Research Article

How Else do We Create Learning Opportunities for the Indigenous/Tribal/Minority Girl-Child? A Study of Teacher Reliefs and Concerns with Translanguaging Pedagogies

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The constitution of India places a special emphasis on the Indigenous/Tribal/Minority (ITM) child's language (Art 350a) and educational rights through the Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP). Therefore, the ITM child's educational space becomes the space for states' aspirations where several policies, especially language-in-education policy, become contested decisions. The ITM girl-child speaks the ITM languages, while the policy mandates English or Hindi as languages of empowerment and economic mobility in schools. Correspondingly, teachers of the ITM children are charged with the responsibility of enabling educational opportunities by creating learning opportunities in the languages of the school. Therefore, the teachers find themselves in language-discordant teaching/learning contexts, which raise questions as to how they understand the ITM girl-child's language disadvantage and then proceed to negotiate their pedagogies. It is also worth considering the reliefs and concerns they experience as they create their pedagogies within the context of language conflict. Based on Q narratives of fifty-one teachers, four patterns of translanguaging pedagogy were identified: engaging in multilingual, multimodal and multipersonnel translanguaging; requesting ITM-speaking teachers for parallel languaging; learner peer translanguaging; and monitored peer translanguaging. Furthermore, teacher engagement with translanguaging pedagogies initiates a consciousness of the access paradox, making the findings both positive and paradoxical. Implications of the findings are discussed with specific emphasis on the need to carefully document teacher practices and engage with teachers' logic as they create rights-based inclusive pedagogies that defy both Indian policy mandates and hegemony of the Western 'methods.'

1. INTRODUCTION

Educational research recognizes schools as spaces where ideologies are enacted since educational decisions are grounded in socio-cultural, economic, and political priorities (Giroux, 2001). Often, the onus of conceptualizing, implementing and monitoring educational opportunities and spaces is placed on the State (the legislature and the executive) through its educational boards and its employees, primarily teachers. In contexts involving children from minoritized communities, educational opportunities are further shaped by questions of linguistic inclusion, equity, and the recognition of historically marginalized knowledge systems. Specifically, in India, states that have Fifth

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areas schedule[1] (i.e. areas which are inhabited by Indigenous/Tribal/Minority (ITM)[2] populations) Art 36 of Directive Principles of state policy (CoI, 1949) mandates such states to ensure that its vulnerable populations are not exploited and special educational initiatives be taken. Consequently, states design exclusive opportunities such as exclusive schools for ITM children[3] with a special emphasis on educating 'the ITM girl-child'. States necessarily have to churn out two different politics (Bull, 2007): First, a bio-politics which talks of the designs the state has for the girl-child and her environment. Second, the developmental-politics examines how the ITM child is described and what capabilities the states want in the ITM child. It is in these ITM schools and the specificities of teachers' responsibilities that the tensions interfacing the two politics manifest. One such aspect of tension in the ITM child's educational context is the 'language' of learning/teaching. This the teachers operationalize on an everyday basis through the lens of their understanding and negotiation of the language policy (Young, 2014). In the proceeding sections a description of the ITM girl-child's languaging and her educational space are considered. Specifically, this paper attempts to understand the tensions and anxieties that teachers in ITM educational contexts experience as they transgress the language policy norms through their pedagogies to make education accessible to ITM girl children.

1.1 The ITM Girl-Child

An ITM child, as such and the girl-child in particular is the cynosure of two parallel discourses. Firstly, the constitutional discourse (The Constitution of India (CoI), 1949) recognizes 'her' (the ITM girl-child's) linguistic rights (Art 350(a), CoI, 1949) and thus the only category of children who are guaranteed education in the mother tongue. Secondly, policy and assessment-driven discourses such as Annual Survey of Educational Report (ASER, 2022), National Achievement Survey (NAS, 2021) and National Educational Policy (NEP, 2020) depict her as 'the disadvantaged' (Wolfe & De-shalit, 2013). The second construction shows her as a poor performer in exams who exhibits signs of *learning poverty*, owing to conditions breeding *learning poorness* (Chimirala et al., 2025; Friedlander, 2013; Garcia, 2005; World Bank, 2019) and as one with attentional deficits (NEP, 2020). The state's discourses in turn construe her as the needy and aspiring of educational intervention and empowerment. The two discourses

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[1] These areas are constitutionally recognized as tribal lands and hence are special administrative areas under Fifth Schedule of the Constitution of India (CoI).

[2] ITM refers to indigenous/tribal/minority/minoritized languages and peoples. We concur with Skutnabb-Kangas, Phillipson and Dunbar (2019) as they point out the politics of discursive discrimination of naming and subordination that supranational bodies and nations do in naming ITM communities as minority. Interested readers can refer to Annamalai (2022) for the process of minoritisation in India and Boreus (2009) for discursive constructions of discourses that then contribute to minoritisation and differential treatment.

[3] The phrases child/children/learner/student in this paper will refer to the ITM girl-child unless mentioned otherwise.

thrive alongside and depict her from a deficit perspective, despite research literature celebrating her being multilingual (Mohanty, 1992; 2018). She is adept in communicating in the languages of *her ecology* through her oral and affective resources (Panda, 2022) as she constantly engages in language-brokering (Orellana, Dorner & Pulido, 2003) and translanguaging for her familial needs in accordance with the functional demands of the context (Panda, 2022). She is vicariously conscious of intersubjective agency (Matusov, 1996) and always carries the arduous task of being comprehendible (Tse, 1996a; 1996b). Such an adept, advantaged by cognitive flexibility, and resourced child finds herself in a paradoxical classroom with a monolingual mindset (Clyne, 2008) vis-à-vis the language-in-education policy of the school and its managers, primarily the teachers implementing, adopting, adapting and manipulating the language policy.

1.2 The ITM Girl-Child's Educational Context and Her Teachers

ITM girl-child's schools are residential, exclusively built and managed by the state with the agenda of educational development for the ITM community. So these schools are framed within the affirmative action initiatives. Children enter these schools in Grade 6 after having gone through the first five years of their schooling either in a regular primary school or in a residential primary school. In either case, the child would have experienced language-discordant pedagogies (Chimirala & John, 2024). Further, India has a 'no detention policy' till Grade 8, which has raised the liability question in a significant manner. In a recent report submitted to the National Human Rights Commission, India, Chimirala and John (2024) have reported parents' anguish when their girl-child struggles to read and write in the school's language. Parents have essentially asked the accountability and liability question: who is accountable and liable if their children do not learn grade-appropriate concepts, numeracy and reading skills?

Teachers, as representatives of the state, have the responsibility of creating educational opportunities. Note that an opportunity is one that can surmount certain inequality breeding obstacles not just in the school space but that which "imparts to reduce the unequalizing impact on the adult life of these differential environments" (Coleman, 1975, p.28). Teachers are the torch-bearers of the State's aspirations[4], both bio-political and developmental, as they attempt to *create a level-playing field* (so that the child can attempt reaching the desired qualification), conscientiously *engage in capability development* (so that higher achievement is possible), create *ways to deal with hurdles* (such that the specific disadvantage is addressed); and finally *nullify any obstacles* that can affect the other three italicized aspects above (Liven 1981; Westen, 1985). So, in educational contexts where the MoI is the mandated language policy but children speak

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[4] The term *aspiration* as Koos Malan (2011) points, is a policy initiative that wishes for a change to happen (in the future) but does not take the onus of making it happen.

