

A Comparative Study on the Effects of Translanguaging as a Communicative Tool among Surigaonon First-Year College Students in Northern Mindanao

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Abstract

This study investigates the phenomenon of translanguaging, the fluid use of Surigaonon, Filipino, and English as a communicative tool among first-year college students enrolled in the Purposive Communication course at a university in Northern Mindanao.

Recognizing the dynamic nature of multilingual practices, the study reframes previously categorized instances of code-switching through the lens of translanguaging to better reflect the integrated and strategic language use observed among participants.

A quantitative research design was employed, utilizing statistical tools such as Pearson Correlation, Measures of Central Tendency (mean), and Standard Deviation to analyze data collected from 72 randomly selected bilingual and multilingual students via an e-questionnaire. The analysis focused on the frequency of translanguaging, its perceived positive and negative effects, and their correlations.

Findings revealed that students perceive translanguaging as more beneficial than harmful, with higher mean scores and lower standard deviations associated with positive effects, indicating consistent agreement. A moderate positive correlation between frequency and perceived benefits suggests that translanguaging enhances interaction, comprehension, and participation in multilingual classrooms, suggesting the need for balanced, intentional use to maximize its benefits. The findings of this study will contribute to the growing body of research on multilingual education, particularly concerning language learning in higher education contexts in the Philippines.

Keywords: Academic Performance, Communication Skills, Multilingual Education, Surigaonon Students, Translanguaging, Quantitative Analysis

Introduction

The Philippines is one of the most linguistically diverse countries in the world, with 186 documented la-

languages and dialects [1] (Eberhard et al., 2021). In this multilingual environment, code-switching has become a natural and widely accepted practice among Filipinos, particularly in regions like Northern Mindanao. Students often switch between Surigaonon, Filipino, and English in their daily interactions, reflecting the region’s cultural and social dynamics [2] (Gallego et al., 2021).

Educational institutions in the Philippines face the challenge of balancing multilingualism with the need for proficiency in English, the primary medium of instruction. The Purposive Communication course, a mandatory subject in higher education, emphasizes developing students' communicative competence for academic and professional success. Code-switching serves as a bridge for students struggling with English while maintaining their native linguistic identity [4] (Mahboob, 2020).

Previous studies highlight the dual nature of code-switching. It facilitates understanding, fosters inclusivity, and enhances classroom engagement [5] (Villanueva & Gamiao, 2022). However, excessive reliance on code-switching can hinder English proficiency, potentially affecting academic performance and professional readiness [3] (Jabeen et al., 2023). This dichotomy underscores the need for a nuanced understanding of how code-switching impacts students' communication skills and academic outcomes.

By focusing on Surigaonon first-year college students, this study aims to provide insights into the contextual use of code-switching and its implications for learning in multilingual settings.

