

# Translanguaging in EFL Classroom at A Private University in South Sulawesi

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## Abstract

This research aims to investigate translanguaging in an EFL classroom. Several researchers have researched translanguaging (1) Sahib (2019), (2) Saputra (2014), (3) Rabbidge (2019), Yuvayapan (2019), Aoyama (2020), and Rasmin & Nur (2023). Nevertheless, in south Sulawesi, especially Palopo still not enough. Hence, this research tries to see the practice of translanguaging in EFL classrooms. This research focused on exploring the reasons lecturers conduct translanguaging, the way lecturers conduct translanguaging in EFL classrooms, and the lecturers' and students' perceptions toward translanguaging. The participants of this research were two English lecturers and fifteen students in the fourth-semester English education department at Cokroaminoto Palopo University. This research applied a qualitative method, the instruments were classroom observation and interview. The result of the observation and interview was transcribed and analyzed based on the research focus. The findings of this research were the reasons lecturers conducted translanguaging the first to make their English teaching in the classroom effective and the second to make the students understand the teaching and learning material well. The way lecturers conduct translanguaging is based on the situation of the students. If the students do not understand what the lecturers explain in English, they will use translanguaging in the classroom to make the teaching and learning process run smoothly. The lecturers express a positive perception toward translanguaging which is reflected through ten positive comments about the use of translanguaging in the EFL classroom. The students also give a positive perception of the five questions that have been asked. The students can feel the benefit of the use of translanguaging in the EFL classroom.

*Keywords:* EFL, perception, translanguaging.

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## 1. Introduction

Williams (1994) first coined the term "translanguaging," and Garcia & Wei (2014) elaborate on it by saying that it refers to pedagogical language practices in programs designed to revitalize Welsh in which participants must read in Welsh and write in English or something similar. After carefully observing this practice, Williams asserts that it will assist teachers and students in maximizing their linguistic resources for problem-solving tasks and conceptual construction. Since then, the concept of translanguaging has been developed to encompass multilingual individuals' complex language practices and their pedagogical application.

According to Garcia and Wei (2014:2), translanguaging is an approach to language use, bilingualism, and the education of bilinguals that views the language practices of bilinguals as one linguistic repertoire with features that have been societally constructed as belonging to two separate languages rather than two autonomous language systems as has traditionally been the case.

Moreover, Cenoz and Gorter (2017:311), translanguaging is a pedagogical technique in which Welsh and English are used alternately for input and output throughout the same lesson. Obtaining knowledge in one language and utilizing it in the other is the notion. Translanguaging, according to Baker (2011:288), is the process of creating meaning, molding experiences, and learning through the use of two languages. Lubliner and Grisham (2017), translanguaging teachers are willing to employ many languages to enhance their instruction by combining their pupils' linguistic and cultural resources.

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English lecturers can use translanguaging as one of the communication strategies in the classroom. Translanguaging not only can be utilized to assist the process of teaching English as a foreign language but also translanguaging involves the use of students' home language in learning English. It can interest students to learn English. The research done by Saputra and Atmowardoyo (2015) wrote about translanguaging in a classroom context. The use of translanguaging in the classroom could help to analyze some problems, to improve students' vocabulary mastery, and also to encourage students to pay attention to students' explanations in the classroom. Translanguaging also motivated students to learn a second language.

Translanguaging has an important role in the teaching and learning process because the effective communication connection between lecturers and students will harmonize through translanguaging. So, translanguaging has been applied by many English lecturers as a pedagogic strategy in the process of teaching English as a foreign language. Because some students had difficulty using English. They will choose to keep silent than speak up during the learning and teaching process. Meanwhile, the main task for the lecturers to understand is how to make the students interested in the material and how to make students able to show their skills in the learning process. The students and the lecturers can use many strategies, including translanguaging in the classroom. The students are allowed to write and speak in their mother tongue and then translanguaging to English as a second language. Translanguaging will optimize the student's mastery of English so that the process of teaching and learning is processive. In the teaching and learning process, the use of translanguaging makes the lecturer more satisfied with using Indonesian than English.

