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Editorial

Rajesh Kumar and Devaki Lakshminarayan

The focal points that mark the Issue 19 of Language and Language Teaching are (a) the detailing of pedagogical processes and (b) describing the process of creating/using digital technology including video films.

Channappa shows the use of worksheets to facilitate reading and writing, and Sonalika Garai in her action research writes about the process of using storytelling as a pedagogical tool. Rajeev Gowda integrates Math and language and reflects on the challenges and issues in integration. It is important to note that all these pedagogical interventions are implemented after building a long relationship with teachers and students.

The Landmark presents a project that is not widely written about – the *Bharat Bhasha Mandakini*. The project consists of producing films that document language in the backdrop of its eco-system. Its purpose is to make language learning a more engaging endeavour, help to deal with the problems of learning deficits by focussing on linguistic diversities in classrooms and contribute to the preservation of languages. U.N. Singh outlines the process followed and believes that this 'utopian' idea provides space for two opposing views to dialogue to create a synthetic construction on the linguistic landscape. We are grateful to Professor Singh for giving us this landmark piece in a short time.

Two contributions, one from Anand and one from Guru, Anand and Karthik, discuss the process of using digital tools. Anand discusses two school-based programmes for developing literacy skills, collaboration and leadership abilities among students. Guru and others look at an approach to translation through the use of digital tools for deepening content knowledge of teachers and contributing to the resource pool in the local language (Kannada). Guru, Rakesh and Anand Desai present a report on the process used in the workshop for the creation of audio resources by teachers. Vanita Chopra offers two activities in the classroom where students use WhatsApp and Youtube for developing English vocabulary and sentences besides other skills.

Iqbal Judge's interview of Professor Joga Singh captures the contributions of Joga Singh to the Punjabi language. The interview travels through the Professor's academic work on linguistics, his advocacy efforts for mother tongue education and his views on English language education.

The contributions of Krashen, Mason and McQuillan, Prodipta Bhattacharjee and Lina Mukhopadhyay, Kalpana and Lavanya and, Gitanjali Chawla focus on other issues.

Krashen and others in their article question the claim that reading abilities among young Japanese are in decline. They stress on the need for a more detailed and careful analyses before jumping to such a conclusion. Prodipta and Lina study how the concept of quantification of 'Every' develops in 5-7-year-old ESL learners. The findings reveal that children do not differentiate between transitive and intransitive frames. The writing difficulties of Ph.D scholars in Engineering Colleges is assessed by Kalpana and Lavanya. They recommend changes in the English curriculum to enhance the writing skills of students. Gitanjali discusses the criticality of mentoring teachers as a means of professional development in the backdrop of National Education Policy 2020. Veena Kapur reviews the book on *Making and Using Word Lists for Language Learning and Testing* by I.S.P. Nation. She attributes the value of the book to three aspects, the detailed theoretical framework, the research details and the practical implications of the book for practitioners and course designers. The anthology *Language and Identity: Selected Papers of Robert B. Le Page*, edited by Rama Kant Agnihotri, Mahendra Kishore Verma and Vandana Puri, is reviewed by Udaya Narayana Singh. Prof Singh shows how the book is of interest to theoretical linguists, scholars interested in empirical work in pidgin and creole studies and to readers interested in language issues in general. Rajni details out the process of teaching prepositions in a way that is full of fun as well as meaning.

Articles

Two Programmes to Demonstrate the Use of Digital Technology in Language Learning

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Anand works with IT for Change in Bangalore. His work focusses on the meaningful appropriation of digital technologies for social change. He has been working with government and government-aided high school teachers and student teachers to innovate on language pedagogies through the integration of digital technologies. His work reflects his interest in multilingual approaches to language learning, as well as resource and activity-rich learning environments in the classroom and outside it.

Key Words: Multilingual approaches to language learning. Digital technologies, Digital resources, Student-teacher interaction, Classroom learning

Abstract

The study presented here is part of an extensive study conducted by IT for Change between 2015 and 2017, across 16 government schools in south Bengaluru. This paper discusses the findings from four of these schools. Through a discussion of two programmes, the paper shows how digital technology can be used effectively in the classroom to enhance the language competencies of students. The programmes were designed collaboratively with teachers. The study captures the opinion of four teachers, who were collaborative partners in the study. The paper concludes that appropriately designed digital tools enable students to learn a language and helps to foster collaboration and leadership qualities among them. This is a revised version of the paper presented at the seminar "Teachers in the Scenario of School Education", held at Mysore in April 2018.

