What Do They Talk About Translanguaging? Students and Lecturers' Voices From Legal English Classes

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Abstract

This qualitative case study investigated the use and perceptions of translanguaging in English for Law courses within Islamic Law programs at a university in Indonesia. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 30 students and 3 English lecturers. The findings reveal that both students and teachers actively engaged in translanguaging, drawing on a repertoire of languages, including English, Indonesian, Bugis (the local language), and Arabic. Translanguaging served multiple pedagogical functions, including facilitating conceptual understanding, promoting inclusivity, and enhancing student engagement. However, the study also highlighted the need for a balanced approach to translanguaging, ensuring adequate exposure to the target language (English) and clear code-switching practices. The implications of these findings for pedagogy, curriculum development, and teacher training are discussed. This study contributes to the growing body of literature on translanguaging in education and provides valuable insights for educators working in multilingual and multicultural contexts.

Keywords*: Translanguaging, English for Law, Islamic Law, multilingualism, higher education*

Introduction

In today's increasingly interconnected and globalized world, English has become the lingua franca of international communication (Misnawati et al., 2022; Misnawati, Yusriadi, et al., 2023), particularly in academic and professional domains (Misnawati & Anwar, 2024; Anwar, et al., 2024). Communicating effectively in English is essential for individuals seeking to participate in global dialogues, access knowledge and information, and advance their careers in various fields (Anwar & Misnawati, 2023). This has led to a growing demand for English for Specific Purposes (ESP) programs tailored to meet the specific language needs of learners in particular disciplines or professions (Anwar & Misnawati, 2024).

ESP focuses on developing the language skills and knowledge required for effective communication in specific contexts (Anthony, 2018; Salmani-Nodoushan, 2020), such as business, law, medicine, engineering, and technology. Unlike general English programs,

which aim to develop overall language proficiency (Arias-Contreras & Moore, 2022), ESP emphasizes the acquisition of specialized vocabulary, grammar, and discourse patterns relevant to the target field (Khalil & Semono-Eke, 2020; Lazarevska, 2020). This approach recognizes that language is not a monolithic entity but a dynamic and context-dependent tool that varies according to its users' specific communicative needs and purposes (Rohani & Suyono, 2021).

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in translanguaging as a pedagogical approach in multilingual classrooms (Anwar & Misnawati, 2024). Translanguaging refers to multilingual individuals' flexible use of multiple languages in their communicative practices (Mgijima, 2021; Yang et al., 2021). Unlike traditional approaches to language teaching, which often emphasize the separation of languages (Ho, 2009), translanguaging recognizes the fluidity and interconnectedness of multilinguals' linguistic repertoires (García & Kleifgen, 2020; McDermott, 2022). It encourages learners to draw on their full range of linguistic resources to make meaning, engage in complex cognitive processes, and express themselves in diverse ways (Ossa Parra & Proctor, 2021; Rajendram, 2023).

Translanguaging has been shown to have numerous benefits for learners, including:

a) Enhanced comprehension: By allowing students to access and process information in their mother tongue or other languages they are proficient in, translanguaging can facilitate a deeper understanding of complex concepts and ideas (Mbirimi-Hungwe, 2022; Qureshi & Aljanadbah, 2022).

b) Increased engagement and motivation: Translanguaging can create a more inclusive and engaging learning environment where students feel valued and empowered to participate actively (Hidayati et al., 2024; Kanduboda, 2020).

c) Development of metalinguistic awareness: By encouraging students to reflect on their language practices and the relationship between different languages, translanguaging can promote metalinguistic awareness and a deeper understanding of language as a system (Cenoz et al., 2022; Ossa Parra & Proctor, 2021).

d) Improved communicative competence: By providing opportunities for students to use their entire linguistic repertoire in authentic communicative situations, translanguaging can enhance their overall communicative competence in both the target language and other languages (Nkhi & Shange, 2024; Simatupang & Supri, 2024).

Perceptions towards translanguaging practice

Research on student perceptions of translanguaging reveals a generally positive trend. A case study at a Puerto Rican university showed that students viewed their lecturer's use of translanguaging favorably, considering it appropriate and respectful (Rivera & Mazak, 2017). Similarly, a study in the USA found that graduate students held positive beliefs about translanguaging, particularly in social and learning contexts (Moody et al., 2019). While students in this study were neutral toward their instructors' use of translanguaging, they acknowledged its value as a learning tool. In contrast, research in China revealed a more divided perspective, with university students expressing almost equal support for monolingual and multilingual approaches (Wang, 2019). This suggests that acceptance of translanguaging can vary depending on the context and cultural norms.

