
Translanguaging in Assam: A Strategy for Equitable English Literacy and Viksit Bharat @ 2047

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Abstract

Standard Language Ideology (SLI) is a global, pervasive challenge in multilingual education; this has consequently mostly prescribed a monolingual-centric pedagogy that views the linguistic repertoire of the learners, especially those among Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SEDGs), as some kind of deficit. In India, this tension runs counter to the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 mandate, which aims at leveraging Mother Tongue (L1) as a resource for English language acquisition. The study is a Qualitative Policy and Theoretical Analysis through the use of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of the language-in-education policies and a comprehensive Literature Synthesis around Translanguaging (TL) theories so as to probe this policy-practice gap. This analysis underlines an important lacuna in literature on the use of an innovative framework, Crosslinguistic Translanguaging Theory (CTT), specifically for newly recognised tribal linguistic communities in Assam, for instance Mising, Karbi, Rabha. The full policy recommendation at the end positions TL as a scalable, equitable tool for achieving national development goals as encapsulated in the Vision of Viksit Bharat @ 2047.

Keywords: Translanguaging, Viksit Bharat, English Literacy, Multilingualism, NEP 2020, Assam

Introduction

The vision of Viksit Bharat @ 2047 carries within it an ambition for India's status as a developed nation, which rightfully requires a deep and fair commitment to reforming education. There is considerable consensus in the global educational literature of several decades on how systemic failure is occasioned in multilingual contexts by adherence to SLI. SLI marginalises the linguistic assets that students bring with them to schools. Pedagogical approaches emerge from SLI that result in the deficit view of diverse learners and undermine the very essence of the right to effective education.

A set of policies that counter this by affirming and mobilising students' whole linguistic repertoires, a practice known as Translanguaging, or TL, are internationally recognised as powerful tools for enhancing cognitive development and attainment. This global academic consensus directly informs India's National Education Policy, or NEP, 2020. The NEP lays down a strategic restructuring of education at all levels, promoting Mother Tongue or L1 as a core resource for learning—a critical provision for Socioeconomically Disadvantaged Groups, or SEDGs. This policy shift is important to realise the goals of Viksit Bharat because English literacy on terms of equity is a key enabler of digital inclusion, higher education, and global economic participation. Nevertheless, there remains a huge gulf between policy and actual practice. Recent studies report that, unfortunately, too many teachers, either consciously or unconsciously, are still under the pervasive influence of SLI, which ultimately makes them discourage students' L1s. Such pedagogical disenfranchisement reduces the effectiveness of multilingual strategies like TL. The present research responds to an immediate need for filling a critical knowledge gap by testing the theoretical and practical applicability of a new framework, Crosslinguistic Translanguaging Theory, through rigorous scrutiny of prevailing policies, curriculum documents, and theoretical strategies. This research addresses an urgent need to fill a critical knowledge gap

by testing the theoretical and practical viability of a new framework, Crosslinguistic Translanguaging Theory (CTT), through rigorous scrutiny of prevailing policies, curriculum documents, and theoretical strategies. We focus on the specific and relatively under-researched context of Assam's tribal linguistic communities, namely Mising, Karbi, and Rabha, with the explicit aim of translating robust theory into a scalable and equitable policy blueprint.

Literature review:

The NEP 2020 Mandate and Viksit Bharat:

India is in need of a strong, globally competitive workforce to enable the country achieve its status of a Viksit Bharat @2047. One very important prerequisite for this is advanced level proficiency in a second language (L2), namely, English. This is considered a vital factor for better employment and career growth and global connectivity. One prerequisite crucial for this achievement is advanced level proficiency in English, a second language (L2). This is considered essential for better employment, career growth, and global connectivity. The paper titled, "Mapping the Nature and Extent of Multilingual Education in Primary Schools in Assam" by Nirmali Goswami, critically examines the persistent gap between official policies promoting multilingual education (MLE), such as those in the NEP 2020 and NCF 2005, and classroom reality in linguistically diverse Assam. It argues that the achievement of MLE goals is basically hindered by the pervasive effect of standard language ideology, the belief that languages exist only in their canonical, prestige forms. The finding is based on interviews with eighteen language teachers in Assamese medium schools within Sonitpur district of Assam. Although teachers were aware of the diverse linguistic backgrounds of their students, the vast majority denied or actively discouraged the use of any non-standard language on school premises, viewing home language varieties as having a "corrupting influence" This ideological stance results in pedagogic practices centred on correcting inaccuracies through methods like dictation and memorization to enforce the "sanctity of a particular form of language," ultimately demonstrating that policy shifts remain "on paper" and highlighting the need to restructure the education system to embrace the social reality of multilingualism as a cognitive and social resource.

