Enhancing EFL Learner Motivation through Task Based Translanguaging Practices in Indonesian Secondary Schools

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Abstract. This study explores how task-based translanguaging practices can enhance English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learner motivation in Indonesian secondary schools. Recognizing that learners often draw on their full linguistic repertoires, this research examines how integrating translanguaging into task-based learning fosters engagement, confidence, and communicative competence. The study employed a mixed-methods approach involving classroom observations, student questionnaires, and semi-structured interviews with teachers. Data were analyzed to identify motivational shifts and changes in learner participation across various task types. Findings indicate that translanguaging practices significantly improve learner motivation by reducing anxiety, promoting collaborative learning, and increasing comprehension. Furthermore, task-based translanguaging encourages meaningful language use and provides students with greater agency in the learning process. The results suggest that combining task-based learning with translanguaging strategies offers an effective pedagogical framework for motivating EFL learners in multilingual contexts like Indonesia. These findings have implications for curriculum design, teacher training, and classroom practices aimed at creating inclusive and dynamic EFL learning environments that acknowledge students' linguistic and cultural resources.

Keywords: Classroom Interaction; Learner Engagement; Multilingual Pedagogy; Motivation; Translanguaging.

1. BACKGROUND

Motivation plays a crucial role in the success of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning, particularly in the Indonesian secondary school context where English is taught as a compulsory subject but rarely used outside the classroom. Despite the integration of communicative and student-centered approaches in the national curriculum, many Indonesian learners continue to experience difficulties in maintaining motivation, participation, and self-confidence when learning English. This issue is compounded by traditional instructional practices that tend to emphasize grammar, rote memorization, and examination performance rather than communicative competence and authentic language use. As a result, EFL learners often perceive English learning as an academic requirement rather than a meaningful and enjoyable process of interaction and expression.

In recent years, the concept of translanguaging has gained significant attention in language education research as a way to acknowledge and utilize learners' full linguistic repertoires. Translanguaging encourages students to draw on all of their languages to make meaning, enhance comprehension, and express themselves effectively. It creates a more inclusive classroom environment by validating students' linguistic identities and cultural backgrounds. At the same time, Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) has been widely recognized for its emphasis on authentic communication through real-life tasks that promote active engagement, problem-solving, and collaboration. While both translanguaging and

TBLT have individually shown positive effects on learner motivation and performance, research combining these two approaches—especially in EFL contexts like Indonesia— remains limited.

Previous studies have shown that translanguaging can increase learner confidence and reduce anxiety by allowing the strategic use of the first language (L1) during English learning (e.g., García & Wei, 2014; Cenoz & Gorter, 2020). Similarly, research on TBLT indicates that task-based activities help learners become more autonomous, motivated, and communicative (Ellis, 2017). However, the integration of translanguaging practices within TBLT frameworks has not been extensively explored, particularly in multilingual classrooms where English is a foreign language. Most existing studies tend to focus on tertiary-level or bilingual education settings, leaving a significant research gap regarding how these pedagogical innovations operate in secondary schools with diverse linguistic backgrounds.

The urgency of this research lies in the need to design classroom practices that not only improve linguistic competence but also foster sustained learner motivation. Indonesian classrooms provide a rich multilingual context where students' native languages, such as Bahasa Indonesia and local vernaculars, coexist with English learning. Leveraging this multilingual potential through translanguaging within task-based instruction could lead to more meaningful communication, increased learner participation, and a sense of ownership in the learning process. The novelty of this study, therefore, lies in combining the motivational aspects of task-based learning with the inclusive principles of translanguaging to enhance EFL learners' engagement and performance in secondary education.

The objective of this research is to investigate how task-based translanguaging practices influence EFL learner motivation in Indonesian secondary schools. Specifically, the study aims to examine the extent to which translanguaging facilitates students' engagement, confidence, and willingness to communicate during task-based activities. By addressing this gap, the study seeks to contribute to the development of pedagogical models that integrate linguistic diversity and communicative learning, offering valuable insights for teachers, curriculum developers, and policymakers in promoting effective and inclusive EFL instruction.