A qualitative study in South Africa further explored the benefits of translanguaging for understanding academic concepts. Participants in this study affirmed that

translanguaging enhanced their comprehension of complex English texts during group discussions, highlighting its value as a tool for improving reading comprehension in multilingual classrooms (Mbirimi-Hungwe, 2022). This finding underscores the potential of translanguaging to facilitate deeper learning and engagement for students from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

Previous Studies on Translanguaging

The application of translanguaging in ESP contexts has gained increasing attention from researchers and educators (Hidayati et al., 2024; Hungwe, 2019; Kanduboda, 2020; Mbirimi-Hungwe, 2022; McDermott, 2022; Mgijima, 2021; Nkhi & Shange, 2024; Qureshi & Aljanadbah, 2022; Rajendram, 2023; Simatupang & Supri, 2024; Song & Cho, 2021). In the field of English for Law, Translanguaging has been recognized as a valuable tool for addressing the unique challenges faced by law students who are learning English as an additional language (Runcieman, 2021; 2022a; 2022b). Legal discourse is often characterized by complex terminology, specialized vocabulary, and intricate grammatical structures, which can pose significant difficulties for non-native speakers (Misnawati, et al., 2023; Runcieman, 2022; Supardi, 2017). Translanguaging can help bridge this gap by allowing students to draw on their existing linguistic knowledge and resources to make sense of legal concepts and participate in legal discussions.

However, limited studies have explored the benefits of translanguaging in English for law classrooms. Therefore, this study seeks to contribute to the growing body of knowledge on translanguaging in ESP and provide insights into its potential to enhance the learning experiences of law students in Islamic Law programs. The findings of this study may also have implications for other ESP contexts where multilingualism and cultural diversity are salient factors.

The Unique Context of Islamic Law

Islamic Law, also known as Sharia, is a comprehensive legal system that governs various aspects of Muslim life, including personal conduct, family relations, business transactions, and social interactions (Al-Farsi, 2022). It is derived from primary sources such as the Quran and the Sunnah (the teachings and practices of the Prophet Muhammad), as well as secondary sources such as scholarly interpretations and legal precedents (Masud & Khan, 2024). Islamic Law is practiced in various forms worldwide, reflecting the diversity of cultures, traditions, and legal interpretations within the global Muslim community.

The study of Islamic Law often involves engaging with texts and legal opinions written in Arabic, the language of the Quran, and the primary sources of Islamic jurisprudence (Al-Farsi, 2022). This poses a unique challenge for students who are not native speakers of Arabic, as they need to develop proficiency in both English and Arabic to understand and interpret Islamic legal concepts effectively. Furthermore, Islamic Law's teaching and learning often occur in multilingual contexts, where students come from diverse linguistic backgrounds and may use their mother tongues or other languages alongside English and Arabic in their learning process.

Despite the growing body of research on translanguaging in education, there is a limited understanding of its specific applications and implications in English for Law courses within Islamic Law programs. This study aims to address this gap by exploring the following research questions:

1. How do students and teachers use translanguaging in English for Law courses within Islamic Law programs?
2. What are the students' and teachers' perceptions of the benefits and challenges of translanguaging in this context?

Method

This study employed a qualitative case study design to investigate translanguaging in English for Law courses at a State Islamic Institute (IAIN) in Bone Regency, South Sulawesi, Indonesia. As Yin (2018) described, the case study approach is well-suited for exploring complex social phenomena within their natural contexts, providing rich and nuanced insights that other research methods may overlook. This design allowed for an in-depth exploration of translanguaging practices within the specific context of Islamic Law education, where the interplay of languages and cultures is particularly salient.

Participants

The participants in this study (N=30) were purposefully selected to ensure the representation of key stakeholders involved in translanguaging in English for Law courses. IAIN Bone was chosen as the research site due to its focus on Islamic Law education and the multilingual nature of its student population, providing a rich context for investigating translanguaging practices.

Thirty students enrolled in the selected courses were recruited through an invitation from course lecturers. The purposive sampling strategy aimed to include students with diverse linguistic backgrounds (including those proficient in Bugis, Indonesian, and Arabic) and varying levels of English proficiency. In addition, three English lecturers who taught the selected courses were recruited through direct invitations from the researcher. The selection criteria included experience teaching English for Law, familiarity with translanguaging practices, and willingness to participate in in-depth interviews.

Data Collection Procedures

Data for this study were collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews with students and lecturers. A semi-structured interview protocol consisting of open-ended questions was developed to elicit participants' perspectives on translanguaging practices, perceived benefits and challenges, and the role of language in Islamic Law education.