ITM language(s), teachers necessarily navigate and negotiate the structural norms of the school to create learning opportunity for their ITM girl children through pedagogies using their full repertoires to meaningfully engage and enable the children's capabilities by engaging in translanguaging pedagogies.

2. TRANSLANGUAGING PEDAGOGIES

Translanguaging was originally conceptualized as Trawysieithu by Williams (1996) as a deliberate switch in the language of input and output in Welsh classrooms with the aim of developing "balanced and confident bilingual pupils" (Williams, 2000, p. 42). In its initial conceptualization, translanguaging was a planned pedagogical intervention with two overarching pedagogical aims: First, the deployment of pre-existent knowledge of languages to further learning and cross-linguistic transfer, and second, the support of " a deeper and fuller understanding of the subject matter" (Baker & Wright, 2017, pp. 280–281) so that the subject matter is fully "digested and reconstructed" (Baker, 2003, p.81). Based on the context and the state endorsement through language policy, Williams (2012) categorizes translanguaging as *official* translanguaging (in the educational context) and *natural* translanguaging. However, in its first round of conceptual expansion translanguaging was applied to bilingual educational contexts of the United States (Garcia, 2009). It began to encompass a bi/multilingual speaker's "normal street mode discursive practices" and "multiple discursive practices" of communication to make sense of their world by taking advantage of their full repertoires (Garcia, 2009, p. 45) in organic and fluid languaging practices (Garcia & Lin, 2017). Thus, a distinction between *spontaneous* and *pedagogical* translanguaging began to emerge based on the context, the purpose, and the nature of relationship between the interlocutors (see Cook, 2016; Grosjean, 2008).

When applied in educational contexts, the theoretical position on translanguaging (irrespective of whether it is *spontaneous or pedagogical* translanguaging), at this juncture is that the languages are by themselves not fixed codes but placed in social practices where language boundaries are expected to be strictly adhered (Garcia & Otheguy, 2020). Translanguaging, which celebrates various language modes of a bi/multilingual speaker and their languaging practices, is an eco-system of symbiotic interdependence of languages and communities (Cook, 2016). Such a theoretical construction of languages in the mind then necessarily questions the monoglossic, monomodal and monosemiotic construction of separate languages competence (Canagarajah, 2013; Fennema-Bloom 2009; García, Flores, Seltzer, Otheguy & Rosa, 2021; Wei & Garcia, 2022).

Within bi/multilingual pedagogical contexts, translanguaging creates a calm, relaxed and low-anxiety atmosphere that can trigger positive changes in learner behavior (Chukly-Bonato, 2016). It can build the "right setting for students and teachers to develop all their language skills and linguistic repertoire" (Nagy, 2018, p. 45) and allow

for the development and exhibition of learning/skills (Hassan & Ahmed, 2015). Li (2011) argues that in pedagogic contexts of translanguaging, a translanguaging space is created that allows for the deployment of available resources including languages, experiences, multimodal assets, intersubjectivities and knowledge systems between learners and teachers and help in meaning making through cross-linguistic flexibility. When teachers engage in translanguaging pedagogies, research finds that they do so as a cognitive act (Chimirala, 2022a; Thomas, 2006) with the objective of enabling participation and access (Garcia & Sylvan, 2011) and creating a near equitable learning experience to empower the student (Garcia & Levia, 2013; Mazak & Herbas-Donoso, 2014).

More recent publications project translanguaging-as-a-decolonizing-act – an act where the hegemonies of colonial-era ideologies (Li, 2017), monolingual mindsets (Clyne, 2008) and several hegemonic assumptions about language learning are questioned (Garcia & Wei, 2014). We concur with Wei and Garcia's (2022) argument that the 'trans' in translanguaging by teachers is not a mere transcendence across named/recognized languages. We further argue that translanguaging as a decolonizing project delinks the devices of control that necessitate 'a' language mastery i.e. in English, to be able to epistemically access the knowledge coded in that language. Thus, translanguaging inevitably questions the nature of the content coded in the language and alters the terms of interactions between teachers and students. From being a teacher and taught, they could now be co-explorers and more-enabled peer-apprentice given that the hurdle of language is now consciously negotiated in the light of the teacher's assessment of learner's linguistically diverse learning circumstances (Chimirala, 2022a; 2022b). So, unlike studies that engaged with teachers who know and do translanguaging as a learnt/conscious concept (like in Garcia & Wei, 2022; Lundberg, 2019; Lau, 2020), the teachers in Indian ITM educational context of this study may not have studied or be aware of translanguaging as a word/concept, as a pedagogy, and/or as a politics but still be doing it – plurilingualism is the way of life and they could be doing versions of translanguaging in their everyday interactions. In their pedagogic contexts, the ITM teachers could be doing translanguaging consciously, purposefully, and deliberately as they help their learners engage their fuller repertoires to explore the *word* and the *world* around them. Therefore, when teachers engage in *their* pedagogy (in and beyond the mandated languages), they could be conscious of the structures within which they and their learners are expected to perform and that they are both transgressing the boundaries for legitimate reasons. The structured work environment such as the ITM teachers' work spaces necessitates an enquiry of the nature of teachers' relief and concerns as they engage in practices that transgress the normative devices called the language of instruction. Hence, this paper engages with the following research question: *What kind of relief and anxieties do teachers experience and articulate as they engage in translanguaging pedagogies?*

3. THEORETICAL APPROACH

Giddens' (1984) structuration theory emphasizes a dynamic interplay between individual agency and the structures within which individuals live. A *structure* can be policies, curriculum, and expectations on employees as can also be institutions such as schools. The theory claims that as much as individuals perpetually shape and negotiate the structures on an everyday basis through their *work*, the structures too are constrained and influenced by the actors vis-à-vis their choices and behaviors within that system. This implies that individuals do not follow rules blindly. Instead, they understand, reflect, interpret and evaluate the utility of the structures against their working conditions.

Understanding teacher's sense of relief and concern with translanguaging pedagogies necessitates engagement with the extent to which teachers understand the *structures* that operate on them in at least two ways: one, *colonize* the teachers into conformity with the structures and two, the degree of agential freedom that teachers perceive and believe they can realize from within that structure (Giddens,1984). Hence Giddens talks of *structuration,* i.e., the spatial location where an individual meets the state's mechanism as a three-layered structure: *signification,* i.e., the use of language and discourse to code practices; *legitimization,* i.e., inserting societal values and norms, and *domination,* i.e., applying power in controlling access and resources. Schools are structured spaces where decisions on what languages will be taught and in what languages will STEM subjects be taught are made on the basis of the state's ideologies and its capacities (Aiyar, 2024). These decisions are backed by values and norms that ought to be imbibed and eventually realized. Further control mechanisms to ensure that the values are materialized and not-diminished/diluted are designed into the structures (Chimirala, et al., 2024).

