Translanguaging in Indian classrooms अभी और भविष्य में

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APPLIED LINGUISTICS

Areas I will try to cover

1. What is translanguaging? Why is it important?
2. How much happens in India in general?
3. How much happens in (ELT) classrooms and how does it happen? (our research)
4. Limitations of our research.
5. Possible questions for thought and future research.
6. Some interesting resources.
7. The 'translingual teacher'.

What 'language' is this in?

From 'Jab We Met' (2007)

Aditya: Geet, I think hum logon ko utarnaa chahiye.

Geet: Try karna chahiye. Bahut mazaa aayega.

Aditya: Ek second, ek second.Mujhe tumse kuch poochna tha. Tumne kabhi kisi psychiatrist ko consult kiya hai?

Geet: Oh, shut up!

Aditya: Nahin nahin, tumhein zaroorat hai, Geet.

What is 'translanguaging'?

- "practices do not so much involve 'switching' between separate systems, but instead involve drawing flexibly on resources from **a single**, **unified** languaging **system**, appropriate to context, interlocutor and interaction" (Anderson & Lightfoot, 2018, p. 1).

- translanguaging is "the act performed by bilinguals of accessing different linguistic features or various modes of what are described as autonomous languages, in order to maximise communicative potential" (García, 2009, p.140).

What is 'translanguaging'?

У нее брат, вот что недавно женился на Lise Мейнен, адъютант Кутузова. Он будет нынче у меня.

— Ecoutez, chere Annette, — сказал князь, взяв вдруг свою собеседницу за руку и пригибая ее почему-то книзу. — Arrangez-moi cette affaire et je suis votre вернейший раб a tout jamais pan, comme mon староста m'ecrit des донесенья: покой-ер-п! Она хорошей фамилии и богата. Всё, что мне нужно.

И он с теми свободными и фамильярными, грациозными движениями, которые его отличали, взял за руку фрейлину, поцеловал ее и, поцеловав, помахал фрейлинскою рукой, развалившись на креслах и глядя в сторону.

— Attendez, — сказала Анна Павловна, соображая. — Я нынче же поговорю Lise (la femme du jeune Болконский). И, может быть, это уладится. Ce sera dans votre famille, que je ferai mon apprentissage de vieille fille.
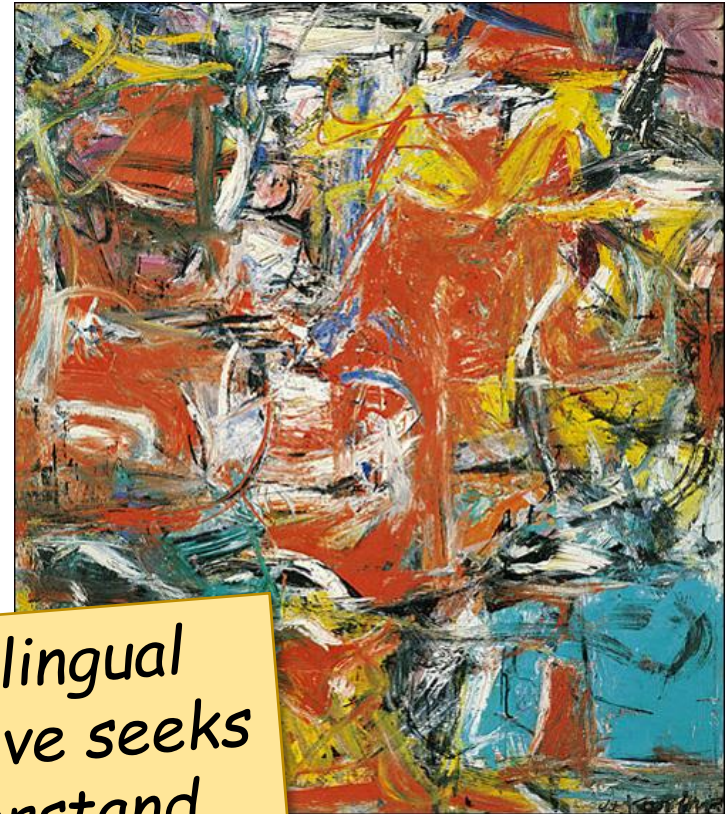
Why 'codeswitching' is too simplistic
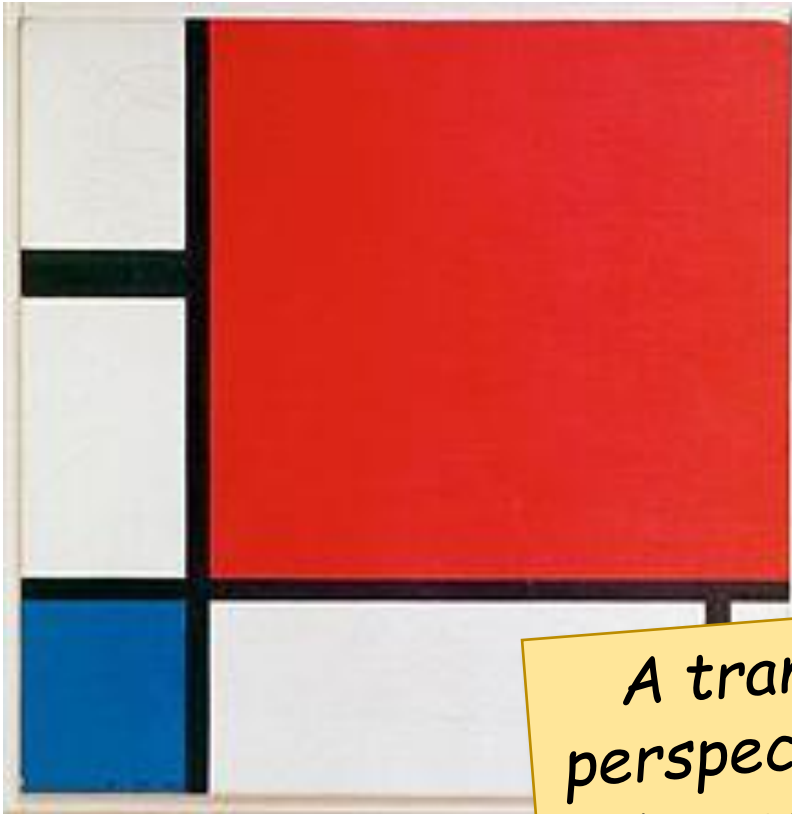
Sometimes we do this…   …and sometimes we do this…

