Translanguaging for Transformation: Identity, Equity, and Pedagogical Resistance in Nepalese ELT Classrooms

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ABSTRACT
Translanguaging refers to the dynamic, natural, and purposeful mixing of multiple languages in communication. It has become popular among English language teachers in multilingual settings. It promotes learner agency and acknowledges individual identities and experiences. However, some teachers still mistakenly view multilingualism as a barrier rather than an asset in English Language Teaching (ELT). Despite the advantages of translanguaging in ELT, little empirical research has been done on its use in Nepalese ELT classrooms, especially when it comes to the teachers' perspectives. The study aims to investigate the roles of translanguaging in ELT classrooms and to analyze the teachers' experience of using translanguaging in ELT classrooms. Employing the phenomenological research design, the researcher purposively selected three English language teachers teaching in three different public schools in the Sunsari district for in-depth interviews. The interviews were recorded, transcribed, coded, categorized, and analyzed thematically. The study found that teachers affirm students' identities and promote an inclusive learning environment by using translanguaging as a transformative tool. The study additionally shows how teachers challenge the exclusive English and mix multiple languages to create a translingual space that empowers students and fosters equity in the classroom. The study concluded that translanguaging is a flexible approach to ELT that enhances student engagement and understanding of content. It implies that teachers in multilingual contexts adopt a translingual pedagogical approach to embrace diversity, promote social justice, and empower their students.

Keywords: language teaching, multilingualism, social justice, translanguaging

INTRODUCTION

The interplay between language, society, and power plays a crucial role in shaping educational policies, political dynamics, and personal experiences. According to Tollefson (2013), language planning and policy are fundamentally sociopolitical processes that affect how power is distributed within communities. The implementation of English-only medium instruction policies in Nepalese ELT classrooms has an impact on both how teachers teach and how well students learn. Moreover, the exclusive English policy ignores the linguistic and cultural diversity in ELT classrooms, which can result in serious social injustices and make learning more difficult, particularly for underprivileged groups (Schulze et al., 2019; Phyak et al., 2022). In order to promote an equitable and inclusive learning environment that values and celebrates diversity, it is crucial to critically assess the effects of such monolingual language policies.

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The importance of English has led to its commodification as 'linguistic capital' (Bourdieu, 1986), primarily in non-English countries. In the context of Nepal, English has become a commodity in the educational market (Sah, 2020; Saud, 2020). Additionally, it is taken as a vehicle for social mobility, global citizenship, and high-quality education (Phyak, 2013; Rauteda, 2024a; Norton & Tembe, 2006). Moreover, public schools have been shifting into English medium from Nepali medium in response to parental aspirations and policies equating quality education with English (Phyak, 2018; Rauteda, 2024a). However, this change reproduces hegemonic ideologies that marginalize local and minority languages.

The inclination towards English-only instruction is deeply rooted in monolingual ideologies that prioritize immersion in the target language as the sole path to achieving proficiency (Schulze et al., 2019). Conversely, extensive research indicates that incorporating learners' native languages into instruction can significantly enhance proficiency in the target language (Baker, 2011; Cenoz & Gorter, 2017; Cummins, 2009; Nambisan, 2014). Given the multilingual landscape of Nepal, where 124 languages are spoken (NSO, 2021), there exists a pressing need for pedagogical approaches that recognize and utilize linguistic diversity to promote social equity.

Multilingualism has been taken as an asset in language teaching classrooms. The researchers, such as Phyak (2018) and Rauteda (2022), highlighted multilingualism as a pedagogical resource in ELT classrooms, particularly in multilingual settings. Despite an increasing acknowledgment of multilingualism as a valuable resource (Creese & Blackledge, 2010; García & Lin, 2016; Wei, 2011), the practice of ELT in Nepal remains predominantly influenced by monolingual ideologies. The assumption that supports the policy of English-only instruction mostly denies the notion of linguistic diversity. The language policy deprives the minority and its language of a broader socio-cultural marginalization (Phyak et al., 2022). Moreover, there is also the widely held perception that the use of English is limited to the inner-circle countries as it represents the exclusive variety of the native speakers (Jenkins, 2007; Seidlhofer, 2011). Despite translanguaging having emerged as an effective pedagogical strategy to address diversity (Otheguy et al., 2015; Wei, 2018; Wang, 2022), empirical research on its application and implications within Nepalese ELT classrooms remains limited. Additionally, teachers' perceptions and experiences regarding the employment of translingual practices in their teaching methodologies are insufficiently explored.

