

Examining the Differences Between Attitudes Toward Translanguaging and Language Positions Among Secondary English Teachers in Balingasag

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Abstract: Understanding linguistic interplay inside the classroom is essential for delivering quality education. Thus, examining the teachers' attitudes toward translanguaging and their language positions can help determine the necessary educational policy adjustment, teacher training programs, and refine linguistic and pedagogical practices to promote inclusive education. However, there have been limited studies investigating public secondary teachers' perceived attitude and positions in translanguaging (Macawile & Plata, 2022). The main objective of this quantitative study was to explore the significant difference between secondary English language teachers' attitudes toward translanguaging and their language positions in Balingasag, Misamis Oriental, Philippines. Data were gathered by floating Translanguaging Attitudinal Survey (Fang & Liu, 2020) and Language Positions Survey Questionnaire (Anderson & Lightfoot, 2018). Findings revealed that secondary English teachers held neutral attitudes toward translanguaging across content-oriented, classroom-oriented, and student-oriented purposes. Majority of the respondents adopted a maximal language position of Macaro's (2001) continuum of perspective indicating strategic but limited use of the first language (L1). There were significant differences between language positions of respondents and their attitudes toward content-oriented and student-oriented translanguaging use, with more positive attitudes for those who had optimal language positions. There was no significant difference between classroom-oriented translanguaging attitudes. These findings underscore the need to encourage balanced language positions to facilitate inclusive and multilingual pedagogy. Teacher training and policy reinforcement are suggested by this research to empower educators to apply translanguaging practices congruent with the multilingual teaching context of the Philippines.

Keywords— Translanguaging, continuum of perspective, teachers' attitudes, language positions

1. INTRODUCTION

In a multilingual country, the use of multiple languages in instruction—known as translanguaging—is essential to enrich learners' understanding, engagement, and intellectual development. The pedagogical practice challenges monolingualism, but its implementation is dependent on teachers' positions and stances on the use of language (Vogel & García, 2017). Secondary school classrooms in the Philippines reflect the interaction of languages (e.g., English, Filipino, and Cebuano). Nonetheless, there is inadequate data as to how English teachers manage translanguaging within their classrooms, especially in Balingasag, Misamis Oriental, Philippines, where educational policies and linguistic landscape shape pedagogical ideologies.

Despite an increasing interest in the study of translanguaging globally, there are limited studies that investigated the secondary English teachers' attitudes and their language positions in public schools in the Philippines (Macawile & Plata, 2022). This gap is critical because teachers' teaching ideologies affect learners' access to equitable education, such that if teachers treat language virtually, this leads to undervaluing learners who use translanguaging to better understand the lesson. Otherwise, if

translanguaging is implemented, it can create inclusive teaching that reflects the multilingual reality of the Philippines.

This quantitative study investigated the significant difference between secondary English teachers' attitude towards translanguaging and their language positions in Balingasag, Misamis Oriental. Furthermore, this study aimed to provide empirical data that may be utilized in informing teacher training programs, language policies, and classroom practices. Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What were the attitudes of the secondary English language teachers toward translanguaging practices in:
 - 1.1. Content-oriented purposes;
 - 1.2. Student-oriented purposes; and,
 - 1.3. Classroom-oriented purposes?
2. What language positions did the secondary English teachers hold, as reflected by their translanguaging practices?
3. Was there a significant difference between secondary English teachers' attitudes toward translanguaging and their language positions?

Hypotheses:

H_0 : There is no significant difference between the translanguaging attitudes of Maximal and Optimal Teachers.

H_1 : There is a significant difference between the translanguaging attitudes of Maximal and Optimal Teachers.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Translanguaging in Multilingual Education

Translanguaging as pedagogy has become increasingly accepted in multilingual classrooms because it helps bridge language gaps and promotes inclusive education. According to García & Wei (2014), this policy contradicts the monolingual 'English Only Policy' and recognizes the fluid and dynamic status of language use in the multilingual community (Vogel & García, 2017).

In the Philippines, the linguistic environment is diverse with learners being exposed to various languages at home, in the community, and in school. Consequently, the Department of Education (2012) institutionalized the Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) in 2009 where the learners' first language was used as the medium in the early years of instruction. This policy has left teachers uncertain as to how to place optimal balance between maintaining the mother tongue and exposing learners to the target language, English. However, Casalan (2022) found out that mother-tongue instruction was proved to be difficult detailing that the language of the school is not the language outside the school and that the need for flexibility and translanguability of the classroom is brought into question.