Furthermore, interviews were scheduled at the participant's convenience and conducted privately to ensure confidentiality and comfort. Each interview lasted approximately 45-60 minutes. Participants were allowed to interview in the most comfortable language (English, Indonesian, or Bugis), expressing nuanced perspectives and experiences. All interviews were audio-recorded with the participant's consent. The recordings were transcribed verbatim, ensuring accuracy and providing a comprehensive data record.

Data Analysis

In the data analysis process, the researcher carefully reviewed the transcribed interviews multiple times to thoroughly understand the participants' perspectives and experiences. The transcripts were then systematically coded using inductive and

deductive coding techniques. Inductive codes emerged from the data, while deductive codes were based on the research questions and existing literature on translanguaging.

Codes were grouped and categorized into broader themes, reflecting patterns and recurring ideas across the data. The themes were further refined and analyzed to develop a nuanced understanding of translanguaging in English for Law courses within Islamic Law programs. Illustrative excerpts from the interview transcripts were selected to support the analysis and provide evidence for the identified themes.

Validity and Reliability

To enhance the validity and reliability of the findings, this study employed triangulation, member checking, and reflexivity. In triangulation, data were collected from multiple sources (students and lecturers) and through interviews to provide a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the phenomenon. The participants were also allowed to review and verify the accuracy of the transcribed interviews and their interpretation of the responses, ensuring that the findings accurately reflected their perspectives. In the end, the researcher maintained a reflexive journal throughout the research process to document their own biases and assumptions, ensuring that these did not unduly influence the data analysis and interpretation.

Ethical Clearance

Ethical considerations were prioritized throughout the research process. Informed consent was obtained from all participants before their involvement in the study. Participants were informed of the purpose of the research, their rights as participants, and the measures taken to ensure confidentiality and anonymity. The research was conducted following ethical guidelines for research involving human subjects, ensuring the protection and well-being of all participants.

Results
Students' Language Usage

Table 1. The Language Used by Students Daily

Students	English Language	Mother Tongue (Buginese)	Indonesia	Arabic
Islamic Family Law (Hukum Keluarga Islam)	X	X	X	X
Constitutional Law (Hukum Tata Negara)	X	X	X	
Postgraduate Islamic Economic Law (Pasja Sarjana Hukum Ekonomi Islam)	X	X	X	X

Table 1 shows that although English is the primary language of instruction - given its crucial role in global legal discourse and access to international legal texts, research, and discussion - Bugis, the mother tongue of most students, also plays an important role.

Lecturers actively use Bugis to simplify complex legal terms and concepts, for example, by translating key terms or providing analogies in Bugis. This strategy improves understanding and creates a more inclusive and supportive learning

environment where students feel more comfortable and confident in raising questions or ideas.

In addition to Bugis, Indonesian was widely used as the language of instruction and class discussions. Using Indonesian enabled students from different backgrounds to follow the lecture material easily. Lecturers also used Indonesian to explain complex legal concepts in more detail, especially when students had difficulty understanding explanations in English.

Interestingly, Arabic is also used, especially in advanced Islamic law courses. Many foundational texts of Islamic law are written in Arabic, so understanding Arabic becomes crucial for students who want to deepen their knowledge of Islamic law. Lecturers often use Arabic when quoting Qur'anic verses or hadith relevant to the material discussed.

This use of multilingualism-including English, Bugis, Indonesian, and Arabic-reflects a translanguaging approach that is dynamic and responsive to student needs. This approach not only facilitates understanding and enhances student engagement but also reflects the linguistic diversity and cultural richness that characterize the learning process of Islamic law.

Teachers' Language Usage

Table 2. The Language Used by Teachers Daily

Languages	English Language	Mother Tongue (Buginese)	Others Indonesia	Arabic
Teacher A	X	X	X	
Teacher B	X		X	X
Teacher C	X		X	X

This study highlights the significant role of translanguaging in English for Law courses within Islamic Law contexts. As illustrated in Table 2, teachers demonstrate multilingual capabilities, strategically incorporating different languages into their teaching methods to enhance students' learning experiences.

Teacher A: Prioritizes local languages (Bugis and Indonesian) alongside English, the international language of academia. This approach fosters a culturally responsive learning environment where students feel connected to their roots while simultaneously developing proficiency in English for specific academic purposes. Given the lecturer's and students' familiarity with local languages, communication and comprehension are facilitated, leading to more efficient teaching and learning in the ESP classroom.

