Interlanguage Analysis as a Formative Assessment: English Educators' Attitude

Ruly Morganna¹, Asep Budiman²

¹*Institut Agama Islam Negeri Curup, Bengkulu. E-mail: rulymorganna@gmail.com*
²*Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Purwokerto. E-mail: a.budiman@unupurwokerto.ac.id*

ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	The purpose of this study is to find out how English educators in Indonesia feel about preparing higher-quality English teaching by performing an interlanguage analysis based on students' existing English language skills. Hence, this qualitative study was undertaken to evaluate the attitudes of 10 English educators in performing an interlanguage analysis. They were chosen specifically because they had prior expertise, ensuring that they were well-versed in the study's topic and that the data the shared would be clear. The research data were gathered by handing out semi-structured questionnaires to English educators. Despite certain particular and situational restrictions, the findings demonstrated that all English educators had a favorable attitude toward performing an interlanguage analysis of students' English ability from an emotional, behavioural, and cognitive perspective. This research is significant because it can guide English educators who want to enhance their teaching quality.

1. Introduction

Interlanguage analysis is used as a formative assessment tool in teaching and learning English as a foreign language. Its purpose is to provide feedback to students as a reflection of their progress and to educators as a reflection of how to prepare more successful lessons (Hashio, 2021; Huang, 2019). In the 21st-century learning trend, it is critical to regularly do formative assessments to sustain reflective teaching (Graney, 2017; Nguyen, 2019). Interlanguage analysis helps plan more qualified further teachings viewed from either designing appropriate English learning materials, planning appropriate teaching strategies that fit students current competence to use English, and getting the appropriate oriented focus based on students' current competence to use English (Mahootian, 2020).

The method should be based on perceiving students' communicative competence as a real-world communication environment, as this is the heart of interlanguage analysis towards students' language capacity. This competency includes linguistic or grammatical competence, discourse competence, sociolinguistic competence, and communication strategy competence (Bazylyak, 2017; Reynolds, 2018). The educator should examine such topics in light of the pupils' abilities. Furthermore, the assessment of students' communicative ability should consider the faults that they make in their interlanguage and

the success of their language output, which is free of errors (Archibald, 2017). Thus, by conducting interlanguage analysis on either errors or gains, the educator will have accurate information about the students' current abilities, allowing him to prepare qualified additional learning materials that are appropriate for the student's current abilities, select appropriate teaching strategies that are appropriate for the student's current abilities, and determine several vital aspects.

Given this situation, it is clear that conducting an interlanguage analysis is an essential strategy for gaining teaching reflection in the twenty-first-century classroom (Vanek, 2017). In light of what has been stated, an English educator must conduct interlanguage analysis as a teaching reflection to plan more effective and qualified teachings (Foster-Cohen, 2017). In addition, the educator must have a positive attitude toward conducting interlanguage analysis so that this action can be used regularly to achieve the success that meaningfully supports students. As a result, the emphasis of this research is on English educators' attitudes towards conducting interlanguage analysis to prepare future teachings better.

2. Literature Review

2.1 The Concept of Interlanguage

Interlanguage is a language system that learners have when studying a second language (Borovina, 2017). This language is different from the learners' native language and their target language, thus it occurs between the two (Torres, 2020). This linguistic system becomes fossilized when learners create it in an unchangeable manner. Interlanguage is neither a native speaker's nor an accurate translation from L1 to L2 made by a native speaker of the target language (Cabrera, 2020; Pardo, 2021). The phrase "approximative system" is part of interlanguage topic which is used to describe interlanguage as a systematic self-contained language system controlled by learners (González, 2020). The systematicity of non-native language activity is represented by this term. Learners' interlanguage continues to develop as they progress through the phases of language acquisition. There are four properties of interlanguage: systematicity, permeability, dynamicity, and fossilization, all of which are related to the fact that interlanguage has its system (Walenta, 2019).

The systematicity is concerned with language aspects like lexicon, phonology, morphology, syntax, pragmatics, etc. Students' linguistic ability as an interlanguage becomes systematic at a particular point in their development. Because it is organically built on the basis of influences from both the native and target languages, the interlanguage system is permeable. As a result, its permeability aids and facilitates the creation of a unique system (Pallotti, 2017). The interlanguage system is evolving due to its distinctiveness as learners move through their study and pass the language acquisition milestone. When a system is no longer dynamic and porous, it becomes fossilized. When a learner's interlanguage system fossilizes before they reach a specific stage of language acquisition, it can reflect their progress in learning (Krulatz, 2020). It can also show the learners' mistakes when their interlanguage system fossilizes before reaching a particular language acquisition stage (González, 2020).