Decolonizing English language teaching in Nepal is essential to promote social justice, challenge linguistic hegemony, and create equitable educational environments. Translanguaging, which utilizes students' complete linguistic repertoires (Otheguy et al., 2015), serves as an effective alternative to monolingual instructional methods. In Nepalese ELT classrooms, students frequently employ translanguaging by articulating thoughts in Nepali or their native languages while engaging with English texts (Rauteda, 2022; 2024b). This approach fosters learner agency and respects students' identities and lived experiences (García & Leiva, 2014). Nevertheless, misconceptions linger among educators, with some viewing multilingualism as a hindrance rather than an asset within English language learning environments. By addressing this gap, the research aspires to contribute to the expanding discourse on multilingual education and its potential to foster inclusive and equitable learning experiences. Consequently, this study aims to investigate the role of translanguaging in ELT classrooms and analyze teachers' experiences in utilizing this approach. The study attempts to answer the following research questions: (1) What are the roles of translanguaging in English language teaching? and (2) How do English language teachers experience translanguaging in Nepalese ELT classrooms?

Literature review

Conceptualizing translanguaging

Translanguaging is a language practice of bilinguals/multilinguals where the speaker uses various languages and linguistic resources at a time naturally, dynamically, and purposefully. It was developed by Cen Williams in 1994, where students were given

opportunities to alternate the language for reading and writing or the receptive or productive skills (García & Leiva, 2014). Translanguaging refers to the intentional mixing of various languages. As stated by García (2009), translanguaging involves the use of multiple linguistic practices by bilingual individuals to navigate their bilingual environment. Multilingual speakers demonstrate the capacity to fluidly transition between languages, viewing their linguistic repertoire as a cohesive system (Canagarajah, 2011). It has been termed with different terminologies by scholars such as 'polylingualism' (Jørgenson, 2008), 'metrolingualism' (Pennycook, 2010), 'codemeshing' (Canagarajah, 2011), and 'pluriliteracy' (García, 2009). From the perspective of language use, translanguaging is a flexible or strategic use of multiple languages (García & Wei, 2014), which can support students in developing their cognitive and socio-emotional skills and leverage the diverse and dynamic language practice of the learners (Vogel & García, 2017). Thus, it is a practice of multilingual learners that can address the diversity in the classroom and create social justice by maximizing the use of the linguistic repertoire of the learners. It can further empower the disadvantaged students who are disadvantaged just because of the language barrier. Li Wei (2011) introduces the concept of a 'translanguaging space' as a framework to illustrate the setting in which students can utilize all of their linguistic, cultural, and epistemic assets in the process of learning.

Translanguaging in English language teaching

Translanguaging serves as a communication strategy that encompasses a range of techniques that speakers may employ depending on their objectives. In the context of English language teaching, teachers use translanguaging through various methods, including translation, code-mixing, meaning construction, content simplification, providing praise, incorporating students' native languages, and actively involving learners in language practices (Rauteda, 2024b; Joshi, 2018; Nambisan, 2014). Moreover, it is used as a pedagogical strategy in ELT classrooms, which allows teachers and students to utilize multiple linguistic resources to enhance learning. It is regarded as a purposeful technique of teaching rather than as a natural mixing of multiple languages. It is further used as a strategy that can leverage the learning of the multilingual students by permitting them to use their full linguistic repertoire. In this regard, the researchers, for example, García & Wei (2014); García (2009); Phyak et al. (2022); Rauteda (2024b), argue that translanguaging is a strategy that can foster inclusivity, address diversity, and empower minority learners in the multilingual setting. Additionally, they emphasize that translanguaging can be used as an inclusive pedagogy in multilingual classrooms that acknowledges the linguistic diversity of students. Moreover, translanguaging is taken as a pedagogical practice that can create space for the local or minority languages in the classroom, which can be beneficial for the students to understand the difficult content. In addition, Creese and Blackledge (2020) state that translanguaging can be used in scaffolding academic language where students are encouraged to process information in their first language and express ideas in English. Through the process, students can have a deeper understanding of the content, and they can be engaged in classroom teaching and learning activities effectively.