2. THEORETICAL REVIEW

The present study is grounded in three interrelated theoretical frameworks: motivation theory in second language acquisition (SLA), Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), and translanguaging theory. Together, these frameworks provide a conceptual foundation for understanding how pedagogical practices that integrate meaningful tasks and multilingual resources can enhance learners' motivation in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms.

Motivation in Second Language Acquisition

Motivation is a key determinant of success in learning a foreign language. According to Gardner's (1985) Socio-Educational Model, motivation in language learning involves the learner's desire to learn the language, effort to achieve proficiency, and positive attitudes toward the learning process. Later, Dörnyei (2005) proposed the L2 Motivational Self System, which emphasizes learners' vision of their ideal L2 self as a driving force behind sustained motivation. In the Indonesian EFL context, where exposure to English is limited, fostering intrinsic motivation becomes particularly essential. When students are encouraged to use English in meaningful and relatable ways, they tend to engage more deeply and persist longer in learning tasks (Lamb, 2017). This study aligns with these perspectives by examining how task-based and translanguaging practices influence learners' motivational engagement.

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)

TBLT emphasizes learning through the completion of meaningful, goal-oriented tasks that mirror real-life communication. According to Ellis (2017), tasks provide opportunities for learners to focus on meaning rather than isolated language forms, promoting fluency, interaction, and problem-solving skills. Willis and Willis (2007) further argue that TBLT enhances learner motivation by creating authentic, purposeful learning experiences. In the Indonesian classroom context, where English instruction often prioritizes grammar and examination results, the use of tasks that encourage collaboration and authentic communication can shift learners' focus from accuracy to meaningful language use. Thus, TBLT serves as a foundation for designing learning activities that support engagement and motivation through interactive and contextualized communication.

Translanguaging Theory

Translanguaging, first conceptualized by Williams (1994) and further developed by García and Wei (2014), refers to the dynamic use of multiple languages within a single learning event to make meaning, communicate, and learn. It challenges the traditional separation of languages in education and instead views bilingual or multilingual learners as holistic language users who fluidly draw upon their full linguistic repertoires. In EFL classrooms, translanguaging can bridge comprehension gaps, validate learners' linguistic identities, and reduce anxiety (Cenoz & Gorter, 2020). By strategically allowing students to use their first language (L1) alongside English (L2), teachers can create more inclusive, supportive, and cognitively engaging learning environments.

Integration of Translanguaging and TBLT for Learner Motivation

The integration of translanguaging practices within TBLT represents an innovative approach to enhancing learner motivation. In task-based activities, translanguaging allows learners to use all their linguistic resources to negotiate meaning, complete communicative goals, and collaborate effectively. Studies by Caruso (2018) and Kirkgöz (2021) suggest that when learners can use their L1 for scaffolding and reflection, their participation, confidence, and motivation increase. Similarly, García, Johnson, and Seltzer (2017) emphasize that translanguaging not only supports comprehension but also affirms learners' cultural identities, which are strongly linked to intrinsic motivation.

This synthesis of theories supports the assumption that task-based translanguaging practices can enhance EFL learner motivation by promoting meaningful engagement, reducing affective barriers, and fostering a sense of ownership in the learning process. Implicitly, this study hypothesizes that when translanguaging is integrated into task-based learning, students are more likely to experience higher levels of motivation, participation, and confidence in English learning.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

This research employed a mixed-methods design combining quantitative and qualitative approaches to comprehensively investigate the impact of task-based translanguaging practices on EFL learner motivation in Indonesian secondary schools. The mixed-methods approach was selected to provide both measurable evidence of motivational change and an in-depth understanding of learners' and teachers' perceptions.

The population of this study consisted of students from three public secondary schools in West Java, Indonesia, where English is taught as a compulsory foreign language subject. Using purposive sampling, a total of 120 students from grades eight and nine were selected as participants, along with six English teachers who implemented task-based translanguaging strategies in their classrooms. The inclusion criteria for student participants were based on their prior exposure to English instruction and willingness to participate in both survey and classroom observation sessions.