Mondrian (193...   ...Kooning (1955)

A translingual perspective seeks to understand both

Our paper (Anderson & Lightfoot, 2018): Method and responses

- Questionnaire, quantitative and qualitative.

- Sent out to English teachers across India.

- 169 respondents (2017).

- Research questions explored:

1. Freedom to use other languages (OLs)

2. Translanguaging in community & classroom

3. Teachers' self-reported classroom practices

4. Teachers' beliefs and opinions

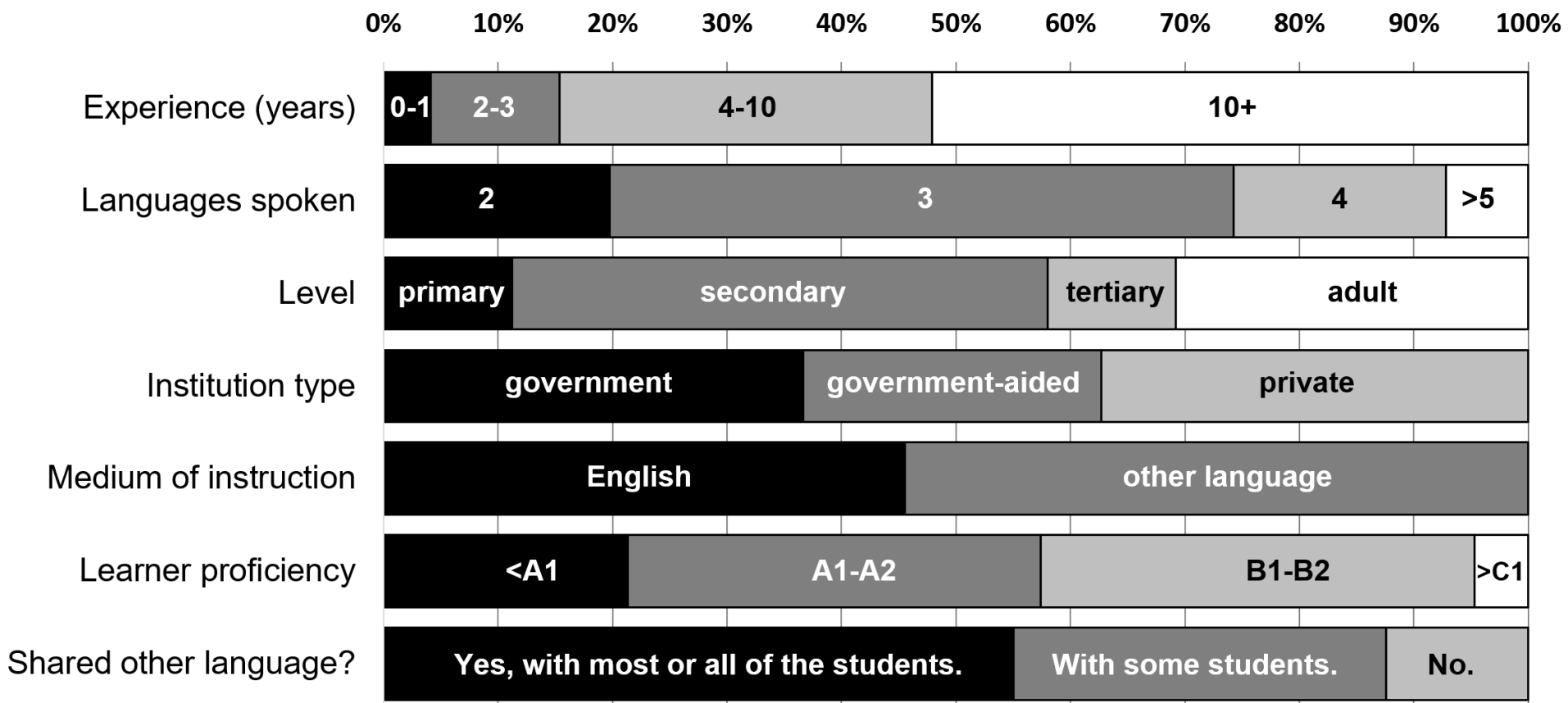# Figure 1 Respondent characteristics (n=169)