Introduction

Meaningful use of digital technology in language learning helps to develop essential language skills and provides opportunities to all students to participate equally in learning. It enables students to think and speak spontaneously and foster a learner-centric classroom learning experience. This paper is part of a study jointly conducted by IT for Change and language teachers in 16 government high schools in South Bengaluru from 2015 to 2017 (Annual Report 2014-15). Of these, four schools located respectively in Dommalur, Ejipura, Jayanagar and Tank Garden were selected for this paper. The purpose of the study was to demonstrate to teachers how to use digital resources such as mobile phones, computers, and some self-made online language applications through two programmes that use digital tools for enhancing the language skills of students.

The study was conducted in four Urdu medium schools in class 8 with Kannada as the second language. The paper describes how digital media was used to enhance the language competencies of students and improve their leadership and collaborative skills. The study started with a baseline assessment of the listening, speaking, reading and writing abilities of students. The findings of the baseline assessment are not presented here since it is not the purpose of the study to evaluate the impact of digital resources on the language competencies of students. The paper consists of two parts; the first part discusses the use of digital resources in the two Information and Communication Technology (ICT) programmes, namely, *Nudi Sampada* [A treasure trove of words] and *Bhitti* [Newsletter]. The second part of the paper discusses the teachers' views on how these two ICT programmes have influenced students.

Design of the Programmes

The two programmes are based on the belief that the use of technology in language learning is a pedagogical process rather than a technology process. The design of the programmes reflects the four pedagogical principles of the National Curriculum Framework (2005) namely,

- (i) to link knowledge with outside school environments,
- (ii) to focus on meaning-making (and not rote memorization),
- (iii) to enrich the curriculum by going beyond textbooks, and
- (iv) to adapt assessment practices to classroom learning and specific needs of students.

The State curriculum was analysed, and curricular adjustments were made to suit a specific classroom and levels of learning to support the pedagogical process. The curricular analysis and adjustments were conducted by a team which comprised language specialists, teachers from the school under study, teachers from other schools and members of the study team. The emphasis was on using a variety of digital formats such as audio, image, video and text, to strengthen language skills.

The Process

The two ICT programmes, *Nudi Sampada* and *Bhitti*, were jointly developed by our team and the teachers. Since the team had been working with the teachers for over two years, the teachers were familiar with the digital resources as well as the members of our team. This familiarity proved helpful in jointly developing the design of the programme. The teachers suggested that the programme was suitable for Class 8 students since they were not burdened with preparing for the Senior Secondary Leaving Certificate Examination (SSLC). The teachers

explained the programme to the students of Class 8 and provided support to them throughout its implementation. They also helped to publish the output of the programmes. The two programmes are briefly detailed as follows.

Nudi Sampada [A Treasure Trove of Words]

The *Nudi Sampada* Programme was implemented in class 8, at the Dommaluru School. The purpose of the programme was to increase the repository of words and creative expressions through digital quizzes and poetry recitals. The students took responsibility for the creation of digital quizzes for other students of their class and in a few other classes. They consulted books in the library and went through the textbooks of 6, 7 and 8 classes to create quizzes along with their answers. They also motivated students of other classes (6, 7, 8, and 9) to participate in the digital poetry recital programme using audio resources. These activities allowed for creative self-expression, mutual dialogue, exchange of ideas, and social adjustment among students. Students of other classes (6, 7, 8 and 9) who did not participate were invited as audiences for such recitals and quizzes.

The students enjoyed the process of creating quizzes. They also got a lot of admiration and praise from other students. These two experiences contributed to an increase in the use of digital resources. Besides the quizzes and the poetry recital, the students also took responsibility for the publication of the resources at the end of the programme. With the help of teachers, they uploaded videos of quizzes, poetry and other digital resources. The use of technology added a fresh dimension to pedagogy and sparked the students' engagement with learning.

Bhitti [Newsletter]

The second programme under ICT was that of the school magazine at Dommaluru School called *Bhitti*. Digital media was used for content collection for the magazine. Here again, students took the lead. They decided the content and were also responsible for creating and distributing it. The teachers facilitated these sessions. The editorial team functioned on a rotation basis, which ensured that every child got the opportunity to be part of the editorial team. The content of the magazine consisted of hand-written pieces in any language the students felt comfortable in, along with relevant photographs. Writings in several languages paved the way for multilingual learning and learning beyond textbooks. With the help of teachers, the hand-written content was converted to digital content and the digital version of the magazine was prepared. The magazines were then distributed to other schools through WhatsApp and Telegram. Subsequently the magazines were published on the school's website.

