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Producing the disciplined English-speaking subjects: Language policing, development ideology, and English medium of instruction policy

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ABSTRACT

This article analyzes how English medium of instruction (EMI) policy is implemented by disciplining teachers' and students' language behaviors in school spaces. I adopt Foucault's (1977) 'discipline' to examine how schools exercise disciplinary power to create an English-only environment in multilingual classroom contexts. The data is drawn from an ethnographic study of EMI policies in two Nepali schools. The findings of the study show that schools exercise their disciplinary power through both panoptic and post-panoptic surveillance strategies to police their students' and teachers' language practices and punish them for speaking the languages other than English. Such disciplinary power is reinforced by neoliberal development ideology that legitimizes linguistic and symbolic capitals of English. While enforcing EMI policies, schools craft students' identity as disciplined English-speaking subjects who are perceived to contribute to development ideology. The article discusses some major impacts that sociolinguists can make on transforming unequal EMI language policies and practices. (Discipline, English medium of instruction (EMI), language policing)*

INTRODUCTION

Recent studies have investigated how English medium of instruction (EMI) policies in school education have reproduced sociopolitical, cultural, and epistemic inequalities (e.g. Bhattacharya 2013; Milligan 2020; Phyak & Sah 2022). Yet, what has not been much discussed in the existing scholarship, particularly in English as foreign language (EFL) contexts, is how schools create and use different technologies and strategies to police and punish students and teachers as a way of enforcing EMI policies. In this article, drawing on the notion of 'discipline' (Foucault 1977, 2007), I analyze how EMI schools in Nepal discipline students' and teachers' language behaviours and discuss how their disciplinary power is shaped by the ideology of *bikās* 'development'. I use Bourdieu's (1991) idea of 'capital' to analyze how the enforcement of EMI policies reproduces *bikās* ideology. As 'a discursive and

ideological structure', *bikās* is perceived as 'a vehicle through which to improve the conditions of life in poor regions of the world' (Pigg 1993:46).

The critique of the English language as social, symbolic, and cultural capital has received much attention in language education policy scholarship (e.g. Park & Wee 2013). But how schools enforce EMI policies to produce 'disciplined English-speaking subjects' that fit in the dominant discourse of *bikās* has received very little attention in the existing literature. Informed by critical language policy (Tollefson 2012; Ricento 2015; Davis & Phyak 2016), a perspective that takes language policy as a sociopolitical issue, this article analyzes the intersection between discipline, development ideology, and language policing in EMI policy. The article concludes by highlighting the impact that sociolinguists can make in transforming unequal language policies and practices from the bottom-up.

DISCIPLINARY POWER AND LANGUAGE POLICING IN EDUCATION

The critique of language policy as a top-down, monocentric, and state-based phenomenon has shifted our attention to how different actors and institutions can create and implement their own policies (Blommaert, Kelly-Holmes, Lane, Leppänen, Moriarty, Pietikäinen, & Piirainen-Marsh 2009; Nissi & Hirsto 2021). This shift has highlighted 'policing' as a framework to explore and understand various tools, practices, and mechanisms that institutions create and enforce to maintain normative orders of language by disciplining their subjects. Studies have discussed language policing as an ideological tool that reproduces racial, socio-economic, and political inequalities and disempowers certain groups of speakers (e.g. Amir & Musk 2013; Cushing 2020). This article expands this body of knowledge by integrating 'discipline' (Foucault 1977, 2007) as a major conceptual tool into an analysis of how schools exercise their disciplinary power to surveil students' and teachers' language behaviors through diverse technologies, rules, and mechanisms. For Foucault (1977:170), *discipline* is 'the specific technique of a power that regards individuals both as objects and as instruments of its exercise'. As an 'anatomy of power', discipline is enacted through various mechanisms that make the individuals who deviate from the given rules VISIBLE. In this process, the 'people who are "disciplined" are disempowered by being made visible' (Hegarty & Bruckmüller 2013:176). A disciplinary power maintains the 'order of bodies' to follow specific 'ways of doing, ways of being, and ways of saying' (Rancière 1999:29). Foucault (1977) considers such bodies as 'docile bodies', bodies that are constantly surveilled and punished to maintain institutional norms. In this article, I am particularly interested in how the disciplinary power of Nepali schools to create and enforce an 'English-speaking environment' is shaped by the broader discourse of *bikās* that crafts the subjectivities of principals/teachers in relation to English medium education. I argue that language policing strategies through which schools exercise their disciplinary power are deeply

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ideological and stand as manifestations of the discourse of *bikās* in Nepal's socio-political context.

In language education policy, researchers have discussed multiple policing strategies that discipline language behaviours of students/teachers. Cushing (2020) discusses how UK schools punish students for violating mandated language norms by using 'surveillant landscapes' (Jones 2017:50) such as 'crime metaphors' and warning posters, letters, and signs in their built environment. Amir & Musk (2013:163) analyze how teachers police students' language practices to address 'a breach of the target language rule' and establish an English-only environment in Swedish schools. Such policing strategies include 'warning', 'reminder', 'bodily orientation', and 'point reduction'. Malabarba (2019:261) examines policing practices in the Brazilian EFL classroom. This study shows that the students' use of their L1 is considered to be 'noticeably problematic' by teachers and students are held 'accountable for not using English to interact'. In Gynne's (2019) study, teachers police students' 'multilingual dialoguing' practices and support monoglossic and monolingual ideologies that promote an 'English-only policy'. Such disciplining practices contribute to the 'self-censorship' of languages other than English (Amir & Musk 2014).

