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From Silence to Engagement: Translanguaging as a Catalyst for Students' Comprehension and Active Classroom Participation

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ABSTRACT

This study explored how translanguaging is implemented by Senior High School teachers and how they perceive its contribution to students' comprehension, participation, meaning-making, and engagement in a multilingual Philippine classroom. Using a qualitative phenomenological design, ten teachers at Pooc National High School, Talisay City, Cebu, were selected through criterion purposive sampling. Data from validated semi-structured interviews, non-participant classroom observations, field notes, and authorized video recordings were analyzed using Colaizzi's seven-step phenomenological approach. Findings indicated that teachers strategically integrated English, Filipino, and Cebuano/Visayan through language shifting, translation, contextualized explanations, and collaborative activities. They reported clearer understanding of unfamiliar concepts, greater willingness to communicate, more confident classroom participation, and strengthened peer interaction. However, challenges included overreliance on familiar languages, difficulty translating specialized terminology, additional instructional demands, and maintaining opportunities for English development. Purposeful translanguaging therefore emerged as a perceived instructional scaffold rather than a substitute for target-language learning. The study recommends piloting and refining the developed Translanguaging-Based Instructional Exemplar, including structured multilingual support and gradual transition to English. As evidence comes from ten teachers in one school and relies primarily on qualitative accounts and observations, causal effects and wider transferability cannot be established. The study contributes a context-specific instructional resource for linguistically responsive teaching and potentially advances educational sustainability, SDG 4 (Quality Education), and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) through more inclusive opportunities for classroom learning.

Keywords: *Classroom Participation, Instructional Scaffolding, Multilingual Education, Student Comprehension, Teacher Experiences, Translanguaging*

1. INTRODUCTION

Translanguaging has gained recognition as a pedagogical approach that allows multilingual learners to use their complete linguistic repertoires to construct meaning, communicate ideas, and engage in classroom learning. Rather than imposing strict boundaries between languages, translanguaging recognizes learners' existing linguistic resources as valuable tools for comprehension, interaction, and knowledge construction (Wang, 2022; Bailey et al., 2025). In English language classrooms, differences in language proficiency may limit students' understanding of complex concepts and willingness to participate in discussions. Research suggests that purposeful translanguaging can support meaning-making, classroom interaction, and learner confidence, although its effectiveness depends on instructional context and implementation (Huang & Chalmers, 2023; Hamman-Ortiz et al., 2025). In the Philippines, where English, Filipino, and regional languages coexist, translanguaging provides opportunities for linguistically responsive instruction. This study explores the experiences of Senior High School English teachers at Pooc National High School in Talisay City, Cebu, focusing on how translanguaging practices support students' comprehension, active participation, meaning-making, and engagement. Its findings serve as the basis for developing a Translanguaging-Based Instructional Exemplar.

Research Problem

Multilingual classrooms present instructional challenges when students are expected to understand lessons and communicate primarily in English despite varying levels of proficiency. Learners may hesitate to express ideas, ask questions, or participate in discussions because of linguistic limitations and concerns about making mistakes. Translanguaging offers a potential response by allowing teachers and students to draw on familiar languages during learning activities (Macawile & Plata, 2022; Miranda & Gervacio, 2023). Studies conducted in Philippine classrooms indicate that translanguaging supports knowledge construction, conceptual understanding, and classroom communication. Macawile and Plata (2022) identified its value as a pedagogical resource among Senior High School teachers, while Miranda and Gervacio (2023) documented positive teacher beliefs and classroom applications in tertiary English instruction. Similarly, Hanasan and Cabanatan (2024) examined the experiences of Senior High School English teachers, highlighting instructional opportunities and implementation challenges. Reyes (2024) and De Los Reyes and Bagona (2024) further demonstrated how multilingual resources facilitate classroom communication and learning activities in Philippine elementary education.

Despite these contributions, important questions remain regarding how teachers implement translanguaging, how they perceive its contribution to student comprehension and participation, and which pedagogical mechanisms support meaning-making and engagement. Systematic reviews also emphasize the importance of context-specific investigations and caution against assuming that translanguaging consistently produces superior learning outcomes across settings (Huang & Chalmers, 2023; Hamman-Ortiz et al., 2025). At Pooc National High School, students communicate through English, Filipino, and Cebuano. This linguistic diversity creates a relevant setting for examining teachers' experiences of using multiple languages during English instruction. Accordingly, the present study addresses the need for context-specific evidence concerning translanguaging instructional practices, teachers' perceived benefits and challenges, and their implications for developing a responsive instructional exemplar.