To explore translanguaging pedagogies empirically, it is essential to question taken-for-granted norms and policies, break the silence, and ensure that the unheard are listened to, while bringing the invisible and those who have been invisibilised into the open. Garcia and Leva (2014) argue that translanguaging is not just about learning something through one's languages but "bringing to open the concealed exchanges and releasing the subjugated histories" (p. 211), so as to reveal "pluriversal epistemologies and practices" (Canagarajah, 2022, p. 1). Specifically in this study, we engage with how teachers recognize the *structures* in which they function – primarily, the nature of performance expectations on their bodies and the nature of linguistic hegemony and disadvantage that the ITM girl-child experiences (Lau, 2020; Panda, Deepshikha & Chowdary, 2019); and the need to initiate enabling pedagogies in their classrooms. Such initiation requires teachers' assessment of the learners' educational experiences and the degree of freedom in exercising agency i.e. the ability to act independently of external forces (Ahearn, 2001).

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 The Q Study

The data for this study is a subset of a larger study where we adopted the Q methodology[5] for two reasons: firstly, exploring teachers' rationales is considered challenging since they are not directly observable and least documentable in their entirety (Young, 2014); and secondly, teachers, as representatives of the state, may be politically inclined to be neutral rather than truly represent their views. Q, as a methodology, builds on two principles of qualitative research: the *principle of communicability*, which posits that we house the ability to discourse on anything that matters to us, and the *principle of subjective communicability* which adds that the discourse would be perceptively subjective in nature. Building on the two principles, Q methodology engages with diverse perspectives along with an in-depth engagement with the respondents' rationales through the primary tool- the Q concourse. The Q-concourse is an exhaustive collection of statements on a specific topic gathered from existing materials such as newspapers, research and media reports, interviews, publications, judgments, opinions, arguments and even conversations with stakeholders. Whetting, expert scrutiny, and piloting of the concourse leads to the final set of statements called the Q-Sort. The Q-sort for the larger study comprises a collage of 25 statements which capture five areas of potential hurdles that impact creation of learning opportunities (namely: learner-based, policy-based, community-based, teacher-practices-based and language-based; see appendices for more). Since the Q-sort is a collage of all possible views on a specific topic, it is believed that teacher salience in opinion and possibilities of biases is reduced, since all the 25 cards have to be placed in the Q grid (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Q sort grid and a sample Q sorting

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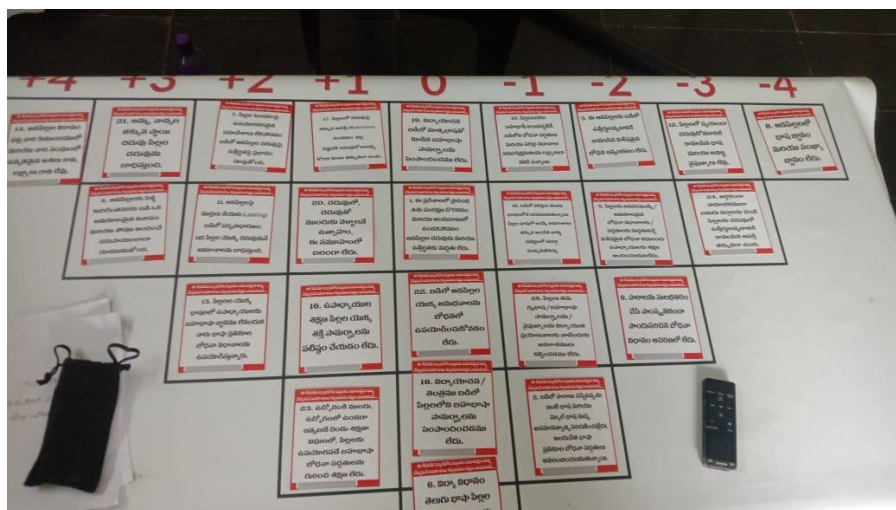
[5] For details on 'Q' in general see Brown (1993).

4.2 The Q Procedures

A total of 113 teachers from 14 ITM schools in six Fifth Schedule districts of four states of India, participated in the larger study. At each school, teacher-volunteers were invited for an orientation where the purpose and procedures of the study were presented. Anonymity and concerns on the ownership and interpretation of data were openly discussed so that the power hierarchies were minimized and teacher-participants could *own* their narratives. Every teacher-participant was invited to first sort the cards into three stacks: 'like my view', 'not like my view' and 'neutral'. Once the three stacks were ready, they were invited to rank order the cards along a quasi-normal shape ranging from +4 to -4. Once the rank ordering was done, a post-sorting interview was conducted. Q interviews encourage in-depth explanations, anecdotes, experiences and conclusions. Therefore, they are known to be exhaustive, lengthy and sometimes strenuous to handle for both the interviewer and interviewee. Mean Q sorting along with the post-sorting interview was about 35.46 minutes for the larger study.

For this study, the narratives and rationales of the fifty one teachers (of the 113) who identified language as a significant hurdle in the creation of learning opportunities were isolated and examined for the following: (i) whether and why they deemed their learners were disadvantaged; (ii) their rationalization of how language-specific aspects impact learning opportunities for the ITM girl-child; and (iii) how do they mitigate the hurdle to create opportunities. Note that we did not use the term translanguaging, nor did we conduct any workshops to introduce the idea. In educational contexts where teachers are linguistically sensitive to pupil's language difficulties, using their multilingual and multimodal repertoires has been the norm rather than the exception (Chimirala, 2022a).

4.3 Participants

All the fifty-one teachers were multilinguals who represented a diversity of languages, social status and cultural backgrounds; were trained teachers; and recruited through a competitive process. With a mean teaching experience of 10.3 years, all the teachers were specifically recruited for the ITM girls' schools on a contractual, consolidated payment basis with precarious terms and conditions. Given that the ITM schools are residential, the participant teachers are expected to live on campus and be constantly available for their ITM learners with whom they neither share the language nor culture. Teachers thus are additionally care-givers and companions.

4.4 Data Analytical Procedures

Teacher interviews comprised 8.43 hours of recorded data gathered from the fifty-one teacher participants. The data was collected in the language the teacher was comfortable

in (e.g., Telugu, Hindi, Marathi, Gormati, Halbi, and Gondi[6]) and the analysis was done in the original language with the help of two multilingual speakers for each ITM language (refer to Appendix 1 for the interview protocol). All the audio files were analyzed by the author and then by a fellow researcher (also as a multilingual person).

Following Saldaña (2013) the audio files underwent two cycles of coding: first, we did *structural coding* that aimed to categorize and label the data to identify commonalities, differences and connections among the segments of data regarding the research question. The second level involved *eclectic coding* that aimed to capture the broader patterns of reliefs and concerns as well as the emotions to understand teachers' lived experiences. Field notes were referred to during the coding of their emotions. Post analysis, the participant-teachers were invited to examine and ratify the interpretation and if required reword, modify or even remove/withdraw statements that they did not agree with.