Teacher B: Utilizes a combination of Arabic, Indonesian, and English. The inclusion of Arabic caters to the specific needs of students studying Islamic Law, where knowledge of Arabic is essential for understanding foundational religious texts. Indonesian is a bridging language, ensuring comprehension for students from diverse linguistic backgrounds and facilitating a smooth transition between English and Arabic.

Teacher C: Employs Indonesian and English, with minimal use of the local language. This strategy reflects the context of teaching postgraduate students, who are expected to have a higher level of English proficiency. While Indonesian is used to clarify complex concepts or facilitate discussion, the focus remains on developing students' competence in English for academic purposes.

The diverse translanguaging practices of these teachers underscore the importance of adapting pedagogical approaches to meet the specific needs of students and the context of the learning environment. By strategically incorporating local languages, Indonesian and Arabic, alongside English, teachers create more inclusive and accessible learning

experiences, ultimately enhancing students' understanding and engagement with the subject matter.

Students' Perceptions of Translanguaging
Enhanced Conceptual Understanding

The utilization of translanguaging by incorporating Indonesian or the local language (Bugis) significantly facilitates the comprehension of complex legal concepts. This finding is echoed in the statements of several students (Students 2, 4, 5, 9, 12, and 14), who reported that lecturers' use of Indonesian or Bugis aided their understanding of legal terms or concepts that proved challenging when presented solely in English.

"Ehm, I think it helps. For example if there is a legal concept that is difficult to understand in English, the lecturer explains it in Indonesian or Bugis, so it is easier to understand." (Student 2)

"Yes, I agree. If the lecturer explains using both languages, it is very helpful. Sometimes, legal concepts are confusing if only using English, so explanations in Indonesian or a regional language can be clearer." (Student 4)

"Yes, I feel more helped by using another language to learn English. Moreover, many legal language terms cannot be translated correctly, so if the lecturer uses two languages, I understand better." (Student 5)

"I find it helpful when the lecturer uses both languages. The explanation in Bugis makes complex concepts easier to understand. Or Indonesian. About fifty-fifty presentation." (Student 9)

"I find it helpful when the lecturer uses both languages. Explanations in Bugis and even in Indonesian make complex concepts easier to understand." (Student 12)

"Uhm, I think it's easier, especially because sometimes there are legal English terms that I don't know the meaning of in English. So with Indonesian, I am more confident in expressing my opinion." (Student 14)

This data shows that the use of their mother tongue, or Indonesian, as the language of instruction plays a vital role in improving students' understanding of legal material presented in English. By explaining complex concepts in a more familiar language to students, lecturers can bridge the understanding gap and help students master the material more effectively. This strategy aligns with the principle of student-centered learning and recognizes the importance of students' prior knowledge and frame of mind in the learning process.

Improved Grammar Comprehension

Translanguaging strategies, which involve using two or more languages in the learning process, have enhanced students' understanding of English grammar. This theme was explicitly expressed by Student 1, who noted that explanations of English grammar accompanied by explanations in Indonesian or examples in another language fostered a deeper understanding of both the context and the material.

"For example, when we discussed grammar in English, I was slightly confused. But after the lecturer explains it in Indonesian or gives examples in other languages, I understand the context better and can understand what is being taught." (Student 1)

This finding suggests that translanguaging can serve as an effective strategy in teaching English grammar. By connecting English grammar concepts with students' first language or other languages they are proficient in, lecturers can help students bridge the understanding gap and establish a strong foundation in grammar. This approach aligns with the communicative approach to language learning, underscoring the significance of meaning and context in language acquisition.

Reduced Anxiety

Integrating Translanguaging (English, Indonesian, and/or local languages) into the learning process fosters a more comfortable classroom atmosphere and reduces student anxiety. This theme was explicitly stated by Students 3, 6, 16, and 18, who expressed feeling more at ease when lecturers employed more than one language in their teaching.

"I feel more comfortable when lecturers explain concepts in two languages. Sometimes, English is difficult to understand, so Indonesian or a regional language is a clearer alternative." (Student 3)

"Same, I feel more comfortable. In my opinion, ma'am, 70% is important. 70% of the importance of using Indonesian in teaching English. Sometimes, explanations in English are difficult to understand, so if the lecturer explains in Indonesian, I can immediately understand." (Student 6)

"I feel more comfortable because I can use a language that I understand well. So it's easier to participate in discussions." (Student 16)

"I find it easier because sometimes if I only use English, I'm a bit hesitant to join the discussion. But if there is Indonesian, or even Bugis, I feel more open to talking to my friends, sis." (Student 18)

This data suggests that multilingualism in the classroom can cultivate a more inclusive learning environment and alleviate anxiety, particularly for students still developing their English language proficiency. Students feel more relaxed, confident, and motivated to learn and actively participate in class by providing space for using their first language or Bahasa Indonesia. This finding is consistent with the "affective filter" concept in language learning, which posits that emotional factors such as anxiety can impede learning.