Assumptions of the Study

The study was guided by the assumption that the purposeful integration of English and learners' familiar languages can support comprehension, meaning-making, confidence, and classroom participation. It further assumed that translanguaging may facilitate collaborative interaction and help learners connect new concepts with their existing knowledge and experiences (De Los

Reyes & Bagona, 2024; Li & Qu, 2024). The study also assumed that teachers' instructional decisions, classroom contexts, and ability to balance multilingual support with English language development influence the implementation of translanguaging. As a qualitative phenomenological investigation, the study treated these assumptions as guiding propositions rather than predetermined conclusions and relied on teachers' experiences to explore them.

Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to explore the use of translanguaging as an instructional strategy among Senior High School English teachers at Pooc National High School, Talisay City, Cebu, during School Year 2026–2027. Specifically, it sought to identify the translanguaging instructional practices employed during classroom content delivery; examine how these practices facilitate students' comprehension in multilingual learning environments; describe their perceived contribution to students' active participation in classroom discussions and activities; determine the pedagogical mechanisms associated with meaning-making and engagement; and explore teachers' lived experiences, including the opportunities and challenges encountered in implementing translanguaging. Based on the findings, the study aimed to develop a Translanguaging-Based Instructional Exemplar that could guide teachers in integrating multilingual resources into English language instruction.

Theoretical or Conceptual Basis

The study was primarily anchored in Translanguaging Theory, supported by Sociocultural Learning Theory and Systemic Functional Linguistics. These complementary perspectives explain how learners use linguistic resources, social interaction, and contextualized communication to construct meaning and participate in learning. Translanguaging Theory recognizes multilingual learners' linguistic repertoires as integrated resources for communication and knowledge construction. It provides the principal framework for understanding how teachers strategically incorporate English, Filipino, and Cebuano to facilitate comprehension and classroom interaction. Recent conceptual research emphasizes the importance of recognizing multilingual competence and designing equitable learning experiences that accommodate students' diverse linguistic resources (Turner & Lin, 2024; Bailey et al., 2025). Sociocultural Learning Theory, associated with Vygotsky's perspective on socially mediated learning, explains how interaction, collaboration, and instructional scaffolding support knowledge development. Within this perspective, translanguaging functions as a potential linguistic scaffold that enables learners to participate in discussions, negotiate meaning, and develop understanding through teacher and peer interaction. Research on translanguaging-mediated classroom interaction and collaborative learning supports this conceptual relationship (Tai, 2024; Li & Qu, 2024). Systemic Functional Linguistics, associated with Halliday's view of language as a social meaning-making resource, explains how language performs ideational, interpersonal, and textual functions. These functions provide a basis for understanding how multilingual learners express concepts, establish classroom relationships, and organize information during instructional activities. Bao (2025) extends this perspective through a Hallidayan framework that conceptualizes multilingual meaning-making across linguistic resources. The study further adopted an Input–Process–Output conceptual framework. The inputs comprised teachers' translanguaging practices, perceived contributions to comprehension and participation, pedagogical mechanisms, and lived experiences. The process involved qualitative data collection, thematic analysis, and interpretation. The intended output was a Translanguaging-Based Instructional Exemplar designed to support purposeful multilingual instruction while maintaining opportunities for English language development.

The study aligns primarily with Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education) by addressing inclusive and linguistically responsive teaching practices. Through the exploration of translanguaging, it seeks to inform instructional strategies that may improve students' access to lesson content, encourage active participation, and support meaningful learning among students with diverse linguistic backgrounds. This focus is consistent with the emphasis on equitable learning opportunities identified in the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2025). The study also has relevance to SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) by examining an instructional approach intended to minimize language-related barriers to classroom participation. Recognizing learners' existing linguistic resources may help teachers create more inclusive environments in which students have opportunities to express ideas and demonstrate understanding regardless of differences in English proficiency (Bailey et al., 2025). In terms of sustainability, the study contributes to educational, socio-cultural, and institutional sustainability by providing a context-specific basis for responsive teaching practices, recognition of linguistic diversity, and professional instructional improvement. Its proposed Translanguaging-Based Instructional Exemplar may support the continuing development of inclusive English language teaching. These contributions represent the study's educational implications rather than directly measured SDG outcomes.

2. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study utilized a qualitative phenomenological research design to examine how Senior High School English teachers experienced, implemented, and interpreted translanguaging in classroom instruction. This approach was appropriate for obtaining detailed descriptions of teachers' practices and perceptions concerning students' comprehension, participation, and meaning-making in multilingual learning environments. Data were gathered through semi-structured interviews and non-participant classroom observations to capture both teachers' experiences and actual instructional practices. The findings were analyzed to identify recurring patterns and themes that served as the foundation for developing a Translanguaging-Based Instructional Exemplar.

Research Locale or Study Setting

The study was conducted at Pooc National High School in Barangay Pooc, Talisay City, Cebu, Philippines. The institution offered Junior and Senior High School programs and served students from the surrounding communities. Formerly an extension of Jaclupan National High School, it became administratively independent in 2025. During the study, the school had 48 teachers and 19 classrooms supporting its instructional operations. English, Filipino, and Cebuano were commonly used in classroom communication and everyday interactions, making the institution a suitable setting for examining translanguaging practices and their perceived contributions to students' comprehension, participation, and engagement in English language instruction.

Participants or Data Sources

The participants consisted of ten Senior High School teachers from Pooc National High School who had direct experience implementing translanguaging in classroom instruction. They were selected through criterion purposive sampling to obtain relevant and detailed accounts of the phenomenon. Eligibility required participants to be currently teaching Senior High School classes, have actual experience using translanguaging, demonstrate the ability to describe relevant instructional situations, and voluntarily agree to participate. Teachers without translanguaging experience, those not teaching Senior High School classes, and those unwilling or unable to provide relevant accounts were excluded. Participants' teaching experience ranged from 6 years and 3 months to 25 years, providing diverse professional perspectives on

multilingual instructional practices. Their identities were protected through the use of participant codes, designated as Participant 1 through Participant 10. The primary data sources were teachers' interview responses, classroom observation records, field notes, and authorized video recordings.

Research Instruments or Materials

The study utilized a researcher-developed and validated semi-structured interview guide and a classroom observation protocol. The interview guide contained open-ended questions aligned with the research objectives and covered five areas: translanguaging instructional practices, students' comprehension of content, classroom participation, pedagogical mechanisms for meaning-making and engagement, and teachers' experiences with translanguaging. The instrument underwent content validation by specialists in qualitative research and English language teaching to improve its clarity, relevance, and organization. The classroom observation protocol was developed to document naturally occurring translanguaging practices, instructional communication, teacher-student interactions, students' responses, and classroom participation. Field notes and authorized video recordings supplemented the observations. The researcher served as the primary instrument for gathering and interpreting qualitative data while maintaining reflexivity throughout the research process.

Data Gathering Procedure

Data collection followed systematic preparatory, implementation, and post-collection procedures. Before gathering data, the researcher secured permission from the Dean of the Graduate School and the Principal of Pooc National High School. Eligible teachers were identified through purposive sampling and informed about the study's objectives, procedures, voluntary participation, confidentiality provisions, and right to withdraw. Informed consent was obtained before conducting interviews and classroom observations, with additional consent and assent procedures applied to students when required. During data collection, the researcher conducted non-participant classroom observations to document teachers' use of multiple languages, instructional explanations, classroom interactions, and students' observable participation. Field notes and authorized video recordings captured relevant instructional events without unnecessarily disrupting classroom activities. Semi-structured interviews were subsequently conducted to obtain detailed descriptions of teachers' experiences, instructional decisions, perceived benefits, and implementation challenges. Follow-up questions were used to clarify responses and obtain additional information. Following data collection, the researcher organized and transcribed the interview recordings verbatim, reviewed observational records, and examined relevant video documentation. Interview transcripts were checked for accuracy, while observations and interview responses were compared to identify converging, complementary, and contrasting information. The organized qualitative data were subsequently coded, categorized, and interpreted to develop themes describing translanguaging practices and teachers' classroom experiences.