The report, titled "Bridging home and school: language support for young children in Assam," documents a specialised language support program carried out from April 2012 to March 201 for primary school-going children in the Kokrajhar and Chirang districts of lower Assam. This area, falling under the Bodo Territorial Council, is marked by linguistic diversity-including Bodo, Nepalese, Santhali, Rabha, and Bengali-and a history of instability, but events took a turn for the worse with the Bodo-Muslim riots in July 2012 that displaced nearly 4 lakh people. The project addresses a critical academic challenge: because most government schools use Assamese or Bodo as the medium of instruction, children from diverse linguistic backgrounds struggle with literacy and face high dropout rates. At the core of the program's strategy is bilingual support and the facilitation of the introduction of Assamese in a child-friendly way, through volunteer teachers from within the community who facilitate learning and interaction in home languages alongside Assamese. Its methodology focuses on oral language development through activities like role play inspired by the local folklore and develops reading and writing competence supported by community-based Teaching Learning Material. Its assessment results are concrete: 49% of the Santhali-speaking children in the supported schools could read a simple paragraph in Assamese compared to just 7% in the unsupported schools. Despite the success and strong monitoring structure, the report mentions that training schedules were disrupted due to the 2012 violence, and educationally the gains are yet to reach some of the remote villages where teacher absenteeism and poverty slow down the pace.

The paper "Understanding Translanguaging in Multilingual Education" by Amina Isabel Bouzid and Carlos A. Javier, 2024, represents an important critique of the concept of "translanguaging," referred to by these authors as a now-popular "buzzword" within multilingual educational environments. To further explicate the meaning of its multiple interpretations, this systematic review categorises the existing conceptual and empirical literature within two main conceptual frameworks: a "fixed language approach," where languages are distinct and separate entities to be used systematically through pedagogic intervention, and a "fluid languaging approach," which theorises language as a process or "verb" that centres on the practices of bilinguals and often represents a practical theory of language. The study finds that translanguaging practices are burgeoning in multilingual classrooms of both the Global North and South and are proving to be efficacious in promoting learners' curriculum access by drawing strategically upon their entire linguistic resources. Translanguaging holds profound consequences for the confrontation of deep-seated monolingual ideologies, the promotion of social justice for minoritised communities, and the positioning of itself as a promising research area for reshaping future language education. Jim Cummins' critical analysis, "Translanguaging: A Critical Analysis of Theoretical Claims," starts by placing TL in context as a dominant term in language education. He notes it originated with Williams (1994, 1996, 2000) and was extended by García (2009). Cummins distinguishes between the controversial Unitary Translanguaging Theory (UTT), or "strong version," which claims that bilingual people do not speak discrete languages but use a unitary repertoire, and the Crosslinguistic Translanguaging Theory (CTT), or "weak version," which affirms the social reality of "named languages" while emphasizing crosslinguistic interdependence and teaching for transfer. He critiques UTT by utilizing criteria of Empirical Adequacy, Logical Coherence, and Consequential Validity. He then contends that the UTT claim that languages do not exist is a logically flawed inference that can undermine linguistic justice, and that UTT illegitimately dismisses empirically supported constructs like additive bilingualism, the Common Underlying Proficiency (CUP), and teaching for crosslinguistic transfer as "monoglossic". Further, Cummins takes up the UTT critique that additive approaches and the teaching of academic language are connected to "raciolinguistic ideologies"; he states that this stance lacks an empirical basis, is logically incoherent, and provides no clear pedagogical direction on how to extend students' literacy skills. On the other hand, Cummins affirms the pedagogical translanguaging as a valid construct; hence, the CTT perspective offers a more coherent evidence-based framework that synthesises the affirmation of students' repertoires and the need to challenge coercive power structures together with explicit teaching of academic language across the curriculum.

VIKSIT BHARAT @ 2047 is a comprehensive national vision that will restructure and build India as a developed nation by 2047, the 100th year of independence. It covers all facets of growth, including economic, social, good governance, and environmental sustainability. For students, this has immense significance, as it aspires to ensure better quality of life through improved education, job opportunities, healthcare, and improvement in the environment. Emphasis has been laid on enhancing educational infrastructure; providing accessible health care; modernizing agriculture; developing strong infrastructure; and producing substantial energy from renewable sources while striving for 100% literacy. Students would be the agents of change, and significant contributions can be expected through innovation and research covering technology and sustainable development, fostering entrepreneurship to promote societal needs, acting vigorously in community education and service, and leveraging technology in promoting digital literacy and revolutionizing sectors like governance and education. For maximizing this engagement, certain departmental strategies have called upon institutions to align curriculum and direct research efforts toward solving the challenges mentioned in the vision, and further utilise the multichannel outreach-particularly promotion of submission of

feedback on MyGov.in, engaging influential alumni, and organizing skill-based workshops, competitions, and debates-in order to encourage participation and critical thinking among the students.