Increased Confidence in Expressing Opinions

Translanguaging has been observed to bolster students' confidence in expressing their opinions and engaging in discussions. This theme emerged in the statements of Students 15, 17, and 20, who reported feeling more confident participating in conversations due to using Indonesian when encountering difficulties in conveying ideas or understanding concepts in English.

"Yes, with two or more languages, I feel more confident in discussing. If I don't understand a term in English, I can rely on Indonesian to explain." (Student 15)

"Uhm, I find it easier to participate because I can follow the discussion in two languages. Sometimes I understand the explanation in Indonesian better, so I can express my opinion more easily." (Student 17)

"Uhm, I think it's easier, especially because sometimes there are legal English terms that I don't know the meaning of in English. So with Indonesian, I am more confident in expressing my opinion." (Student 20)

This data indicates that translanguaging empowers students by affording them flexibility in language use and self-expression. When students can utilize the most proficient language, they feel more comfortable and confident communicating, encouraging active participation in class discussions. This finding underscores the potential of a multilingual approach to create a more inclusive learning environment and empower students to reach their full potential.

Improved Speaking Fluency

Using two languages in the learning process has been found to enhance students' speaking fluency. This theme was expressed by Student 13, who noted that the ability to choose the language that felt most appropriate facilitated greater fluency in expression.

"Yes, I find it easier. With two languages, I can speak more fluently because I can choose the language that I feel is more appropriate." (Student 13)

Student 13's statement highlights how using two languages provides flexibility and

comfort for students in expressing themselves. By having the option to switch between languages, students can overcome limitations in vocabulary or grammatical structures in one language by utilizing the other language in which they are more proficient. This allows for a more fluid and spontaneous flow of ideas, thereby improving overall speaking fluency.

Emphasis on the Mother Tongue as the Language of Instruction

The importance of utilizing Indonesian or the local language (Bugis) as the primary language of instruction in English language learning was emphasized by Students 10 and 11. They proposed that Indonesian or the local language should be dominant in English learning, especially for students not majoring in English.

> *"I think 70 percent of the use of other languages should be used when we are not majoring in English but are studying English. So that we understand faster, ma'am."* (Student 10)
> *"Me too, ma'am. The point is, we have to use other languages in teaching English so that it becomes the language of instruction, ma'am."* (Student 11)

The statements of Students 10 and 11 reflect a belief that employing the mother tongue or Indonesian as the primary language of instruction can enhance the effectiveness of English language learning. By using a language that students understand well, they can better focus on mastering English concepts and skills without language difficulties. This aligns with the notion that the mother tongue is a crucial foundation in foreign language learning and can act as a bridge to achieving the desired level of English language competence.

Connection with Real-World Communication

Translanguaging bridges classroom learning with real-world communication. This theme was raised by Student 7, who indicated that translanguaging not only aids in understanding the material but also connects it to the real-world use of English, such as in dialogues.

> *"Alhamdulillah, it helps, sis. Because I understand it better, and it connects when we do, for example, dialogue in English."* (Student 7)

Student 7's statement illustrates that translanguaging facilitates conceptual understanding and helps students recognize the relevance of English language learning to real-world communication scenarios. Using their mother tongue or Indonesian as a bridge, students can transfer the English knowledge and skills acquired in the classroom to everyday communication contexts. This, in turn, boosts their motivation and confidence in using English outside of the classroom setting.

Cultural Relevance

Integrating the local language (Bugis) in learning enhances understanding and cultivates a culturally relevant learning environment. This theme was expressed by Student 8, who found that the use of Bugis by lecturers made the material more accessible because it was his first language.

> *"I find it easier to understand the material when the lecturer uses English and Bugis. The explanation in Bugis makes difficult concepts easier to understand because I am Bugis, ma'am."* (Student 8)

Student 8's statement underscores the notion that the use of local languages in education serves not only as a communication tool but also carries significant cultural value. By acknowledging and respecting students' mother tongues, lecturers can create a more inclusive, relevant, and empowering learning environment. In this context, Bugis

facilitates understanding, reinforces students' cultural identity, and fosters a sense of pride in their cultural heritage.

Hindering English Language Acquisition

The importance of maximizing exposure to English to optimize language acquisition was highlighted by Students 2 and 3. Student 2 preferred the exclusive use of English in English language learning, while Student 3 added that frequent exposure to English can be instrumental in developing listening skills.