Language policing strategies, particularly in EFL contexts, are enforced with an assumption that an English-only environment will help students improve their English proficiency. The policing of language behaviours is deeply ideological and shaped by the broader sociocultural and political discourses. Cushing, Georgiou, & Karatsareas (2021), for example, show that schools and teachers become a vehicle for reproducing standard language ideologies and prescriptive discourses of academic success through language policing practices. Their analysis of language policing in both mainstream and complementary schools in the UK illustrates that schools ban, stigmatize, and sanction non-standard varieties, affecting students' learning and self-image. Researchers have used Bourdieu's (1991) notion of 'capital' to examine how language policing practices in multilingual contexts have strengthened the neoliberal ideologies of competition and free market-based education by legitimizing the linguistic and symbolic capitals of English (e.g. Park & Wee 2013; Sharma & Phyak 2017; Sah & Li 2018). While acknowledging the role of neoliberalism in shaping EMI policies, this article focuses on how schools create and enforce multiple disciplinary 'tactics' (Foucault 1977) to police their students'/teachers' linguistic behaviours in the name of implementing EMI policies. My focus lies on how Nepali schools have become ideological spaces for reproducing *bikās* ideology as their disciplinary power in order to legitimize the 'symbolic capital' (Bourdieu 1991) of English as the language of 'the educated person' (Skinner & Holland 1996). For this purpose, I expand Foucault's concept of *panopticon*, a de-individualized and automatized surveillance strategy, using Page's (2017) notion of *post-panopticon* to analyze how Nepali schools discipline their students/teachers through multiple surveillance tactics. Panoptic surveillance exercises a disciplinary power without direct monitoring and focuses on

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self-governance and self-subservience. However, panopticism does not cover the diverse forms of surveillance strategies adopted by modern institutions.

In educational settings, for example, Page (2017) uses the concept of post-panopticism to examine how schools adopt both direct and indirect strategies to discipline teachers. Defined broadly as 'the democratisation of surveillance' (Page 2017:4), post-panopticism includes disciplining through 'vertical' (authority), 'horizontal' (peer), and 'intrapersonal' (self) surveillance strategies. Although Page (2017) does not discuss language issues in the theorization of post-panopticism, I extend this framework to analyze how Nepali schools use divergent strategies and tools to discipline and punish their students/teachers, forcing them to speak English in school spaces. I focus on how such strategies serve as both a demonstration of institutional power and a mode of self-management/self-discipline and examine how together they reproduce the ideology of *bikās* as constructed in Nepal's development discourses.

MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT IDEOLOGY IN NEPAL

The medium of instruction (MoI) policy is a sociocultural and political phenomenon (Tollefson & Tsui 2004; LaDousa & Davis 2022). In Nepal, since the beginning of mass-based formal education in the 1950s, MoI policies have been used as tools to promote the state ideology. Until the 1990s, national education policies had focused on strengthening nationalism through a monolingual policy (Nepali-only medium) and nationalized curricula (Pradhan 2019). In its 'national development plans', the Panchayat regime (1960–1990) focused on a nation-building project by producing educated people (Skinner & Holland 1996) who were not only literate in Nepali but also loyal to the one-nation-one-culture-one-language ideology. With a broad vision to 'modernize' and 'democratize' education, the Nepal National Education Planning Commission (1956), for example, defined education as a 'national' and 'unitary program' to support the nation-building project (Pradhan 2019). Written by Dr. Hugh Wood, the Commission's report recommended Nepali as the sole medium of instruction to develop it as 'the true national language' (Weinberg 2013).

Since the early 1990s, the national education policy discourse has shifted its attention from nationalism to *bikās* 'development'. With the restoration of a liberal democratic system, the state embraced a neoliberal ideology for its structural reform agendas that contributed to the promotion of privatized education, free market economy, and foreign-aid-based development activities, largely supported by funding agencies such as the World Bank, ADB, and the International Monetary Fund (Pandey 2009). As an ideology, *bikās*, in the Nepali public sphere, 'means things: especially commodities that come from elsewhere' (Pigg 1993:48; Onta 1996). *Bikās* has now become a hegemonic discourse that describes human and socio-economic progress defined in terms of new materials, skills, knowledge, and infrastructures that are non-local and come from 'elsewhere' through various

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agencies, mainly aid-agencies and international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) (Pandey 2009). As this discourse becomes 'the collective imagination' (Pigg 1993) in the public sphere, the state, and its institutions (e.g. schools, universities), pay attention to producing 'human capital' (Becker 1975) that fits with *bikās* ideology. For this purpose, national education policies, upholding neoliberal assumptions, have focused on producing student subjects that can compete in the free market economy, both locally and internationally (Phyak & Sah 2022).

By considering education as the major foundation of 'national development', the *National Education Policy* states that education will produce 'good, qualified, able, competitive and productive human capitals' whose contribution to 'the state's economic, social, cultural and infrastructural development is important' (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology 2019). In contemporary *bikās* discourse, the competitive and qualified student subjects are understood as graduates from English medium schools where they are expected to acquire the linguistic and cultural capital necessary for economic, social, and infrastructural development. In this article, I conceptualize such student subjects as 'disciplined English-speaking subjects'. As *bikās* ideology reframes the identity of educated persons in terms of the marketability of their skills and knowledge, English has been consistently valorized as the language of *bikās* that expectedly helps to develop new material conditions and jobs in the country (Pigg 1993; Shrestha 1995:268; see also Phyak 2016).