2.2 Translanguaging as a Pedagogical Tool

Anderson & Lightfoot (2018) revealed that although teachers are not familiar with the term 'translanguaging', they tend to use the learners' strongest languages to describe and clarify activities, showing positive attitude toward the practice as way to promote understanding and engagement. Furthermore, Fang and Liu (2020) figured out that translanguaging is an efficient pedagogy where instructors scaffold learning by taking advantage of the linguistic resources available to students. Thus, educators utilize both 'natural' and 'official' translanguaging approaches (i.e., code-switching, direct translation, and metalinguistic explanation) to explain ideas and make them better understood. These findings are consistent with Perfecto (2020) who noted that the said approaches bridged gaps between learners' L1, L2, and the target language, particularly in multilingual classrooms.

2.3 Influence of Teacher Attitude and Training

Teachers' attitude towards translanguaging is the key to whether it will be applied in class or not. Evidence shows that positive attitudes make a high likelihood of embracing translanguaging practice, thereby facilitating learner motivation and content attainment (Fang & Liu, 2020; Macawile & Plata, 2022). Training of teachers has a pivotal

impact. In fact, recent studies showed evidence that professional development interventions designed to promote translanguaging can profoundly shift teachers' conceptions and beliefs, developing more positive attitudes and inclination to embrace translanguaging as part of their teaching repertoire (Anderson & Lightfoot, 2018). However, the effectiveness of such training is likely to be compromised by pragmatically bounded constraints, like time and support from the institution (Sulaiman et al., 2020).

2.4 Translanguaging and Educational Equity

Translanguaging helps in promoting equity and inclusivity in education. It recognizes the students' language resources and allows them to draw on everything they bring as language to learn. This enables engagement, helps in diversity, and challenges the conventional idea that languages must be compartmentalized at school (García & Wei, 2014; Vogel & García, 2017). It is especially helpful in English as a Second Language (ESL) classes in the Philippines because it helps communicate and addresses the problem of having multiple languages in urban and rural areas (Perfecto, 2020).

2.5 Gaps and Future Research Directions

Although its benefits are well-documented, there is still limited knowledge on how it impacts language proficiency and the development of a theoretical framework for its intentional implementation in regular instruction. Sulaiman et al. (2020) suggest that even if translanguaging provides better comprehension, its role in helping students develop proficiency in the target language can be negligible. Further research is needed on the opinions of students and parents with regards to translanguaging and teacher training through translanguaging in the long term (Macawile & Plata, 2022).

The literature highlights the significance of translanguaging as an instructional practice in multilingual contexts like the Philippines, where language diversity is the default. Teacher attitudes based on intensive professional development are centrally located in effective classroom embedding of translanguaging. Policy, training, and resource allocation challenges persist. Further research needs to be undertaken to further fine-tune translanguaging practice and optimize their benefits for both learners and teachers.

As a response to these gaps, this research investigated the attitudes of secondary English teachers in Balingasag, Misamis Oriental, and assessed how their language positions impacted on their perceptions regarding translanguaging. Through content-oriented, classroom-oriented, and student-oriented uses, the research hoped to provide localized contributions that will shed light on future professional development programs and language-in-education policy reforms.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is based on three prominent theoretical frameworks that explain the nexus between teachers' attitude towards translanguaging, their language positions, and classroom dynamics.

3.1 Dynamic Systems Theory (DST)

Based on Dynamic Systems Theory (DST) proposed by Herdina and Jessner (2002), neither teachers' attitude nor language acquisition is static, but both continuously transform dynamically interacting with various contextual and classroom parameters. Teachers' translanguaging orientations in this perspective are flexible, adaptive, and context-dependent in adjusting to classroom demands, learners' demands, and policy demands, underscored by the responsive and dynamic character of multilingual education.

3.2 Translanguaging Categories

Ferguson (2009) and García and Wei (2014) suggested the Translanguaging Categories approach with three functional orientations: content-oriented translanguaging, facilitating meaning-making and comprehension; student-oriented translanguaging, authenticating learners' identities and languages; and classroom-oriented translanguaging, validating multilingual practices in education.