The NEP 2020 lays great emphasis on promoting multilingualism as well as leveraging the power of language in education, mainly by stipulating that the medium of instruction, wherever possible, should be the home language/mother tongue/local language at least till Grade 5, and preferably till Grade 8 and beyond, in both public and private schools since this ensures that young children will learn more quickly. For promoting national unity and cognitive growth, the flexible three-language formula will remain, yet students will have to choose languages such that at least two are native to India, with no imposition of any language on any State. The Policy goes further than just Indian languages to provide for wide, free access to classical languages, mainly Sanskrit, an important option, and introduces foreign languages at the secondary level. It further supports the role assigned to the teaching of English by developing high-quality bilingual textbooks and teaching-learning materials for subjects such as science and mathematics, ensuring that students attain proficiency in their home language and also in English, with all languages being taught using enjoyable, interactive, and experiential pedagogical methods.

Overview The article “Languages for learning: a framework for implementing India’s multilingual language-in-education policy,” by Santosh Kumar Mahapatra & Jason Anderson, offers a “Languages for Learning” (LFL) framework as a critically constructive response to India’s recent National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020). While the NEP 2020 has a clear and commendable aim to promote multilingualism and the use of the home/mother tongue as the MOI until grade 5, the policy is problematic since it presents undefined terms such as ‘mother tongue’ and does not account for any flexible plan for implementation. Prior to presenting the LFL framework, the authors establish a theoretical grounding that is primarily based on current translanguaging theory. Indeed, the authors note that previous models of multilingualism were often ‘monolingualist’ and ‘additive,’ where languages were simplistically compartmentalised and failed to recognise the fluidity of boundaries across languages. Translanguaging theory, in contrast, captures the dynamic and fluid practices of multilingual language users and recognises the largely underutilised plurilingual and sociocultural repertoires of students. Moreover, the paper is critical of the history of India’s Three-Language Formula (TLF), which is at the centre of India’s language policy; for even though it continues to exist, the TLF often fails in practice, as it has totally ignored linguistic diversity, wrongly assumed that the mother tongue and the regional language were one and the same, and resulted in a fundamental lack of clarity with regard to language-in-education policy. Thus, the LFL framework is proposed as a multilingually appropriate alternative to the reductive “Medium of Instruction” concept in order to foster equity, first language support, and cognitive independence.

The theoretical models of L2 and cognitive skills

L2 research centres around, broadly speaking, two sets of theories: macro and micro theories.¹⁸ Where macro theories address broad phenomena, such as the range of factors influencing language learning, micro theories focus on specific phenomena, such as effectiveness of the acquisition of a single grammatical rule.

psycholinguistic approach towards L2 learning thus sees it as an acquisition of a complex cognitive skill comprising sub-skills, such as grammatical rule application or choosing appropriate vocabulary.¹⁸ More importantly, while a learner automatizes these sub-skills through practice, they internally organise, restructure, and relate new linguistic information to their coherent knowledge base.¹⁸ The need for such internal cognitive restructuring provides the basic justification for translanguaging.

Defining Translanguaging:

Theory, Practice, and Cognitive Benefits:

Originally coined by Cen Williams in 1996, translanguaging is a theory of language practice that moves beyond traditional views of bilingualism and embraces a holistic and dynamic perspective. It recognises the natural ways in which bilinguals or multilinguals draw upon their entire linguistic repertoire to make meaning about their worlds.

In a pedagogical context, translanguaging is defined as a planned instructional practice that makes strategic use of bilingualism as a resource. It is a cognitive process wherein the learner receives information in one language, L1, and then works with, applies, or produces output using that information in another language, L2.

This practice yields significant cognitive benefits:

1. Conceptual Understanding and Knowledge Retention: Students use all language skills to learn new ideas and retain knowledge.
2. Affirming Identity and Confidence: Inviting students to use home languages underscores their cultural and linguistic heritage, so that they feel welcomed
3. Fostering Critical Thinking: Comparing languages and concepts of different systems brings about deeper understanding, higher cognitive flexibility, and metalinguistic awareness.