Based on researcher observation, a tendency of bilingual and multilingual translanguaging used by the lecturer and students occurred in the classroom interaction, especially at Cokroaminoto Palopo University. Translanguaging cannot be ignored in the teaching and learning process. Supported by the result of interviewing some students who said they find it very difficult to understand if the lecturer is full of English in explaining the material. They prefer if the lecturers combine English and Indonesian rather than use English because it's not useful if the lecturers use English but the students do not understand the material well. This paper focuses on the way lecturers conduct translanguaging in EFL classrooms. As a background through this research, a research question formulated in this research (1) Why do lecturers conduct translanguaging during EFL teaching in the classroom? (2) How do lecturers conduct translanguaging during EFL teaching in the classroom? (3) How do lecturers and students perceive translanguaging in EFL teaching in the classroom at Cokroaminoto Palopo University?

## **2. Methodology**

To investigate the reasons lecturers, conduct translanguaging in the classroom and the way lecturers conduct translanguaging, the researcher applied a descriptive qualitative design. Qualitative research is an expansive and continually evolving methodological field that encompasses a wide range of research approaches, as well as multiple perspectives on the nature of research itself (Leavy, 2019). This research was conducted at Cokroaminoto Palopo University. The participants of this research were two English lecturers who had been teaching in an EFL classroom at Cokroaminoto Palopo University, Kota Palopo, South Sulawesi. The data of this research was obtained by using observation and interviews while observing and interviewing the sample researcher used video and audio recording. The data were analyzed by using the mode of Miles and Huberman (2014) through four steps namely data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification.

## **3. Findings**

### *3.1. The reasons lecturers conduct translanguaging*

The reasons lecturers conduct translanguaging in EFL classrooms was to make the students understand the material and the instruction given to them and also to make the teaching process in the classroom effective. This can also be seen in the result of classroom observation done by the researcher. The two lecturers conduct translanguaging in the teaching process, especially in explaining the material.

The data analysis presents the reason lecturers conduct translinguaging in the teaching and learning process. The question “What is your reason for using translinguaging in the teaching process?” The answer from the lecturers presents in extract 4 below..

*Extract 4*

L1: The reason to use translinguaging in teaching I think, as I said before, is to make the students understand about the material and the instructions given to them.

L2: My reason is to make my English teaching in the classroom effective and the second is to make the students understand the material well.

**Table 1.** Translinguaging Practice by Lecturer 1

Activities	Description	Techniques of Translinguaging			
		Translinguaging	Indonesian	English	Local Language
Opening	Greeting			√	
	Checking students' attendance			√	
	Opening the class			√	
	Gaining students attention	√	√	√	
Core activities	Explaining the material	√	√	√	
	Giving feedback			√	
	Giving assignment	√	√	√	
Closing	Checking students understanding	√	√	√	
	Closing the class	√	√	√	

Regarding the observation above, the lecturer conducted translinguaging in the teaching and learning process. The lecturer used it to gain students' attention, explain the material, give assignments, check students understanding, and close the class. The lecturer used three languages namely English, Indonesian, and sometimes local language.

**Table 2.** Translinguaging Practice by Lecturer 2

Activities	Description	Techniques of Translinguaging			
		Translinguaging	Indonesian	English	Local Language
Opening	Greeting			√	
	Checking students' attendance			√	
	Opening the class			√	
	Gaining students' attention	√	√	√	
Core activities	Explaining the material	√	√	√	√
	Giving feedback		√		√
	Giving assignment	√	√	√	
Closing	Checking students understanding	√	√	√	
	Closing the class	√	√	√	

From the result of the observation above, the researcher conclude that the lecturer conducted translanguaging in the teaching and learning process, especially in gaining students' attention, explaining the material to the students, giving assignments, checking students understanding, and closing the class cause when the lecturer uses full English their students will not understand or not catch the teaching and learning materials have been explained by the lecturers.

### 3.2. The way lecturers conduct translanguaging

The result from the interview regarding the way lecturers conduct translanguaging in the teaching process is presented as follows:

#### Extract 5

Q: How do you conduct translanguaging in EFL class?

L1: By translating what I've said in English to Indonesian mostly in Indonesia because I seldom translate them into local language. So, when I'm trying to explain in full English and I see the students do not understand what I am saying or what I mean so I try to translate into Bahasa Indonesia or I try to combine it using English and Indonesia.

L2: I conduct based on the situation of the classroom. If the classroom finds many problems in accepting the material, I will use translanguaging.

