


## Dr R. Vennela

Developing a pilot English-Telugu bilingual pedagogic picture dictionary resource and teacher resource book for low-resource ESL contexts



**The context:** Recent Indian government policy has acknowledged language teachers' widespread use of Indian languages and aims to promote translanguaging in English language classrooms. Dr R Vennela set out to create and pilot a bilingual picture dictionary and teachers' resource to support students' use of their home language, Telugu, in English classes at three primary schools in the rural village of Ponnada in East Godavari district, Andhra Pradesh.

**Supporting existing resources:** The textbooks used in English classes are predominantly in English with a handful of vocabulary items translated into Telugu. This project took the textbook vocabulary as a starting point and created a fuller bilingualised glossary of key vocabulary items that included pictures, translations of both the key words and example sentences, plus information about pronunciation, rhyming words, related words (synonyms and antonyms) and grammar where relevant. The resource was designed in two parts with simple, level-appropriate entries for students and longer, more detailed entries in the teachers' resource book, covering grades 1-5.

GRADE – 01 STUDENT ENTRY	GRADE – 01 TEACHER ENTRY
 <p>Bee (బీ) – తేనెటీగ See and Say! <a href="#">Bee</a></p>	<p><b>Bee (బీ) – తేనెటీగ</b> Video of pronunciation: <a href="#">BEE</a> Meaning: An insect that makes honey. తేనె తయారు చేసే ఒక కీటకం. Rhyming word: She Example sentence: A bee is sitting on the flower. తేనెటీగ పువ్వు మీద కూర్చోని వుంది.</p>

**The pilot:** The teachers involved in the study received the resources in advance and took part in pre-trial questionnaires and interviews with the researchers to allow for mentoring and co-construction of activities to make use of the dictionary in class. The lessons in which the resources were used were observed and recorded and followed by post-teaching interviews.

**In the classroom:** During the pre-trial questionnaires and interviews, the teachers in the study had commented that the use of bilingual methods and materials was nothing new, but during the observed lessons, they actually made very little use of the Telugu translations provided, instead focusing primarily on the English examples and content. Similarly, while they were enthusiastic about the potential for using the pictures and suggested numerous activities, they made almost no use of them in the lessons. In general, while the teachers in the study did refer to the new resource in class, they didn't seem to have a clear plan as to how to integrate it into their teaching, in some cases, simply reading out all the information in an entry rather than drawing on it selectively as appropriate.

**Conclusions:** Dr Vennela concludes that if the policy of using local languages in the English language classroom is to be implemented effectively, appropriate and accessible bilingual resources, such as the one piloted in this project, are essential. Perhaps more importantly though, it is not enough to simply provide a resource that teachers say they will use. Crucially, more teacher training is required to equip teachers with the necessary skills to make a real shift in their teaching practice towards the use of planned translanguaging in the classroom.

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*“Ensuring teacher-researcher partnership was a vital aspect of this project. Teachers were collaborators in the development and implementation of these resources. This approach is expected to achieve a more long-lasting habit of integrating dictionary resources in classroom teaching and lesson planning.”*

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