In the academic article "Languages, Inequality, and the Double Divide in India," Ajit K. Mohanty says that multilingualism in India is hierarchical, defined by a linguistic double divide that significantly influences the status and survival of languages. This consists of three tiers: at the top is English, the elitist language of power; in the middle are major regional languages (vernaculars); and at the bottom, the ITM languages. The double divide encompasses the chasm between English and vernacular languages (the English-Vernacular divide) and the gap between vernacular languages and the ITM languages (the Vernacular-Other divide). Although India exhibits unique characteristics that often promote language maintenance through widespread individual and community bilingualism, an adaptive strategy sometimes termed an "anti-predatory strategy", this maintenance comes at the cost of marginalization and domain shrinkage for dominated languages, pushing them out of spheres of power like education, official use, and commerce. This institutionalised linguistic inequality, reflected in constitutional recognition processes and, critically, in education, where very few ITM languages are used as a medium of instruction, leads to severe educational failure, capability deprivation, and poverty among minority linguistic groups. The structure of public and private schooling, which is stratified by cost and language medium (from exclusive English-Medium schools to no-cost Vernacular-Medium government schools), directly follows from and perpetuates this societal linguistic hierarchy. While recent attempts, such as mother tongue-based Multilingual Education (MLE) programs, have shown positive effects for tribal children, these transitional programs still face immense pressure from the societal double divide to rapidly accommodate dominant languages like vernacular and English.

Linguistic Ecology of Assam and Policy Context

Assam represents a microcosm of linguistic diversity in India, including speakers of Indo-Aryan (Assamese), Sino-Tibetan (Tibeto-Burman), and Austro-Asiatic families.⁵ This is characterised by systemic negligence in the case of minority and tribal languages like Bodo, Mising, Karbi, and Dimasa, with speakers of these languages being largely surrounded geographically by Assamese speakers.

This systemic marginalisation creates a "double divide" in education. The first divide is between dominant (English/Assamese) and marginalised minority languages. The second, more crucial divide, separates the child's mother tongue (L1) from the mandated language of instruction (L2/L3), leading to linguistic alienation

and reduced learning outcomes.¹⁷ The resulting necessity for communities like the Bodo and Mising to acquire Assamese for education and business, sometimes at the cost of their languages' core attributes-e.g., the Mising language losing its tonality-emphasises how imperative it is to have a policy that elevates these L1s as active academic assets rather than liabilities.

The paper titled, "Multilingualism and the Tea Tribe of Assam" by Amidevi Urang provides a valuable overview of the profound multilingualism found within the tea tribe community of Assam, effectively arguing that this intense linguistic diversity is rooted in their specific history of colonial-era labour migration from over a hundred different sub-castes across various Indian states. The paper's strength lies in its focused, contextual analysis, which anchors the community's current linguistic landscape not just in modern factors like globalization, but primarily in its unique and complex ethnic and social structure. However, the review is limited by its lack of detail on the functional dynamics of language use, such as the role of a lingua franca, translanguaging practices, or the distribution of languages across different social domains, and it would be significantly strengthened by the inclusion of methodological details to support its findings and allow for replication or further research. Overall, the paper serves as an important starting point for recognizing and studying this marginalised community's intricate linguistic reality, but it requires further analytical depth on the practice of multilingualism and a clearer delineation of its research approach.

The article by Kersten and Ludwig, "Translanguaging and Multilingual Picturebooks," strongly criticises the monolingual bias of ELT while supporting a translanguaging pedagogy, which recognises the students' whole linguistic repertoire as one integrated system and not separated languages. This is practically discussed through a detailed case study that analyses Gloria Anzaldúa's bilingual work, *Friends from the Other Side/Amigos Del Otro Lado*, which itself models the needed linguistic hybridity for effective classroom discussion. A key strength of the paper is the clear bridge that it constructs between this advanced theoretical concept-as referred to by important scholars like Wei Li-and the use of the picturebook as an "easily implementable classroom resource" to deal effectively with "cultural identity, migration, and social justice." However, a vital limitation is noted concerning "Instructional Universality." It was suggested that clearer adaptation strategies are needed for any language pairing other than Spanish-English discussed in the paper (like German-Turkish) that will enhance the reach of the article. Overall, the paper is considered essential to the "multilingual turn" of education and offers a valuable practical roadmap to practitioners on how to validate and make use of students' complex linguistic realities.

Research Gap:

The key research gap is that there is a significant disconnect between policy mandates and classroom reality in Assam. Though the NEP 2020 provides a boost for multilingual education, the implementation is constrained by a pervasive Standard Language Ideology, where teachers are found actively discouraging the use of students' diverse L1s, framing them within a "Deficit/Problem" perspective. This ideological block and the severe barriers to implementation in rural schools, including maths 68 % of teachers with no formal ELT training, along with a dire shortage of basic resources, weaken the possibility of equitable education. Crucially, this resistance is well-documented as fundamentally misaligned with evidence of immense efficacy for multilingual approaches. For example, the finding that supported Santhali-speaking children attained 49 % reading proficiency in Assamese compared to only maths 7 % without support; similarly, multilingual teaching may boost learning outcomes by Therefore, the established gap is the absence of rigorous, longitudinal evidence demonstrating the effective, planned translanguaging (CTT) for newly recognised tribal linguistic groups (Mising, Karbi, Rabha) to successfully bridge their L1 literacy with L2 English proficiency.