Data Analysis

The qualitative data were analyzed using Colaizzi's seven-step phenomenological approach to identify the essential meanings of teachers' lived experiences with translanguaging. The analysis began with repeated reading of verbatim interview transcripts to develop familiarity with participants' accounts. Significant statements relevant to the research objectives were extracted, and meanings were formulated based on participants' descriptions. Similar meanings were organized into thematic clusters and checked against the original responses to ensure consistency and accuracy. The identified themes were integrated into a comprehensive description of translanguaging instructional practices, students' comprehension and

participation, meaning-making processes, and teachers' perceived opportunities and challenges. This description was subsequently synthesized into a fundamental structure representing the essential characteristics of the phenomenon. To validate the interpretations, the findings were presented to participants for confirmation and clarification, and relevant feedback was incorporated into the analysis. Classroom observations, interview transcripts, field notes, and video recordings were examined collectively to strengthen the interpretation of the findings. An audit trail linking participants' statements, formulated meanings, thematic clusters, and final descriptions was maintained to support the transparency and credibility of the analytical process.

Ethical Consideration

The study observed ethical principles concerning voluntary participation, informed consent, privacy, confidentiality, participant welfare, and responsible reporting of research findings. Participants were informed of the study's purpose, procedures, and their right to decline participation, refuse uncomfortable questions, or withdraw without penalty. Written informed consent was obtained before conducting interviews and classroom observations. Because classroom recordings could include students, appropriate consent and assent procedures were followed, including parental or guardian permission when required. Participants' identities were protected through coded identifiers, while interview recordings, classroom videos, transcripts, and field notes were securely maintained and restricted to the researcher and authorized personnel. All collected information was used exclusively for academic and research purposes in accordance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173). The researcher ensured that data collection caused minimal disruption or discomfort and that findings were presented accurately and objectively without fabrication, falsification, misrepresentation, plagiarism, or unauthorized disclosure of confidential information.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Translanguaging Instructional Practices Employed by Teachers

3.1.1 Strategic Language Shifting

The findings revealed that teachers strategically shifted between English, Filipino, and Cebuano/Visayan to explain difficult concepts, clarify instructions, and address learners' comprehension difficulties. Participants 3, 7, and 9 described switching to familiar languages when students encountered unfamiliar vocabulary or abstract concepts, while Participant 10 reported translating between English and Bisaya in both directions. Classroom observations confirmed that teachers generally returned to the designated instructional language after clarification. These practices demonstrate that translanguaging was used as a responsive instructional strategy rather than an unrestricted replacement of the target language. The findings align with De La Fuente and Goldenberg (2022), who emphasized the instructional value of learners' first language, and Cenoz and Gorter (2022), who described pedagogical translanguaging as the purposeful integration of linguistic resources to support learning.

3.1.2 Translanguaging as Comprehension Scaffolding

Participants reported using translation, paraphrasing, familiar examples, and contextual explanations to make difficult lessons more understandable. Participant 3 shifted to Bisaya when students appeared confused, while Participant 4 introduced familiar vocabulary before presenting unfamiliar terms. Other teachers used multilingual explanations to clarify complex concepts and ensure that students understood classroom instructions. These findings indicate that translanguaging provided linguistic scaffolding that helped learners connect unfamiliar

information with existing knowledge. Laarous (2024) similarly emphasized the instructional value of multilingual resources in supporting comprehension, while Cenoz et al. (2022) demonstrated how planned multilingual instruction can promote cross-linguistic awareness and support vocabulary learning.

3.1.3 Translanguaging in Collaborative Learning

The participants incorporated multilingual discussions, group activities, peer explanations, reporting, and classroom presentations into their instructional practices. Teachers allowed students to exchange ideas using familiar languages before presenting or completing activities in the required instructional language. These practices were observed in collaborative tasks intended to improve students' understanding and communication. The findings suggest that translanguaging supported collaborative learning by providing students with accessible linguistic resources for negotiating meaning and sharing ideas. Li and Qu (2024) similarly identified the value of translanguaging in collaborative classroom discussions, while Nguyen and Tran (2025) documented its use in supporting participation and inclusive interaction in secondary English classrooms.

3.1.4 Multilingual Classroom Participation

Teachers reported encouraging students to participate in recitations, discussions, group sharing, and performance tasks using English alongside familiar languages. Participants observed that students who initially hesitated to respond became more willing to communicate when allowed to explain ideas in their preferred languages. Classroom observations supported the reported use of multilingual interaction during instructional activities. These findings indicate that multilingual participation provided students with additional opportunities to communicate their understanding without being restricted by immediate English language limitations. Chen et al. (2024) similarly identified classroom functions of translanguaging involving comprehension checking, instructional reinforcement, and teacher-student interaction. The findings also reflect the importance of flexible language practices in creating inclusive classroom environments.