Methodology

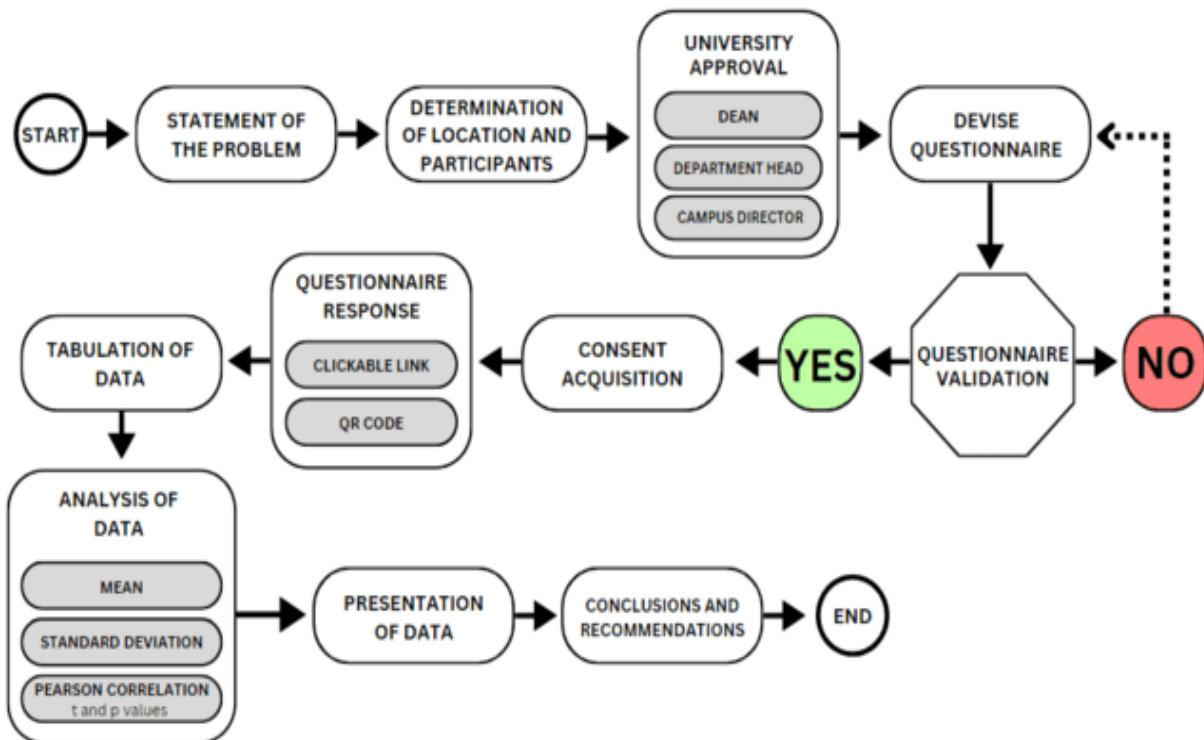


Figure 1: Methods

Using a quantitative design, this study surveyed 72 randomly selected first-year Purposive Communication students in Northern Mindanao through a validated online questionnaire to compare the positive and negative effects of translanguaging, with data analyzed using descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation under approved ethical protocols.

Results and Discussion

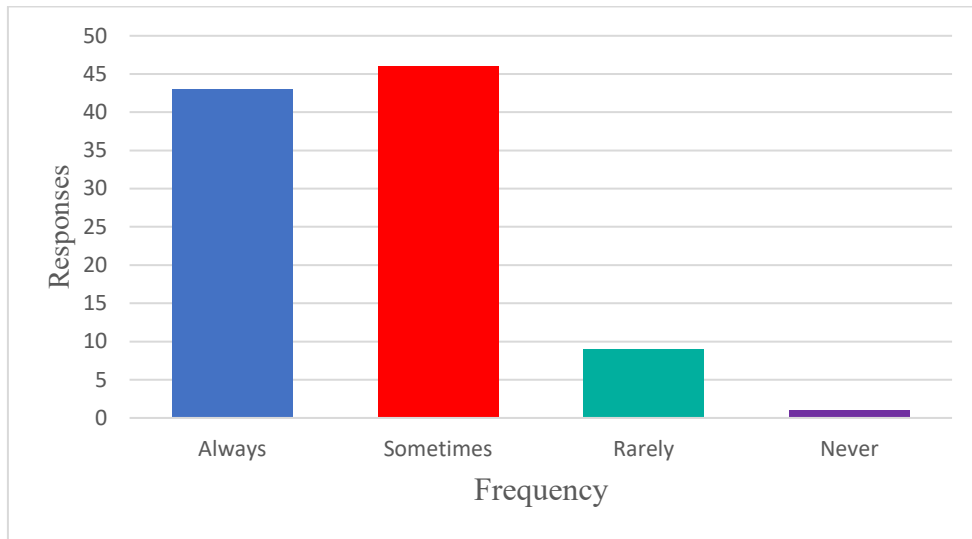


Figure 2: Frequency of Translanguageing

Most students use translanguageing 'Sometimes' (46%) or 'Always' (43%). Rarely (9%) and Never (1%) responses are minimal.

Interpretation: Translanguageing is common and context-driven, especially in interactive activities.