The state's neoliberal policy has promoted English as a commodity and as the language of quality education (Phyak 2016). Private schools have been using English as a de facto medium of instruction and valorizing it as necessary for quality education in the public sphere. By contrast, public schools have historically used Nepali as the medium of instruction and as the language of nationalism. This English-Nepali divide has created several challenges and tensions for public schools. First, student numbers have decreased in public schools due to the hegemonic discourse of English as the language of *bikās*. English medium private schools have become parents' choice for their children's schooling. Second, public schools are forced to implement an English medium policy to prove that they can provide the same type of quality of education as is perceived to be provided by private schools (Phyak 2016). More strikingly, public schools are also accountable for 'mother tongue education' as mandated by the constitution. The state has developed 'mother-tongue education' (in 1990) and 'mother-tongue-based multilingual education' (MTB-MLE) (in 2007) policies, allowing schools to use local mother-tongues, both as a medium and a subject (Phyak & Ojha 2019). Yet, the state is not committed to implementing these policies throughout the country.

The state revised the national education policy in 2006 and made a flexible language policy that legitimated private schools' EMI policy and allowed public schools to implement the same policy. Studies have shown that this policy reproduces the neoliberal ideology of *bikās* that expects students to have the linguistic and cultural capital (English proficiency and English medium education) recognized by the free market of education (Sah & Li 2018). In Nepal, a large number

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of students go abroad to study first and immigrate later (Phyak 2016). This situation has discursively constructed an English medium education as 'symbolic' and 'cultural' capital (Bourdieu 1991). In other words, an English medium education is perceived to be an integral part of producing disciplined English-speaking subjects who can contribute to *bikās* through their knowledge, skills, jobs, social networks, and international mobilities.

Although literature shows that EMI policies are detrimental to students' literacy and academic learning (Dearden 2015), Nepali schools continue to embrace 'the inevitability of differences' (Pigg 1993), a key assumption of *bikās*, that takes English medium schools to be inherently the best place to produce educated persons. As *bikās* becomes a 'social imagination' (Pigg 1993), a distinction between English medium and Nepali-/mother tongue medium schools is constructed in that the latter is seen as a deficient space in which to produce educated persons. This social imagination has forced public schools to enforce EMI policies. In the remainder of the article, I discuss how two Nepali schools have exercised their disciplinary power through diverse surveillance strategies in order to produce disciplined English-speaking subjects.

THE CONTEXT AND METHODS OF THE STUDY

This study adopts a critical ethnographic approach (Heller 2011) to explore and analyze language policing strategies in EMI schools. While focusing on how 'the complexities of power works' (Heller 2011), critical ethnography 'takes us beneath surface appearances, disrupts the status quo, and unsettles both neutrality and taken-for-granted assumptions by bringing to light underlying and obscure operations of power and control' (Madison 2005:7). The data is collected from two EMI schools, Target School and Samaj School (both pseudonyms) in Nepal. I have selected Target School because, unlike most private schools, it is located in a rural multiethnic and multilingual village. I am interested in how such a relatively small and low-cost school implements EMI policy. I selected Samaj School because of its segregated language policies—English medium and Nepali medium. The students attending Target School are mostly from middle-class families that can afford the tuition and other school fees whereas the students attending Samaj School have mixed socio-economic backgrounds. Most students attending the English medium are from middle-class families but those attending the Nepali medium are from low-income families.

As a private school, Target School has adopted EMI policy and has a mandatory rule for teachers and students to speak English within the school premises. The morning assembly usually begins with the singing of the national anthem (in Nepali) and of the school song (in English), followed sometimes by a light physical training (PT). Kamal (pseudonym), the principal, usually announces the updates related to school activities and students' behaviours in English. Teachers are asked to check students' bodies to make sure that they have worn a clean and

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proper uniform (e.g. tie, belt, shirts, and pants) and maintained short hair (for boys) and nails. Kamal rationalizes the relevance of EMI policy as part of school's "mission to provide quality education as per 'parental demands'". For him, 'strict disciplinary measures' are necessary to maintain an 'English-speaking environment' in the school. He argues that "if we do not make students follow these rules, parents do not consider our school as a good school".

Samaj School is a public school located in an urban area. Known as one of the best public schools in the district, with about eleven hundred students from diverse ethnic backgrounds such as Limbu, Rai, Magar, and Khas-Arya, the school has two units: 'English Wing' and 'Nepali Wing'. Nepali was the sole medium of instruction in the school until 2014. But due to the state's neoliberal policy, Samaj School (and public schools in general) is under pressure to compete with private schools and introduce EMI policy, despite its lack of competent teachers. Because of private schools in the neighbourhood, the number of students in Samaj School has decreased in the past decade and, thus, the institution decided to introduce EMI policy to attract more students to the school. In the beginning, the policy was implemented for all students in the upper grades (grades 8–10) but later, students were segregated into two wings. The head teacher, Raj (pseudonym) said the students who were "weak in English" could not learn effectively under EMI policy. The students in the 'English Wing' are mostly returnees from private schools, belonging to upper-/middle-class families, and with more exposure to English. The parents who had sent their children to private schools for an English medium education have now enrolled them in Samaj School because of its EMI policy. This trend has now become a common practice throughout the country (Khati 2016). Indeed, the 'English Wing' is a private school within a public school. According to the constitution, school education is 'free' and 'compulsory' for all children, but Samaj School, like private schools, collects some fees, which Raj calls a 'donation support' from parents. The infrastructure (such as classroom, desks/benches) in the 'English Wing' is more sophisticated than in the 'Nepali Wing'; all classes in the 'English Wing' are equipped with computers and science labs, white boards, and multimedia projectors. The teachers with relatively 'better English' proficiency are assigned to teach the classes in the 'English Wing'.

