified the reporting process of the students' perceptions of translanguaging by categorizing the data into three groups, namely mean scores below 3.00 were classified as negative, mean scores of 3.00 as neutral, and mean scores above 3.00 as positive perceptions. Subsequently, the quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Then, correlation and regression analyses were obtained using SPSS 26. The Pearson correlation analysis aimed to examine the strength and direction of the relationship between students' perception of translanguaging and their L2 WTC, while regression analysis aimed to predict L2 WTC based on the students' perception of translanguaging. In addition, the qualitative data were analyzed following Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis stages, which include becoming familiarized with the data, making initial codes, looking for themes, reviewing themes, identifying and naming themes, and writing the report. The themes were derived based on students' perceptions and attitudes toward the role of translanguaging in their L2 WTC. Thus, a member checking was employed with multiple researchers and the participants to ensure that the themes derived were relevant and accurately represented participants' perceptions.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
Research Findings

This section outlines the findings from the analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative finding detailed the results of students' perception of translanguaging and their L2 WTC, as well as the relationship between the variables. Following that, the qualitative finding was presented to deeply explore students' perception of the role of translanguaging in their L2 WTC.

Students' Perception of Translanguaging

Our analysis of students' perception of translanguaging shows that students consistently perceive translanguaging as a positive practice in their English classroom in all aspects measured. Several noteworthy findings were summarized from the data, including frequency of translanguaging use, appropriateness of translanguaging, encouragement for translanguaging, positive impact of translanguaging on learning, and translanguaging and inclusivity.

Table 1
Students' Perceptions of Translanguaging

Items	Mean (M)
1. Frequency of translanguaging use	3.98
2. Appropriateness of Translanguaging	3.96
3. Encouragement for Translanguaging	3.76
4. Positive Impact of Translanguaging on Learning	4.05
5. Translanguaging and Inclusivity	3.85
Overall mean	3.92

Analysis of students' perceptions revealed that students consistently scored above 3 across all aspects with an overall mean score of 3.92, indicating a positive perception of translanguaging. The overall positive perception of translanguaging shows that it is not only frequent but also beneficial to their learning process. Students recognized its importance in enhancing their understanding of English, promoting inclusive and engaging classroom practices, and acknowledging the value of their L1 in facilitating L2 learning. However, while students perceived translanguaging as appropriate and positively impactful, there was slightly less consensus on whether it should be more actively encouraged by lecturers, suggesting that the implementation of translanguaging could be nuanced and context-dependent, considering the students' background in English education.

Students' Level of L2 WTC

Students' level of L2 WTC was analyzed based on the mean scores of each item measured. The results are presented as follows:

Table 2
Students' Perceived L2 WTC

Items	Mean (M)
1. Talk to classmates about a class assignment.	3.94
2. Communicate ideas, feelings, and opinions	4.06
3. Ask for clarification when confused	4.03
4. Listen to what classmates say in English	4.25
5. Read the activity description before start completing	4.09
6. Talk freely in an English class	3.91
7. Talk in front of the class in an English class	3.78
8. Make a group discussion in an English class	4.12
9. Make a presentation in front of a large group in an English class	3.82
10. Explain your own culture in English to your classmates	4.02
Overall mean	4.00

The students' level of WTC in communicative settings was presented by a mean score of 4.00, which was classified as "willing" from all measured aspects. The mean scores across different aspects of communication ranged from 3.78 to 4.25. Overall, the data highlights that students were generally willing to engage in English communication, with higher levels of comfort in listening to classmates and participating in group discussions.

Correlation between students' perception of translanguaging and L2 WTC

The Pearson correlation coefficient was employed to investigate the correlation between students' perception of translanguaging and L2 WTC, and the result is presented below.

Table 3
Correlation between students' perception of translanguaging and L2 WTC (N = 65)

		L2 WTC
Translanguaging	Pearson's *r*	.587**
	p-value	.000
	N	65

Based on the summary of the data above, the result shows there is a significant positive correlation between students' perceptions of translanguaging and their L2 WTC ($r = 0.587$, $p < 0.01$). The relationship is classified as a moderate positive correlation between both variables. This result suggests that when students have a positive perception of translanguaging, their L2 WTC also tends to increase. This implies that positive perceptions of translanguaging are associated with increased WTC in L2 classrooms. Furthermore, the regression analysis shows a significant positive relationship between students' perception of translanguaging and their WTC in the L2 communicative settings, with a regression weight (β) of .364 ($p < 0.01$), as presented in Table 4. This finding indicates that a more favorable perception of translanguaging positively influences students' willingness to engage in L2 communication. In other words, students who view translanguaging positively are more likely to exhibit a higher level of WTC in the L2 communicative settings. This was also supported by the interview data, highlighting that the participants expressed a significant WTC in L2 when allowed to use translanguaging in their complex learning process.