Regarding the result of interviewing the lecturers, the researcher conclude that the way lecturers conduct translanguaging is based on the situation of the students, if the students do not understand what lecturers explain in English, so they will use translanguaging in the classroom to make the teaching and learning process run smoothly.

It can be seen from the result of the extracted data recording in the teaching and learning process below:

L: When you become a teacher **pilih mi**. (*When you become a teacher, just choose it*).

L: Tapi **nda papa, gampang ji**. I want to explain in very simple way. (*But does not matter. I want to explain in a very simple way*).

The extract above show that the lecturer used three languages in explaining the material. They did translanguaging by using English, Indonesian language, and sometimes also using the local language.

### 3.3. Lecturers' and students' perceptions toward translanguaging

The third research question is about the lecturers' and students' perceptions of translanguaging. Based on the result of the interview, the researcher found that the students and lecturers have a positive perception of translanguaging.

#### a. Lecturers' perception of translanguaging

Based on the result of the interview, the lecturers express a positive perception toward translanguaging which is reflected through ten positive comments about the use of translanguaging in the EFL classroom.

The first question that appears is "*What do you think about the existence of translanguaging?*" extract 1 below is the lecturer's answer to the question:

#### Extract 1

L1: **I think this is ok**. So, every teacher or every lecturer can use translanguaging as long as the purpose is to help the students in understanding the materials or to make materials clearly why not we use translanguaging.

L2: In teaching English as a foreign language because in our country English is still foreign so **translanguaging is very important**. We don't need to teach English fully because English is still foreign, if we teach English fully in the classroom the students will get bored or we cannot make the students know what our aim is in the classroom so translanguaging is very important.

Based on the lecturer's answer above, translanguaging is very important in teaching English as a foreign language as long as the purpose of using translanguaging is to make the students understand the material and make the students not bored in the classroom.

The next question is about the impact of using translanguaging in teaching EFL. The answer of the two lecturers can see in the extract below:

*Extract 2*

L1: Talking about whether it has impact or not in teaching EFL classroom **I think it has**, because sometimes when we use full English some of the students will not understand it deeply, so we try to translate it into another language or into students language for example into Bahasa Indonesia, so it has impact actually as I said before that it can make students understand the material deeply.

L2: **Ya, it's very big impact** especially when we teach the material most of the students will know better than full of English because we know some of our students are still low in English, so we should explain the material by combining English and Indonesian.

The extracted data above show that translanguaging has an impact on teaching EFL. The use of translanguaging can make the students know better about the material that has been explained and make them understand the material deeply because some of the students are still low in English.

The third question that appears is about the importance of using the Indonesian language in the teaching process.

*Extract 3*

L1: Talking about the importance it depends on actually, when most of the students in the classroom are low in English **I think it is very important to use translanguaging**. When we see some of the students don't understand what we are explaining in English, then I think we can use translanguaging to make them understand.

L2: It is conditionally, if the students cannot understand the material well so the teacher should use Indonesian but if the students know the material if lecturer using English ya never mind the lecturer should continue by using English but the students have a problem to understand the material ya **the lecturer should change English to Indonesian**.

The two lecturers state that the use of Indonesian is conditionally based on the students in the classroom. If some of the students do not understand the materials that explaining in English it is very important to use Indonesian.

The fourth question that appears is about reasons lecturers conduct translanguaging. It can be seen in the extracted data below:

L1: The reason to use translanguaging in teaching I think, as I said before, is to **make the students understand about the material and the instructions given to them**.

L2: My reason is **to make my English teaching in the classroom effective** and the second is to make the students understand the material well.

Regarding the extracted data above, there were two reasons lecturers conducted translanguaging in the teaching and learning process to make the students have a better understanding of the material and make the teaching and learning process in the classroom more effective.

The sixth question is about the appropriate time to use translanguaging in the classroom. Below are extracted data from the lecturer's answer.

*Extract 6*

L1: Talking about the appropriate time to use translanguaging **I think when the students have problem** in understanding the instruction or the material explaining to them but as long as they still understand then we have to try to keep speaking English because you know we have to make them habit in listening English and make them habit in using English.

L2: **To explain the material** in difficulty we should use translanguaging and then to explain some definition of material and some definition of theory probably the first time we use English and then Indonesian to make the students know the material.