Table 1: Rural-urban continuum

Table 1. The rural-urban continuum ($n = 76$). *1 = beginner; 2 = elementary/pre-intermediate; 3 = intermediate/upper intermediate; 4 = advanced.

Context (n)	% of respondents in each context who work in private schools	% of respondents in each context who work in EMI schools	Mean reported learner English proficiency*	Mean no. of languages that respondents reported speaking	Mean no. of languages reported in community	% of respondents in each context who share languages other than English with students
rural (24)	12	17	1.67	3.17	2.67	88
semi-urban (23)	39	46	2.52	3.26	3.04	74
urban (29)	34	74	2.72	3.41	4.81	62

Figure 2 Teachers' perceptions of freedom to use other languages.

Are you allowed to use other languages in English lessons?

- ■ No. I am told to teach using only English.
- ▨ There is no policy, but using other languages is discouraged.
- □ Yes. I'm allowed/free to use other languages in English lessons.

18%

36%

47%

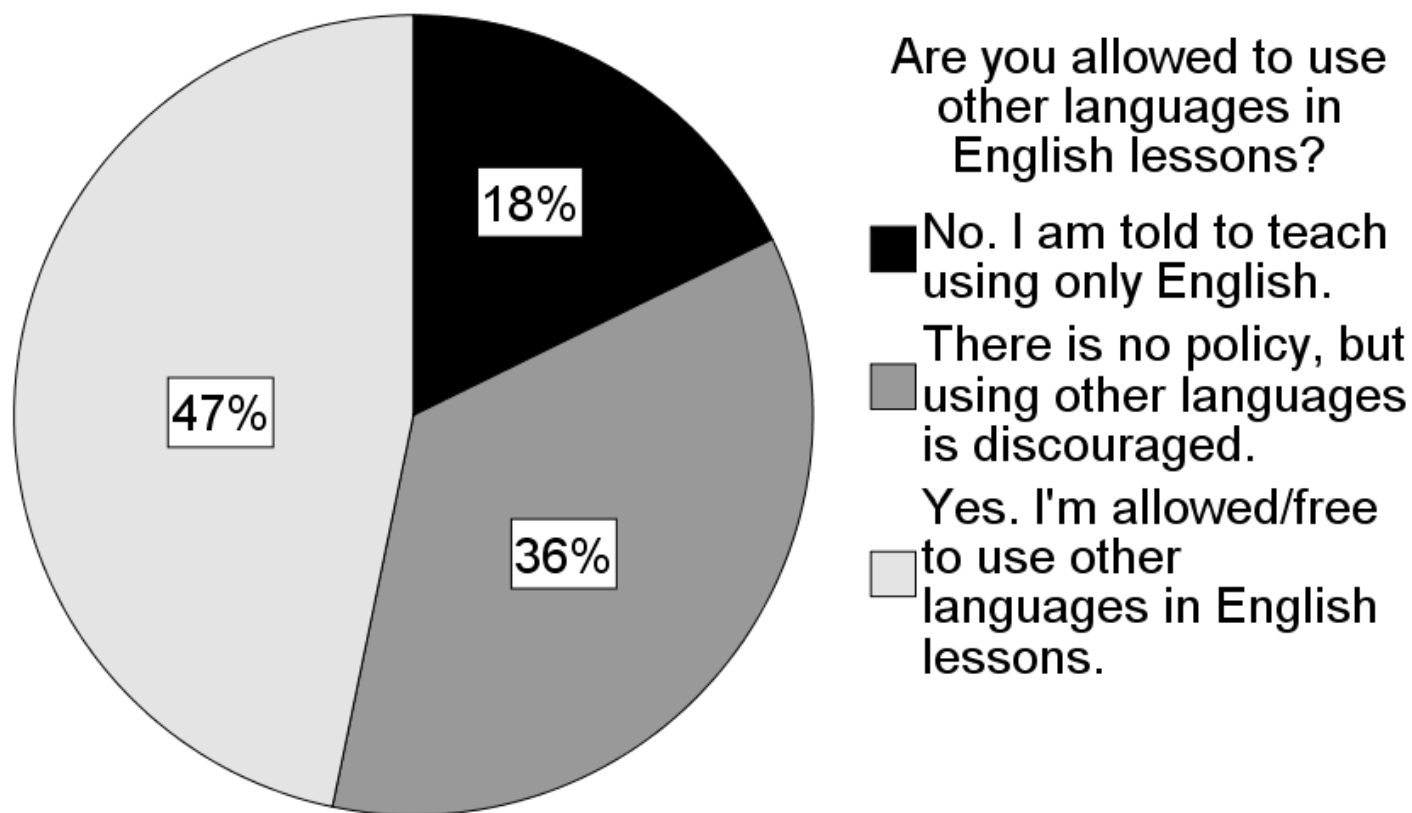# Figure 3 Freedom to use other languages by medium of instruction.
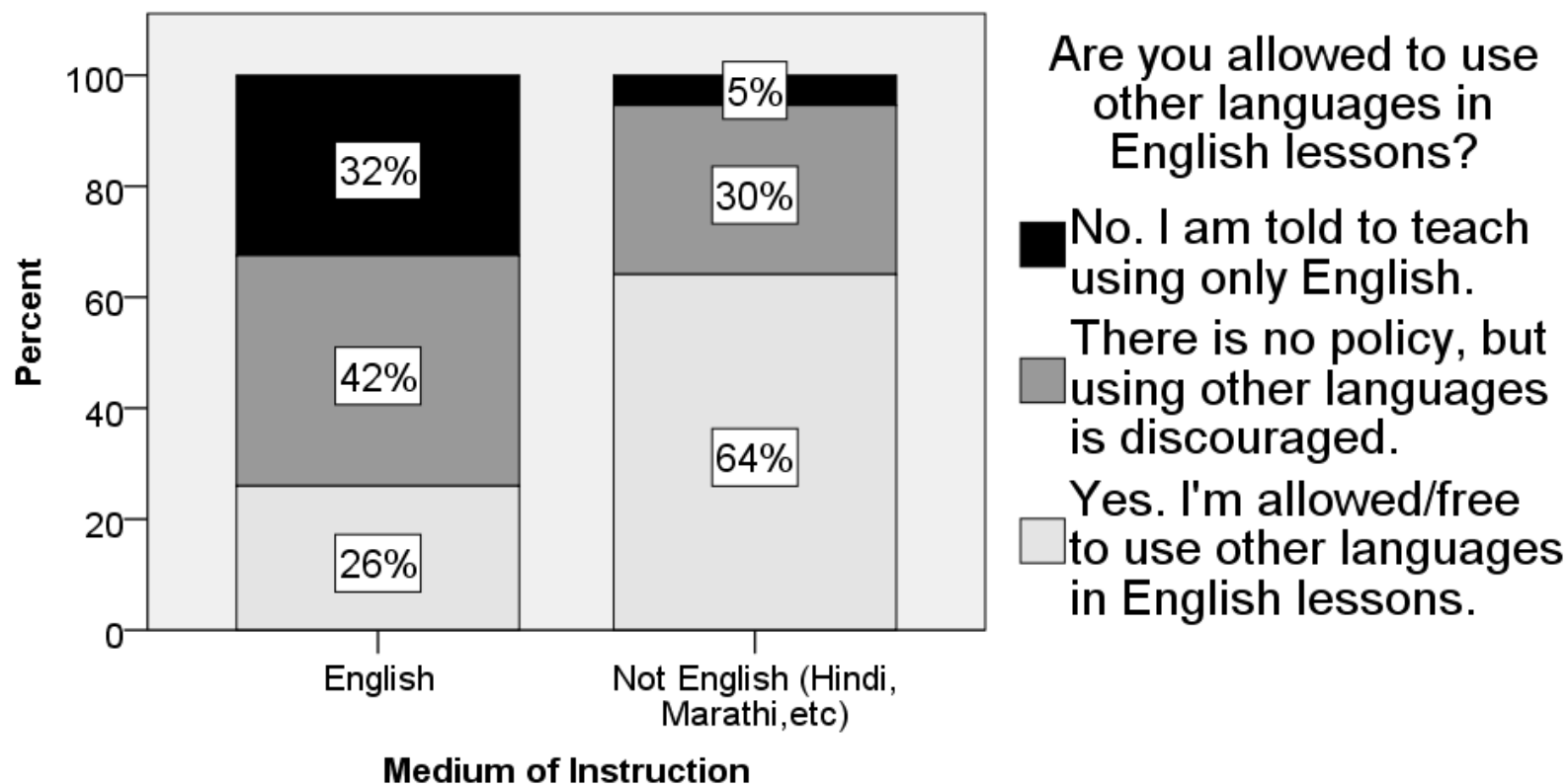
Figure 5 Translanguaging in the community.