3.2 Translanguaging Practices in Facilitating Students' Comprehension

3.2.1 Flexible Language Shifting for Clarification

The findings revealed that teachers used familiar languages to clarify confusing vocabulary, instructions, and academic concepts. Participant 1 described using Bisaya to explain a mathematical subtraction instruction, while Participant 6 reported switching temporarily to the mother tongue when students struggled with unfamiliar literary concepts. Teachers observed that students responded more accurately after receiving explanations in languages they understood. These findings demonstrate how flexible language shifting addressed immediate comprehension difficulties without necessarily abandoning the original instructional language. Wong and Tian (2025) similarly documented the pedagogical potential of translanguaging in supporting content and language development. The participants' experiences suggest that language shifting was most useful when applied to specific instructional difficulties.

3.2.2 Connecting New Concepts to Familiar Linguistic Knowledge

Teachers reported that translanguaging helped students understand unfamiliar concepts by connecting them with familiar words, experiences, and previously acquired knowledge. Participants 6, 7, and 8 emphasized using students' existing linguistic repertoires as a bridge to

new information. Students were reportedly able to understand complex ideas more clearly when these were explained through familiar language and contextual examples. The findings suggest that translanguaging facilitated comprehension by activating learners' prior linguistic and conceptual knowledge. De La Fuente and Goldenberg (2022) highlighted the relevance of principled first-language use in second-language instruction, while Cenoz et al. (2022) demonstrated the potential of planned multilingual approaches for developing linguistic awareness and supporting language learning.

3.2.3 Meaning-Making Through Multilingual Explanation and Discussion

Participants described students becoming more capable of asking questions, summarizing lessons, and explaining concepts when multilingual explanations were permitted. Participant 3 observed that learners could express understanding in their familiar language before gradually translating their ideas into English. Participant 5 emphasized the importance of allowing students to explain their thinking rather than limiting responses to a single language. These findings indicate that translanguaging supported meaning-making by allowing learners to process information through available linguistic resources. Li and Qu (2024) similarly examined how translanguaging facilitated collaborative knowledge construction, while Eren (2026) emphasized students' positive perceptions of selective first-language use for comprehension and classroom interaction.

3.2.4 Improving Clarity and Accessibility of Academic Content

The participants reported that multilingual explanations improved students' access to lessons involving unfamiliar terminology and complex instructions. Teachers observed that students expressed ideas more clearly, demonstrated understanding through classroom responses, and participated more confidently after receiving linguistic support. Participants 1, 6, 9, and 10 particularly associated familiar-language explanations with clearer communication and comprehension. These findings suggest that translanguaging helped reduce linguistic barriers to academic content. De Los Reyes (2024) likewise examined translanguaging in Philippine multilingual classrooms and its role in classroom learning. The present findings indicate that familiar-language support was perceived as a means of making instructional content more accessible rather than replacing English language learning.

3.3 Translanguaging Practices in Enhancing Active Classroom Participation

3.3.1 Strategic Language Shifting for Meaningful Expression

The results showed that teachers allowed students to use familiar languages when expressing opinions, answering questions, and explaining unfamiliar concepts. Participants observed that students who previously hesitated to communicate became more willing to share ideas when language restrictions were relaxed. Teachers also encouraged students to gradually express their understanding in the required instructional language. These findings suggest that strategic language shifting supported meaningful classroom expression by reducing immediate linguistic constraints. Cahanap (2026) similarly identified translanguaging as a perceived support for students' comprehension and classroom participation. Nguyen and Tran (2025) also documented how high school teachers used translanguaging to encourage classroom interaction and facilitate English language learning.

3.3.2 Comprehension Scaffolding for Active Engagement

Participants reported that students participated more actively when they understood lesson instructions and unfamiliar concepts through multilingual explanations. Teachers observed improvements in students' willingness to answer questions, engage in discussions, and complete classroom activities after receiving clarification in familiar languages. The findings indicate that comprehension and classroom participation were closely connected in the participants' experiences. Students appeared more willing to engage when instructional content became understandable. Cahanap (2026) reported comparable perceptions among Senior High School students, while Pan and Fang (2026) identified a positive association between translanguaging pedagogy and student engagement in English-medium instructional settings.