The two lecturers state that the appropriate time to use translanguaging is when the students have a problem understanding the material or instruction given to them. For example, to explain some definitions of the theory which need more explanation.

The last question is about whether agree or not translanguaging has a positive impact on learners.

*Extract 10*

L1: Whether I agree or not I think **it depends**. When the students are not very good in English then I agree but when some students have good capability in English I don't agree, so it depends.

L2: **Ya I agree**, because it makes the students easier. It is based on my reason in the first question. In our country English is still foreign we didn't use English as a second language so we should combine English and Indonesian.

From the extracted data above, one of the lecturers answered agreed because it makes the students easier to understand the material while the other one depends on the students. If the students are not very good in English she will agree but if the students have good capabilities she will not agree.

Based on the result of interviewing the lecturers about their perception of translanguaging, the researcher conclude that the two lecturers perceive translanguaging positively. Almost all the comments showed translanguaging has a positive impact on teaching EFL, especially at Cokroaminoto Palopo University.

*b. Students' perception of translanguaging*

Translanguaging has a positive impact on learning EFL. Fifteen students were interviewed with five questions, and all of them give positive comments. The answer of the students can see on the transcript data below:

The first question that appears is whether students agree or not about translanguaging has a positive impact on learning English as a second language.

*Extract 1*

S3: Iya tentu, translanguaging has a positive impact in EFL karena membantu dan memudahkan dalam mempelajari Bahasa asing. (*Yes, of course, translanguaging has a positive impact in EFL because it can help and facilitate the students in learning foreign languages.*)

S4: Menurut saya, penerjemahan ini memiliki dampak positif dalam pembelajaran EFL karena tidak semua dari kita itu paham betul apa arti dari Bahasa Inggris yang disebutkan oleh dosen. Jadi terkadang ada kata yang terdengar tidak familiar di telinga kita yang dosen sebut jadi mengapa saya merasa translanguaging dalam pembelajaran EFL ini memiliki dampak yang positif. (*According to me, translanguaging has a positive impact in learning EFL because not every students understand about the meaning of English words or sentence from the lecturers, so sometimes there are some unfamiliar words to the students.*)

Fifteen students who were asked eight of them answered yes but do not give a reason. The extract data indicate that all of the students agree translanguaging has a positive impact on learning EFL because translanguaging can help them to understand the material explained by the lecturer.

The next question is about the existence of translanguaging. Below was the extracted data from the student's answer. The other answer can see on the transcript data put in appendices.

*Extract 2*

S5: In my opinion, keberadaan penerjemahan sangatlah penting dan tentunya sangat diperlukan ketika kita ingin mempelajari suatu Bahasa. (*The existence of translanguaging is very important when we want to learn a language*)

S6: Karena perbedaan budaya menghasilkan perbedaan Bahasa keberadaan translanguaging sangat penting dalam menghubungkan orang di seluruh dunia, sebab pertukaran informasi perlu difasilitasi agar pesan yang disampaikan dapat diterima baik oleh penutur maupun lawan penutur tanpa adanya translanguaging pesan tidak bisa disampaikan dengan baik. (*Because different culture produces different language, the existence of translanguaging very important to associate people all over the world because exchange information must be facilitated in order to make the message*)

*has been taught can receive by the speaker and listener without translanguaging the message cannot convey smoothly.)*

S7: Menurut saya, keberadaan translanguaging ini sangat membantu karena tidak semua dari kalangan orang memahami betul tentang arti dari Bahasa Inggris itu sendiri. *(According to me, the existence of translanguaging help the students because not every people know about the meaning of English itself).*

From the extract data above, the students give positive comments about the existence of translanguaging in learning foreign languages, especially English. Translanguaging really helps them in the learning process.

The third question that appears is about their perception of translanguaging.