The research design followed a quasi-experimental structure with two groups: an experimental group, which received instruction through task-based translanguaging practices, and a control group, which followed conventional task-based learning without translanguaging. Both groups were taught the same English language topics over six weeks. The quantitative component involved the use of a Motivation Questionnaire adapted from Dörnyei's (2005) L2 Motivational Self System framework, which assessed dimensions such as intrinsic motivation, engagement, and willingness to communicate. The validity and reliability of the instrument were tested through pilot implementation, resulting in Cronbach's alpha values above 0.80, indicating a high level of internal consistency.

For the qualitative component, classroom observations and semi-structured interviews were conducted to gain deeper insights into how translanguaging occurred during task-based learning and how it influenced learners' participation and motivation. Observational data focused on interaction patterns, language use, and learner engagement during communicative tasks. Interviews with teachers and selected students provided supporting data on their attitudes and experiences with translanguaging practices.

Data analysis for the quantitative data employed descriptive statistics and inferential tests. The mean and standard deviation were used to describe the overall motivation levels of both groups, while the independent sample t-test was applied to determine significant differences between the control and experimental groups. Qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's (2006) framework to identify recurring themes related to learner motivation, classroom interaction, and translanguaging strategies.

The research model used in this study is based on the interaction between task-based learning (independent variable, X_1), translanguaging practices (independent variable, X_2), and EFL learner motivation (dependent variable, Y). The model assumes that the integration

of translanguaging into task-based learning fosters a more inclusive and engaging classroom environment, thereby increasing learner motivation.

In summary, this research systematically combined quantitative and qualitative data to validate the effectiveness of task-based translanguaging practices in enhancing motivation among EFL learners in Indonesian secondary schools. The combination of quasi-experimental design and qualitative inquiry ensured both statistical accuracy and contextual understanding of the pedagogical implications of translanguaging in multilingual educational settings.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data Collection Process, Time Span, and Research Location

The data collection process was conducted over a period of six weeks, from March to April 2025, in three public secondary schools located in Bandung, West Java, Indonesia. The schools were selected based on their use of communicative English teaching approaches and diverse linguistic backgrounds of students. The study involved two classes in each school—one assigned as the experimental group (task-based translanguaging instruction) and the other as the control group (traditional task-based instruction). Data were collected through motivation questionnaires administered at the beginning and end of the intervention, supported by classroom observations and semi-structured interviews with both teachers and students.

Quantitative Findings

Table 1 presents the comparison of pre-test and post-test mean scores on learner motivation between the control and experimental groups.

Table 1. Comparison of Pre-Test and Post-Test Motivation Scores

Group	N	Pre-Test Mean	Post-Test Mean	Mean Difference	t-value	Sig. (p)
Control Group	60	68.45	70.10	1.65	1.72	0.09
Experimental Group	60	68.83	78.92	10.09	7.84	0.000*

Note: p < 0.05 indicates a statistically significant difference.

The results reveal a significant increase in motivation among students in the experimental group, where translanguaging was integrated into task-based activities. The independent sample t-test showed a statistically significant improvement ($p < 0.05$) in post-test motivation scores for the experimental group compared to the control group.

Meanwhile, the control group exhibited only a marginal increase that was not statistically significant. These findings suggest that incorporating translanguaging strategies within task-based learning effectively enhances EFL learner motivation.

Qualitative Findings

The qualitative data derived from classroom observations and interviews supported the quantitative results. Students in the experimental group demonstrated higher engagement, enthusiasm, and participation during classroom tasks. Translanguaging was used strategically—students discussed task instructions, clarified vocabulary, and reflected on meaning using their first language (Bahasa Indonesia) before switching back to English for task performance. Teachers reported that such practices reduced learner anxiety and encouraged more equitable participation.Several recurring themes emerged from the thematic analysis:

a) Enhanced Comprehension and Confidence – Students expressed that using both languages helped them understand complex instructions and lowered their fear of making mistakes.

b) Active Collaboration – Translanguaging facilitated peer interaction and cooperative problem-solving during tasks.

c) Cultural and Linguistic Affirmation – Students felt their linguistic backgrounds were valued, which positively influenced their sense of belonging and motivation to learn English.