How common is it for people in the community to mix languages or switch languages during conversations?

- ■ It doesn't happen
- ■ Occasional
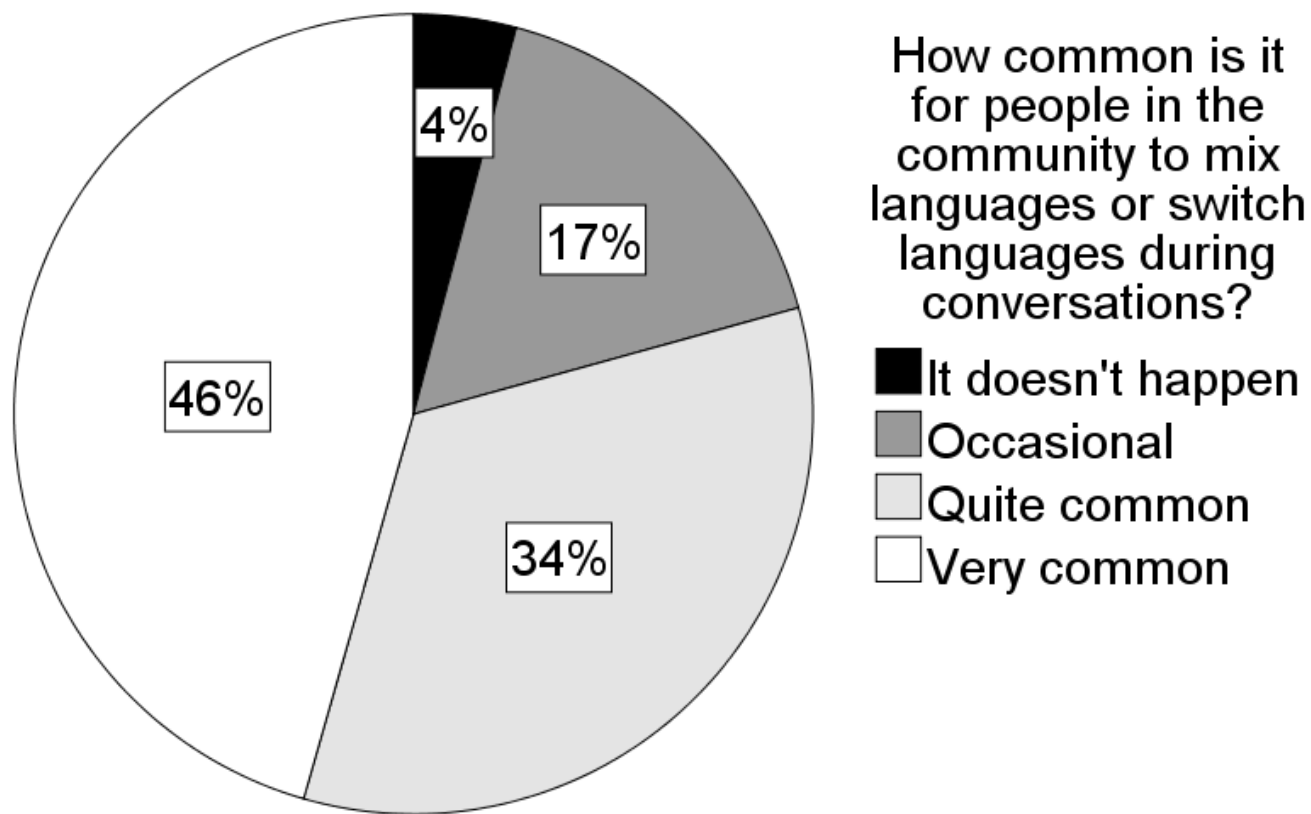- ☐ Quite common
- ☐ Very common