Employing translanguaging in ELT classrooms requires deliberate strategies that align with pedagogical goals. Creating translanguaging spaces, peer learning, and collaboration can be used as a strategy that can assist in the use of translanguaging in ELT classrooms (García & Wei, 2014). Moreover, Cenoz and Gorter (2020) emphasize the use of language alternation and bilingual/multilingual instructional materials in the teaching of English. In the context of Nepal, translanguaging is commonly used in ELT classrooms (Rauteda, 2022; Rauteda, 2024b; Phyak, 2018), where students and teachers share ideas in Nepali, English, and in the languages they are familiar with. Moreover, they take part in the discussion in multiple languages. Researchers emphasized that translanguaging has gained attention as a pedagogical approach in ELT classrooms in Nepal, as Nepalese classrooms are characterized by linguistic diversity, such as Nepali, English, and numerous other indigenous languages like Rai, Limbu, Tharu, and Maithili, which offer spaces to explore translanguaging practices.

Consequently, translanguaging enables students to utilize their home languages to learn academic content effectively, and it serves as a scaffolding strategy that promotes better comprehension and participation in classroom discussion. Moreover, translanguaging enhances the cognitive engagement of the learners so that their retention of the content could be longer. Thus, the use of translanguaging in ELT classrooms not only enhances learner engagement and autonomy but also fosters understanding of the complex content and the identity of the learners by utilizing their linguistic repertoire as a resource for learning, and contributes to social justice by challenging monolingual ideologies.

Diversity management, transformation, and social justice through translanguaging

Translanguaging refers to the fluid, natural, dynamic, and intentional practice of multiple languages. It is seen as a way to promote social justice for the marginalized learners disadvantaged due to his or her language abilities. Translanguaging empowers those learners and destabilizes existing language structures and hierarchies by allowing individuals to use their language during the learning process. Researchers have also described translanguaging as an emancipatory and humanizing pedagogy by highlighting its potential to create a more equitable language environment (García, 2009; Salazar, 2013; Vogel & García, 2017). Moreover, translanguaging is considered a pedagogy that is socially appropriate and culturally responsive, which leads individuals and society towards transformation.

Translanguaging is also taken as a transformative pedagogy that can eliminate the hierarchy of languaging (García & Lieva, 2014; Conteh, 2018; Makalela, 2015; Phyak et al., 2022). Moreover, Wei (2024) described translanguaging as an inclusive pedagogy that creates a participatory environment in the classroom and fosters social justice through co-learning. Further, translanguaging addresses the inequities present in the multilingual context and ensures an equitable environment, and respects the linguistic diversity (Paudel, 2021). In the context of Nepal, there is a mismatch between the educational language policy and the classroom reality. Policies often prioritize an English-only medium of instruction, but the classroom realities are diverse. Therefore, translingual approaches are crucial in Nepal. Moreover, translanguaging has been perceived as a tool that can recognize and capitalize on the multilingual students' existing linguistic and cultural knowledge and practices for equitable classroom pedagogies (Phyak et al., 2022). Similar to the previous researchers, Li Wei (2011) argued that translanguaging is relevant to explore the teacher agency not only in challenging hegemonic language ideologies, but also in empowering linguistically minoritized students' learning experience by rightfully recognizing and integrating their most familiar languages in pedagogies.