During my ethnographic fieldwork (four months at different times between 2015–2019), I observed language practices both inside and outside the classroom; interviewed students (ten from each school) and teachers (five from each school); and collected artifacts and images such as posters (inside and outside the classroom), school diaries, and pamphlets from both schools. The interviews were conducted in Nepali and translated into English by the author. I asked the participant teachers to check whether the translated texts were accurate. I have adopted a critical ethnographic framework (e.g. Carspecken 1996; May 1997; Madison 2005) to organize, analyze, and interpret the data. Using Carspecken's (1996) model of critical ethnography, I first compiled data from multiple sources (mainly observational

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data, interview transcripts, fieldnotes, and artifacts) and selected and combined 'what is useful' for the purpose of the study (Madison 2005). Then, I conducted a 'reconstructive analysis' (Carspecken 1996) by doing 'a deductive thematic coding' (Linneberg & Korsgaard 2019), which allowed me to 'code with analysis in mind' (Carspecken 1996). As critical ethnographers take 'a theoretical position' (May 1997), a deductive coding method is helpful to systematically 'identify, and interpret, key, but not necessarily all, features of the data, guided by the research question' (Clarke & Braun 2017:297). My coding process was informed by three major concepts: language policing/surveillance, disciplining, and development ideology. I selected key excerpts relevant to these concepts from the interview transcripts and connected them to the context to provide an ethnographic rigour to data analysis. Finally, I explained each of the themes, situating my interpretations within their sociohistorical conditions, what Carspecken (1996) calls 'the broadest system features'.

As part of my larger critical ethnographic project, I have been working with the teachers from the sample schools since 2015. The principals from both schools had first invited me to share my ideas about school improvement and agreed that I would work with them to explore and understand their own policies and practices. I have had a series of informal meetings with the teachers from both schools and discussed not only language education issues but also other personal and professional activities. We have had critical discussions on EMI policies and practices, formally and informally. The principals/teachers from both schools were engaged in reflective discussions on the creation, implementation, and impact of their own schools' EMI policies and practices. Such dialogic, open, and locally situated discussions helped me develop a good rapport with the teachers. I have also discussed the findings of my study with the teachers at both schools. In what follows, I discuss the findings of the study.

SELF-CENSORSHIP, CRIMINALIZATION, AND PUBLIC SHAMING OF LANGUAGE BEHAVIOURS

In Nepal, EMI policy has historically served as a 'distinction' (Bourdieu 1991) between the private and public schools. Since the 1990s, private schools have used the policy to address the interests of upper-/middle-class people who could afford to pay expensive tuition fees. Public schools have generally used Nepali as a medium of instruction as it has been historically constructed as a 'national' and 'official' language. These divisive instructional policies have framed education within the discourse of *bikās*: public-school students are seen as deficient subjects in terms of their linguistic and cultural capital. By contrast, private-school students are valorized as 'English-speaking citizens' who can contribute to *bikās* (Thebe Limbu 2021). These strict disciplinary measures have been key strategies by which private schools produce English-speaking students (Caddell 2006).

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As a private school, Target School adopts tougher language policing measures than Samaj School. It adopts both panoptic and post-panoptic approaches to discipline students. Kamal, as a 'founder' and principal of the school, has the authority to exercise disciplinary power to create an English-speaking environment that he thinks makes the school 'look different from other schools'. Kamal organizes meetings with teachers and students and keeps reminding them to speak English in the school. He has written and distributed an English-speaking policy which states 'all students and teachers are heartily requested to speak in English within the school premises'. This 'authority surveillance' (Page 2017) and 'reminder strategy' in meetings (Amir & Musk 2013) crafts the identity of teachers and students as monolingual English-speaking subjects. Because the school should 'compete with other schools' in the village, as Kamal claims, teachers and students have to 'strictly' follow the English-speaking rule. In a series of interviews, he told me that parents also "desire to see their children speaking English". Kamal rationalizes EMI policy as *samayako māg* 'the demand of time' in the "age of internationalization, modernity, and technology". While naturalizing the surveillance strategies used to enforce EMI policy, Kamal reproduces the ideology of *bikās* and argues that an English medium education is the major *sucak* 'indicator' of 'quality education' required for "the personal development, foreign study, and future job opportunities". But my field observation shows that teachers 'cautiously' use Nepali during their personal interactions outside the classroom as they are "afraid of being noticed and interrogated" by the principal. As most teachers do not feel comfortable speaking in English, very few teachers actively participate in meetings and other school-related activities, including teaching. What is striking is that the teachers with better English proficiency are given more responsibilities, power, and facilities (e.g. salary).

'Speak English' signs are common in EMI schools in Nepal (see Figures 1 & 2). Target School also disciplines teachers' and students' language behaviors by using a specific form of panoptic surveillance, 'surveillant landscapes' (Jones 2017), which include warning signs, posters, and wall paintings such as 'English Speaking Zone'. Except for the national anthem and some famous quotes from local literary figures, school rules and topics about science, education, and environment are represented in English on the school walls. Even textbooks are used as language policing tools. During my classroom observations, I found that teachers constantly ask and force students to speak English because they have 'English medium textbooks' and are students of an 'English medium school'. The emphasis on English and the banning of other local languages constructs private schools as a distinct space where the 'disciplined English-speaking subjects' are produced (see Thebe Limbu 2021). Such subjects are expected to be docile and follow the English-only policy of the school.

Self-censorship is a major feature of panoptic surveillance (Foucault 1977). Target School has installed some close-circuit television (CCTV) cameras both inside and outside the classroom to monitor the behaviour of teachers and students.

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FIGURE 1. English speaking zone.

FIGURE 2. Surveillance poster.

Rauniyar (2019) has reported that the use of CCTV cameras has been discursively constructed as one of the major features of 'good schools' across the country. In Target School, Kamal (as the principal) controls and checks the CCTV cameras from his desktop computer. For him, such technologies have helped the school to 'maintain discipline, including the English-speaking rule, of teachers and students'. Although such panoptic surveillance violates 'personal freedom' of teachers and students (Rauniyar 2019), schools across the country promote the use of CCTV cameras as a major indexicality of modernity and a quality school through media, brochures, and public discourses (see Ghimire & Rana 2022). My field observation shows that the CCTV cameras in Target School have self-disciplined students and teachers, mostly in the classroom, and forced them to speak English only. As the

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principal monitors their behaviours from a distance, they fear being punished for not speaking English.