4%
17%
46%
34%

Figure 6 English in community translanguaging.
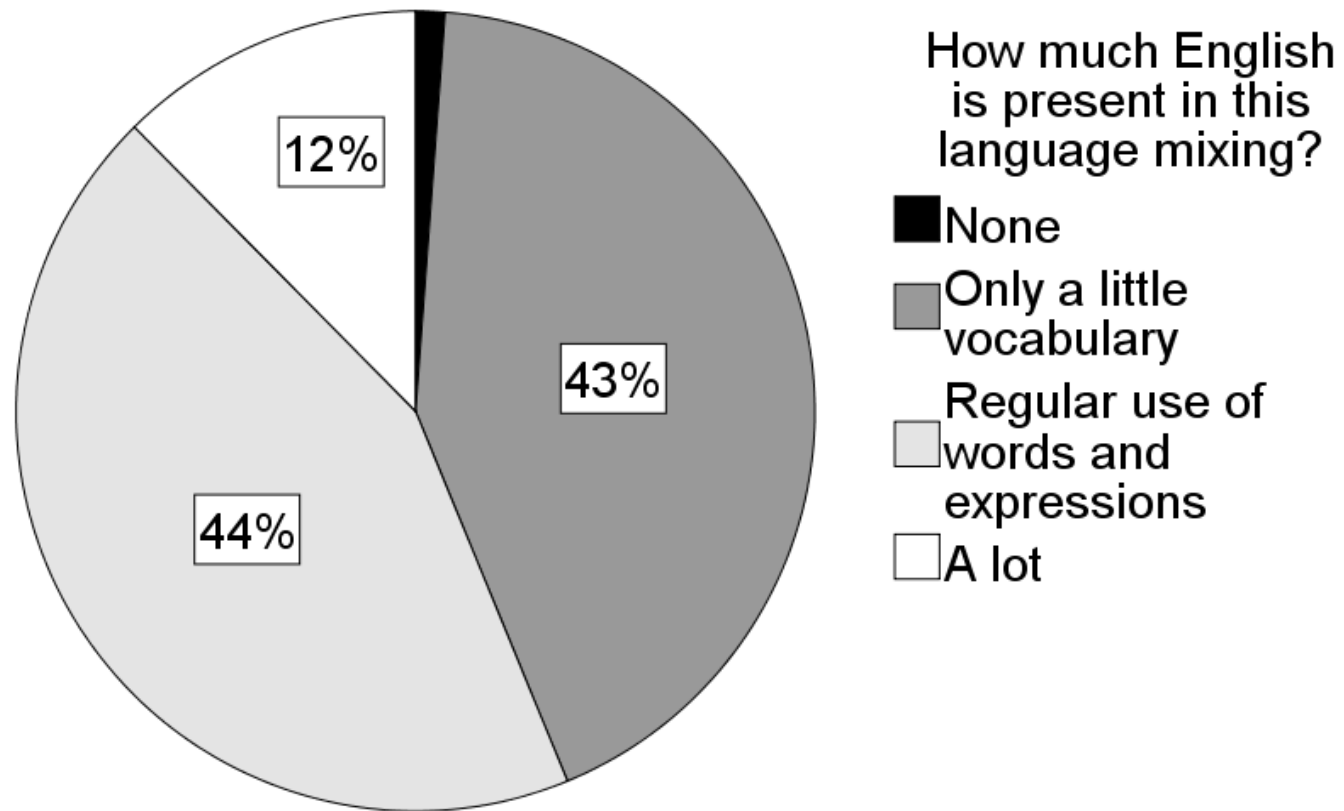
Figure 7 Respondents' self-reported reasons for using other languages (teaching).

	Never	Occasionally	Regularly	Always
13. T. uses OLs for classroom mangement	22%	53%	18%	7%
14. T. translates for Ss.	21%	53%	21%	4%
15. T. uses OLs to explain things	18%	56%	20%	6%
16. Ss. compare how langs. express things	12%	55%	27%	6%
17. T. gets Ss. to do translation activities	37%	45%	16%	
18. T. compares sounds to help with pron.	21%	46%	25%	8%
19. T. allows Ss. to speak OLs	27%	47%	20%	6%
20. T. allows translation resources	33%	38%	21%	7%
21. T. allows Ss. to make notes in OLs	66%	24%	9%	
22. T. allows Ss. to mix langs. (speaking)	46%	34%	18%	
23. T. allows Ss. to mix langs. (writing)	82%	15%		
24. T. uses text/audio including OLs	60%	31%	7%	
25. T. thinks about Ss' OLs (prep./teach.)	27%	43%	25%	5%
26. T actively encourages use of OLs	57%	34%	7%	
27. T uses OLs to 'discipline' Ss.	46%	40%	11%	

T = teacher; Ss = students; OLs = own languages.

Figure 8 The four OL-use positions. (building on Macaro 2001 – see paper).

A. Virtual position: "Allowing other languages into English lessons does not help learning. The classroom should be like an English-speaking country. Skilled teachers can exclude these other languages." — 8%

B. Maximal position: "Allowing other languages into English lessons does not help learning. However, perfect conditions for teaching do not exist and so sometimes we have to make a little use of other languages." — 21%

C. Optimal position: "Allowing other languages into English lessons can improve learning. But we should keep it to a minimum, and maximise English language usage." — 52%

D. Inclusive position: "Allowing other languages into English lessons can improve learning significantly. We should make use of these languages. Teaching English is about adding to their ability to communicate." — 20%