Discussion

The findings of this study align with Dörnyei's (2005) L2 Motivational Self System, which emphasizes that meaningful engagement and positive self-concept are crucial for sustaining motivation. The significant improvement in learner motivation in the experimental group demonstrates that translanguaging, when embedded in task-based instruction, fosters a more inclusive and psychologically safe environment for learners. This integration not only supports comprehension but also strengthens emotional and social aspects of learning, thereby increasing intrinsic motivation.

The results are consistent with Cenoz and Gorter (2020), who found that translanguaging enhances learner engagement by making linguistic input more accessible, and with Willis and Willis (2007), who argue that authentic, communicative tasks naturally stimulate motivation through goal-oriented interaction. However, this study extends

previous findings by demonstrating that translanguaging does not merely assist comprehension—it actively transforms learner participation patterns and classroom dynamics, particularly in multilingual contexts like Indonesia.

Theoretically, these findings reinforce the idea that motivation in EFL learning is deeply connected to identity, interaction, and agency. Allowing students to utilize their full linguistic repertoire enables them to take ownership of their learning, aligning with the principles of sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978) that emphasize learning through mediated interaction.

Implications

The implications of this research are both theoretical and practical. Theoretically, it supports the integration of translanguaging and TBLT as complementary frameworks that enhance learner motivation by balancing cognitive and affective dimensions of learning. Practically, it suggests that English teachers should not restrict students' use of their first language but rather guide it purposefully within communicative tasks to scaffold learning and maintain motivation. Teacher training programs should therefore incorporate translanguaging principles to help educators design more inclusive, flexible, and contextually relevant EFL instruction.

Overall, this study demonstrates that task-based translanguaging practices significantly enhance EFL learner motivation in Indonesian secondary schools by promoting engagement, confidence, and meaningful communication. Future research could expand on these findings by exploring long-term impacts on language proficiency and comparing effects across different educational levels or regional settings.

5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The findings of this study conclude that the integration of translanguaging practices within task-based language teaching effectively enhances EFL learner motivation in Indonesian secondary schools. The results of both quantitative and qualitative analyses indicate that students who participated in task-based translanguaging activities demonstrated higher levels of engagement, confidence, and willingness to communicate compared to those who experienced conventional task-based learning. Translanguaging provided learners with a supportive environment where they could use their linguistic resources to negotiate meaning and express understanding, thereby reducing anxiety and fostering a sense of ownership in the learning process. These findings confirm that

combining task-based learning and translanguaging contributes positively to learner motivation and aligns with theoretical perspectives emphasizing learner autonomy, inclusivity, and meaningful interaction in language education.

Based on these conclusions, it is suggested that English teachers in multilingual contexts adopt translanguaging-informed task-based approaches to create more inclusive and motivating classroom practices. Teachers should be encouraged to strategically allow students to use their first language for scaffolding and comprehension, while guiding them toward greater use of English in communicative tasks. Curriculum developers and policymakers are also recommended to integrate translanguaging principles into English teaching frameworks to better reflect Indonesia's linguistic diversity.

However, this study has several limitations. It was conducted over a relatively short time span and within a limited number of schools, which may restrict the generalization of its findings to other contexts or educational levels. Future research should therefore involve longitudinal studies across diverse regions and include more varied learner populations to examine the long-term effects of task-based translanguaging practices on motivation and language proficiency. Further investigation into teachers' professional development and classroom management strategies for translanguaging implementation is also recommended. Overall, the study reinforces the importance of recognizing multilingualism as a resource in EFL classrooms and highlights the pedagogical potential of translanguaging in enhancing motivation and engagement among learners.

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