2.2 The Nature of Interlanguage Analysis

Interlanguage insights are evolving in lockstep with the progress of interlanguage-focused research. When an English educator wants to assess a student's interlanguage growth, progress leads to modifying various elements that should be considered. When conducting an interlanguage analysis, it is essential to include the pupils' grammatical abilities and their communication abilities as a whole (Ahn, 2021).

The primary orientation of conducting interlanguage analysis is on students' English communicative competence. The word "communicative competency" has several different interpretations. Communication competence encompasses more than just grammatical proficiency; it also includes the capacity to use grammatical proficiency in various communicative settings (Cai, 2019). Knowledge of linguistics and sociolinguistic conventions is also referred to as communicative competence (Edi, 2017). The term "communicative competence" refers to a set of knowledge and skills used to communicate methodically. Grammatical principles, the means of using language contextually and functionally, and the means of applying discourse principles are all included in knowledge. In addition, competence refers to applying the information in real-life situations (Heggernes, 2021). Learners' interlanguage performance can be used to observe, strengthen, and evaluate this competence as it develops. Concerning the context of communication, competency becomes more dynamic, interpersonal, and relative.

Interlanguage analysis differs from contrastive analysis, which is a strategy for preparing second or foreign language learning materials by comparing learners' L1 and L2 through a parallel description based on the perspective of errors, and error analysis (Archibald, 2017). Interlanguage analysis is done from the standpoint that the growth of a learner's language system, interlanguage, should be viewed from errors and non-errors of their language usage based on communicative competence (Nakamura, 2016). As a result, conducting interlanguage analysis entails examining learners' progress in language use using communicative competence as the basis of analysis, with both errors and non-errors analyzed, so that the educator has data on learners' current competencies as a benchmark for developing relevant and appropriate additional materials, teaching strategies, and assessments.

2.3 Interlanguage Analysis in English Teaching

Interlanguage analysis is instrumental and essential for English educators to apply regularly to their students' language and interlanguage development. The value of interlanguage analysis is demonstrated as one of the English educator's formative assessment strategies (He, 2020). The use of formative assessment to assess learners' language competence allows the English educator to organize the subject matter, orient new roles and responsibilities, and evaluate the teaching practice (Jing, 2018).

The process of interlanguage analysis begins with collecting data on students' communication ability, both oral and written. For example, the educator's guidance for doing interlanguage analysis is by asking students to have a free conversation or write a free text, recording natural learners' oral and written data, asking students to provide both oral and written data insufficient length so that the analysis can be conceivably done, and collecting. Because communicative competence encompasses essential aspects of language ability, it can be used as the basis for further analysis (Pereira, 2018). Additionally, a

portfolio can be used to obtain learners' interlanguage data for further analysis (Alarcón, 2021).

The data of students' communicative competence in producing interlanguage can be collected in a variety of ways for later analysis by the educator, thanks to the role of interlanguage analysis as one of the strategies for doing formative assessment. Portfolios, journals, observational checklists, peer assessment, assessment dialogues, and other techniques are recommended for doing interlanguage analysis. The more inventive an English educator is when using interlanguage analysis as a formative assessment, the more likely techniques he can use to gather data on students' current abilities (Mahootian, 2020).

After obtaining it, the educator must analyze the data representing learners' current competencies by classifying errors and non-errors. Both of the classified conditions are useful in determining the extent to which learners have progressed. The educator can use the errors to create additional learning materials, teaching strategies, and teaching focused orientation that are well-planned with the goal of providing reinforcement. Furthermore, the educator can use the non-errors to prepare new materials for the learners at the next stage of their current success, continuous teaching strategies that have the potential to maintain their success, and orienting the next materials with the previous ways of orienting teaching processes as ones yielding to students' success. Conducting an interlanguage analysis will enable the educator to make more informed decisions about providing more effective and qualified teaching (Nam, 2020).