Figure 9 English teachers' opinions on MOI in India.
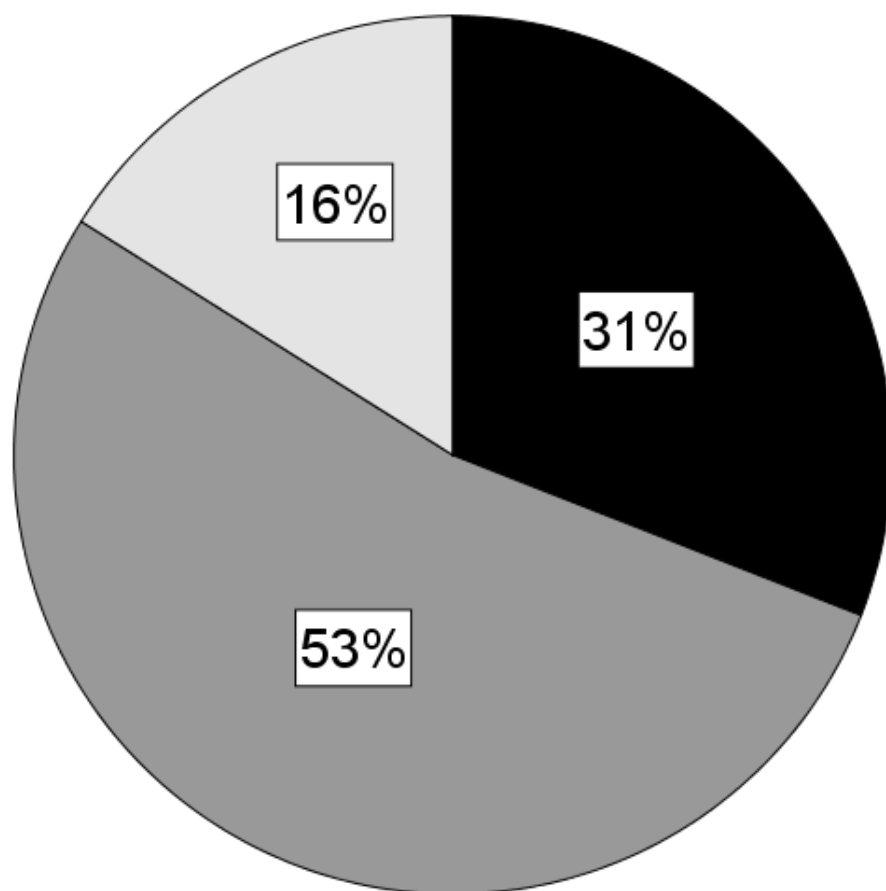
Which of the three statements is closest to your belief regarding the teaching and learning of English?

- Students should be given option to learn all subjects in English from primary school.
- Students should learn English as subject in primary school alongside developing skills in first language.
- Students should get a solid understanding of first language, with English introduced as subject at secondary level.

Figure 10 Teachers' beliefs on treating languages separately by experience.

Error Bars: 95% CI
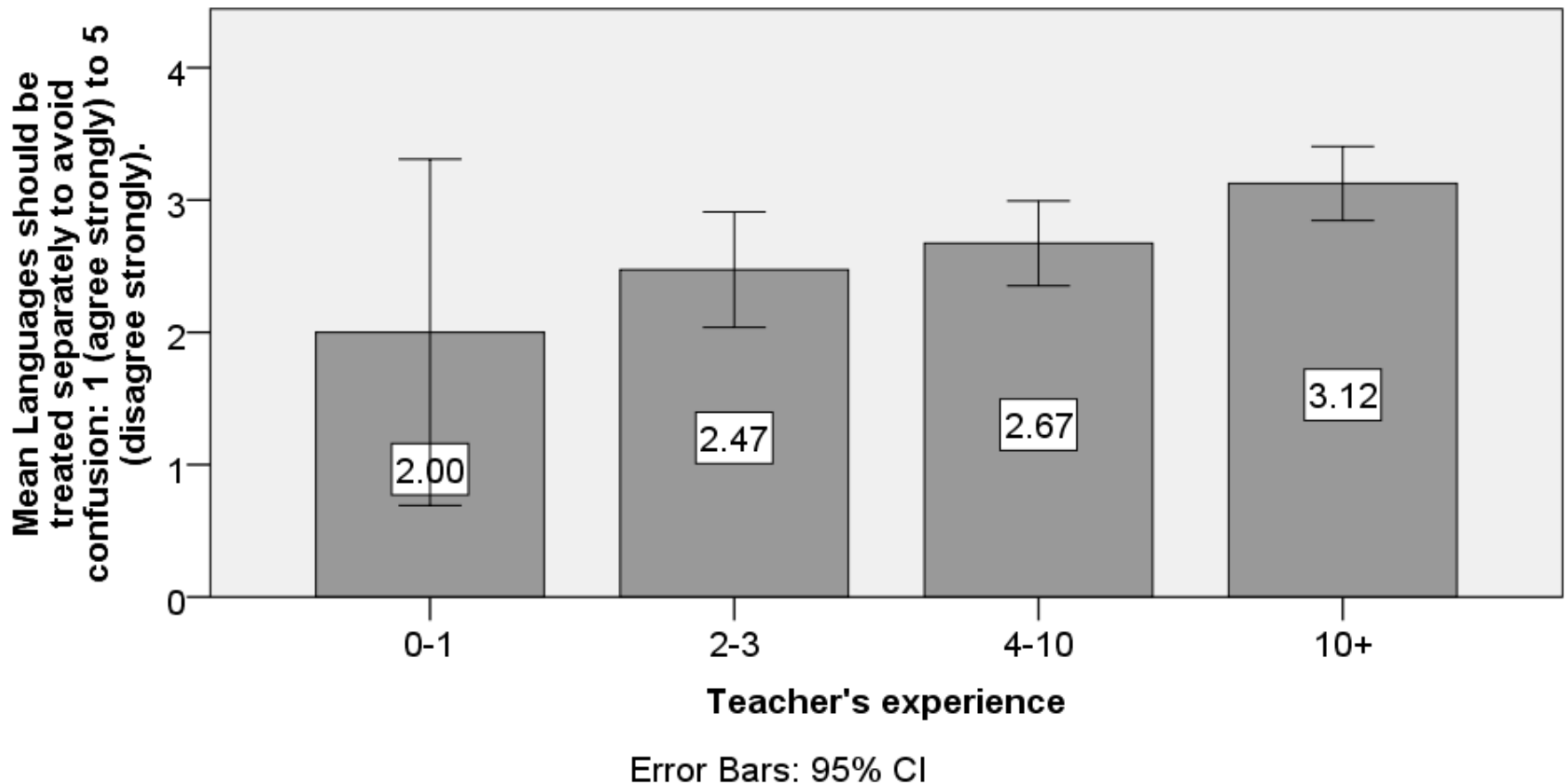
Reality check 1: Was the sample representative?