"But for me, ma'am, it's not necessary because we are learning English, not Indonesian or Bugis or other languages, so we should just use English." (Student 21)

"In my opinion, I don't agree with using other languages. To understand English quickly, we have to listen to the language often so that our hearing is trained. But, ma'am, once in a while is okay."
(Student 30)

The statements of these two students suggest a belief that immersion in English is a highly effective strategy for language acquisition. By maximizing the use of English in the classroom, students are expected to become more familiar with the sounds, vocabulary, and structures of the English language, thereby accelerating the learning process. This perspective aligns with language acquisition theories that emphasize the importance of sufficient and meaningful language input in developing language skills.

Confusion Due to Frequent Language Code-Switching

The potential for confusion arising from frequent code-switching in the learning process was raised by Student 1, who noted that excessive switching between languages can sometimes lead to confusion.

"I feel helped, especially if the lecturer explains difficult concepts in Indonesian or regional languages. So I can understand faster. However, if you change languages too often, sometimes it can be confusing." (Student 1)

Student 1's comment serves as a reminder that translanguaging should be implemented strategically and judiciously. While multilingualism offers numerous benefits, excessively frequent or unstructured code-switching can cause students to lose focus and struggle to follow the flow of the lesson. Therefore, lecturers must exercise sensitivity in applying translanguaging to ensure its effectiveness and prevent it from becoming counterproductive.

The interview data reveals a diversity of opinions among students regarding the use of translanguaging in the English for Specific Purposes (ESP) classroom. While some students find translanguaging beneficial for comprehending complex concepts and mitigating anxiety, others believe it may hinder their English language development and create confusion. This underscores the need for educators to carefully consider these varied perspectives and strike a balance that caters to the needs of all learners.

By employing translanguaging strategically and judiciously, teachers can support students who require it while maintaining an environment conducive to immersive language learning. This balanced approach can help maximize comprehension, engagement, and overall language proficiency in the ESP classroom. Ultimately, the effectiveness of translanguaging hinges on finding the optimal balance between utilizing it as a tool to aid understanding and maintaining sufficient immersion in the target language to enhance language skills. While the data suggests that judicious use of the native language can be beneficial, ensuring that such use does not lead to confusion and that students are consistently exposed to English is crucial.

Teachers' Perceptions of Translanguaging

This section explores the perspectives of three teachers on integrating translanguaging in their English for Specific Purposes (ESP) classes, specifically within the context of teaching Islamic Law. Their insights shed light on how translanguaging is perceived and implemented in this unique educational setting.

Scaffolding Understanding through Translanguaging

Teachers T1 and T2 emphasized the strategic use of translanguaging as a scaffolding tool to facilitate students' comprehension of complex legal concepts. Both teachers described a similar approach, initially explaining legal concepts in Indonesian, establishing a strong foundation before introducing the corresponding English terminology.

> *"...I use translanguaging by explaining the English of the legal concepts in Indonesian first, just to make sure students have a basic understanding, and then I introduce the English terms."* (Teacher 1)

> *"...when explaining the definitions and principles of English legal materials, I usually start with Indonesian first to make it easier for students to understand, then switch to English."* (Teacher 2)

This approach aligns with constructivist learning theory, which posits that new knowledge is best acquired by building upon learners' existing knowledge and understanding. By presenting complex legal concepts first in Indonesian, a language familiar to students, teachers can effectively bridge the gap between abstract notions and new English vocabulary, fostering a deeper and more meaningful understanding.

Boosting Students' Self-Confidence

All three teachers observed that translanguaging has positive students' self-confidence in learning English.

> *"...they become more active participants, and more confident. They are not afraid to make mistakes in English..."* (Teacher 1)

> *"...students feel more comfortable and more able to follow the lesson. They are also more active in discussions..."* (Teacher 2)

> *"...translation is very helpful in building students' confidence. It gives them a sense of security..."* (Teacher 3)

These observations suggest that translanguaging fosters a more inclusive and supportive learning environment, where students feel valued and comfortable using their mother tongue as part of the learning of English. By alleviating the pressure to speak in perfect English consistently, translanguaging allows students to focus more on comprehending and expressing ideas, boosting their confidence in learning and communicating.

Reducing Language Barriers

Teachers T2 and T3 highlighted the role of translanguaging in helping students overcome language barriers and participate more freely in the learning process.