The importance of translanguaging pedagogy in a multilingual context like Nepal is undeniable. It fosters creativity, criticality, cultural identity, and increases learner engagement, co-learning, and collaborative practices by creating translingual spaces in the classrooms. Hence, Huang and Chalmers (2023) state that translingual approaches are effective in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms to improve learning achievement. Furthermore, Zhu and Gu (2022) highlight the role of translanguaging and argue that translanguaging is useful for enhancing learners' performance, engagement, and comprehension. Additionally, translanguaging bridges the gap between students' linguistic repertoires and the demands of the curriculum (Shi & Rolstad, 2022). Furthermore, Almatrafi (2023) explores students' perceptions of pedagogical translanguaging and found that it is perceived as a beneficial approach for better and long-term learning. In addition to pedagogical benefits, translanguaging is useful to foster a positive teacher-student relationship. Surprisingly, translanguaging is regarded as a pedagogy that reduces anxiety and creates a more supportive learning environment (Khairunnisa & Lukmana, 2020). In a similar vein, Riswanto (2022) argues that translanguaging allows students to engage more actively in the learning process by promoting deeper understanding and retention of content. Consequently, by leveraging students' linguistic resources, teachers can create more inclusive, engaging, and effective learning environments. Further, translanguaging is useful for both inclusivity and identity affirmation in multilingual

classrooms. Through affirming the utilization of the students' primary language in the classroom, teachers can establish a more inviting and encouraging atmosphere for the students. This is especially significant for students from a minority language background who might experience estrangement in the mainstream English classroom interferes with their learning (Sutrisno, 2023). In the same spirit, Song et al. (2022) posit that translanguaging promotes a sense of belonging, develops students' social-emotional learning, and supports students' overall well-being. Typically, translanguaging allows for the expression of cultural identity by students (a point that is key for the success of students and their personal development) (Phyak, 2023). Therefore, translanguaging is crucial for social justice in the diverse classroom, having multilingualism, multiculturalism, and ethnic minorities that can empower the voiceless and help them to come into the mainstream of education.

METHOD

The researcher used phenomenology as a research design to accomplish the study. Hence, phenomenology is a research design that describes the meaning of the participant' lived experience of a concept or a phenomenon. For Hammersley (2013), the knowledge of an individual is rooted in the immediate experience, and the task of the researcher is to describe, understand, interpret, and explain these experiences. Moreover, the purpose of phenomenological research is "to reduce individual experiences of a phenomenon to a description of a universal essence" (Van Manen, 1990, p.177). Three English language teachers teaching in three different public schools in Sunsari district were purposively selected as participants of the study. The participants were Kamal, Ramesh, and Rohit, from Itahari Secondary School, Dharan Secondary School, and Janapratibha Secondary School, respectively. Hence, all the participants were male and had experience of 15, 12, and 10 years, respectively. The names of both the participants and the schools have been pseudonymized to maintain privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity in the study. All the participants were teaching in similar kinds of contexts where the majority of the students belonged to linguistically minority economically disadvantaged, and socially marginalized groups. As the participants expressed, they had students from the Tharu, Sardar, Rai, Tamang, and Limbu communities. Moreover, one of the participants had students from an economically disadvantaged Brahmin community. Hence, Kamal was a teacher of English at Itahari Secondary School who completed his M.Ed. in English education. Similarly, Ramesh was a teacher at Dharan Secondary School who also completed his M.Ed. in English, and Rohit was teaching at Janapratibha Secondary School and was pursuing his MPhil in English education.

The researcher used in-depth interviews as a research tool to collect the information. The interviews were conducted individually using interview guidelines. The researcher used both primary and secondary sources of information to collect the required information. Previously published literature, such as books, journal articles, and book chapters, was used as a secondary source, and the three secondary-level English language teachers were used as a primary source of information. To collect the information, the researcher built rapport and trust with the participants and obtained their consent before conducting the interview. It became easier for me to build rapport and trust as we were already familiar. After all the information was elicited and recorded on cellphones. Moreover, the field note was also used to note down the important ideas that the participants raised. The recorded data were transcribed into text, then coded, categorized, and thematically analyzed using Braun and Clark's (2006) model of thematic analysis. Additionally, the transcribed text, which has been stated in the themes as a reference, was translated into English. In this study, I used 'translanguaging' as a phenomenon, and the participants' lived experience of using this phenomenon in English language teaching has been critically analyzed.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Identity construction and transformation through translanguaging