5. RESULTS

Before we present key findings with reference to teacher experiences with translanguaging pedagogies, we first report on teacher assessment of learner 'linguistic disadvantage' (in 5.1) and the key patterns of translanguaging pedagogies as they engage in creating learning opportunities for their girls (in 5.2).

Recall that the primary purpose of the study is to recognize aspects of relief and anxiety in teacher experiences with translanguaging pedagogy and hence the first two aspects are briefly presented. To understand teachers' concerns, it is necessary to first understand their perception of what it means to be linguistically disadvantaged and from there, how they help in 'engaging' their students.

5.1 Teachers' Perception of the ITM Girls as 'Linguistically Disadvantaged'

A brief description of the teacher assessment of learners' linguistic disadvantage under three categories is presented in Table 1:

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[6] We engaged with Gondi of Adilabad, Telangana State; Dantewada and Bastar of Chhattisgarh State; and with Gormatti/Lambadi of Adilabad and Nizamabad of Telangana State.

Table 1. Summary of Teacher Perception Being 'Linguistically Disadvantaged'

Instances that showcased linguistic disadvantage	Reasons for linguistic disadvantage	Effect of linguistic disadvantage
1) Inability to: a) recognize the alphabet, b) read-aloud the text, c) comprehend the text, d) comprehend the math word problem and solve it 2) Disengagement in classroom due to the language of the class 3) Passive presence and mental absence in content subject class 4) Absence of grade-appropriate performance in content subjects such as math, science and Environmental science 5) Seclusion and sparing engagement in conversation with teachers even in the dormitories 6) Comfortable conversing amongst themselves in 'their' languages in their dormitories but not so in the classroom where they have to use the school's language	1) Restricted exposure to the complex language of the textbook 2) No familial and community engagement in their language development given the 'residential' educational set up 3) Non-implementation of mother-tongue education in primary education 4) Undeveloped language repertoire since their mother tongues too are underdeveloped 5) Lack of parental support and encouragement to girl-child education 6) Absence of self-learning abilities and thus stunt their own possibilities of learning opportunities.	1) Stunted opportunities for communication 2) Reduced access to learning material, and recreational reading material available in schools 3) Stunted linguistic repertoires that effect access to resources, information, functionality and possibilities of higher education and reaching desired careers.

All the fifty-one teachers felt that their girls experienced a relative extent of linguistic disadvantage as they exhibited one or more of these features (Column 1), *reasoned* why they felt so (Column 2) and *voiced* what effect such disadvantage can have (Column 3). The teachers demonstrated fine sensitivity in recognizing gaps in foundational literacy abilities which if, according to the World Bank (2019), are not developed enough to sustain *reading-to-learn* will result in learning poorness conditions that propel learning poverty and eventual drop-outs (see column 1, Table 1; Chimirala et al., 2025). Their reasoning of why linguistic disadvantage exists ranges from parental/community educational exposure and support to stunted linguistic repertoires to a lack of self-learning abilities (Column 2, Table 1). The effect of such disadvantage incrementally materializes in reduced access to digital learning materials, opportunities for higher education and desired careers (Column 3, Table 1).

5.2 Teachers' Transgressions: Patterns of Translanguaging Pedagogy

All the teachers reported that the language policy of the schools was a major hurdle for their ITM girls since they recognize that the language hurdle has to be mitigated to access the subject matter. They unanimously agreed that learning opportunities (of specific concepts) would be restricted if they strictly followed the school language-only policy and hence engaged with at least one and occasionally a combination of these possible transgressions described below. Note that the teachers in addition to their scheduled class hours also have a scheduled tutorial for 2 hours per week when they meet the students for doubt clarification/tutorial and practice. It is this space that the teachers find the most fruitful.

5.2.1 Engage in Multilingual, Multimodal, Multipersonnel Translanguaging

Twenty one (of the fifty one) ITM-speaking teachers reported using multiple languages mainly the ITM child's language in addition to the regional language (state's official language) and English besides including diagrams and flowcharts to help in processing information. Teacher TSAG012[7] recollected her experiences as a learner to find the logic for her current pedagogy. She explained the need for deep learning in subjects and that knowing and understanding the subject enhance recalling. In a rare insight on learning concepts that once understood, retention is better and that the concept can be coded in other languages. Hence, she not only uses 3 languages, but emphasizes on English since that is the language of instruction and examination.

Excerpt 1

I speak both Gondi and Gormatti (Lambadi language). I know Telugu as well but we have to explain science in English… that too in the language of the textbook. All my days as a student I suffered because I had no one to help me understand in detail so I would have surface understanding…these girls too have the same problem…most of the time they would memorize but you know remembering is easy if you understand. Now as a teacher I explain in all the languages (3 languages) but stress more in English because that is the language of the exam as well. (TSAG012)

So, according to teacher TSAG012 four reasons drive the teachers' decisions: 1) enabling access to the complex language of the subject content; 2) recalling details and faster understanding of basic concepts to facilitate comprehension of advanced concepts; 3)

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[7] In TSAG012, TS refers to the first letters of the specific state; A refers to the district; G refers to the specific school and 012 is the teacher code. The same pattern is followed throughout.

understanding the language of question in examination; and 4) finally, overcoming language hurdles that impede possibilities of deep learning.

5.2.2 Recruiting an ITM-Speaking Teacher for Parallel Languaging

Eight content-subject teachers reported designing a parallel languaging session for their ITM girls. This is a strategy where an ITM-speaking teacher is invited to co-teach with her in the ITM language. Since all the teachers have scheduled classes, such strategizing is possible only in the tutorial hours when the girls are supposed to work in smaller groups in practicing math/science tasks. So, this slot gets converted into an hour of teaching key concepts and then practicing them often into the night given the importance of math/science. All the eight teachers claimed that such parallel teaching with ITM inputs create opportunities for learning the concepts (be it math/science/social science) without the language being a hurdle. What the teacher APSSI008 explains in Excerpt 2 below is an example of linguistically-sensitive pedagogy which as yet is a possibility only in the tutorial sessions.

Excerpt 2

I don't know any other language other than Telugu and English, but here most girls speak Saora. They are from the hill and so their Telugu is also really poor... forget English. So I have to struggle a lot especially since I teach both Math and English. I take my colleagues help. She speaks their language and so in the tutorial hour I request her to co-teach math and then supervise in the tutorial session. We do this exchange because I can help teach science, especially sums in physics. Because math is important and a lot of girls are afraid of failing in math they are willing to do extra tutorial hour as well. We do the same teaching exchange for physics as well where she teaches in Saora and Telugu, I explain in English. (APSSI008)

Teacher APSSI008, a bilingual subject teacher, acknowledges her lack of knowledge in Saora which she bridges by seeking help from colleagues during the tutorial hour. The mutually symbiotic relationship between the two teachers represents their compliance with the normative language structures in the scheduled hour and their willingness to defy the same in the tutorial session. The teachers emphasise the importance of STEM subjects as the trigger for teacher-learner additional engagement through languages of communication.