- "Invitations to participate were sent out via the British Council's networks in India (project data-bases and social media sites for English language teachers)." p.5.

- "it is likely that respondents to our survey have a greater than average interest in their professional development and in contributing to the wider body of knowledge relating to language teaching and learning. Primary and tertiary teachers are underrepresented in our data." p.16.

No!

Reality check 2: What do other sources say?

- L1 use is clearly widespread, esp. "translation method" (e.g. Rajkhowa & Das, 2015, p. 73; also Hayes & Raman, 2015; Megananthan, 2017), and almost certainly underreported in our study.

- "Translation is a way to increase comprehension without increasing the ability to comprehend" (Prabhu, 2017).

- Mody (2013, p.6) documents that English is the "main classroom language" in Maharashtra (secondary) with only low levels of L1 use, but observer effect may be distorting impressions.

A question of perspective

Two different questions representative of different perceptions of language systems:

A. How much 'L1-use' is 'appropriate'?
- zero tolerance, minimal use, judicious use, etc.
- 'L1'? 'use'? What do these words mean?

B. How can we engage learners' prior languaging resources to facilitate the emergence of 'Englishing'?

Is this a paradigm shift?

Towards a translingual pedagogy: initial questions

Consider not only 'L1'<->English, but also between other languages: Different contexts could be compared:

1. How do effective Indian users of English (as a set of resources) make use of these resources in their work and daily lives? How did they get to this multicompetence?

2. How do teachers and learners translate in classrooms today? How could this be made a more systematic, valued practice, rather than a haphazard strategy?

3. How do teachers and learners 'code-switch', 'code-mix', 'code-mesh', etc.? How could the study of this help us to offer support to teachers and learners?

4. To what extent do the above impact on 'target language use' and what impact does this have on learning?

5. How important is 'monolanguaging' in (for e.g.) English likely to be at different stages in the learning process?

Initial exploration of more translingual practices

- Adi Rajan's work in Indian teacher education: https://adirajan.wordpress.com/
- City University of New York's Translanguaging Guide: https://www.cuny-nysieb.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Translanguaging-Guide-March-2013.pdf
- My ideas (incl. contributions from Julu Sen & Heera Rajwani, see Anderson, 2017): http://www.jasonanderson.org.uk/downloads/Jasons_ideas_for_translanguaging_in_the_EFL_ESL_classroom.pdf
- Other countries (e.g. Algeria): http://www.jasonanderson.org.uk/downloads/multilingual_language_learning_for_algerian_teachers.docx

The translingual teacher

- "…is able to understand, interpret, scaffold, and challenge their learners' choice of linguistic resources appropriately. Importantly, s/he is also able to model effective translingual and monolingual practices across the translingual continuum."

- "Within the classroom, … translingual competence might be defined pedagogically, focusing on a teacher's ability to choose appropriately from L1 and L2 resources, dependent on, for example, the level, age, and needs of the learners, and the aims of the course."

(Anderson, 2018, p.34)

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