2.4 Attitude towards Interlanguage Analysis

The way a person reacts to his environment is defined as his attitude (Armstrong, 2019). It falls under reflexive connections between feeling, behavior, and belief (Bienemann, 2017). It is also constructed when a judgment is made about thoughts or objects (Brügger, 2020). Because someone with an attitude toward something will eventually decide what he will do as a reaction to that thing, the attitude serves as the starting point for making decisions. Regarding English educators' attitude towards interlanguage analysis, the learners' interlanguage is examined in this study not only in terms of errors but also in terms of non-errors. Furthermore, the educators' attitude is investigated using the ABC model, which includes the affective, behavioral, and cognitive domains (Eagly & Chaiken, 2007). The purpose of this study is to look into the attitudes of Indonesian English educators toward doing interlanguage analysis on their students' language, where the analysis is used as one of the strategies in formative assessment so that the educator can prepare better, more effective, and qualified subsequent teachings.

3. Research Methodology

The data for this study was gathered qualitatively using a questionnaire given to 10 Indonesian English educators with varying levels of expertise. The English educators who took part in this study were purposefully chosen based on the criterion that they had been familiar with technical terminology connected to interlanguage, communicative competence, and English teaching since they were professional English educators and had dealt with these concepts in prior. Their understanding of interlanguage concepts was necessary for them to provide all possible data for this investigation. The questionnaire was created using Eagly and Chaiken's (2007) ABC model, an attitude model. The ABC model's three domains (affective, behavioral, and cognitive) were used to create three themes, with some questions based on communicative ability to reflect learners' interlanguage. The data

of this study were analyzed using an interactive model of analysis as recommended by Miles et al. (2014). According to this model, the data analysis in this study encompassed four interactive elements, namely data collection, data condensation, data display, and data conclusion.

4. Results and Discussion

This research discovered numerous findings that expanded on the study's focus on English educators' views on undertaking interlanguage analysis to prepare better competent English teachings. The data were divided into three primary categories of attitude based on Eagly and Chaiken's (2007) attitude model, which included emotional, behavioral, and cognitive categories.

4.1. Affective Domain of Attitude towards Interlanguage Analysis

As evidenced by their feelings and emotions, all English educators had a good attitude toward interlanguage analysis. Some English educators were interested in conducting interlanguage analysis because they wanted to provide students with a learning process based on their needs, including linguistics, discourse, and communication strategy competence. It is clear that one positive benefit from doing interlanguage analysis is that English educators can serve learning materials to students on the basis of students' needs and expectations (Bardovi-Harlig, 2018). For instance, educator 3 said as follows:

> "I am interested in conducting interlanguage analysis so that I can plan my teaching in a way that is convenient for my students" (Educator 3)

They chose interlanguage analysis as one of the methods for implementing formative assessment. For example, educator 6 shared the following information.

> "I believe interlanguage analysis can provide feedback to my students so that they may reflect on their abilities" (Educator 6).

Students may receive feedback on how far their growth has progressed through formative evaluation. Because of the necessity to prepare for future teaching, several English educators were interested in applying interlanguage analysis to students' English abilities. This point depicts the essence of interlanguage similar to a formative assessment (Bibbens, 2018; Nguyen, 2019). Educator 1 said as follows:

> "I can then create a good concept for the next teaching process once I know my students' English competencies as a consequence of utilizing interlanguage analysis" (Educator 1).

4.2 Cognitive Domain of Attitude towards Interlanguage Analysis

The English educators also expressed their enthusiasm for interlanguage analysis and its potential contribution to future English education. All of the English educators expressed their enthusiasm for performing interlanguage analysis since it could help with future teaching. It was thought to have great promise since it could investigate students' present English proficiency, their contextual and meaningful English interlanguage, and their problems in using English (Archibald, 2017; Bardovi-Harlig, 2018; González, 2020). For instance, educator 2 said as follows:

> "I need to perform interlanguage analysis to teach effectively and contextually depending on my students' needs and competence" (Educator 2)

It could also serve as the foundation for creating contextual learning materials tailored to students' needs, creating learning media that cater to their interests, planning teaching strategies that are appropriate for their abilities and needs, and preparing more meaningful and effective teaching for them (Bakırcı, 2020). Educator 3 stated,

> "Essentially, after performing interlanguage analysis, I am motivated to be creative since I can produce appropriate learning materials, teaching techniques, media relevant to my students' interests, and overall effective teaching" (Educator 3).

To summarize, all English educators had a favorable attitude toward performing interlanguage analysis that was consistent and linked to one another.