3.3 Macaro's Continuum of Perspective

Macaro's (2001) Continuum of Language Positions identifies different positions about the employment of L1 in class ranging from virtual position (total reliance on the second language) to the maximal position (occasional use of the first language), and to the optimal position (full integration and acceptance of both L1 and L2 into instruction).

These frameworks helped better understand how institutional ideologies, classroom practices, and individual opinions intersect to drive translanguaging practice in multilingual classrooms.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 Research Design

This study employed descriptive quantitative research design. According to Enago (2023), descriptive quantitative gives accurate and objective description of traits, attitudes, or behavior of a specific population by systematically gathering and examining numerical data. Through the application of statistical treatment and surveys, this method allowed the researcher to gain insight into the prevailing attitudes and language positions of secondary English teachers toward translanguaging practices.

The Translanguaging Attitudinal Survey (Fang & Liu, 2020) and the Language Positions Survey Questionnaire (Anderson & Lightfoot, 2018) were distributed to the respondents via Google Forms to determine differences in the respondents' translanguaging attitudes and their language

positions. These tools were used in the study of Mendoza (2022) from Philippine Normal University (PNU) which means it that instruments were used in Philippine Context.

4.2 Respondents and Sampling Procedure

The respondents of this study were English teachers in public secondary schools in Balingasag, Misamis Oriental. The municipality has 14 public secondary schools in three educational districts: Balingasag Central District, Balingasag North District, and Balingasag South District. English teachers in these schools were considered the target respondents because of their applicability to the study's topic on translanguaging and language positions. Purposive sampling was utilized in selecting English teachers teaching English subjects in the school year 2024-2025.

4.3 Data Collection Procedure

The researcher sought consent to conduct this study from the division office of Misamis Oriental. The link to the survey questionnaire was then sent to the respondents through their school heads. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean, SD) and inferential tests (t-test, ANOVA) to identify significant differences in attitudes and language positions. Both instruments were pilot tested with 10 secondary English teachers in the private schools of Balingasag. Cronbach's alpha was computed to confirm internal consistency. An 0.82 Cronbach Alpha score meant that the questionnaire has a good internal consistency.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This part of the study exhibits the results, analysis and data gathered based on the problems of the study. The tabulated data sets are organized based on the order of the specific problem of the study.

RQ1. What were the attitudes of the secondary English language teachers toward translanguaging practices in:

- 1.1. Content-oriented purposes;
- 1.2. Student-oriented purposes; and,
- 1.3. Classroom-oriented purposes?

Table 1: English Teachers' Translanguaging Attitudes for Content-Oriented, Classroom-Oriented, and Student-Oriented Purposes

	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
1.1 Content-oriented purposes	3.50	.72	Neutral
1.2 Classroom-oriented purposes	3.72	.82	Neutral
1.3 Student-oriented purposes	3.39	.78	Neutral

Note. Scale: Negative= 1.00-2.99; Neutral= 3.00-3.90; Positive= 3.91-5.00

Table 1 shows the neutral stance of English teachers' attitudes toward translanguaging across the three purposes: content-oriented, student-oriented, and classroom-oriented.

Content-oriented purposes received a mean score of 3.50 ($SD=0.72$). This indicates that teachers do not strongly favor nor oppose making use of translanguaging in facilitating understanding and meaning making as part of content teaching. This is in line with a study by Scopich (2018), which identified that the EFL teachers acknowledged the application of translanguaging to explain and correct vocabulary and grammar but generally had a moderate level of acceptance, reflecting an even-neither very positive nor very negative-attitude (Scopich, 2018). Similarly, Saud (2023) determined that, while teachers valued the advantage of using students' mother tongues to promote comprehension, others were concerned with balancing translanguaging with promoting mastery of English, which was exhibited as being largely conservative or middle-of-the-road practice.