5.2.3 Recruiting Learner Peer Translanguaging

Twelve of the content teachers report taking help of more-abled-multilingual students' to engage in a linguistically-supportive learning space for creating learning opportunities. Two different strategies are reported in this pattern. MSGE011 reported, in Excerpt 3a, that during the scheduled teaching hour, a local person (maybe a former student/parent/sibling) is invited to volunteer for the subject especially math/sciences.

Excerpt 3a

Sometimes the most readily available resource to help in the school is the students themselves. We have former students who would have passed grade 10 and for some reasons have not gone for further studies or have married into the village here. We request them to help as volunteers with the classes especially for grade 6 and 7 when the ITM girls come here. In grade 6 and even in 7 we are struggling to have some basics in place both in language and math. They are volunteers with no remuneration but are really helpful in ways I cannot explain. (MSGE011)

TSNK023 explains in Excerpt 3b that in the tutorial session, a few (4 or 5) linguistically more-abled students usually from the older classes are identified to form a guided support group. In both strategies, the purpose is to create a linguistically-supportive and engaging learning space where opportunities to learn are not hurdled by language concerns. Furthermore, by extension opportunities to utilize the available repertoires to the best possible extent are explored since the teachers cannot provide that support.

Excerpt 3b

8th and 10th grade girls help all the time. They have experienced the difficulty of navigating a complex subject and so volunteer to help grade 6 and 7 girls. This is in these peer groups that something called as //Bhaa-shaa-sam-me-la-nam// linguistic inclusivity is actually happening. You should see them trying to explain in ITM languages and then making that same point sometimes word-by-word in Telugu and in English. It is in that struggle that we see what I cannot help with yet I am charged with this responsibility to educate the girls. (TSNK023)

Additionally in these excerpts where teachers source and deploy peer learners as resources seem to highlight one commonality: both the teachers acknowledge the nature of pedagogic support that the peer scaffolds for the learners, which they would not be able to despite it being their responsibility.

5.2.4 Monitored Learner Peer-Translanguaging

Three of the content teachers express that they have no other option but to take help from their pupils, sometimes even in the scheduled class. They are simultaneously engaged in *monitored* peer translanguaging. While students are asked to work in groups especially during the tutorial hours, one amongst the group is a designated more-able peer as presented in Excerpt 4.

Excerpt 4

In doing math, especially, algebra or trigonometry or explaining the functioning of the human body, the linguistic complexity increases many times. Getting students to understand the concept becomes a challenge. But we do have some students who understand Telugu better and through Telugu the same content in English, but not all. So I adopt peer learning in groups. The problem is how do I know if they are explaining correctly? With math I can see the steps and the result...but how do I know if the explanation in science is correct? So I request 11th grade girls to help in checking if they are working right and if required correct them as well...To an outsider, it might look like I am delegating (without leaving) my work to the students but I am working my best in more than just through me. (CSJ023)

CSJ023 laments that as a non-ITM speaking teacher, one constant doubt she has is the conceptual correctness of whatever was being explained or discussed within the group. This is resolved by requesting smarter students to monitor the interactions. CSJ023 comments that while the whole task looks lackadaisical since the onus of supporting learning is being shared and delegated (definitely not abdicated), she points out that within the constraints of her capabilities and working context, she has found this to be the best solution.

5.3 Relief and Concerns of Teachers When Doing Translanguaging Pedagogies

Figures 2 and 3 presented below show the patterns of reliefs and concerns teachers logicized as they adopt their pedagogy to mitigate the linguistic disadvantage and thus create learning opportunities. In the order of expressions, reliefs come first and then the aspects of anxiety follow.

5.3.1 Explaining Relief While Translanguaging

Relief in the context of this study refers to the expressions that project the purposes aimed at creating environments that support learning. Figure 2 shows the three reasons

the teachers cited: access to learning, materialize the child's right to education and enable education as a means to escape disadvantage. We illustrate it further with Excerpts 5a and 7c.

Figure 2. Overview of aspects of relief logicised by teachers as they mitigate the linguistic disadvantage for their girls
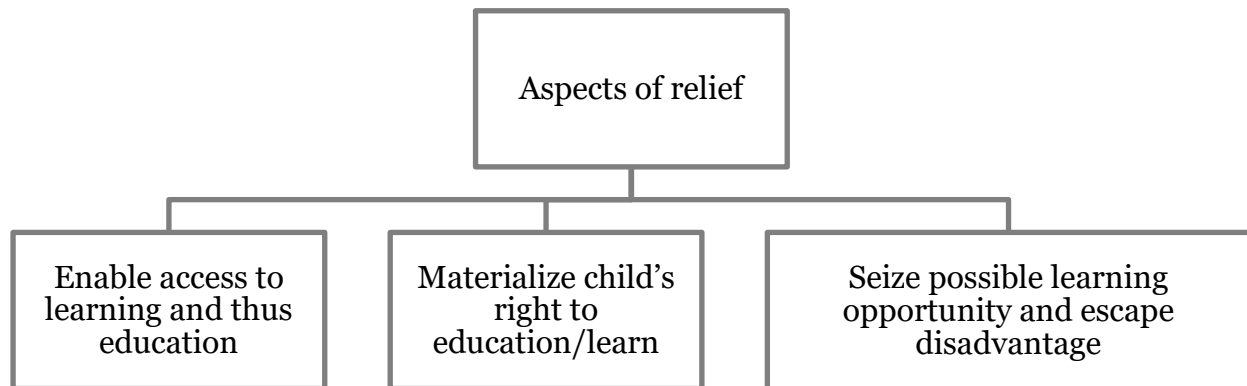
5.3.1.1 Enable Access to Learning and thus Education

Excerpts 5a to 5c demonstrate that there are intersectional hurdles specific to the ITM girl-child's educational experiences which have to be mitigated so that they can use the opportunities to learn as reflected in Excerpts 5a-c.

Excerpt 5a

….it's after great difficulty that they reach here. We cannot fail her here and so whatever needs to be done we have to do for her to restart the learning. You know that we cannot learn for her…only create those conditions. (CSD021)

Excerpt 5b

…..How do you access that learning if it is in a language that you cannot wrap your head around? They will be unable to learn and will pass through the system the way they entered. (APSS012)

Excerpt 5c

……we are given this task of enabling that access. So we'll do what needs to be done. Don't judge us with your standards based on your students… our girls have seen a

difficult phase that you cannot imagine before they arrive here with their dream to study. (APSST016)

Excerpts in this pattern express four aspects: one that a generic recognition of the nature of disadvantage (in general) and linguistic disadvantage exists; two, that without linguistic access, access to possibilities of learning and education as such are practically non-existent; three, possibilities of overcoming the disadvantages is through education; and finally, it is in the hands of the teachers to make things happen. So, as teachers strategize their pedagogies for their girls, a sense of *responsibility, responsiveness* and *resolute* is noticed. Nevertheless, teachers warn that neither they nor their children should be compared to any other child or to other teachers' work.