Objectives:

1. To analyse official education policies regarding L1 use and medium of instruction to determine the ideological stance toward multilingualism in primary L2 English teaching. 2. To review and synthesise existing primary-level research on translanguaging in the region to establish the study's relevance and scholarly contribution. Methodology: Policy and Theoretical Analysis The current study adopted a Qualitative Policy and Theoretical Analysis design, drawing exclusively on secondary data to meet the stated aims. The methodology is organised around two main analytical elements: Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of policy documents and a Systematic Literature Synthesis of Translanguaging theory. This approach is justified by the fact that the study specifically focuses on analysing the discursive construction of language policy and the theoretical feasibility of applying CTT within the Assam context and does not involve empirical fieldwork. Data Sources and Scope The data analysed consists of three major categories: 1. Policy Documents: o National Policies: The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 focuses on sections dealing with multilingual education, medium of instruction, and language of study. o State Policy and Curriculum Documents (Assam): State Curriculum Frameworks, curriculum guides and government circulars outlining the use of language in the primary and foundational stage classrooms. 2. Theoretical Literature: o Translanguaging Theory: Core academic works by seminal global scholars that define and operationalise TL, such as Williams, García, Li Wei. o Crosslinguistic Translanguaging Theory (CTT): Specific literature related to defining CTT and its application within contexts containing linguistically asymmetric L1s and L2s. 3. Contextual Literature: o Socio-Linguistic/Educational Research: Available scholarly articles and reports on the status of tribal languages and challenges of English literacies in Assam, such as Mohanty, Mahapatra, and ASER Centre. Discussion The Government of Assam announced a widely acclaimed, path-breaking decision on March 30, 2024, to provide primary education in six languages of its plains tribes, Rabha, Tiwa, Mising, Karbi, Dimasa, and Deori, a move seen as politically significant just before the Lok Sabha election and soundly in keeping with the National Education Policy 2023's mandate for primary education in the mother tongue. This has been seen as a bold step in legally recognizing and promoting the linguistic diversity of these tribes set against the broader, long-term strategy adopted by Assam in the management of its diversity through various statutory and non-statutory development councils for several ethno-linguistic groups. But this linguistic policy will face bleak implementation with probable shortages in textbooks and proficient teachers. No less important, this reform is intertwined with an equally important 2023 decision to introduce English as the medium of instruction for teaching science and mathematics from Class 6 in state-run schools with an aim to empower students with global terminology and reduce the advantages of private English medium schools. The empirical study, "English Language Teaching in Assam's Rural Schools: Problems and Pedagogical Possibilities" by Rilumoni Deka, utilised a convergent parallel mixed-methods design, surveying 156 teachers and 420 students across 45 rural schools in five districts of Assam, to investigate the challenges and opportunities in English Language Teaching (ELT). The research confirms that rural ELT faces profound systemic disadvantages, , stemming from critical infrastructural, pedagogical, and socio-cultural barriers; key findings highlighted that 68% of teachers lack formal ELT methodologies training, essential resources such as internet connectivity are unavailable in 67% of schools, and 78% of students report minimal exposure to English outside of the classroom environment. These constraints contribute to the low proficiency observed, correlating with the observed dominance of traditional, teacher-centred methodologies like Grammar-Translation and Lecture-Based Instruction (92% combined usage). Crucially, the study validated contextually appropriate interventions, demonstrating that implementing multilingual teaching approaches (translanguaging) can enhance learning outcomes by approximately 34%, and that strategic community engagement alongside

mobile-based learning can address the exposure deficit and increase student engagement by 41%. The strong positive correlation between student exposure and proficiency ($r=0.67$) underscores the need for creating English-rich environments, leading to the conclusion that sustained improvement requires mandated specialised teacher training and systemic policy reforms that prioritise contextually adapted strategies. The National Curriculum Framework -Foundation Stage is one of the most important documents to fulfill the goals and objectives of NEP 2020. The document, recently published by NCERT and launched on 20th October 2022, mandates that for children in the age group of 3-8 years, the mother tongue/home language (L1) has to be the medium of instruction and interaction in all schools because this evidence-based approach will ensure rapid concept acquisition, as it helps to build an emotionally secure environment for learning. The NCF also emphasises that the child's L1 is never to be discouraged; rather, it has to be used formally as a "bridge" to the school language, thereby requiring teachers to learn the child's L1. In other words, the Framework strongly advocates multilingualism and delineates a Curricular Goal at the end of Grade 3: 'every child is able to use a rich vocabulary and grammatically correct constructions in communicating at least two languages (L1 and L2) with ease and clarity'. For teaching a less familiar language like English, which is L2/L3 for the majority of students, the NCF-FS favours a natural and communicative approach using L1 scaffolding. It advocates strategies like action songs, simple conversations, and story retelling. Final Report detailing a Minor Research Project sponsored by the UGC, focusing on the medium of instruction and languages taught in the primary schools of Assam. The final report of the Minor Research Project on the medium of instruction and languages taught in the primary schools of Assam outlined the broad objective as follows: to explore the socio-linguistic diversity of the school-going population in the Sonitpur district and to assess the capacity of the school system to manage such diversity. The research adopted an interdisciplinary approach through a mixed methodology-involving a survey of 33 primary schools, followed by interviews of 49 teachers and 61 students. The project established that Assam is a multilingual state, where schools provide instruction in many languages, Assamese, Bengali, Bodo, English, and Hindi, and 60.60% of the responding schools had a student population which was linguistically heterogeneous. Moreover, the students themselves are highly multilingual, with almost 80% using three or more languages in their daily lives out of school. Despite this fact, the central finding of the study was that even as the state has provisions for teaching many languages, schools were largely ill-equipped to deal with linguistic diversity at the ground level, as teachers, who were themselves mostly multilingual outside of schools, assumed a linguistically homogenous classroom and often advised students against using the mother tongue/neighbourhood language on the grounds that it would have a corrupting influence on their speech, showing thereby a serious lack of training in the management of diverse learning environments.