As discipline becomes an integral aspect of English-speaking subjecthood, Target School also uses 'vertical surveillance' (Page 2017) strategies by giving some students and teachers authority to discipline other students' and teachers' language behaviours. The principal appoints one or two teachers and students as 'CID' (in one teacher's words) who secretly observe their colleagues' language practices. In Nepal, CID is commonly used to describe persons who spy on a suspect/criminal and report them to the authorities. In Target School, the CIDs prepare a list of 'undisciplined' teachers and students and give it to the principal for punishment purposes. The CIDs walk around school spaces such as restrooms, classrooms, the canteen, the library, and so on to observe the language practices of their teachers and students. Most CIDs are known as 'good' and 'disciplined' students who sincerely follow the English-speaking rule. While criminalizing their non-English language practices, as my observation shows, the principal calls the 'undisciplined' teachers and students into his office and interrogates them and reminds them to speak English. Although students do not generally react in these situations, I have observed teachers arguing about why they have to speak Nepali. For example, one social studies teacher told the principal that some of her students could not understand her questions in English, so she had to explain them in Nepali. During an interview (with the author), she said, "I am not happy with the English-only policy. I don't think that our students can understand the lessons and express their ideas in English-only medium". The teacher feels 'unhappy' about being monitored by her students and interrogated by the principal. She told me that "it is unfair for both teachers and students. I'm always afraid of being punished". Another teacher said, "I don't feel like I'm talking with my colleagues when I speak in English. We can teach in English, but it is strange for me to speak only in English with my colleagues". However, such voices are dismissed as teachers in private schools are not given much agency and power to create and implement language education policies.

As private schools have historically become a place where English can be heard and used, they are also perceived as a space for producing educated people with the linguistic and cultural capital recognized by the discourse of *bikās* (Gellner 2015). In recent times, public schools have also been forced to adopt EMI policy to LOOK LIKE private schools. Samaj School has also imitated different disciplining strategies of private schools such as the installation of CCTV cameras and the deployment of language monitors from private schools. However, the surveillance strategies to produce the disciplined English-speaking subjects go beyond the panoptic surveillance of language behaviours. For both schools, the disciplined English-speaking subjects should have special bodily features including a dress code. Both schools use 'shaming' (Foucault 1977) as a power to discipline their students. In morning assemblies, they publicize the names of the students who have violated the English-speaking rule and dress code. In one assembly, for example, the

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names of five students from the 'English Wing' of Samaj School were announced and sent to the principal's office by the coordinator because they did not wear a proper uniform and follow the English-speaking rule. Boys had worn sport shoes (not black leather shoes) and girls had put on colourful (not white) head bands. The principal interrogated them and warned them to follow the dress code in English: "you follow the rule. Change your shoes. … No colourful head bands". In both schools, students were constantly warned not to 'wear dirty clothes and colourful shoes' and reminded to 'shorten their hair' (for boys) by the principals in morning assembly.

Public shaming as a disciplinary power has been a part of school culture in Nepal, and is broadly perceived as an action needed to produce the 'disciplined English-speaking subjects'. In Samaj School, teachers have appointed some students as 'monitors' to maintain an English-only environment. In excerpt (1), Raj, the coordinator of the 'English Wing', explains that the monitors prepare a list of the students who violate the English-speaking rules and give it to the principal for punishment purposes. As in Target School, the students who break the English-speaking rule are discursively labelled as 'undisciplined', 'rule breakers', and 'incompetent' in warning sessions.

(1) 'We warn not to speak Nepali'[1]

Raj: We have **monitors** for each class. These **monitors** give us information about the students who speak Nepali. Teachers also **monitor** them. … We don't **charge fines** for not speaking English, but we remind and warn them not to speak Nepali.

Such disciplinary actions through language policing have negative effects on students' identity, learning, and self-image (Cushing et al. 2021). The students from both schools have told me that they are afraid of speaking English in the school space because of the fear of being embarrassed publicly. Most students feel comfortable communicating in Nepali and mix it in while speaking English. But the students with such language practices are punished by being made publicly visible for their undisciplined behaviors. Public shaming, as Foucault (1977) claims, is one of the major tools for exercising disciplinary power. In both schools, most students who are punished in morning assemblies remain silent and docile in the classroom and talk less with their classmates throughout the day (fieldnote). One student at Samaj School even told me that they are "afraid of being transferred to the Nepali Wing" if they do not speak English. In public schools, where there is a segregated medium of instruction policy, the students who have 'good English' and a high level of educational achievement, particularly those from upper-middle class families, are enrolled in the 'English Wing'. The students in this wing are discursively constructed as 'good students' with better skills, knowledge, and futures. By contrast, the students in the 'Nepali Wing' are considered to be 'struggling students' who have very little parental support and care due to their low socioeconomic background. This dominant

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public discourse is the basis of the disciplinary power whereby public schools impose English-only policies.

Because the 'Nepali Wing' is perceived as a space for deficient students, who may not be able to contribute to *bikās,* being transferred from the 'English Wing' to the 'Nepali Wing' works as punishment through a 'subordination process' (Lippi-Green 2012). It downgrades students' 'good' and 'disciplined' identities to 'weak' and 'undisciplined' subjecthood. This kind of disciplining through public shaming has deep negative effects on students' language socialization and learning processes. One student told me, "I cannot speak freely and share my personal ideas in English with my friends and teachers. I remain silent because I am not allowed to speak Nepali and my mother tongue". Most students said that it is 'natural' to use Nepali in their daily conversations so they do not think that using Nepali should be a 'punishable act'. The students are not happy about public shaming, the punishment strategies used to impose the English-only policy in the school. Yet, EMI schools adopt and justify the relevance of their disciplinary power to produce the disciplined English-speaking subjects. As Raj argues, 'strict disciplinary' measures are necessary to create an English environment and address 'the need of the public'.