5.3.1.2 Materialize ITM Girl-Child's Right to Education

This refers to explanations along creating actionable ways of ensuring that the child actually materializes her right to education. Though the word education is possibly understood differently by different teachers, typical markers of this pattern mention 'right to education'; 'child's right to future'; and 'child development' as reflected in Excerpts 6a-6c.

Excerpt 6a

...every child the right to go to school and in school they must learn to be able to get atleast their first degree – the 10th class pass certificate.... So as a teacher we need to do our best. (MSGA0124)

Excerpt 6b

....for this area education is the only mantra to development. ...whether boys or girls, this area will have a future only if they are educated otherwise these children will end up as cheap labor in your cities and without education they will be exploited...we already know of such stories...so we'll do everything to put basics in place so that they are not exploited. (TSAI045)

Excerpt 6c

....right to full development is every child's right even these girls but they are in such contexts where something that comes easily to our children is a struggle here....starting with language to health to hygiene to... the list never ends. (TSMM05)

The Excerpts above recognize that education is every child's right as per the law and hence all that needs to be done, ought to be done. Teacher MSGA0124, in Excerpt 6a, points out the non-negotiable need to possess their school leaving certificate (which is a pass in grade 10) that allows for further educational/ employment opportunities. However, teacher TSAI045, in Excerpt 6b, goes beyond education to the labor market where being educated with foundational literacy and numeracy would mean reduced chances of exploitation.

Teacher TSMM05, in Excerpt 6c adds to the list of areas that education impacts to include health. All three teachers understand their responsibility not only to the children in their classrooms but also to their futures. They have engaged in teaching methods that prioritize access to language, which supports the children's overall development. This approach, they believe also helps build adequate skills to protect against exploitative forces in the labor market. Thus, a conceptualization of development which goes beyond classroom to participation in life and democracies and to have enhanced chances of employment formed the rationale here.

5.3.1.3 Seize Possible Learning Opportunities to Escape Disadvantage

The phenomenon of seizing learning opportunities refers to teacher recognition that structural difficulties makes it difficult to materialise learning opportunities. Hence, ways in which teachers can materialize such opportunities are in focus here. For instance, MSGE011 acknowledges that if the language does not make sense, then nothing would make sense. She questions the point of education if girls exited the same way as they entered the school in Excerpt 7a. The very point is reiterated for different life phases through Excerpts 7b-c.

Excerpt 7a

….Language is a marker of development here (shows the head)….They should go out different from they entered here. But when schools function in a language that does not make sense then the purpose is defeated …..Without language how do you teach and they learn? (MSGE011)

Excerpt 7b

….these girls recognize the need to be educated but with structural barriers all we can do is reduce them in whatever way we can. (CSBI032)

Excerpt 7c

...educational opportunity and ability to learn is the only way to escape the disadvantages here. These days we see that if girls study and do well in school, then parents postpone their marriages. So we have to show them (parents) through marks that their daughter is studying well and for that I understand I will have to create all the means I can. Math is important for them and even parents recognize that. (TSAN03)

All the three Excerpts recognize that enabling language capability is paramount to enabling access to learning and knowledge. The teachers explicitly acknowledge that their girls recognize and live through structural barriers on a daily basis (for e.g. genderisation and early marriage). They note that while some of the barriers (like early marriage) require up-stream interventions, some other concerns can be addressed through education (Raghupati & Raghupati, 2020; Raju & Alajangi, 2022). For instance, notice TSAN03 mentioning that if girls do well and that is visibilised through marks, then parents are willing to postpone their girl's marriage; so there is a possibility that she would be allowed to finish (atleast) her school certificate.

5.3.2 Explaining Concerns with Translanguaging Pedagogies

Concerns in the context of this study refer to expressions that visibilised worries and fears teachers experience as they deviate from or modify the pedagogic norms of the school space, as they create environments that support learning. Specifically Figure 3 represents the concerns raised by the teachers as they engage in translanguaging as a strategy to create learning opportunities for their girls. They project three categories of concerns related to policies, ethics and logistics.

Figure 3. Overview of aspects of concerns logicised by teachers as they mitigate linguistic disadvantage for their girls
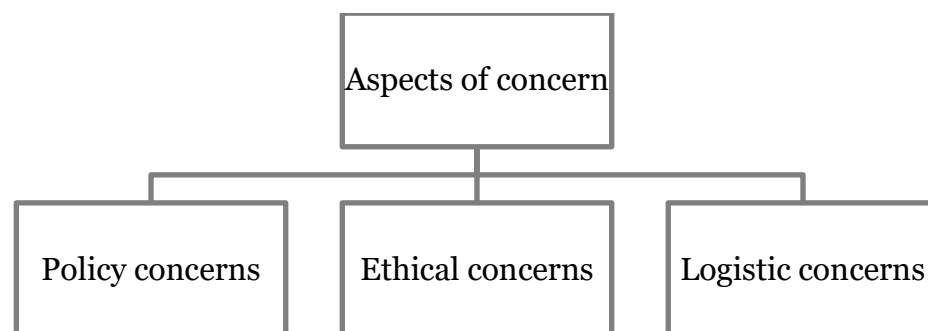
5.3.2.1 Policy Concerns

Typical explanations in this pattern include phrases like 'language policy', 'language rule is disobeyed', 'language of examinations is' and 'child's language rights.' Therefore, teacher reasoning is grounded in the language legislations or the language policy of the state under which the school functions as presented in Excerpts 8a-8c.

> *Excerpt 8a*
>
> ….Our school is English medium and that is the school's language…so our Officer says that we are expected to teach in English' … So according to him we are disobeying the rule of language. (TSMM026)

> *Excerpt 8b*
>
> … the language norm of exams is English….so despite working hard…comprehending the question paper and then writing the answer is a time-taking process and a huge challenge especially in Mathematics. (TSMM029)

> *Excerpt 8c*
>
> ….this a tribal district and so special administration rules exist still… no one talks about the language part of special administration atleast for schools where the difficulty is evident. Is it not a violation of child rights if its language rights are not recognized? I am following the Constitution of India … But I will be in trouble if The XXX catches me. (TSAG021)

Teachers' concerns in this pattern capture a sense of disobedience and violation of state-mandated language norms, its repercussions for the teachers and consequences for the child. Hence, concerns about disobeying the states' language policy and possible repercussions are clearly evidenced in Excerpts 8a and 8c. Teacher TSMM029 points out how the structural mechanisms of the school create conditions of disadvantage: for example, examinations are essentially monolingual. So she explains that even if the girls learn their subject matters well, time taken to comprehend the question paper followed by the response time may negatively affect the learners. TSMM021 believes that through her pedagogy she is materializing the mandate of the constitution of India by linguistically supporting ITM child's educational and linguistic rights. Despite such initiatives, she fears that she could be taken to task by the school administration.

5.3.2.2 Ethical Concerns

Representative reasoning in this category of concerns aim to capture the teachers' dilemma and sense of guilt at doing their translanguaging pedagogies. Hence, this concern is loaded with words like 'linguistic short-cuts'; 'compromising English exposure'; 'entrance examination in English'; and 'disadvantage in job/employment markets' in excerpts 9a-c.