The "Roadmap for MLE Planning and Implementation" is an approach paper to align education strategies in states with the National Education Policy (NEP 2020) and the NIPUN Bharat mission, with focused goals of achieving FLN by 2026-27. A related core argument is that FLN goals are achievable only if children learn through their strong languages at the foundational stage, based on a worldwide research consensus that it is easier for children to comprehend and excel academically in all subjects if they have MoI in a language they know well. Recognizing the complex and varied linguistic ecology of the country, the document outlines four broad MLE approaches, including MTB-MLE and strategically using L1 as the primary instructional language when an unfamiliar MoI is used, L2. In addition, the roadmap sets out concrete policy initiatives for states, such as formal recognition of children's L1s in the curriculum; a guarantee that L1 is the MoI in ECE; the explicit statement of not using English as the MoI until at least Grade 3 or beyond; and positioning MLE as

the key to ensuring strong comprehension and better learning outcomes among children suffering a language disadvantage.

In a recently published article entitled “The Status of Tribal Languages of Assam Based on Linguistic Context” by Dr Barnali Gohain and Rashmika Goswami, it has been contended that the status of tribal languages in Assam is precarious owing to many obstacles that threaten their very long-term survival, which urgently requires serious, concerted action by both the government as well as the native speaking communities themselves. These indigenous languages, predominantly of Sino-Tibetan origin, face significant difficulties because most lack their own script or elaborate written literature, hindering their historical development and educational use. Their status as linguistic minorities is further compounded by the educational policies at the level of schools where Assamese plays the role of the medium of instruction at the governmental schools, relegating the tribal languages, except Bodo-assigned up to post-graduate level-to single subject teaching at the primary level, thus arresting their growth and spread.

The movement of tribal people toward urban life combined with the general influence of globalization further increases the danger of extinction, often resulting in younger generations being ignorant of their mother tongue. These languages vary according to UNESCO criteria from vulnerable, which includes Karbi, Rabha, and Dimasa, to critically endangered, including Tai-Phake and Tai-Aiton. Most native speakers have a favourable attitude toward their language and culture. However, this optimistic attitude alone cannot be relied upon for the maintenance of a language. It all depends upon appropriate language planning regarding both the status and corpus of the languages so that extension to include mass media and broadcasting is prioritised along with the preparation of essential resources, including textbooks and dictionaries, for the future generations to feel the pragmatic need and desirability of their mother tongue in everyday life. The research paper titled "Effectiveness of Translanguaging as a Pedagogical Model in Foreign Language Teaching and Learning," authored by Ge Shuai and published in the Proceedings of the 2024 International Conference on Social Sciences and Educational Development (ICOSSED 2024). These languages vary according to UNESCO criteria from vulnerable, which includes Karbi, Rabha, and Dimasa, to critically endangered, including Tai-Phake and Tai-Aiton. Most native speakers have a favourable attitude toward their language and culture; however, this optimistic attitude alone cannot be relied upon for maintenance. Preservation depends on appropriate language planning with regard to both the status and corpus of the languages, such that their extension to include mass media and broadcasting is prioritised along with the preparation of essential resources, including textbooks and dictionaries, ensuring that future generations feel the pragmatic need for and desirability of their mother tongue in everyday life. This research work explores the role and effectiveness of translanguaging or the fluid use of multiple languages as an instructional approach in foreign language education. The paper is based on a critical research paradigm that is underpinned by notions of inclusivity, social justice, and validation of the multilingual identities of students by claiming that such a translanguaging approach effectively problematises traditional monolingual policies. The paper reviews the existing literature on functions, types, and effects of translanguaging, including discussions of implications for language policy, teachers' practices, students' linguistic competence, and identity construction. Eventually, this study tries to identify the benefits and challenges of using translanguaging in order to reduce the barriers in educational outcomes and help policymakers.