PEER-POLICING, DISCURSIVE VIOLENCE, AND DEVELOPMENT IDEOLOGY

The disciplining and punishment strategies have been naturalized in the discourse of school effectiveness in Nepal (Caddell 2007). As discipline becomes an integral part of English-speaking subjecthood, schools also adopt peer-surveillance strategies (Page 2017). In addition to CIDs, as mentioned above, both Target School and Samaj School have appointed 'language captains' to discipline the language behaviour of their students and teachers in the classroom. Selected on the basis of their perceived 'good English' and 'disciplined' identities, these captains have regular meetings with their principals/teachers and discuss how to implement different disciplining strategies. The captains observe their teachers' and classmates' behaviours and report to the principals/teachers if they find someone violating the English-speaking rule. In Target School, students have to pay 'four rupees' for speaking two Nepali words. Peer-policing is also adopted in Samaj School. In excerpt (2), two captains (C1 and C2) reveal that they are asked (by their teachers) to be 'strict' to monitor their classmates' language behaviours.

(2) 'Counting the words'

1	C1:	I collect Nepali words from my friends. They have to pay
2		**five rupees** for two Nepali sentences [laugh].
3	C2:	**I charge** two rupees for speaking Nepali
4		once and five for twice. [X] sir told us to be **strict**.
5	Prem:	Do they give you money?
6	C1:	Um, some give. Those who don't give money will

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7		be called on in the morning **assembly**.
8	C2:	Yes. They give because they are afraid of being **punished**.
9	Prem:	Do you keep the record of Nepali words?
10	C1:	Um… I note down in my **diary** if I hear any Nepali words.
11		I don't focus on **a complete sentence**. I just **count words**. [laughter]
12	C2:	Ma'm has told me that if there are many Nepali words,
13		I have to give the **list** of students to her. She will punish them.
14	C1:	If someone speaks Nepali more than five times, I will report to her.

The language captains serve as 'language policy arbiters' (Johnson & Johnson 2015) who can create their own policies to implement the institutional EMI policy. For example, C1 charges five rupees for two Nepali sentences but C2 charges the same amount of money for speaking Nepali twice. As this system has become a part of school culture, students pay fines to their captains without much resistance. As in excerpt (2), they are afraid of being 'punished' (line 8) and called on in the 'morning assembly' by their teachers (line 7). Because all teachers, staff, and students meet in the morning assembly, the principals/teachers use it as a space for disciplinary checks and punishment. I have observed that the principals in both schools use 'language shaming' (Piller 2017) as a major strategy to discipline the so-called undisciplined students. Based on their language captains' secret reporting, the principals call on such students in front of the assembly, read out the Nepali words they have used and warn them not to break the English-speaking rule. Such a shaming strategy, as Piller (2017) argues, affects students' self-esteem, identity, and emotion (see Liyanage & Canagarajah 2019). For example, in an informal discussion after being punished in the assembly, one grade 7 student from Target School expressed his frustration: "I don't like to speak with my friends and teachers. I don't want to take classes and study here". However, he has 'no choice' because his parents want him to study in a 'boarding school' (private school). What is more striking is that such disciplining measures are accepted, even by parents, as a legitimate way to produce the disciplined English-speaking students who are considered 'ideal' human capital for development (see Caddell 2006).

Historically rooted in the school culture of elite English medium private schools, disciplining students by imposing a monolingual policy is now reproduced by public schools throughout the country. This 'sociocultural reproduction' (Bourdieu 1991) reinforces the assumption that English medium schools should focus on the EMI policy and follow the modern dress code (uniform, tie, belt, and shoes). Raj accepts that they have to discipline their students in the 'English Wing', but not in the 'Nepali Wing', because the 'educated' and 'aware' parents enrol their children in the former and expect them to be disciplined and looked after. My field observation shows that parents do not complain about disciplining and punishment practices in either school. Like other public schools, Samaj School reproduces private schools' ideologies of English medium schooling and enforces multiple strategies to discipline students to construct and promote the school's identity as 'a true English medium school'. Yet, such strategies are resisted by students in

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subtle ways. For example, in excerpt (3), the language captains share how they are not 'listened to' and often 'threatened' by their classmates for writing down their names as 'Nepali speakers'.

(3) 'They call me stupid'

1	Prem:	Is there any debate on the **name list**?
2	C1:	Boys are so unruly. They don't listen to me. But I note down their names.
3		They **threaten** me. Some blame that I do not note down my friends' names
4		although they did not speak English.
5	C2:	They call me **'stupid'**. They yell at me. There are
6		arguments between boys and girls. [laughs]
7	Prem:	So, your job is not easy, right?
8	C1:	Yes. If we tell them to speak English, they tell us that "we are Nepali
9		so we should speak Nepali". Our teachers will **punish** us if we cannot
10		**control** the class.
11	C2:	We also feel **comfortable** to use Nepali both inside and outside the
12		classroom. But we cannot do so as a **captain**. We should be strict to
13		implement the **rule**.