3.3.3 Freer Communication for Collaboration and Peer Learning

The findings revealed that multilingual group discussions and peer interactions encouraged students to communicate ideas, ask questions, and collaborate during classroom tasks. Teachers observed that students exchanged explanations more freely when they could use English, Filipino, or their mother tongue. These practices provided opportunities for learners to clarify concepts collectively before presenting their responses. These findings suggest that translanguaging supported classroom collaboration by allowing students to negotiate meaning through familiar linguistic resources. Chen et al. (2024) identified translanguaging functions that facilitated classroom communication and teacher-student relationships. Pan and Fang (2026) likewise reported the relevance of translanguaging to behavioral and social dimensions of classroom engagement.

3.3.4 Reduced Language Anxiety for Confident and Inclusive Participation

Teachers reported that students became more comfortable answering questions and participating in discussions when they were not required to communicate exclusively in English. Participants observed reduced hesitation, greater confidence, and increased willingness to express ideas when students could draw upon familiar languages. Participant 6 particularly associated multilingual flexibility with reduced fear of making mistakes. The findings suggest that translanguaging contributed to a more supportive classroom atmosphere by reducing perceived language-related pressure. De Guzman (2025) reported improvements in classroom engagement and English language confidence following translanguaging-based instruction. Similarly, Nguyen and Tran (2025) found that first-language support helped reduce students' anxiety and encouraged participation in secondary English classrooms.

3.4 Pedagogical Mechanisms of Translanguaging for Meaning-Making and Engagement

3.4.1 Activating and Bridging Learners' Prior Knowledge

The participants described using familiar vocabulary, everyday experiences, and existing linguistic knowledge to introduce new concepts. Teachers explained unfamiliar information by connecting it with situations and expressions already understood by students. These practices helped learners interpret lesson content and establish relationships between previously acquired knowledge and new academic information. The findings suggest that translanguaging supported knowledge construction by providing linguistic connections between familiar experiences and unfamiliar concepts. Moraru et al. (2025) identified several translanguaging processes that facilitate disciplinary content learning, including translation, comparison, and

collaboration. These processes correspond to the participants' descriptions of using language resources to support conceptual understanding.

3.4.2 Linguistic Scaffolding for Conceptual Understanding

Teachers reported using multilingual explanations, translation, paraphrasing, and contextual examples to support students' understanding of difficult lessons. Participants emphasized that familiar-language assistance enabled students to interpret complex concepts before attempting explanations in English or another required instructional language. These findings indicate that translanguaging functioned as an instructional scaffold that supported students' access to academic information. Hamman-Ortiz et al. (2025) highlighted the importance of translanguaging in supporting multilingual learners' participation and access to classroom learning. The present study similarly demonstrates how teachers perceived familiar-language support as a means of addressing comprehension barriers.

3.4.3 Fostering Collaborative and Inclusive Multilingual Engagement

Participants reported that translanguaging encouraged students to collaborate, participate in group discussions, and express ideas without relying exclusively on English. Teachers observed that allowing familiar languages made classroom interactions more accessible to learners with different language proficiency levels. These practices encouraged peer assistance and more inclusive participation. The findings suggest that translanguaging supported multilingual engagement by creating opportunities for students to contribute through their available linguistic resources. Lan (2025) similarly examined how translanguaging scaffolded student participation in linguistically diverse classrooms. The findings emphasize the importance of language flexibility in supporting collaborative and inclusive learning environments.

3.4.4 Facilitating Deeper Meaning-Making and Higher-Order Thinking

Teachers described how translanguaging helped students explain ideas, compare concepts, develop interpretations, and express their reasoning during classroom activities. Participants reported that students could demonstrate conceptual understanding more effectively when permitted to process information through familiar languages before formulating their responses in the target language. These findings suggest that translanguaging provided additional resources for conceptual processing and academic expression. Karlsson (2026) documented how multiple linguistic and semiotic resources supported participation and meaning-making in a multilingual science classroom. The participants' experiences similarly indicate that multilingual explanations and discussions may facilitate deeper engagement with academic content.

3.5 Challenges and Negative Experiences in Implementing Translanguaging

3.5.1 Overreliance on Familiar Languages

Participants expressed concern that excessive use of familiar languages could encourage students to depend on translations rather than develop confidence in using English. Participants 1 and 3 observed that some learners became less motivated to communicate independently in the target language when familiar-language support was consistently available. These concerns highlight the need to balance immediate comprehension with opportunities for independent language development. Mukhopadhyay et al. (2023) identified implementation challenges associated with translanguaging in multilingual classrooms. The findings suggest that familiar-

language support requires purposeful application to avoid becoming a substitute for sustained engagement with the target language.