The guide, *Translanguaging in Dual Language Bilingual Education: A Blueprint for Planning Units of Study*, lays out a framework to integrate translanguaging pedagogy into DLBE settings intentionally, challenging traditional models built upon traditional bilingualism. These latter models treat English and the Language

Other Than English (LOTE) as two separate systems, each requiring strict language allocation. In contrast, this guide is grounded in Dynamic Bilingualism, which recognises that an individual has one unified linguistic repertoire. Thus, it affirms the right of every learner to translanguage by leveraging full resources for deeper learning and as an act of social justice. This blueprint delineates five essential components for unit design: Translanguaging Classroom-Community Development-establishing a safe space that validates diverse linguistic practices; Translanguaging Pre-assessment-allows students to use their entire repertoire to holistically gauge content knowledge; Translanguaging Rings-temporary scaffolds or "lifesavers" provided during named-language instruction to assist emergent bilinguals; Translanguaging Spaces-designated instructional times that are transformative, used for critical linguistic analysis and authentic use of all language features; and Formative and Summative Assessments-use both translanguaging and monolingual tools to accurately measure growth. The results will ensure that in DLBE programs, honouring the full linguistic resources of students enhances and does not undermine them.

The CUNY-NYSIEB guide, *Translanguaging in Curriculum and Instruction*, is a crucial 2014 text advocating for a necessary shift from traditional deficit models to an empowering asset-based approach for Emergent Bilinguals (EB). It places translanguaging-the purposeful use of a student's full linguistic repertoire for learning and expression-at the forefront as a robust pedagogical strategy and positions it as enhancing, not deterring, academic outcomes for students. The core of its power is that this guide offers real examples that are classroom-ready and aligned with academic standards to show that leveraging multilingual scaffolding supports complex tasks such as planning and revising writing and validates student identity to promote deeper conceptual understanding.

Analytical Procedures

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) CDA, with the socio-cognitive approach underpinning it, was applied to the Policy Documents to uncover ideologies of language-in-education embedded therein.

CDA, which relies on the socio-cognitive approach, was employed with the Policy Documents to unearth the embedded ideologies of language-in-education. The analysis sought to ascertain:

- Lexical Choices: Terms for referring to tribal languages, such as "resource," "problem," "vernacular," and "Mother Tongue." Discursive Strategies: Mapping how policies either normalise SLI or affirm Translanguaging principles in relation to the medium of instruction.
- Contradictions: Examining discursively constituted tensions between the humane, equity-oriented spirit of the NEP and the possibility of monolingual implementation frameworks in Assam.
- Discursive Strategies: Mapping how policies either normalise SLI or affirm Translanguaging principles in relation to the medium of instruction.
- Contradictions: Examining discursively constituted tensions between the humane, equity-oriented spirit of the NEP and the possibility of monolingual implementation frameworks in Assam.

Systematic Literature Synthesis

A synthesis of related literature was needed in establishing the theoretical and practical feasibility of CTT, core to the policy recommendation within the paper. It involved:

- Mapping CTT Principles: Identify from existing theoretical papers the core operational principles of CTT, such as the strategic use of L1 to scaffold L2 literacy.

Feasibility Study: Synthesizing the contextual literature on the tribal languages of Assam, namely, Mising, Karbi, and Rabha, for an assessment of where the principles of CTT can be directly applied with a view to resolving their specific literacy challenges, thus providing a theoretically robust justification for the final policy recommendation.

Analysis of Policy-Practice Contradictions and Feasibility of Theory

This section synthesises the analysis and is structured to first identify the discursive contradictions in policy, then demonstrate the resultant policy-practice chasm, and finally propose Crosslinguistic Translanguaging Theory as the necessary theoretical bridge.

Analysis of Policy-Practice Contradictions and Theoretical Feasibility

This section synthesises the analysis, which is structured to first identify the discursive contradictions in policy, then demonstrate the resultant policy-practice chasm, and finally offer Crosslinguistic Translanguaging Theory as the necessary theoretical bridge.

The discursive contradiction in Assam's language policy

Assam's language-in-education policy represents a deep discursive contradiction if assessed against the imperatives of the NEP 2020. A recent decision of the state government, taken on March 30, 2024, to give primary education in six tribal languages-namely, Rabha, Tiwa, Mising, Karbi, Dimasa, and Deuri-is a strong, highly acclaimed discursive affirmation of linguistic identity and squarely coincides with the intent of the NEP 2020 and the National Curriculum Framework - Foundation Stage (NCF-FS). NCF-FS categorically states that the Mother Tongue/L1 should be the medium of instruction for 3–8 years old children to ensure swift concept acquisition and emotional security.