Table 4.
Regression weight of students' perception of translanguaging

Model	B	Std. Error	p-value
(Constant)	11.274	5.019	.028
Translanguaging	.364	.063	.000

The role of translanguaging in L2 WTC

The semi-structured in-depth interview explored how students perceived the role of translanguaging in supporting their L2 WTC. Our thematic analysis revealed several key themes that reflect several significances of translanguaging that contribute to students' L2 WTC, such as facilitation of understanding, improvement of self-confidence, reduction of anxiety, and promotion of a positive classroom environment.

Facilitation of understanding

All participants perceived translanguaging as a positive practice in their English classroom because they often find difficulty understanding the materials due to limited vocabulary, complex ideas, and a lack of multilingual support.

> *Because of my limited vocabulary. For the initial stages, I might still need it. In class, if I understand the lecturer's explanation in English, it's fine for me. However, for my friends who also have limited vocabulary, we just use Indonesian sometimes.* (P1)

P1 added that translanguaging should be used in explaining grammar and linguistics lessons because those are too complex to be understood without the use of Indonesian. Similarly, P4 emphasized that L1 use is essential because it will be difficult to learn if only relying on the target language. Furthermore, P2 agreed that translanguaging should be promoted to facilitate understanding, as it plays a role in multilingual support in the classroom.

> *If, for example, someone is asked, the correct answer is A, then his answer is B, because he doesn't understand, because there is no translanguaging, or it is forbidden to speak other languages other than English.* (P2)

The participants also reported that translanguaging assists them in becoming more willing to ask questions and take initiative in communication when they don't understand the materials, as not all students are equipped with sufficient English knowledge and vocabulary. Thus, without the support of translanguaging, students might struggle to grasp or convey their ideas clearly.

Improvement of self-confidence

Being confident in the EFL classroom is still challenging for the participants, particularly when they are not equipped with the use of translanguaging. P3 commented that in his speaking class, most students are not confident in using full English due to apprehensions about whether their speech and grammar use is correct and understandable, thus leading to unwillingness to communicate. P1 supported the idea that translanguaging plays a role as a facilitator of confidence improvement as it enables students to get a direct understanding and experience of the subject matter.

> *For example, the lecturer explains material A using translanguaging, so like oh, the English is this, like the English for a car is a car, well, that will be direct understanding. So, it's like we experience it and then we understand it.* (P1)

Similarly, P4 contended that asking for clarification requires confidence that is driven by translanguaging. Moreover, P3, who viewed the English major as not the students' first choice, argued that he becomes more confident to engage in L2 communication when translanguaging is allowed, as he stated, *"By using translanguaging, we can be more confident to speak up about what we have learned and about what we haven't understood. So, it's more confident to communicate"*.

Reduction of anxiety

As reported by the participants, translanguaging reduces the fear of making mistakes, which is a significant barrier to L2 communication. P3 expressed feelings of anxiety and worry about being judged by others when speaking in English, which encourages him to use L1.

> *I feel not confident because my classmates are usually like, "That's wrong to say like that" or "Not like that". So, it's like there's a feeling there's no need to speak in English, just use Indonesian.* (P3)

Similarly, P4 and P2 emphasized that translanguaging helped them to reduce their anxiety about classroom misunderstanding when interacting using English only in the classroom.

> *Because if there is a misunderstanding in class, it could cause anxiety.* (P4)

> *If the lecturers use full English, sometimes I'm afraid if I'm asked this, I don't fully understand what he said. So, the existence of translanguaging must be very helpful for me. I'm happy to express what's in my heart. I understand what he said with translanguaging.* (P2)

P2 also added that being afraid of making mistakes, a lack of confidence, and nervousness are the reasons why he gets reluctant to actively communicate in class. However, the existence of translanguaging has definitely increased and facilitated him to cope with his anxiety and become more confident in communication.

Promotion of a positive classroom environment

The participants argued that they perceived translanguaging positively because it could promote a positive classroom environment among students and lecturers, leading to their engagement in L2 communication. They possessed that by allowing students to activate their mother tongue, they are more ready to take part in class participation.