As seen in excerpt (3) above, sometimes there are debates between the language captains and other students. The language captains are called 'stupid' and 'yelled at' for their acts of policing other students' language behaviours. Some instances of students' resistance against language policing were observed in both schools. For example, a group of students in a debate with their captains in Samaj School said, "we should speak Nepali because we are Nepali". Such remarks clearly indicate how students use nationalism as a stance to resist the disciplinary power and tactics that the school has enforced in order to create an English-speaking environment. Because they are punished for speaking Nepali and local languages, students claim that their "Nepali national identity is being questioned, and English medium is not a nationalist policy". The language captains themselves "feel comfortable" communicating in Nepali and are aware of how the English-only policy has created learning challenges. But they should be "strict to implement the [English only] rule" (lines 12–13) and self-discipline while policing their own classmates' language practices.

The 'horizontal surveillance' strategies (Page 2017) in both Samaj School and Target School create and reproduce unequal power relations among students. The captains in both schools are perceived to have better English proficiency and are known as 'model students' in terms of their discipline and study. The captains in Samaj School are returnees from private schools who can speak English with both teachers and students. After the implementation of EMI policy, many parents have stopped sending their children to private schools and enrolled them in Samaj School. However, most students in the school cannot fully understand and speak in English. Such students are perceived as undisciplined and deficient in their studies. The students in both schools, particularly in the lower grades, remain silent and inactive in the classroom due to an English language barrier. Most lessons thus become teacher-dominated and focused on the transmission of

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information from the recommended textbooks. However, the students from both schools, despite being disciplined, demonstrate fluid language practices, often switching between English and Nepali, particularly in the playground and canteen where they are less likely to be observed. Although the students in both schools come from diverse ethnolinguistic backgrounds, I did not find them talking much in languages other than Nepali and English. Yet, some students in Samaj School use Rai and Tamang during tiffin breaks. But the use of any languages other than English is punishable.

(4) 'Yea, we've understood'

C2: Students may understand but it's difficult to express ideas in English.
They can say [something] in Nepali promptly but it's difficult in English.
It's easy in Nepali. [laughs]
C1: Some students don't even know any **new words**. When teachers ask
did you understand? they say "**yea, we've understood**" [laughing].
But they don't even know how to use 'they' and 'you'.
Without speaking Nepali, they don't know what they're talking about.

Some students resist the disciplinary power by feigning their own understanding of English. My own and the captains' observations (excerpt (4)) show that students must speak English although the English-only policy has created learning challenges for them. Therefore, they fabricate their understanding and say "yea, we've understood" to avoid punishment from teachers. They are not allowed to mix languages. For example, a social studies teacher in Samaj School asked one student, who wanted to describe his own 'family' (the topic of the lesson) in Nepali, to speak English because "they are in an English medium school". The student struggled to describe his family in English, so he mixed some words such as *hajurbā* 'grandfather' and *hajurāmā* 'grandmother'. But the teacher forced him to 'speak English-only' thus he remained silent throughout the lesson. This situation contributes to 'silencing' (Fine 2003) of students' voices by creating an environment of fear and shame. More importantly, the students who are unable to converse in English are seen as deficient subjects and given negative identities such as *dhātne* 'a liar', 'silly boy', and 'silly girl' in the disciplinary process (see excerpt (5)).

(5) 'A liar'

S1: We try to speak English, but Nepali comes **automatically**. So, **captains**
record our names. They tease us. They call us *dhātne* [liar].
S2: They even say, '**you silly boy**', '**you silly girl**'. They don't stop teasing us
if we **mix** Nepali while speaking English.

Language policing in both schools has constructed a layer of power relations among students and reinforced 'discursive violence' (Jones, Nast, & Roberts 1997). Discursive violence involves the 'processes and practices to script groups or persons in places, and in ways that counter how they would define themselves'

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(Jones et al. 1997:394). In addition to teachers' deficit labelling of students (labels such as 'weak' and 'undisciplined') in morning assemblies and the principal's office, students who do not adhere to the monolingual English-speaking policy also become the victim of discursive violence from their peers. As seen in excerpt (5), teasing is used as a discursive tool in peer surveillance. Because students are teased and called 'liar' and 'silly' for mixing Nepali while speaking English, they do not like to speak freely for fear of being punished. Such practices of discursive violence are exercised through *legitimization* and *normalization* (McMillian 2022). Both schools have legitimized such practices in their disciplining strategies to implement EMI policy. In excerpt (6), Kamal and Raj explain that both schools have normalized their disciplinary power as 'common' and 'important' for producing disciplined English-speaking subjects.

(6) 'Good students must speak English'

Kamal: **Discipline** is important and common in **English medium schools**. **Parents evaluate** us whether we make students disciplined and English speakers. **English medium** and discipline make us different from other schools.

Raj: **Society** thinks that the **educated** people must be good in English. The students from **English medium** are given a **priority** in the job market, **NGOs**, **INGOs**, and foreign employment.

As both Kamal and Raj argue above, EMI is a discursive power meant to produce disciplined and educated persons (Skinner & Holland 1996; Gellner 2015), defined in terms of their abilities to speak English. The disciplining power of EMI policy is deeply ideological; it reproduces *bikās* ideology by legitimizing the symbolic capital of English as 'the language of development' (Shrestha 1995). Indeed, both schools investigated in my ethnographic work enforce EMI policy because of the linguistic and cultural capital (Bourdieu 1991) of English medium education 'in the job market, NGOs, INGOs, and foreign employment'. In Nepal, I/NGOs are key animators of *bikās*, supported by foreign-aid organizations and dominated by the English-speaking population (Pigg 1993; Gellner 2015).

DISCUSSION

Foucault (1977) argues that disciplinary power stems from discourse and is exercised through various surveillance strategies. The disciplinary power of the schools in this study is shaped by the discourse of *bikās* that embraces the linguistic, cultural, and symbolic capital (Bourdieu 1991) of English as a legitimate resource for strengthening the state's neoliberal policies of development. As *bikās* discourse frames the identity of educated persons (Skinner & Holland 1996) in terms of their English language abilities and skills necessary to access external resources (e.g. communicating with foreign-aid agencies and NGOs/INGOs), so schools enforce strict disciplinary measures to provide students with exposure to English by creating a monolingual English environment.