Translanguaging plays a crucial role in the construction of identity and brings changes in the learners, classroom practices, and teaching-learning strategies. It functions as a dynamic pedagogical approach that allows multilingual speakers to fluidly and naturally blend their linguistic repertoire. Hence, García and Wei (2014) argue that translanguaging is not merely a tool for language learning but a space where individuals engage in different identity works and reconfigure their social and cultural identities. Nepal's English language teaching classes are multilingual, where students represent several linguistic, social, and cultural backgrounds. In that kind of situation, affirming identity in the classroom is important for transformation. Translanguaging has been experienced by teachers differently in different situations. Hence, in this study, one of the participants, Ramesh, shared:

> I always allow students to use and mix the languages dynamically within classroom practices. The benefit of this practice is that even the students who usually don't speak, those who sit with their hands folded, those who try not to look at the teacher while speaking only English, those who keep their heads down, stare at the floor, or even try to lie down on the bench… at least when they can speak in Nepali or Sanskrit, they feel that "My expression is also heard by the teacher, I am also an integral part of the classroom, I am also a participant.' Even though I don't know English well, I don't have to feel inferior…"

Hence, the snippets reveal that teachers acknowledged that linguistic diversity existed in the classroom and ensured their linguistic knowledge as a useful resource in the English language teaching classrooms. For instance, the teachers' practice of accepting students communicating in Sanskrit and Nepali in the English classroom made students feel heard by the teacher, and recognize themselves as member of the learning community, revealing the transformative impact of translanguaging pedagogy. Moreover, it shows that students construct their identity through this practice of the teachers. It further highlights how allowing for multilingual expression empowers students, helping to dismantle hierarchies that often marginalize non-native English speakers. Consequently, the information reveals that acknowledging students' home languages enhances students' self-efficacy and agency, which are essential components of critical pedagogy (Freire, 1970). In that sense, translanguaging functions as a transformative or critical pedagogy in English language teaching classrooms. In a similar vein, by allowing students to express themselves using Nepali and Sanskrit in the English language teaching classroom, the teacher acknowledges the cultural and linguistic diversity present in the classroom. This is close to the principles of translanguaging, where the fluid use of multiple languages allows students to leverage their full linguistic repertoire (García & Wei, 2014). The act of encouraging students who might otherwise remain silent or disengaged contributes to their identity construction, as they recognize their voices as valid and significant within the academic discourse. Similarly, another participant, Kamal, shared in the interview:

> Some time ago, I did some work where I noticed that the students' performance was weak while learning to write. I told them, 'Whatever language you speak and whatever stories from your village you have, bring them in. After that, many students collected the old folktales, worked in the group, and developed translingual stories using Tharu, Limbu, Nepali, and English together. I couldn't understand all the folktales well, but the students were excited to present them. After repeating that practice for some time, it seems that the students are now asking questions, inquiring, and they have developed a bit of a sense of belonging…

The excerpts show an important pedagogical intervention aimed at improving students' writing performance by incorporating culturally relevant storytelling. The initial observation of students' weak performance underscores a common challenge in educational settings where traditional instructional methods may fail to engage learners effectively (García & Wei, 2014). By encouraging students to bring in stories from their local culture, the teacher employs a strategy rooted in culturally responsive pedagogy, which recognizes and values students' backgrounds as a means to enhance learning outcomes. The act of collecting folktales from students' villages serves as a powerful tool for fostering cultural relevance in the curriculum. As noted by Moll et al. (1992), incorporating students' cultural knowledge into educational practices can significantly enhance their engagement and motivation. This approach not only validates students' identities but also creates a bridge between their home and school environments, facilitating a deeper connection to the learning material. The students' active engagement in making translingual stories in Tharu, Limbu, Nepali, and English shows that the purposeful and dynamic use of multiple languages together is helpful for better learning. The students' excitement in presenting their folktales illustrates the effectiveness of this method in promoting active participation and ownership of their learning experiences. Finally, an expression like 'students are now asking questions, inquiring, and they have developed a sense of belonging' further reveals that translanguaging affirms the learners' identity and brings changes in learner motivation.