Classroom-oriented purposes obtained the highest mean rating of 3.72 ($SD = 0.82$). This reflects a somewhat more positive attitude towards translanguaging when employed for classroom organization. It suggests that teachers can appreciate some pedagogical usefulness in employing more than one language for purposes such as providing instructions, explaining activities, or involving learners. This is echoed by Wang (2023), who discovered that EFL learners rated teachers' translanguaging for classroom management like providing feedback, clarifying instruction, and establishing rapport to be effective and facilitating. Saud (2023) also reported that the teachers perceived translanguaging to be a robust managerial and explanatory strategy, especially for the instructions and coordination of classroom activities.

Student-oriented purposes, which is usually employed in answering questions or asking for permission from the teachers, ranked lowest with a mean of 3.39 ($SD = 0.78$). This indicates that translanguaging is considered an informal process, reflecting that L1 should not be employed in communicating with the teachers. Furthermore, this shows that teachers are possibly still under monolingual norms or do not have the confidence to utilize students' home language for formal teaching. Scopich (2018) reported that although teachers permitted some translanguaging by students for peer assistance or answering questions, hesitation to accept L1 use fully in official teacher-student interactions was evident due to compliance with monolingual norms. Saud (2023) further reported that teachers had mixed attitudes towards student-led translanguaging, with a few showing doubts over its acceptability in official situations.

Generally, the neutral positions in all categories reflect a cautious attitude towards translanguaging. This could be a result of institutional pressures, insufficient training at the professional level, or prevailing English-only teaching

perceptions. However, the slightly higher rating towards classroom-oriented use reflects that teachers may be more inclined to practice translanguaging practically than based on beliefs or principles.

These are implications for more targeted teacher training and policy focus to allow teachers to see how translanguaging can be utilized not just for functional purposes but also to create inclusive and identity-affirming classroom environments.

RQ2. What language positions did the secondary English teachers hold, as reflected by their translanguaging practices?

Table 2: English Teachers' Language Positions

	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
Language Position	2.24	.33	Maximal

Note. Scale: Virtual= 1.00-1.50; Maximal= 1.51-2.49; Optimal= 2.50-3.00

Table shows the English teachers' language positions under Macaro's (2001) continuum of perspectives. It indicates that English teachers hold a maximal language position ($M = 2.24$, $SD = 0.33$), which means they allow the use of L1, especially when the need arises. This aligns with Fang and Liu's (2020) discovery that teachers will use translanguaging strategically to scaffold academic concepts or classroom management in spite of institutional regulations to limit English-only policies. For example, Cai and Fang (2023) discovered that Macau and mainland Chinese teachers utilized translanguaging frequently for explanation of terminologies (such as explaining 'prefrontal cortex' in Chinese) and for monitoring comprehension, even though they strictly adhered to English-Medium Instruction (EMI) models. Likewise, Scopich (2018) discovered that L1 was allowed by teachers in peer-to-peer discussion or instruction of grammar but was kept away from standardized tests, as advocated by maximal position's pragmatic flexibility.

Notably, no teachers fall under the virtual position, suggesting that they recognize the benefits of translanguaging in teaching. Despite the fact that teachers acknowledge the utility of translanguaging, they remain under some pressures that prevent them from maximally employing it in the class. Fang and Liu (2020) called this feeling 'guilty translanguaging.' In the study of Cai and Fang (2023), for example, one teacher felt guilty at first about using Chinese in the classroom, but gradually she used it more to build rapport with students and to accommodate her use of multiple teaching styles.

This is consonant with labor where teachers are under competing demands: while 58% of the teaching staff interviewed in the Philippines-based study accepted

translanguaging's potential for pedagogy, they at the same time complained about decreased target-language exposure because of school policy. These are conflicts characteristic of the 'optimal' and 'maximal' position hybridity in Macaro's (2001) continuum since teachers are weighing practicality and obedience.

The lack of a virtual position differs from research in more restrictive EMI settings but aligns with studies highlighting translanguaging's inevitability in multilingual classrooms. For instance, Cai and Fang (2023) discovered that even teachers who initially opposed L1 use later employed translanguaging for student engagement, showing a move toward maximal practices. Likewise, Scopich (2018) reported that no teachers in their study completely rejected L1, although many limited it to informal contexts.

RQ3. Was there a significant difference between secondary English teachers' attitudes toward translanguaging and their language positions?