3.5.2 Tension in English Language Development

Teachers reported difficulties balancing the use of English with students' need for instruction in familiar languages. Participants 6, 8, and 9 emphasized the importance of providing multilingual clarification while continuing to encourage English vocabulary development, communication, and academic expression. The findings suggest that translanguaging requires careful decisions regarding the purpose and extent of language flexibility. Huang and Chalmers (2023) emphasized the importance of instructional context when evaluating pedagogical translanguaging, while Cenoz and Gorter (2022) distinguished purposeful multilingual instruction from unrestricted language alternation. These perspectives support the participants' concerns regarding maintaining opportunities for target-language learning.

3.5.3 Difficulty with Specialized Terminology

Participants identified difficulties translating technical and subject-specific terminology into familiar languages. Participant 4 explained that certain academic expressions lacked direct Visayan equivalents, while Participant 10 encountered similar challenges with English terminology in MAPEH. Teachers addressed these difficulties through explanations, contextual examples, and clarification rather than relying exclusively on direct translation. These findings indicate that translanguaging does not eliminate all linguistic difficulties, particularly when specialized vocabulary has no precise equivalent. Rafi and Morgan (2024) demonstrated the value of multilingual scaffolding and contextual explanations in accessing complex academic texts. The present findings similarly suggest that effective comprehension support requires conceptual explanation beyond word-for-word translation.

3.5.4 Instructional Management Burden

Teachers reported that translanguaging required additional time, instructional preparation, and continuous monitoring of students' understanding. Participant 2 described multilingual explanations as time-consuming and demanding, while Participants 8 and 9 emphasized the difficulty of balancing several languages while addressing diverse learning needs. These findings suggest that effective translanguaging requires deliberate instructional planning and teacher adaptability. Zakharova and Lasagabaster (2026) identified teacher preparation, institutional expectations, and implementation constraints as important considerations in secondary EFL translanguaging. The participants' experiences likewise indicate that multilingual instruction requires careful management to remain pedagogically effective.

3.6 Positive Experiences and Opportunities in the Use of Translanguaging

3.6.1 Improved Comprehension

Participants consistently described translanguaging as helpful in explaining difficult vocabulary, instructions, and academic concepts. Teachers reported that students understood lessons more clearly when familiar languages were incorporated into explanations. Participants also observed that students could relate lessons to personal experiences and demonstrate understanding through classroom responses. These findings suggest that translanguaging was perceived as an effective means of improving access to instructional content. Hamman-Ortiz et al. (2025) similarly emphasized the role of translanguaging in supporting multilingual learners'

educational experiences. The findings reinforce the importance of familiar-language support in addressing comprehension difficulties.

3.6.2 Increased Engagement

Teachers reported increased student involvement in classroom discussions, learning activities, and group tasks when translanguaging was permitted. Participants observed that students became more responsive, volunteered answers, and demonstrated greater willingness to participate. Participant 1 also associated improved understanding with reduced need for repeated explanations. These experiences suggest that translanguaging supported engagement by making classroom interaction more accessible. Hamman-Ortiz et al. (2025) identified participation and belonging as important considerations in translanguaging research. The present findings similarly indicate that teachers perceived language flexibility as a resource for promoting student involvement in learning activities.

3.6.3 Greater Confidence

The participants observed that students expressed ideas more confidently when permitted to communicate using familiar languages. Teachers reported that learners became less hesitant to answer questions, explain concepts, and share opinions during discussions. Students were described as more comfortable participating when immediate grammatical accuracy was not the principal restriction on communication. These findings suggest that translanguaging supported students' perceived communicative confidence. Hou et al. (2025) identified positive teacher and learner perceptions concerning motivation and participation in translanguaging-supported EFL classrooms. The present findings similarly associate multilingual flexibility with a more supportive environment for classroom expression.

3.6.4 Stronger Teacher-Student Connection

Participants described translanguaging as helpful in establishing rapport and improving communication with students. Participants 3, 4, and 10 reported stronger connections with learners when familiar languages were used in instruction. Teachers perceived that students became more comfortable expressing their thoughts and responding to classroom explanations. These findings suggest that translanguaging had a relational function beyond content clarification. Hamman-Ortiz et al. (2025) emphasized the importance of identity, belonging, and inclusion in multilingual classroom practices. The findings indicate that acknowledging learners' linguistic resources may help teachers establish more responsive instructional relationships.