Learning from the Two Programmes

The two programmes show that digital resources such as audio and video clips, images, and text provide multiple possibilities for students to meet the core competencies of language. For instance, students used mobile phones and computers to listen to songs and stories, to record songs, replay and edit sounds, recite or retell them, as well as download and print them. Digital tools were also used to display and discuss images and videos, create word lists and write short essays using these lists. These digital resources simultaneously catered to the needs of multiple language-speaking groups in the same class. Students were motivated to write on any topic in any language they felt comfortable in. After

participating in this programme, the eagerness to learn was markedly visible among students. The number of students who completed their homework increased, and more students were able to express themselves in class without hesitation. A few students who were having difficulties in word identification were able to write simple words.

The use of digital resources enhanced the self-expression among the students. For example, students listened to an audio description of how a thief was caught by a policeman while trying to enter a house. They first imagined the story, then said it out loud, and finally wrote about it. The opportunity to write based on their imagination allowed for a more creative expression. The use of digital resources also created opportunities for students to develop leadership capabilities, coordination and collaboration skills. It gave students a distinct advantage compared to traditional classes without access to such resources.

Teachers' Opinion

We talked to teachers who were part of the digital study team to get a flavour of their opinion on the use of digital resources for language teaching. The teachers gave their opinion in Kannada. The highlights from the teacher's responses have been paraphrased in English and presented as follows. The real names of teachers have been used here, with their consent.

- Kannada teacher of Tank Garden School - Srimala Bhatt

The digital resources focused on teaching concepts with an emphasis on understanding, creative expression and appreciation in Kannada, English, and Urdu, and on allowing students to express their opinions. Students listened to bird and animal sounds and were asked to identify them. To improve their writing abilities, students used digital technology to create a sequence of pictures and talk

about the story conveyed by them. This process triggered and sustained the interest of students. The use of digital resources also allowed the use of multiple languages and made learning more effective.

For the Kannada version of this teacher's opinion, click on https://karnatakaeducation.org.in/KOER/en/index.php/GUHS_Tank_Garden#.E0.B2.95.E0.B2.A8.E0.B3.8D.E0.B2.A8.E0.B2.A1.2FKannada.

- Head Teacher of Tank Garden Urdu High School - Nahid Fatima

In the beginning, our students were struggling to read Kannada. Now, their reading has improved slightly. One can say that the use of digital technology has brought about this change.

- Kannada teacher of Ejipura Government High School - Saroja

I had earlier thought that digital technology lessons were limited to math and science. However, after learning the possibilities of using it for teaching various aspects of language as well, my enthusiasm has increased. There is certainly a change in students' learning.

For knowing more about teachers' opinion on digital technology and the community of learning, click on these two links:

- a) <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqgyxozUJgAxjBoSJNKbqWA>
- b) https://karnatakaeducation.org.in/KOER/en/index.php/GHS_Dommaluru#.E0.B2.B6.E0.B2.BF.E0.B2.95.E0.B3.8D.E0.B2.B7.E0.B2.95.E0.B2.B0.E0.B3.81.E0.B2.97.E0.B2.B3_.E0.B2.A8.E0.B3.81.E0.B2.A1.E0.B2.BF_.2F_Teacher_speak

Challenges

Despite the potential of technology in teaching, learning, discussion and evaluation, there are specific challenges. These include erratic power supply, lack of access to computers and internet in schools, scheduling problems due to lack of extra classrooms, lack of awareness of technology, inadequate knowledge of

integrating technology in the curriculum and the limited scope of seeing immediate results from the use of technology for learning. These challenges, however, do not undermine the value of integrated technology pedagogy as a meaningful approach to learning.

Conclusions

- This study shows the value of integrating technology with pedagogy. The creation of a digital learning resource environment made it possible for each student to participate in the learning process.
- The group activities, interactions, discussions, debates, and analyses conducted by the children facilitated collaborative learning in the classroom.
- This approach helped students reach their potential, overcome their shyness

or initial hesitation. It also closed the gap between teachers and students and increased their joint engagement in the learning process.

- School teachers reported an improvement in attendance as well as greater interest among students to learn.
- When compared to other approaches, it may not be out of place to say that a technology-based pedagogical approach is more teacher and learner-friendly.