Table 3: Difference of Language Positions between English Teachers' Translanguaging Attitudes for Content-Oriented Purposes

Language Positions	n	95% confidence interval of the difference		Independent t test value	df	p-value	Interpretation
		Lower	Upper				
Maximal	11						
Optimal	9	-0.3773	3.3766	-2.3	18	0.035246	Reject H ₀

Preliminary assumption testing was conducted. Shapiro Wilk test for normality and a Leven's test for equality of variance. Normality for Maximal and Optimal groups on the dependent variable was found tenable at the .05 alpha level. Also, the result of Leven's test provided evidence that the assumption of homogeneity of variance across groups was tenable. Consequently, an independent t-test was employed. Using an alpha level of .05, an independent-samples t-test was conducted to evaluate whether Language Positions in the Maximal and Optimal level differed significantly on their Content-Oriented translanguaging attitudes. The difference was significant, $t (18)=-2.3$, $p=.035246$. An examination of the group means indicate that the content-oriented translanguaging attitudes are higher in the English teachers with optimal language positions ($M=3.9593$, $SD=0.18$, $n=9$) than those English teachers with maximal in language positions. ($M=3.3766$, $SD=4.95$, $n=11$). This means further that English teachers who hold optimal language positions are more open to using translanguaging to help learners understand the content than those who hold maximal positions.

The findings above are supported by recent studies such as of Mendoza (2023) which indicated that teachers with more advanced comprehension of multilingual pedagogies-expressed in ideal language placements-had better attitudes toward translanguaging for content purposes than teachers who occupied maximal positions and permitted L1 use

conditionally. This corroborates the view that teacher training serves a pivotal function in inculcating more positive attitudes toward translanguaging. Moreover, Tastanbek et al. (2023) demonstrated that teachers' attitudes toward translanguaging can develop positively through professional development, improving their plurilingual competence and acknowledgment of students' language resources. This indicates that the attitude difference between maximal and optimal positions for languages may also be subject to ongoing teacher education and reflective practice.

Table 4: Difference of Language Positions between English Teachers' Translanguaging Attitudes for Classroom-Oriented Purposes

Language Positions	n	95% confidence interval of the difference		Independent t test value	df	p-value	Interpretation
		Lower	Upper				
Maximal	11						
Optimal	9	-0.5055	3.5844	-1.81	18	0.179784	Accept H ₀

Preliminary assumption testing was conducted. Shapiro Wilk test for normality and a Leven's test for equality of variance. Normality for experimental and control group on the dependent variable was found tenable at the .05 alpha level. Also, the result of Leven's test provided evidence that the assumption of homogeneity of variance across groups was tenable. Consequently, an independent t-test was employed. Using an alpha level of .05, an independent-samples t-test was conducted to evaluate whether Language Positions in the Maximal and Optimal level differed significantly on their Classroom-Oriented translanguaging attitudes. The difference was not significant, $t (18)=-1.81$, $p=.179784$. This means that the classroom-oriented translanguaging attitudes of the English teachers' with optimal language positions and maximal language positions are the same. It can be inferred then that teachers who hold either maximal or optimal positions are generally okay in using translanguaging in the classroom such as giving instructions, managing activities, or keeping order in class.

Likewise, Mendoza (2023) concluded that pre-service teachers who held maximal and optimal language positions were also open to positive attitudes for translanguaging to functions feasible in classrooms, specifically classroom interaction management and rapport establishment with students. The research proved that all teachers of language positions appreciated the pragmatic advantages of employing the first language (L1) so they can communicate clearly and effectively with constantly positive mean ratings on classroom-relevant translanguaging. However, such uses were more an accommodation to fleeting classroom needs than a strong ideological position toward translanguaging. Attesting to this, Yuvayapan (2019) and Raja et al. (2022) found that teachers, regardless of their general stance on translanguaging, tended to use learners' L1 to fulfill classroom-oriented functions such as feedback and explanation of instruction. The approaches were found to be

seen as useful classroom management tools and student engagement supports.