Excerpt 9a

….sometimes I think by explaining in Gormatti (Lambadi) or Marathi I am reducing their English exposure…so…their English learning will suffer and this will go into future also…but without Gormatti… they'll understand nothing. (TSWR046)

Excerpt 9b

…..am I doing it right?…with group learning and me not being able to check if what is being discussed is correct…. I think by taking these short-cuts I'm somehow breaking the school rule. (CSJJ023)

Excerpt 9c

…All higher education examinations are in English, how will these girls get seats?…should they always be on the low paid jobs? (TSWU011)

The excerpts above point to three ethical concerns having adopted their pedagogies: one, self-doubt on the efficacy of the pedagogies; two, concerns of depriving the child of English exposure as an immediate linguistic skill; and finally, an inkling of the long-term effect of the girls' opportunities for higher education since all the gate-keeping examinations are in English and consequently on their opportunities in the job markets that require English.

5.3.2.3 Logistical Concerns

Explanations that pertain to the difficulty in arranging for linguistically-sensitive strategies are referred to in this section. The purpose is to sustain consistent learning support systems for the students. Though very few teachers mention this concern, it is nevertheless a significant one. Typical markers of this concern include mentions 'migration, 'few volunteers' and 'no ITM-speaking teachers.'

Excerpt 10a

....with migration being high in this district, it is becoming difficult to get Gondi (ITM language) speaking volunteers who can help in school. (MSBH016)

Excerpt 10b

....'ITM-language teacher is preferred in recruitments in this area....but that is not an eligibility and anyways there is no certification also....so less and less ITM-speaking teachers will be recruited. (MSEP013)

Excerpt 10c

....even those who come as ITM-language volunteers do not stay long because there is no minimum support as remuneration....So there is discontinuity. (MSAI018)

The reasoning here encapsulates three key concerns: availability of ITM-speaking volunteers; continuity of linguistically-sensitive support; and absence of linguistically-conscious recruitment processes. MSEP013 points out in Excerpt 10b that fewer ITM-speaking teachers get recruited since the recruitment process mentions of a linguistic preference but not a linguistic eligibility. She points out in her explanation that 'language preference' criterion is activated only at the end of the recruitment. By then most ITM-speaking candidates would have been filtered maybe due to their own language disadvantage in learning and in acquiring proficiency in English. Such a recruitment process according to MSEP013 affect the availability of language-conscious teaching-learning possibilities within the school. Further, MSAI018 and MSBH016 highlight that large-scale seasonal migration and the absence of any supportive remuneration for volunteers affect the availability and sustained continuity of language support for learning.

6. DISCUSSION

Creating an opportunity necessarily involves strategic synchrony between three aspects: the agent, the hurdle, and the outcome/goal (Westen, 1985). Teachers, in this study, deemed themselves to be agents of change who work consciously to address the hurdle of language for the ITM girl-child and help her in reaching the goal i.e. learn. Therefore, the premise on which this inquiry is based is that when teachers work with children who visibly demonstrate versions of linguistic disadvantage, teachers tend to adapt and hence engage in translanguaging as a (natural and) decolonizing practice. The discussions engage first with whether teachers were cognizant of their child's language disadvantage; whether they *transgress* the norms to adapt their pedagogies to

translanguage in addressing the hurdle; and finally, what they experienced as they translanguaged.

6.1 Teachers' Sense of Linguistic Disadvantage

Teachers demonstrated an acute sense of socio-cultural-economic-political-historical and linguistic understanding of their working context and their children as they recognized how the girls in their school are socially and linguistically disadvantaged. Additionally, they recognized the intersectional nature of disadvantage as they discourse on locational disadvantage, socio-economic status, genderisation and gender preferential treatment by the community. Correspondingly, teachers diagnose that their girls do not have as many, as often and as rich opportunities to communicate that 'others' might have. Their reduced opportunity to communicate affects their ability to access information and learning materials. With untapped linguistic repertoires, their ability to access the available and additional digital learning material is affected which could impact possibilities of completing the basic education (10th grade certificate). Further, the effect of disadvantage has a futuristic impact – it affects the ITM girl's access to several state schemes for higher education and, finally, their agentive ability to access employment opportunities and function in a democratic set up and life.

6.2 Versions of Translanguaging Practices

Teachers reported four patterns of translanguaging based on whether the teachers speak the ITM languages which shaped how translanguaging practices are adapted and exercised. Four patterns of translanguaging practices are reported: engaging in multilingual, multimodal and multipersonnel translanguaging; requesting ITM-speaking teacher for parallel languaging; learner peer translanguaging; and monitored peer translanguaging. All the strategies aim at creating linguistically-supportive learning conditions so that the hurdle of 'one' language of instruction can be addressed, besides mobilizing possibilities of enhanced motivation, comprehension, utility of learning resources and thus enhance learner engagement (Li, 2017; Applebee et al, 2003).

6.3 Relief and Concerns in Engaging in Translanguaging Pedagogy

The findings on teacher experiences with translanguaging pedagogies are both *positive* and p*aradoxical*. Teachers see their translanguaging pedagogies in a positive light for at least 3 reasons: 1) they are critically cognizant of their pedagogic contexts, challenges, constraints and chances. What they do is the absolute optimal (given their context) and further believe that no outsider can or ought to compare or even criticize their actions;

2) they deem it their *duty of care* to realize the child's right to education, with the word education engulfing a wider sense of agency, well-being and resilience; and 3) they are aware and argue that language cannot be allowed to be a barrier since they acknowledge that education impacts life chances affected by disadvantaging circumstances like place of birth, religion, race, class, gender (Brady et al., 1995; Borooah & Sabharwal, 2021).

Being cognizant of vulnerable circumstances in which ITM girls find themselves, teachers believe that linguistic access to education can improve the ITM girl child's ability for human flourishing i.e. to make choices, develop resilience, and cope with life concerns besides enhancing employment chances, countering exploitative work conditions, awareness of well-being are enabled and realized (Mohanty, 2018). In short, teachers see their pedagogies as pivotal in overcoming disadvantage. However, the teachers also express dilemma and guilt over the appropriateness of their pedagogies making the findings paradoxical.

Teachers recognize their child's linguistic context as multilingual, multimodal, multisemiotic and even multisensory. But the learning contexts in the school environment present a paradox of being monolingual. It is this primary paradox that triggers the teachers' doubt of the aptness of their pedagogies, and yet their sense of duty and care towards the child's immediate and futuristic aspirations. Therefore, in adopting different versions of translanguaging pedagogies to counter the monolingual mindset (Clyne, 2008), teachers discourse on the possible repercussions they and their children can encounter since the policy does not back multilingual pedagogies.