3.6.5 Enhanced Inclusion

Teachers reported that translanguaging enabled students with different levels of language proficiency to participate more meaningfully in classroom activities. Participants observed that students who struggled to express themselves in English could still demonstrate their understanding through Filipino or Cebuano/Visayan. This flexibility was perceived as providing greater opportunities for learners to participate in academic discussions. These findings suggest that translanguaging contributed to inclusive instructional practices by reducing language-related participation barriers. Bailey et al. (2025) emphasized the equity-oriented foundations of translanguaging in multilingual education. The present findings similarly indicate that recognizing students' existing linguistic resources can support more accessible classroom learning experiences.

3.6.6 More Responsive Instruction

The participants reported that translanguaging encouraged them to adjust instructional approaches according to learners' language proficiency, comprehension difficulties, and classroom needs. Participant 10 emphasized adapting language use to students' learning requirements, while Participant 7 described becoming more flexible in distinguishing the languages students used to understand lessons from those expected in formal academic outputs. These findings suggest that translanguaging supported responsive instructional decision-making by allowing teachers to adjust language use according to specific learning situations. Zakharova and Lasagabaster (2026) emphasized the significance of teacher preparation and context-sensitive translanguaging implementation. The findings indicate that multilingual instruction requires educators to make deliberate decisions that balance comprehension, participation, and continued language development. Overall, the findings demonstrate that teachers perceived translanguaging as a purposeful instructional resource for improving students' comprehension, encouraging classroom participation, supporting meaningful interaction, and responding to linguistic diversity. However, the participants also emphasized the importance of maintaining English language exposure, addressing terminology difficulties, and managing instructional demands. These interconnected findings provide the basis for developing a Translanguaging-Based Instructional Exemplar that incorporates strategic language shifting, comprehension scaffolding, multilingual collaboration, contextualized meaning-making, gradual transition to the target language, and continuous monitoring of language use.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concludes that purposeful translanguaging serves as a valuable instructional scaffold in multilingual classrooms, as reflected in the experiences of ten Senior High School teachers at Pooc National High School. The strategic integration of English, Filipino, and Cebuano/Visayan supported teachers in clarifying difficult concepts, connecting lessons with students' prior knowledge, and facilitating meaningful classroom interaction. Participants observed improvements in students' comprehension, confidence, participation, collaboration, and willingness to express ideas when familiar languages were incorporated into instruction. These interconnected findings suggest that translanguaging extends beyond translation by supporting conceptual understanding, inclusive participation, and responsive teaching practices. However, teachers also identified challenges involving excessive dependence on familiar languages, specialized terminology, instructional demands, and maintaining English language development. Overall, the findings emphasize the importance of balancing multilingual support with opportunities for target-language practice. The study provides a contextual foundation for the developed Translanguaging-Based Instructional Exemplar.

Based on the findings, English language teachers are encouraged to adopt and adapt the developed Translanguaging-Based Instructional Exemplar to address learners' linguistic backgrounds, comprehension difficulties, and classroom participation needs. Teachers should strategically incorporate familiar languages when explaining complex concepts, clarifying instructions, facilitating collaborative activities, and connecting lessons with students' prior knowledge. However, multilingual support should be gradually reduced when appropriate to encourage independent communication and continued English language development. School administrators may facilitate the pilot implementation of the instructional exemplar and provide opportunities for teachers to share effective translanguaging practices, address instructional challenges, and strengthen responsive teaching strategies. Classroom feedback and

observations should be used to assess the exemplar's practicality, relevance, and instructional applicability. Particular attention should be given to managing language balance, explaining specialized terminology, and minimizing excessive dependence on translation. Future researchers may examine the exemplar's implementation across different educational settings and evaluate its contribution to students' comprehension, participation, and language development.

This study was limited to ten purposively selected Senior High School teachers from a single public secondary school in Talisay City, Cebu. Its qualitative phenomenological design emphasized teachers' lived experiences and perceptions rather than statistically measurable learning outcomes. Although classroom observations supplemented the interviews, the findings did not establish causal relationships between translanguaging and improvements in students' academic performance or English proficiency. Consequently, the findings may not be directly transferable to other educational contexts. Future investigations may involve larger and more diverse participant groups, multiple schools, and additional assessment methods to examine translanguaging practices and their educational outcomes.

5. REFERENCES

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