4.3 Behavioral Domain of Attitude towards Interlanguage Analysis

All of the English educators were also enthusiastic about conducting an interlanguage analysis of the students' English abilities. However, there were a few difficult cases that made it difficult for them to conduct interlanguage analysis on a regular basis. English educators in this study agreed that interlanguage analysis could be done by assigning students writing and oral assessments: "yes, with writing and oral tests" (Educator 2), and by providing them with learning activities such as assigning them to communicate in group and pair work: "it can be while tasking them to have discussion with their friends" (Educator 2). These exercises equipped educators with the tools they needed to assess students' linguistics, discourse, and strategic competency. To some extent, the betterment of doing interlanguage analysis is also determinant to the educators' creativity in designing activities or exercises to emerge the practical data about their students' interlanguage (Nam, 2020; Pardo, 2021; Sumonsriworakun, 2017).

On the other hand, other English educators complained that it was necessary to do interlanguage analysis based on time availability. For example, educator 5 shared the following information:

> "If I think on my experience, I frequently lack the time to complete interlanguage analysis" (Educator 5).

As a result of this situation, interlanguage analysis could not be done at every meeting. For example, educator 7 said as follows:

> "I don't do interlanguage analysis at every meeting because of time constraints" (educator 7).

Furthermore, some English educators emphasized that, besides doing interlanguage analysis, which they should also complete as educators, they had many other responsibilities that required much time to complete. Assigned with the preceding, educator 9 said as follows:

> "I also have other responsibilities as outlined in the curriculum adopted by the school where I teach. These responsibilities also divert my attention" (Educator 9).

The frequency with which English educators performed interlanguage analysis might be linked to the number of responsibilities assigned to them according to the curriculum (Nguyen, 2019). Interlanguage analysis might be carried out using a range of teaching and assessment media as a bridge to provide an output in students' English proficiency. For example, educator 2 shared the following information.

> "I frequently utilize some teaching and assessment tools to manage to perform interlanguage analysis" (Educator 2).

The output was made as the subject of interlanguage analysis. The analysis results were then used to create additional relevant learning resources and teaching techniques that met the needs of the students (Archibald, 2017). Some English educators recognized that interlanguage analysis was difficult for a specific area of study, such as sociolinguistics competence, due to educators' inadequate expertise and comprehension of the subject. The goal of this condition was to determine whether or not idioms or dialects used by students were included in the criteria of intelligibility (Rahman, 2020). In terms of the preceding explanation, teacher 10 said as follows:

> "It is tough for me to judge if particular idioms widely employed by my pupils are truly contextually proper or not when compared to the occasion when such idioms are spoken," one English educator said (Educator 10).

Technically, the little English output provided by pupils may obstruct the success of interlanguage analysis on occasion. "Sometimes my students are nervous to speak in English," said one English educator (Educator 4). On the other hand, educators could not force students to produce English output because there would be a period of silence before they were capable of producing English output that was relevant to the current materials they were learning. Because of the large number of students in the class, conducting an interlanguage analysis for each individual's English proficiency was quite tricky (Nakamura, 2016). The K13 curriculum, which was adopted and implemented in Indonesian schools, assigned educators with various tasks and conducted interlanguage analysis. These tasks necessitated concentration and preparation, consuming time that was otherwise available to them. It was such as the following, which was shared by educator 8.

> "As required by the curriculum, I must also include a description of each student's progress from a character standpoint in my portfolio. This viewpoint is the foundation of the curriculum at the school where I teach" (Educator 8).

Because the educators' time was limited, this situation naturally made it difficult for them to regularly conduct interlanguage analysis on each student's English proficiency.

5. Conclusion

According to the findings of this study, all English educators effectively share their positive attitudes toward doing interlanguage analysis because they want to provide competency-based teaching and receive teaching reflection. Despite various restrictions, all English educators have good opinions regarding doing interlanguage analysis from a behavioral standpoint. They have agreed that interlanguage analysis can be done while giving assessments and exercises, but only if time allows. Despite several challenges such as limited knowledge and understanding for analyzing sociolinguistics competence, limitation of students' English output, many students, and other tasks assigned by the curriculum, interlanguage analysis can be done using valuable media.

All English educators have similar cognitive positive attitudes toward interlanguage analysis because it can help interpret students' current competence, develop learning materials, develop learning media, plan teaching strategies, and prepare meaningful and contextual additional teachings.

Because English educators must play the role of facilitator, this study is considered one of the most important resources for improving the continuity of English teaching. Furthermore, to effectively assist students, educators should plan and design additional teachings relevant to their needs based on their communicative competence. As a result, interlanguage analysis is critical because the results serve as the foundation for developing more effective, contextual, and meaningful teachings.

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