Teachers articulate policy concerns along three different matters that could disadvantage them and their learners: a) the language norm for examination; b) possibility of repercussions for the teachers from their educational officers and immediate superiors; and c) finally the recruitment policy for teachers which *prefer* ITM speakers rather than set ITM language as *eligibility*. Within the school environment, they point out to the logistic concerns of how the non-availability of language-sensitive and language-supportive pedagogic systems jeopardizes learning continuity which further captures the teacher's concerns about the child completing school certificate and then accessing further educational opportunities. Ethical concerns pertain to how their pedagogy could impact their learners' exposure to English. A sense of guilt and dilemma on whether their pedagogies are apt and acceptable are also palpable in their concerns (Lau 2020; Chimirala, 2017).

6.4 Plausible Reasons for the Sense of Guilt and Dilemma

The question that demands attention is why teachers experience such dilemmas and guilt-trips about their practices despite believing that they are personalizing learning for *their girls* within the constraints of *their working* contexts (Maguire, et al., 2013). Two possible explanations seem to be at work. First notice that the teachers are concerned

about their practice i.e. the method they are employing for *their* contexts for *their* children. First, Kumarvadivelu (2016) in reminiscing about his life experiences contends that *marginality of the majority* is a colonizing project churned through nuanced tactics that propel linguistic imperialism (Phillipson, 2012). Kumarvadivelu argues that discourses on five aspects namely, curricular plans, methods, materials, standardized testing and teacher preparation are *centrally* planned, produced and perpetuated as apposite for empowering the *peripheral consumers*. It is through these five propellers that marginality is managed, maintained and controlled (Kumaravadivelu, 2016). Amongst the five, 'method' is the "most crucial and consequential area where hegemonic forces find it necessary and beneficial to exercise the greatest control" (p. 73). Teachers as representatives of the state exist within the State structure that mandates them to follow the policy norms. But they are not kegs on the policy wheel (Mohanty et al., 2010). As thinking-feeling and reacting-responding professionals they are perpetually *problem-solving* (Snow & Fillimore, 2008). Young (2014) proposes that teachers tend to "fill the vacuum through perceived policy and practice" (p. 167) when they encounter a paradox as they engage deeply with the sociolinguistic, political, ideological and historical knowledge of their working contexts. The teachers in this study seem to be grappling with what Janks (2010) explains as the *access paradox*. While the center's promotion of English to sustain its dominance necessarily curtails efforts in multilingualism, denying minoritized (ITM) students' access to its prestigious linguistic capital further perpetuates their marginalization which is precisely what the teachers in this study are trying to avert for their ITM girls. Hence their dilemma regarding their pedagogies and the guilt they experience.

A second explanation is an extension of the first. Gidden's structuration theory recognizes that teachers have agency which can be exercised within the constraints of the system in which the teachers live. The system churns discourses on the child's languages (ITM languages) and on how ITM languages are devoid of any capital through what Giddens calls *signification*. Spolsky (2019) argues that language management is propelled by language ideologies, language practices and language beliefs and that state-representatives as *managers* are at the heart of the language management system. Beyond doubt teachers are "at the frontline of all language policy planning and management activity since they take decisions every day that amount to developing language policies for their classrooms" (Hult, 2014, p. 2). *Legitimization* of the central discourses then happen through description of the needy ITM child and insertions of how education in English is emancipatory and empowering. As recipient-products of a similar system through their education and teacher training programme, teachers have internalized the legitimizing discourses (Chimirala, 2017) and yet continue to experience coloniality (Lau, 2020). Recall how teachers in this study make repeated references to how education and exposure to English can impact their girls' abilities to deal with exploitative work environments, increase employment choices and economic advancements for the girls. Tacit and overt *domination* through means and devices that exercise power over teachers' work as well as access and resources are articulated.

Teachers recognize several means of control over themselves through entities such as the education officer. They also recognize several means of control over their ITM girls who would not be able to access and complete education without English, that is, they need access to the language to acquire knowledge and can further opportunities coded in that language.

The articulation of *concerns* is indicative of a differential awareness of the *degree of comfort* with their languaging and its enabling abilities for their students (Janks, 2010). The value they accord to the ITM languages is pivotal yet guilt-driven. This could be seen as a marker of teachers' consciousness to linguistic hierarchies, the power and privilege such hierarchies legitimize and how such legitimization masks hurdles in accessing opportunities especially for ITM children (Flores & Rosa, 2015). It indicates their awareness of the extent of domination through education that builds on language ideologies (Brock-Utne, 2000). Correspondingly, teachers exhibit a "continued persistence of coloniality" where the value for English is placed higher than the child's linguistic resources by the teachers (Lau, 2020, p. 222) while also recognizing why ITM languages are needed to be used (Kioko, 2011).

7. IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

This study has demonstrated what teachers experience when they *put the child first*. It had set out to examine the extent of relief (i.e. a sense /cause of purpose and fulfillment) and concerns (a sense/cause of worry and distress) that teachers working in ITM contexts experience as they attempt to create learning opportunities through their translanguaging pedagogies. The findings of the study indicate several critical and problematic spaces that need immediate attention of policy makers and teacher educators within teacher education as well as professional development spaces. We recognize three of them: First, a systemic evaluation of who the child is for whom the systems work (Bull, 2007) and accordingly evaluate the efficacy of the five propellants (Kumaravadivelu, 2016) that house the potential to empower as well as marginalize not just the child but also the teachers. Second, build the teachers' agentive capacity to critically evaluate and innovate according to their working contexts so that they recognize what politics/advocacy for *a* language/method/approach means for the different stakeholders especially for the ITM girl-child and its community. Third, classroom-based creative solutions that teachers evolve to facilitate learning need more rounded documentation so as to appreciate and support teachers in their *duty with care* towards the future citizens of the nation and their right to learn (Gellman, 2019). Therefore, instead of adhering to the Western understanding of translanguaging pedagogies, there is a need to understand emergent translanguaging pedagogies from the *bottom* as they struggle to shift gears from monolingual, hegemonic and nationalistic mandates of the State to child-rights-based and linguistically-inclusive pedagogies.

In conclusion, we reiterate that examining translanguaging-as-a-decolonizing-project requires that teachers be heard for their place-specific *histories*. The logic for their practices needs to be brought to the fore to engage with how learning opportunities for epistemic access and ways to counter disadvantage are materialized. Therefore, engagement with teacher narratives on their linguistically disadvantaged contexts and how they cope must become mainstream and the norm of language education (Garcia & Sylvan, 2011). We did not engage with classroom observations and other approaches to understand teacher decision-making and the many contours of those decisions. The reader is warned of this limitation. Future studies can attempt to include other forms of data as they engage with teachers' translanguaging pedagogies.

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APPENDIX A

Interview Protocol

1. Personal Information: name, age, languages, education, specialization areas, local status, and socio-economic status.

2. Is the language as medium of instruction a serious concern in learning for your students? Why? Tell us some experiences with the MOI related concerns.

3. How do you describe linguistic disadvantage? Would you categorize the girls here as linguistically disadvantaged? Why?

4. How does linguistic disadvantage affect the girls here?

5. Do you do 'something' to address the linguistic disadvantage? Why?.

6. What gains do you notice when you strategize your teaching for the girls?

7. Are there any problems/concerns/difficulties that you face as you strategise your teaching?