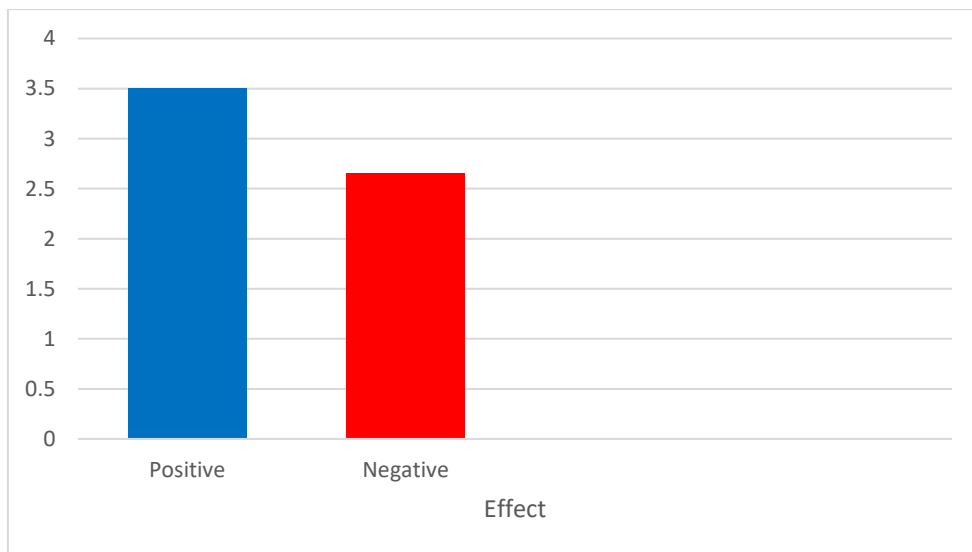


Figure 3: Effects on Communication Skills

Positive effects dominate (Mean: 3.54) → Better comprehension, easier participation.

Negative effects less significant (Mean: 2.65) → Minor fluency concerns.

Interpretation: Students view translanguageing as helpful for communication.

Interpretation: Students view translanguageing as a helpful tool for communication.

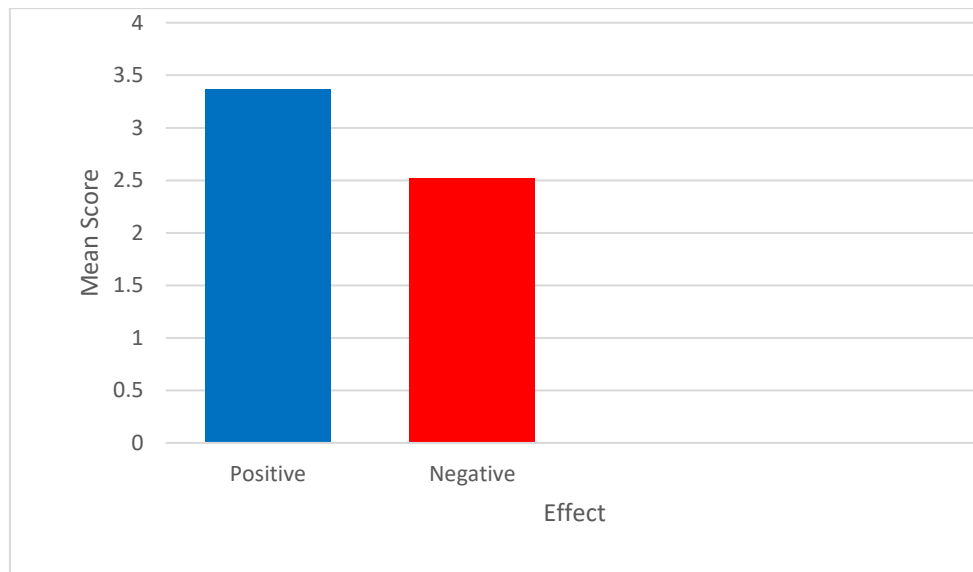


Figure 4: Effects on Academic Performance

Positive effects (Mean: 3.37) → Improves concept retention and engagement.

Negative effects (Mean: 2.52) → Occasional confusion and vocabulary limitations.

Interpretation: Translanguaging supports learning but should be balanced.

Correlation Analysis

Moderate positive correlation with communication benefits. Strong negative correlation with academic performance when overused. Frequent translanguaging boosts interaction but may hinder mastery of English.

Conclusions

Translanguaging is widely used among Surigaonon first-year college students and is generally perceived as beneficial for communication and academic engagement. However, excessive use may hinder English proficiency and cause occasional confusion, highlighting the need for balanced implementation.

Recommendation

Structured Guidelines: Teachers should use translanguaging strategically as a scaffolding tool, not as the primary mode of instruction.

Curricular Support: Integrate multilingual resources while maintaining English proficiency goals.

Professional Development: Train educators on effective multilingual strategies.

Further Research: Conduct longitudinal studies to examine long-term effects on language mastery and academic performance.

References

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