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As a mechanism of power, discipline in the EMI schools comprises diverse tools, rules, and procedures that institutions exercise as 'an essential instrument for a particular end' and 'a means of reinforcing or reorganizing their internal mechanisms of power' (Foucault 1977:215). Schools frame EMI policy as 'an explicit symbol of *bikās*' (Castellsagué & Carrasco 2021), thereby reconfiguring themselves as a POLICED SPACE where students and teachers are disciplined and punished to produce the 'disciplined English-speaking subjects' (see Thebe Limbu 2021). Such subjects are surveilled using both panoptic and post-panoptic technologies that represent what Foucault (1977:167) calls tactics 'the art of constructing, with located bodies, coded activities and trained aptitudes, mechanisms in which the product of the various forces is increased by their calculated combination'. These tactics not only create a monolingual school environment but also promote a hegemonic neoliberal ideology of education that valorises the symbolic capital of English as the language of *bikās.*

We can draw two major theoretical insights from the creation and implementation of EMI policy in Nepal. First, the disciplinary power exercised through both panoptic and post-panoptic tactics, as seen in the context of Nepal, creates schools as 'functional sites' (Foucault 1977) where multilingual identities and agencies of teachers and students are not only delegitimated but also SEEN as punishable acts. Because the state's neoliberal policies have reimagined schools as a 'site of development' (Gellner 2015) for the producing of students that can compete in a free market economy, speaking English has become 'a model of expected behaviours' (Weinberg 2022). But, in enforcing EMI policy, schools engage in disciplinary strategies such as interrogations, public shaming, and punishing of non-English language practices and these diminish students' and teachers' agency and voices as multilingual speakers and reposition them as docile disciplined subjects (Foucault 1977), with a deep sense of fear and self-censorship.

Second, the enforcement of EMI policy not only reproduces the symbolic capital of English but also strengthens a hegemonic development ideology (Pigg 1993; Escobar 1995). As the assumption that schools are required to implement EMI policy to produce educated persons has become hegemonic in the public sphere, schools across the country continue to use various surveillance strategies in order to create an English-speaking environment. While reinforcing a distinction between the English-speaking and Nepali-speaking students, the disciplinary practices in EMI schools promote 'symbolic violence' (Bourdieu 1991) against multilingual students. As the production of the 'disciplined English-speaking subjects' become their goal, schools create linguistic hierarchies and erase the use of 'local' mother tongues, including Nepali. The disciplinary power exercised to create a monolingual environment where English is heard and used supports a deficit view of local languages as an inappropriate resource for *bikās* (Caddell 2007; Castellsagué & Carrasco 2021). This view eventually reproduces 'epistemic injustice' (Fricker 2007) and 'discursive violence' (McMillian 2022) against the

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multilingual students who cannot fully participate in classroom activities without fluid and multilingual languaging practices.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

In this article, I have analyzed the intersection of discipline, development ideology, and EMI policy in Nepal. The analysis of disciplining language behaviours shows that language policing to enforce a monolingual EMI policy in both private and public schools is deeply shaped by the ideology of *bikās*. Language policing strategies not only reproduce sociolinguistic inequalities but also divide students in terms of their socioeconomic backgrounds and English language competence. More strikingly, the disciplining of language behaviours creates school as a policed space where both students' and teachers' right to speak in multiple languages are violated, affecting their self-esteem, identity, and participation in interactions, both inside and outside the classroom.

This study has two major implications regarding how sociolinguists can have an impact on resisting and transforming unequal language ideologies, policies, and practices. First, sociolinguists need to engage the institutions and their actors in critical dialogue to understand and build collective and critical awareness about how their own policies, ideologies, and practices (e.g. EMI policy and policing) affect the social and affective life of people. While engaging in dialogues to discuss the findings of this study, the teachers in both schools critically reflected on their own and students' experiences, struggles, and identities in relation to language disciplining and gradually became critical of their own schools' EMI policies and practices. They agreed that the disciplinary measures they had imposed on students to enforce EMI policy were not only discriminatory but also dehumanizing, affecting the personal, affective, and educational aspects of students' lives. Davis & Phyak (2016) call such a critical engagement approach 'engaged language policy' which builds on the 'principle of error correction' and 'principle of debt incurred' (Labov 1982). Reflecting on the findings of the study not only helped the teachers identify the errors in their own ideologies, policies, and practices but also gave me (as a researcher) an opportunity to give knowledge back to the schools/teachers in order to improve their existing policies and practices. The teachers, particularly in Samaj School, have already started using students' home languages in teaching content area subjects and have stopped punishing students for not speaking English. Likewise, the teachers in Target School have dropped their language shaming practices in assembly and started accepting students' translanguaging practices, mainly in social studies classes.

Second, this study implies that sociolinguists need to focus on promoting 'sociolinguistic justice' (Bucholtz, Lopez, Mojarro, Skapoulli, VanderStouwe, & Warner-Garcia 2014) in EMI policy research. Engaging individuals/institutions/communities (who provided data) in critical dialogue on the findings of the study would be one way to collectively counter discriminatory language policies and ideologies and

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dehumanizing disciplining strategies (as discussed above) in school spaces. Such 'dialogic efforts' (Phyak, Rawal, & De Costa 2021; see also Phyak 2021) offer a doable bottom-up approach for sociolinguists to engage in having an impact on building just language policies in education and beyond.

NOTES

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[1]The boldfaced words in the transcripts are English in the original throughout the article. The author translated the excerpts from Nepali into English.

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