> *"...they are also more active in discussions because they don't feel burdened by the language barrier."*(Teacher 2)

> *"...So, they don't feel hampered by the language barrier."* (Teacher 3)

These statements indicate that translanguaging is a bridge, connecting students with English language knowledge and skills even when their proficiency is still developing. By allowing space for the use of their mother tongue, translanguaging helps alleviate the fear and anxiety associated with language limitations, enabling students to focus on

understanding the material and gradually developing their English competence. This approach resonates with language learning principles that emphasize creating a supportive and empowering learning environment.

Supporting Translanguaging with Resources and Strategies

Teacher 1 emphasized the importance of utilizing resources and strategies that support the implementation of translanguaging.

"I often use bilingual materials, such as texts available in Indonesian and English. I also encourage students to read literature in two languages to deepen their understanding. So, they can compare concepts more easily." (Teacher 1)

This statement suggests that translanguaging can be further enriched by incorporating relevant resources and learning strategies. Using bilingual materials, such as texts available in both Indonesian and English, facilitates students' ability to connect concepts and terms across both languages. Additionally, encouraging students to read literature in two languages allows them to deepen their understanding and compare different perspectives. This approach aligns with language learning pedagogies emphasizing the value of diverse resources and developing strong literacy skills.

Impacting Students' Confidence, Comprehension, and Communication

Teacher 2 shared positive feedback from students, indicating that translanguaging positively impacted their confidence, comprehension, and communication skills in English.

"They have told me that they feel more confident and better able to understand difficult topics. Some of them also say that they find it easier to communicate in English after using translanguaging." (Teacher 2)

This feedback suggests that translanguaging facilitates comprehension, boosts confidence, and contributes to the development of English communication skills. Using their mother tongue as a bridge, students can more easily access and process information in English, improving fluency and confidence in expressing themselves and interacting in the target language. This supports the notion that translanguaging is a holistic and effective strategy for fostering students' overall English language competence.

Discussion

This study examined translanguaging in English for Law courses within Islamic Law programs, revealing a dynamic interplay of languages in the classroom. Both students and teachers actively utilize a repertoire of languages, including English, Indonesian, Bugis (the local language), and Arabic, to facilitate teaching and learning. This resonates with Garcia's (2022) and García & Wei's (2014) concept of translanguaging as a resource, where individuals leverage their entire linguistic repertoire to make meaning and engage in complex communicative practices.

The findings highlight that translanguaging serves multiple pedagogical functions in this context. Firstly, it facilitates conceptual understanding. By explaining complex legal concepts in students' mother tongue (Bugis) or the national language (Indonesian) before introducing English terminology, teachers scaffold learning and bridge the gap between prior knowledge and new information. This aligns with Tai's (2024) findings that students' use of translanguaging resources allows for an externalization of thinking processes, which offers visible output for inspection by the teacher. Similar strategies

have been observed in other ESP contexts, such as Cenoz et al. (2022) and Ossa Parra & Proctor's (2021) study of multilingual business communication classrooms, where students drew on their diverse linguistic resources to negotiate meaning and complete tasks.

Secondly, translanguaging fosters a more inclusive and equitable learning environment. By allowing students to draw on their entire linguistic repertoire, teachers create a space where diverse learners feel valued and empowered to participate. This resonates with Anwar et al.'s (2018) and Anwar & Misnawati's (2024) study that Bugis, in particular, acknowledges and validates students' cultural and linguistic identities, potentially contributing to a greater sense of belonging and motivation. This finding is also supported by McDermott's (2022) work on negotiating pedagogical spaces, highlighting the importance of recognizing and valuing students' linguistic and cultural resources in the classroom.

Thirdly, translanguaging promotes active learning and student engagement. Students reported feeling more confident and comfortable expressing their opinions and participating in discussions when allowed to use their linguistic repertoire. This is consistent with research on affective factors in language learning (Hidayati et al., 2024; Kanduboda, 2020), which suggests that reducing anxiety and creating a supportive classroom environment can enhance student motivation and participation. By allowing students to use the most comfortable language, teachers can facilitate a more natural and spontaneous flow of communication, leading to more meaningful interactions and deeper learning (Nkhi & Shange, 2024; Simatupang & Supri, 2024).

However, the study also identified potential challenges associated with translanguaging. Some students expressed concerns about over-reliance on the mother tongue or Indonesian, which they perceived as hindering their English language development. This highlights the need for a balanced approach to translanguaging, where teachers strategically utilize students' linguistic repertoires while ensuring adequate exposure to and practice in the target language (English). This finding is consistent with concerns raised in the literature about the potential for translanguaging to lead to linguistic segregation or hinder the development of academic language proficiency (Almashour, 2024; Reyes, 2024).