I think it (translanguaging) is still needed. The surrounding environment is not fully in English, so it's not maximized if English is used all the time. (P1)

I'm more motivated to take the initiative if there is translanguaging in the class. Because if I'm still told to use the main language I learn, English, I'm a little afraid to take the initiative to ask. (P2)

Furthermore, all the participants argued that through translanguaging, the learning and teaching process becomes easier because they can convey ideas more clearly when communicating with their peers or lecturers. As P4 emphasized when students do not understand the ideas or concepts given by the lecturers, they get eager to ask either using their L1 or L2. Thus, the students' WTC, when they are equipped with translanguaging strategy in their L2 classrooms, increases significantly. P2 argued his confidence in communication increases because he feels that he is equipped with translanguaging in the classroom. This shows that students are engaged more in classroom interaction because they perceive translanguaging as a positive strategy to make them better engaged in the L2 learning process.

Discussion

The findings showed how students perceived translanguaging as a supportive strategy that was closely associated with their increased L2 WTC. This aligns with recent studies, which emphasize the role of translanguaging practices in promoting students' engagement.

Translanguaging as a Positive Strategy

Based on the findings, students perceived translanguaging as a positive strategy to be conducted in EFL classrooms, particularly in higher education. It resembles Moody et al. (2019), who found that graduate students perceived translanguaging as a highly positive practice in L2 learning. They highlighted the role of lecturers and students in encouraging translanguaging in the classroom to promote the ease of L2 learning. Similarly, this present study demonstrated translanguaging as a positive strategy to be encouraged by lecturers and students in EFL classrooms, mainly to ease their understanding of the subject matter and improve their communicative competence. Aligning with this, scholars have proven that translanguaging enables students to grasp a better understanding of the materials taught (Rahmadani, 2023; Liando et al., 2023). Rahmadani (2023) found translanguaging enabled students to recall their L1 knowledge, facilitating a better understanding of the material. Similarly, Cenoz and Gorter (2022) argue excluding the knowledge of previously acquired languages can hinder language learning, as it is the most fundamental knowledge in the learning process. With regard to the development of communicative competence, Carstens (2016) argues that using L1 can improve English competence of weaker students by developing their vocabulary and confidence. Thus, the availability and positive perception of L1 use in the classroom helps develop students' communicative competence.

However, translanguaging is not always seen as a positive strategy in EFL contexts. Numerous studies also found the drawbacks of translanguaging, such as reducing English practice and exposure and making students reliant on their L1 (Sa'd & Qadermazi, 2015; Alasmari et al., 2022; Orfan, 2023). They argue that the overuse of L1 interfered with L2 learning and hindered students' ability to get more focus on L2 improvement. This challenge is particularly crucial in Indonesian contexts, as students encounter a variety of languages other than English, such as national and local languages (Zein, 2018; Rasman, 2018). Rasman (2018) found that in the Indonesian context, socio-political construction and monolingual bias where students accustomed to a monolingual environment, still hinder the creation of translanguaging space. Moreover, for English education students who are expected to master English, the use of translanguaging might affect their professionalism, as not only does it hinder their L2 focus, but it may also indicate a lack of low English proficiency (Galloway, 2017;

Orfan, 2023). Thus, employing translanguaging as an alternative strategy in L2 learning requires careful consideration to balance effective learning outcomes while maintaining a professional focus on the target language.

Responding to these ambivalent perspectives, L1 should take a role in improving L2 learning, such as for clarity and ease of instructions and explanations of grammatical and lexical items (Sa'd & Qadermazi, 2015). All the participants reported favoring translanguaging due to their limited L2 proficiency, especially during their freshman year. Therefore, translanguaging should be promoted in EFL classrooms, considering the need to facilitate a better understanding of the materials and engagement in classroom activities. However, there needs to be a measurement of how much L1 should be taken into consideration to mitigate the inappropriate use of translanguaging (Fang & Liu, 2020), as selective use of L1 can be an effective strategy in L2 communication (Sato, 2023). After all, with a positive attitude towards the use of translanguaging, students are deemed motivated to use translanguaging when learning English. Moody et al. (2019) claim that since students perceive translanguaging positively, L2 teachers should permit and promote the practice of translanguaging in their classrooms. Thus, translanguaging can be an alternative strategy in EFL classrooms to accommodate students' needs, address L2 deficiency, and promote flexible learning in the L2 classrooms.