Table 5: Difference of Language Positions between English Teachers' Translanguaging Attitudes for Student-Oriented Purposes

Language Positions	n	95% confidence interval of the difference		Independent t test value	df	p-value	Interpretation
		Lower	Upper				
Maximal	11						
Optimal	9	-0.4324	3.3485	-2.7	18	0.015077	Reject H ₀

Preliminary assumption testing was conducted. Shapiro Wilk test for normality and a Leven's test for equality of variance. Normality for experimental and control group on the dependent variable was found tenable at the .05 alpha level. Also, the result of Leven's test provided evidence that the assumption of homogeneity of variance across groups was tenable. Consequently, an independent t-test was employed. Using an alpha level of .05, an independent-samples t-test was conducted to evaluate whether Language Positions in the Maximal and Optimal level differed significantly on their Classroom-Oriented translanguaging attitudes. The difference was not significant, $t (18) = -2.7$, $p = .015077$. An examination of the group means indicate that the student-oriented translanguaging attitudes are higher in the English teachers with optimal language positions ($M = 4.17$, $SD = 0.49$, $n = 9$) than those teachers with maximal in language positions. ($M = 3.35$, $SD = 0.41$, $n = 11$). This implies that strictly using English may limit how well teachers can connect and support their students. In addition, teachers who hold optimal positions were more supportive of using translanguaging to help students feel more comfortable, confident, and engaged.

Findings coincide with García and Wei (2014) who highlight the fact that translanguaging is an effective pedagogical strategy that enables educators to connect with students on an emotional level by upholding their linguistic identities. Educators with the best language positions in terms of flexibility and availability are likely to adopt this inclusive strategy since it can increase affective participation and minimize classroom anxiety. Moreover, Canagarajah (2011) criticizes hardline monolingual English-only policies, suggesting that they tend to impede effective communication and student engagement, particularly in multilingual classrooms. Teachers who hold maximal positions can stick to these policies, constraining their potential to facilitate students' language needs. In the study of Yuvayapan (2019), it was discovered that classroom teachers utilizing active translanguaging techniques in support of students' communications create more confidence and engagement from the students. This is most evident with ideal position teachers who acknowledge translanguaging as key in developing an inclusive classroom. The wide translanguaging attitude gap between maximal and optimal position instructors in terms of student orientation is consistent with studies that highlight the affective-relational advantages of

translanguaging. Optimal-position instructors tend to be more likely to use translanguaging to mediate students' communicative and affective needs, while maximal-position instructors can be limited by ideologies around monolingualism.

6. CONCLUSION

The results indicated that teachers showed neutral attitudes towards translanguaging in content-oriented, classroom-oriented, and student-oriented categories with mean scores between 3.39 and 3.72. This neutrality indicates that teachers do not strongly reject or fully accept translanguaging, perhaps because of institutional constraints or lack of training. In terms of language positions, most teachers held a maximal stance ($M = 2.24$), indicating a preference for the strategic use of the first language (L1) to support second language (L2) learning, rather than strictly excluding L1 (virtual) or fully integrating it (optimal). In addition, it was found that there was a significant difference between positions of language and attitudes toward content-oriented and student-oriented translanguaging. Teachers in the optimal position had more positive attitudes toward content-oriented ($M = 3.96$) and student-oriented ($M = 4.17$) translanguaging than those in the maximal position ($M = 3.38$ and $M = 3.35$, respectively), with p-values of .035 and .015. However, no significant difference was found in classroom-oriented translanguaging attitudes ($p = .179$), which means that these attitudes are typically not influenced by the language positions of the teachers.

7. RECOMMENDATION

To assist teachers to move from maximal to optimal positions of language, professional development opportunities like workshops must be held. The trainings should focus on a context-specific balance between the use of L1 and L2 and promote the pedagogical advantage of translanguaging in making content more accessible and engaging to students. Policy-wise, there has to be lobbying for increased flexibility in the Philippine public school curriculum to justify translanguaging approaches. This can assist in responding to teachers' neutral stances and resisting institutional constraints, like inflexible English-only policies. In the classroom, teachers can be motivated to employ translanguaging practices specifically for student-centered functions, like scaffolding meaning and validating learners' identities, as these are linked with more positive attitudes among individuals in optimal language positions. More research must investigate why attitudes toward classroom-based translanguaging continue to be neutral, even among teachers' language positions. This involves considering potential influences such as classroom management standards or pressure linked to assessments. Finally, developing teaching resources—in the form of translanguaging toolkits incorporating useful strategies such as code-switching during lessons and working with multilingual resources—can facilitate teachers to utilize optimally situated language positions effectively in practice.

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