Thus, Translanguaging has been used by teachers in multilingual contexts to make learners feel proud of their language and culture. Moreover, it is used to bring changes in the learners' engagement, motivation, learning, and sense of belonging, which indirectly resembles the construction of identity and transformation.

Challenging monolingualism: Translingual pedagogies for equity in multilingual classrooms

Traditionally, English language teaching was understood to be most effective when conducted exclusively in English. However, teachers are now challenging these conventional linguistic boundaries by incorporating students' home languages into the classroom, a practice referred to as creating translingual spaces. English language teachers establish these translingual spaces to promote social justice, inclusivity, equity, and empowerment. Translanguaging is viewed as a language practice that transcends boundaries and contests the dominance of a designated or standardized language (García, 2009). For example, participant Rohit shared during the interview:

> I explain certain words by mixing English, Nepali, and sometimes even in other languages, such as 'Tharu,' based on the students' levels, to help them understand the subject matter easily, and the students become happy.

The excerpts demonstrate that English teachers are actively challenging the traditional dominance of English-only language practices, even in multilingual environments. Additionally, the text illustrates how teachers are employing translanguaging strategies to enhance students' comprehension of content. In this context, Rauteda (2022; 2024b) emphasizes that translanguaging aids in simplifying complex material. The practice of explaining vocabulary in multiple languages, such as English, Nepali, and occasionally 'Tharu', further exemplifies translanguaging, which extends beyond conventional pedagogical methods. Translanguaging is especially advantageous for English language learners who often find themselves grappling with linguistically dense or culturally specific content (August & Shanahan, 2006). This approach not only validates the linguistic and cultural resources of marginalized communities but also promotes inclusivity by recognizing the inherent value of diverse language practices. By fostering translingual spaces, teachers can challenge traditional power dynamics that typically favor dominant languages, thereby facilitating equitable

participation and amplifying the voices of all students. Ultimately, embracing translanguaging empowers learners to engage meaningfully with their cultural narratives, contributing to a more just and equitable society. Thus, the information highlights how translanguaging serves as a boundary-breaking practice wherein English teachers transcend monolingual language frameworks.

Similar to Rohit, Ramesh also seemed to be going beyond the structures. He shared in the interview:

> I believe that language should not prevent students from expressing their thoughts and ideas. In my classroom, I provide them with the option to choose the language in which they are most comfortable. I have observed that when students are free from language barriers, they engage more openly, express their viewpoints with confidence, and participate more actively in discussions.

The transcripts indicate that the teacher advocates for students' rights to express their opinions in the language they are most comfortable with. The phrase 'language should not be a barrier' encapsulates the teachers' commitment to fostering an inclusive educational environment. Furthermore, this illustrates that teachers employ a democratic approach, allowing students the freedom to choose how they wish to communicate. As a result, this practice aligns with the principles of equitable education, empowering learners from disadvantaged and marginalized backgrounds while promoting social justice within English language teaching classrooms.

Likewise, another participant also believed in flexible languaging, which tries to challenge the monolingual ideologies in English language teaching classrooms. Hence, another participant, Kamal, shared in the interview:

> Relying solely on English for instruction feels unjust, especially given our constitution. Our nation's linguistic diversity should be reflected in our classrooms. An English-only policy can be exclusionary, so I aim to create a classroom environment where students can use their familiar languages and blend the languages during discussions to promote equity and inclusivity.

This excerpt reveals that English-only as a language of instruction in multilingual settings is against the constitution of the country and unjust for the learners. Realizing this fact, the teacher challenges monolingual policies in education by emphasizing the importance of linguistic diversity and advocating for the inclusion of local languages in the classroom. Hence, the information further disclosed that linguistic exclusion negatively impacts students' engagement and cultural identity where multiple languages co-exist (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2009). Moreover, the teacher's experience and action resemble Freire's concept of 'dialogical pedagogy' where learners' cultural backgrounds and languages are not merely accepted but are actively used as educational resources to promote inclusive and equitable learning (Freire, 1970). Consequently, teachers can make learning more accessible and meaningful, especially for marginalized communities, by incorporating students' languages into ELT classrooms, fostering a sense of belonging and cultural pride (García & Wei, 2014).