But this progressive move is structurally undermined by the equally important 2023 decision to introduce English as the medium of instruction for teaching Science and Mathematics from Class 6 in state-run schools.

- The state validates tribal linguistic identity through L1 MOI in the early grades, but it is also emphasising global economic competitiveness through early L2 immersion-English MOI in the middle grades.

- SLI Framing: The dualism in this policy is a suggestion of the persistence of Standard Language Ideology. While L1 is sufficient to initiate identity development in a child, English is discursively framed as the language of power and opportunity to gain access to “global terminology” and reduce the advantage of private schools.

This creates in the Indian context what Mohanty 2024 calls the Double Divide: it is the policy invested in uplifting tribal languages that actually turns out to consolidate the dominance of English, therefore generating an insoluble structural tension except through a strategic pedagogical intervention.

The Policy-Practice Chasm and the Dominance of SLI

This discursive tension within policy is reflected in the contextual literature as translating directly into a deep policy-practice chasm within the classrooms of Assam, wherein the deficit view regarding minoritised languages continues to be deeply embedded.

- Entrenched Deficit View: The UGC Minor Research Project, which dealt with primary schools in Sonitpur district, established that while the linguistic reality may be closer to around 80% students speaking three or more languages, the teachers presume a linguistically homogenous classroom. More critically, the teachers themselves, who are often multilingual, consciously discourage students from using their mother tongue or neighbourhood language owing to the fear of its “corrupting influence.” This shows how SLI has been entrenched in the pedagogical psyche completely at variance with the NEP's asset-based approach.

- **Systemic Barriers:** The deficit view is heightened by systemic capacity issues reflected in Deka's empirical study on rural ELT, which estimated that 68% of teachers lack formal training in ELT methodologies and 92% use monolingual, traditional methodologies. These are some of the barriers that make the implementation prospects of multilingual policies bleak. Second, the precarious status of languages such as Karbi, Rabha, and Mising is confirmed by Gohain and Goswami's analysis of tribal languages, since they mostly lack elaborate written literature. Therefore, this calls for a strategic, non-traditional approach.

Crucially, the study by Deka proved that the application of multilingual teaching approaches, or translanguaging, increases learning outcomes by about 34%. This provides the empirical justification needed to show that Translanguaging is the necessary mechanism to bridge the policy-practice gap.

Crosslinguistic Translanguaging Theory (CTT)

This seems particularly compelling in the theoretical literature: Crosslinguistic Translanguaging Theory is arguably the most viable and equitable framework that might help unravel the policy contradictions and systemic failures in Assam.

- **Theoretical Rationale:** Although global literature has already satisfactorily established that TL is a social justice imperative (Shuai 2024), CTT will be befitting for the Assam context because it is specially designed to handle asymmetrical linguistic relationships. This becomes imperative for Mising, Karbi, and Rabha languages with their highly vulnerable status and corpus issues. CTT makes sure the L1 acts as a sure bridge to the L2 (English) even when its formal resources are at their bare minimum.

- **Operationalizing the Framework:** CUNY-NYSIEB and Dual Language Blueprint have developed comprehensive TL guides that provide specific, scalable pedagogical strategies necessary for teachers to implement the principles of CTT and dismantle SLI:

In sum, CTT directly speaks to the policy-practice dichotomy through a structured, asset-based, scalable methodology. That is to say, it ensures that L1 is used as a resource for foundational learning-NEP 2020-while building in the requisite academic skills for functional literacy in English-Viksit Bharat @ 2047.

Conclusion and Policy Recommendation:

The paper concludes that only a translanguaging approach can be the equitable and viable mechanism for realizing both educational equity and global competence in Assam by 2047, moving beyond restrictive "monolingualist" and "additive" models. It supports the philosophical shift required from viewing linguistic diversity as a deficit to a resource that aligns with the operationalization of NEP 2020 with reference to "Double Divide." Three mandates under the policy framework are suggested: Specialised Teacher Training to dismantle the Standard Language Ideology and also leverage the multilingualism of teachers through theories like CUP; Formal Recognition and Resource Development through institutionalising and investing in high-quality bilingual/multilingual TLM representing various marginalised tribal languages along with Assamese and English; and Strategic L1-to-L2 Bridging where planned TP is institutionalised within Grades 1-3 to build conceptual understanding in the child's home language (L1) before a gradual and planned transition to English (L2) as the MOI from Grade 3 or 4 onward. It zeroes in on the fact that such a strategic, asset-based approach would change Assam's rich linguistic diversity from perceived problem to engine of cognitive growth and equitable L2 English literacy, thus securing the human capital required for Viksit Bharat @ 2047 and ensuring choice is not between identity and opportunity for marginalised learners.

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