#### *Extract 3*

S5: In my point of view, translanguaging merupakan suatu jembatan bagi seorang pembelajar Bahasa agar lebih muda dan lebih memahami Bahasa yang sedang dipelajari tentunya. *(In my point of view, translanguaging is a bridge to have better understanding to the language being studied)*

S6: Translanguaging sebagai upaya para penutur multibahasa atau yang bisa bicara dalam beberapa Bahasa untuk memenuhi fungsi sosial dan fungsi kognitif yang kompleks dalam kehidupan sehari-hari. *(Translanguaging as the way of multilingual speaker to fulfill social and cognitive function in daily life).*

S7: Pandangan saya tentang penerjemahan itu baik, mengapa? Karena dapat membantu seseorang yang tidak paham betul dengan Bahasa Inggris. *(My perception about translanguaging is good, why? Because can help someone who do not understand English).*

S11: In my personal opinion, translanguaging is a way merupakan suatu cara untuk mempermudah seorang pembelajar dalam memahami Bahasa yang sedang dipelajari. *(Translanguaging is a way to make learners easily understand the language).*

Based on the extracted data appear the researcher concludes that all of the interviewers give a positive perception toward the use of translanguaging in the teaching and learning process. Translanguaging plays an important role because translanguaging might let the students mix languages when responding to their teacher's question or friend's question, knowledge, and vocabulary they know.

Another question that has been asked was about the impact of translanguaging in the EFL classroom.

#### *Extract 4*

S5: Tentunya translanguaging atau penerjemahan sangat berdampak atau memiliki dampak pada kelas EFL yang mana dengan adanya penerjemahan maka kami akan lebih memahami materi yang disampaikan walaupun tidak harus sepenuhnya penerjemahan tersebut diterapkan di kelas. *(Of course, translanguaging has an impact in EFL class, because translanguaging make us more understand about the material explain although not fully the translanguaging is applied in class).*

The students agree that translanguaging has an impact in EFL class because translanguaging make them a better understanding of the material explained.

S14: From what I have seen so far, translanguaging has such a big impact in EFL studies and one of the impacts is that students are able to learn English well even though their native is not English.

Other students say that translanguaging bring some impact on EFL learners one of them is the students can learn English well even though their native language is Indonesian.

S11: In my opinion, dengan adanya translanguaging saya dapat dengan mudah memahami apa yang disampaikan oleh guru atau dosen. *(In my opinion, with translanguaging I can easily understand what the lecturers have explained).*

Based on the extracted data, thirteen students said yes because translanguaging can help them to easily understand what lecturers have talked about or explained, a student answered neutrally it depends on the lecturer, and a student answered translanguaging can make students lazy to look for unfamiliar or unknown words in learning EFL. From

fifteen samples of the students, thirteen of them give positive comments about the impact of translanguaging in the EFL classroom.

The last question is about the situation translanguaging must be done by the lecturers in the classroom.

#### *Extract 5*

S1: In my opinion, when the lecturer explains the material so the students have a better understanding of what is being discussed.

S7: Menurut saya, dalam situasi jika dosen melihat mahasiswa agak kebingungan dengan kata yang sudah disampaikan karena dalam situasi itu siswa tidak paham dengan apa yang disampaikan oleh dosen. (*According to me, the situation when the lecturer see the students confuse with word because in this situation the student do not understand what lecturer has been explained*).

Based on the extracted data above, most of the students said the lecturers must be used translanguaging when explaining the material or saying some unfamiliar words to make the students understand the material easily. A student also said in every situation while studying EFL the lecturers must be done translanguaging.

## **4. Discussions**

### *4. 1. The Reasons Lecturers Conduct Translanguaging*

Regarding the result of the findings above, the reason lecturers conduct translanguaging was to make the students understand the material and the instruction given to them and also to make the teaching process in the classroom effective it is relevant to the study done by Hoffman (1991) there are a number reasons for bilingual and multilingual done translanguaging, those are talking about a particular topic, quoting somebody else, express solidarity, interjection, repetition used for clarification, expressing group identity, to soften and strengthen request or command, because of real lexical need, and to exclude other people.

Moreover, Rahmawansyah (2019) found translanguaging is always used by teachers in the teaching and learning process because teachers have many reasons: translanguaging used the teacher could help the students to be more active in the teaching-learning process. Translanguaging used by the teacher could create effective communication between teacher and students in the classroom, translanguaging used by the teacher to help the low students in English vocabulary, and translanguaging used by the teacher to accommodate local language in EFL classroom.

Similarly, this case is also depicted in a study by Saputra (2014, p.9) that assumed ten functions of translanguaging was found in the classroom namely checking to understand, explaining pronunciation and spelling, explaining the rule of grammar, explaining exercise in the book, explaining the meaning of abstract vocabulary, to co-construct meaning, class management and control, organization classroom setting, telling jokes/anecdotes, and praising. Furthermore, Sahib (2019) found that translanguaging is essential in making the learning process more effective in EFL classrooms at public high schools in the Indonesian context. Translanguaging occurs with multilingual, with English as the target language in learning, Indonesian language, and local languages.