Teaching through linguistic flexibility: Teachers' translanguaging responses to classroom realities

Teachers as transformative agents (Phyak et al., 2022) play a crucial role in challenging traditional monolingual ideologies of language teaching. The belief that English is better taught by using English only as a medium of instruction has been practiced by teachers in multilingual settings. In Nepal, where the classrooms are completely multilingual, teachers are surprisingly expected to teach in English only. However, teachers teach English using Nepali as a supporting language to simplify the content, increase learner engagement, and motivate the

learners (Rauteda, 2024b). Here, in this study, one of the participants, Rohit, shared in the interview:

> Speaking with my experience, I am not in favor of using English only while teaching English, and I cannot be… Students tend to conceptualize better when taught by incorporating their mother tongue along with English. So I incorporate Nepali along with English in my classroom. What I think is, we as teachers need to be flexible. My point is that we should teach in the language students understand best.

The verbatim discloses that the teacher resists the traditional English-only as a medium of instruction. Referencing his experience of teaching English, the participant experienced that teaching utilizing students' mother tongue helps in deeper understanding and comprehension (García & Wei, 2014). Moreover, the verbatim shows the teacher's resistance to a rigid English-only policy, which leads to subtractive bilingualism where students are expected to replace their mother tongue with English (Hornberger & Link, 2012). Additionally, the information reflects that teachers practice democratic teaching-learning activities where language is a choice for communication. These practices and beliefs are regarded as translanguaging, for which the teacher seems positive here in the snippets. Similarly, another respondent, Kamal, shared in the interview.

> Based on my experience, when I taught lessons solely in English, my students remained silent—they neither asked questions nor engaged in discussions. However, when I permitted them to use a language they were comfortable with, conversations naturally emerged. This is why I encourage students to incorporate their familiar languages while posing questions, interacting with peers, and engaging in discussions. They ask questions in Nepali, and they respond to my questions in Nepali too. I don't discourage them. This approach has significantly contributed to improving their comprehension and fostering creative thinking.

The information indicates that the teacher observed his students becoming disengaged when he used only English in his teaching. This aligns with Cummins' (2007) perspective that a monolingual approach can create a communicative barrier. Conversely, the teacher found that allowing students to use their known languages for communication in the classroom facilitated interaction, boosted confidence, and enhanced understanding (García & Kleyn, 2016). Additionally, the participant's response revealed that students answered questions posed in English using Nepali and also asked their teacher questions in Nepali. The teacher's practice of validating this interaction demonstrates that incorporating multiple languages is beneficial in multilingual settings. Furthermore, the information emphasizes that permitting students to use their home languages encourages creative thinking. It also suggests that using multiple languages can lead to higher levels of cognitive flexibility, creativity, and problem-solving skills.

CONCLUSION

The study has investigated the roles of translanguaging in English language teaching classrooms. Using the phenomenological approach as a research design, it has critically analyzed the secondary-level English language teachers' lived experience of using translanguaging in their instruction. The study concluded that translanguaging is significant in English language teaching classrooms to increase learner engagement, achievement, and understanding. Additionally, translanguaging deconstructs the structured monolingual linguistic boundaries and creates a space for the learners' home language that helps in identity affirmation, an inclusive learning environment, and transformation. Moreover, the study

explored that translanguaging creates a democratic and equitable learning environment in English language teaching classrooms, fostering the use of multiple languages, and bringing about changes and transformation. Consequently, translanguaging helps in the formation of teachers' agency for the employment of learners' home languages to enhance learning, motivation, and confidence, and ensures the diversity, social justice, and empowerment for all the learners in English language teaching in general, and minority language speakers in particular.

The study is a valuable contribution to academia and is important for English language teachers who are teaching English in multilingual settings. Hence, teachers' lived experience implies that translanguaging is a transformative, culturally responsive, and democratic pedagogical approach that can be used in the multilingual setting to ensure students' sense of belonging, identity, and confidence, and create an equitable and inclusive learning environment, social justice, and empowerment. Future researchers can explore the students' lived experience in translanguaging as a phenomenon.

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