WTC and Translanguaging Space

Students' positive perception of translanguaging correlates positively to their increased L2 WTC. This implies that students who view translanguaging positively might be more likely to use it in ways that enhance their WTC in formal communicative settings, particularly because translanguaging is frequently practiced to support their learning process. This finding is similar to Vrikki's (2012) finding that students' WTC increased when they were allowed to use their L1 to support their L2 development. Similarly, Antón and DiCamilla (1999) emphasize that L1 is essential as it provides students with scaffolded support to effectively function within their zone of proximal development. This suggests that allowing students to access and use their L1 in translanguaging strategy is crucial to increasing their WTC due to being better equipped and less inhibited, resulting in active engagement in classroom communication (Moody et al., 2019; Rahmadani, 2023). Thus, being equipped with L1 in L2 settings allows students to increase their WTC and express ideas verbally (Cook, 2001; Pan & Pan, 2010).

Students perceived translanguaging is associated with their L2 WTC because it facilitates better understanding, creates a positive classroom environment, and addresses affective variables (i.e., lack of confidence and language anxiety). This finding resembles several studies that found WTC was linked to a positive classroom environment (Khajavy et al., 2018; Li et al., 2022) and influenced by affective factors, such as self-confidence, motivation, and language anxiety (Peng & Woodrow, 2010; Eddy-U, 2015; Alqarni, 2021). Khajavy et al. (2018) found that when students are equipped with a supportive classroom, they have decreased anxiety and increased enjoyment and L2 WTC. Previous studies have discovered that students who used their L1 in L2 learning became less anxious to express themselves (Mari & Carroll, 2020; Cenoz et al., 2024). Consequently, since all the students perceived the use of translanguaging as positive, it fostered a low anxiety environment for them to get involved in L2 communication, resulting in increased WTC.

As perceived by the students, the fundamental reason for using translanguaging is to facilitate better understanding and communicative competence in the L2 classroom. The students believed that the English-only policy hindered their opportunity to engage in communication, especially when they did not understand the material well. This has also been discussed by Fang and Liu (2020), who found that translanguaging strategy is perceived positively by the students to get a better understanding and assist their low English proficiency. Since students perceived their L2 competence as insufficient, they tended to have reduced WTC as MacIntyre and Charos (1996) asserted that perceived language competence is associated with

WTC. Thus, increasing students' positive perceptions toward translanguaging might affect their WTC in the L2 classroom, as translanguaging fosters an emotionally safe environment (Ladegaard, 2018; Dryden et al., 2021). Moreover, allowing students to use translanguaging as a meaning-making mediator fosters engagement in communication with diverse audiences (Zein, 2022), thus, increasing their WTC in L2 communication.

CONCLUSION

This study found there is a significant positive correlation between students' perceptions of translanguaging and WTC in communicative settings among higher education students. This indicates that students' perception of translanguaging predicts their involvement in communication. Facilitation of understanding, self-confidence improvement, reduced anxiety, and promotion of a positive classroom environment are factors that contribute to increased L2 WTC, assisted by translanguaging in communicative settings. This present study contributes to the notion that translanguaging not only assists language proficiency but also serves as an emotional aid in L2 learning. To this end, lecturers need to integrate translanguaging strategy in the classroom, where L1 is often restricted. The implications of this study rely on the promotion of translanguaging as an alternative teaching strategy to assist students' communicative competence. This study also suggests that while translanguaging can facilitate learning, its application should be balanced and context-specific. Lecturers could promote translanguaging strategically to enhance comprehension without diminishing L2 exposures, encouraging students to build confidence and increase their L2 WTC, given their goal of becoming proficient English teachers. This can be achieved by implementing translanguaging only in a way that supports learning such as clarifying complex topics and helping students feel more comfortable and engaged in L2 communication in the early stages of language learning. Thus, it is also highly recommended that lecturers should be mindful of their students' specific needs, particularly during the initial phases of adaptation to English language learning.

However, it is important to note that the findings were mainly derived from students' perceptions. Their real performance when implementing translanguaging has not yet been explored. Thus, it is a call for further study to cover this gap by investigating translanguaging strategy inside the classroom and seeing what aspects are found to be beneficial and challenging when it is implemented in diverse linguistics contexts, particularly concerning underexplored local languages. Furthermore, exploring other stakeholders' perceptions (lecturers, parents, and curriculum makers) regarding translanguaging strategy can bring rich nuances into this area of improvement. All these areas of improvement are crucial for gaining a rich understanding of translanguaging and its complex role in promoting L2 WTC in EFL classrooms.

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