Cook (2001) referred to translanguaging in the classroom as a natural response in a bilingual situation. It supported by Garcia (2012:2) defines translanguaging as “the discourse practices of the bilinguals, as well as pedagogical strategies that use the entire linguistic repertoire of bilingual students flexibly to teach both rigorous content and language for academic use.

### *4. 2. The Way Lecturers Conduct Translanguaging*

Based on the findings above, the researcher found that the way lecturers conduct translanguaging is based on the situation of the students. If the students do not understand what the lecturers explain in English, they will use translanguaging in the classroom. Translanguaging practice can trigger higher responses from the students. It is



related to the study from Rabbidge (2019), teachers' translanguaging practice can improve students' understanding and improve students' ability to participate in the teaching and learning process.

Similarly, Putri and Rifai (2021) the teachers practiced translanguaging when explaining the material, especially grammar. In addition, the teachers also practiced translanguaging when they managed the classroom and showed shared cultural values. Further analysis showed that translanguaging helps teachers achieve their goals and one of the goals is to help their students understand the materials better. Moreover, Putrawan, G., E. (2022) found that the teachers practiced translanguaging by using English, Indonesian, and local languages and even foreign languages other than English.

#### *4. 3. The lecturers and the students perceive translanguaging*

##### *a. Lecturers' perception of translanguaging*

The lecturers express a positive perception toward translanguaging which is reflected through ten positive comments about the use of translanguaging in the EFL classroom. The two lecturers' responses resonated with the concept of Canagarajah (2013) as he pointed out that translanguaging could be helpful to enhance student's learning experience and develop their sense of ownership. Students could get a better understanding of the vocabularies which overall would enhance their experience of gaining knowledge. Also, the use of both native and target languages might be helpful to solve grammar problems. Furthermore, students would be able to come out of inferiority if their native language gets equal priority as the target language.

Meanwhile, Yuvayapan (2019) stated that when translanguaging occurs in the classroom, lower-level proficiency students could use this opportunity to understand the lesson and to participate in the classroom. Similarly, Khairunnisa & Lukmana (2020) said that EFL teachers showed a positive attitude toward the use of translanguaging in their classroom. Most of them considered the incorporation of Indonesian and local languages to be beneficial in EFL classrooms Translanguaging also use to facilitate students' learning.

Moreover, Raja, F., D., Suparno, and Ngadiso (2022) that assumed teachers express positive attitudes towards teacher-directed translanguaging. Employing translanguaging can close the gap between the student's proficiency levels caused by the national curriculum provision.

##### *b. Students' perception of translanguaging*

Regarding the findings above the students also give positive perception to the five questions that have been asked. The students can feel the benefit of the use of translanguaging in the EFL classroom. It is also relevant to the study of (Nursanti, 2016) six benefits were revealed in the study. First, it assists the students to understand English lessons. Second, it helps them to understand new vocabulary in English. Third, it can help them to do exercises. Fourth, it helps them to ask and answer something during the class. Fifth, it assists them to read something in English correctly. Lastly, it makes them feel comfortable during the class.

Furthermore, Aoyama (2020) stated that students' awareness of the use of L1 as established by the teachers will facilitate the learning process. Students will use L1 to provide explanations about unknown words and phrases in English that they thought will be difficult to be understood by their peers.

## **5. Conclusions**

Based on the finding and discussions above, the researcher concludes that:

- a. The reasons lecturers conduct translanguaging are first to make their English teaching in the classroom effective and second to make the students understand the material well.
- b. The way lecturers conduct translanguaging is based on the situation of the students. If the students do not understand what the lecturers explain in English, they will use translanguaging in the classroom to make the

teaching and learning process run smoothly. The lecturers practiced translanguaging by using English and Indonesian language sometimes also using the local language.

- c. The lecturers express a positive perception toward translanguaging which is reflected through ten positive comments about the use of translanguaging in the EFL classroom. The students also give a positive perception of the five questions that have been asked. The students can feel the benefit of the use of translanguaging in the EFL classroom.

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