Furthermore, some students reported confusion when code-switching occurred too frequently or abruptly. This underscores the importance of clear and purposeful translanguaging practices. Teachers must be mindful of how and when they switch between languages, ensuring that translanguaging is used strategically to support understanding and engagement rather than creating unnecessary cognitive overload for students. This finding supports the need for teacher training and professional development in translanguaging pedagogies (Cenoz & Gorter, 2020; Li et al., 2024) to equip educators with the knowledge and skills to implement translanguaging effectively in their classrooms.

In conclusion, this study contributes to the growing literature on translanguaging in education by providing empirical evidence of its use and perceived benefits in English for Law courses within Islamic Law programs. The findings suggest that translanguaging can be a valuable pedagogical tool for promoting conceptual understanding, creating a more inclusive learning environment, and enhancing student engagement. However, teachers must adopt a balanced and strategic approach to translanguaging, ensuring that it supports, rather than hinders, students' development of English language proficiency. Further research is needed to explore the long-term impact of

translanguaging on students' academic achievement and language development in this context.

This study has several implications for pedagogy and curriculum development in English for Law courses within Islamic Law programs:

1) Embrace translanguaging as a pedagogical resource: The study demonstrates the value of translanguaging in facilitating understanding, promoting inclusivity, and enhancing student engagement. Educators should be encouraged to embrace translanguaging as a legitimate and valuable pedagogical tool rather than viewing it as a deviation from "standard" English language teaching practices.

2) Develop a culturally and linguistically responsive curriculum: Curriculum design should reflect the multilingual realities of the students and the specific demands of Islamic Law studies. This may involve incorporating authentic materials in multiple languages, providing opportunities for students to engage with diverse linguistic resources, and explicitly addressing the role of language in shaping legal interpretations and practices.

3) Provide professional development for teachers: Teachers must have the knowledge and skills to implement translanguaging effectively in their classrooms. Professional development programs should focus on raising awareness of translanguaging pedagogies, providing practical strategies for incorporating students' full linguistic repertoires, and addressing potential challenges associated with code-switching and language balance.

4) Foster student agency and meta-linguistic awareness: Students should be encouraged to reflect on their language practices and develop a critical understanding of how language shapes their learning and engagement with legal concepts. This can be achieved through activities that promote meta-linguistic awareness, such as language portfolio development, reflective writing, and classroom discussions about language use.

5) Promote research on translanguaging: Further research is needed to explore the long-term impact of translanguaging on students' academic achievement, language development, and professional success. This research should examine the effectiveness of different translanguaging strategies, investigate the role of individual and contextual factors in shaping translanguaging practices, and develop assessment tools that accurately measure students' multilingual competencies.

By embracing translanguaging and incorporating it into pedagogical practices and curriculum design, educators can create more inclusive, engaging, and effective learning experiences for students in English for Law courses within Islamic Law programs. This can empower students to develop the linguistic and legal expertise needed to navigate the complexities of the globalized legal landscape and contribute to their communities and societies.

Conclusion

This study investigated the use of translanguaging in English for Law courses within Islamic Law programs. The findings reveal that students and teachers actively engage in translanguaging practices, drawing on various languages, including English, Indonesian, Bugis, and Arabic. Translanguaging serves multiple functions in this context, facilitating conceptual understanding, enhancing student participation and confidence, enriching language instruction and real-world context, and supporting cultural relevance.

However, the study also highlights the need for a balanced approach to translanguaging, ensuring adequate exposure to and practice in the target language (English), and the importance of clear and purposeful code-switching practices. The implications of these findings for pedagogy, curriculum development, teacher training, and future research are discussed. By embracing translanguaging as a valuable pedagogical resource, educators can create more inclusive, engaging, and effective learning experiences for students in this unique educational setting.

In addition, this study also has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, there is a limited sample size. The study involved a relatively small number of participants from a specific context. The findings may not be generalizable to other English for Law programs or educational settings. Second, the qualitative Nature of the Data: The study relied primarily on qualitative data from interviews. While this provided rich insights into participants' perceptions and experiences, it may not capture the full complexity of translanguaging practices in the classroom. Third, self-reported Data: The data were based on participants' perceptions and experiences. There is a possibility of response bias or social desirability effects influencing the data. Fourth, focus on Perceptions: The study focused primarily on participants' perceptions of translanguaging. Future research could benefit from incorporating classroom observations and analysis of student work to provide a more comprehensive understanding of translanguaging practices and their impact on learning outcomes.

Despite these limitations, this study provides valuable insights into the use and perceived benefits of translanguaging in English for Law courses within Islamic Law programs. The findings contribute to the growing literature on translanguaging in education and offer practical implications for educators and curriculum developers.

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