The use of technology in pedagogy is full of challenges. Notwithstanding these challenges the technology-pedagogy integration is scalable since most schools in the city have computer and internet facilities, allowing them to adopt this approach. The main requirement is for teachers to be familiar with the use of ICT for pedagogical purposes.

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Using Worksheets to Facilitate Reading and Writing

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Key Words: Reading, Writing, Standard language, Local dialect, Facilitation, Worksheet, Traditional and meaning-making approaches to language teaching, Surpur Taluk

Abstract

This study demonstrates to school teachers the use of worksheets in facilitating reading and writing. It was conducted with Class One students across five Government Schools in Surpur Taluk of Yadgir district, Karnataka. The designing of the worksheets and its use have been outlined in the article. The children, however, were not very engaged with reading and writing when these worksheets were used. The reason for their disengagement was attributed to the gap between the Kannada dialect spoken at home and the standard Kannada used in textbooks. This learning was used to redesign the worksheet using words that are common to dialect and standard Kannada. The children were more responsive when the new version of the worksheet was used. It is concluded that the designing of the worksheet requires knowledge of the linguistic resources that children bring to the classroom.

This is a modified version of the paper presented at the seminar "Teachers in the Current Scenario of School Education" held at Mysore in April 2018.

Introduction

In Surpur Taluk of Yadgir district, many students struggle to learn reading and writing Kannada, even though they speak a dialect of Kannada at home. When children come to school, they come with the knowledge of the sounds of their language, which they combine to make words and sentences, and use language creatively. The rules of Kannada grammar are inherent in their utterances. Nevertheless, students find it difficult to read and write the standard Kannada used in textbooks.

The approach to teaching standard Kannada generally consists of introducing Kannada alphabets as isolated letters, joining vowels and consonants, clustering the letters (*ottakshara*), putting these together to make words, sentences and texts. Students taught in this way rarely achieve their expected grade-level competencies. For instance, when a picture of a monkey climbing a tree is shown to a child with the accompanying sentence, “ಕೋತಿಮರವಿರಾಕತ್ತೆತಿ” /kootimaraeraakataiti/ [a monkey is climbing a tree] children tend to pronounce “ಕೋ”/Ko/ as “ಕೈ”/Kai/, and say /kaiti/ instead of /kooti/[monkey]. Another fallout of the students learning the alphabet in an isolated manner is that some of them tend to use their fingers to spell out the alphabets. So “ಕೆ”/Ka/ is represented by the index finger, “ಕಾ”/Kaa/ the next finger, and so on. When these alphabets occur in words, the children try to recall the alphabets using their fingers. For example, in the word “ಮರ”/mara/ [tree], they try to recall the position of “ಮ” /ma/ on their finger and read it either as “ವ”/v/ or “ಯ”/y/. Hence this isolated approach to learning Kannada is not very useful for reading.

By Grades 6 or 7, students can decode the text, but they still have difficulties in using the language for tasks such as analysing, explaining, describing, arguing their views,

expressing their ideas, responding to news in the newspaper and reasoning. The point to be emphasized is that the conventional approach to teaching alphabets may not work with all children. When teachers are asked why students struggle to use language for expressing their ideas, typically one gets a response, ‘*we have done our duty. Children can read and write, if children are not able to think, we cannot help them.*’

Language learning is not merely to do with alphabets and words. Understanding what is read and expressing ideas through language is part of the competencies that children must acquire. The question then arises, how to facilitate reading and writing so that children acquire these competencies. The following section presents an approach to reading and writing based on meaning-making.

Using Meaning-Making as an Approach to Facilitate Reading and Writing

Reading and writing are not merely decoding and encoding skills; and they deal with meaning-making. From this viewpoint, the primary requirement of language learning is to help children make connections between the written language in school and their environment which includes names of shops, signboards, street names, picture posters, words on packing materials (tooth paste box, soap powder covers), to mention a few. All of these can be used to teach the written language. In addition, drawings, word pictures, sentences and sequential illustrations can be used for written language learning. With this as the basis, we developed worksheets to demonstrate to teachers on how reading and writing can be taught by using words familiar to

children. We worked in collaboration with the teachers of five schools in Surpur Taluk. Students of class one participated in the study.

Why Worksheet as an Approach?

According to Lesley & Labbo (2003), worksheets are the driving force of curriculum. Studies have shown the value of workbooks in teaching reading (Barry, 2005). Teachers use worksheets to support and encourage active learning. In the Indian school context, teachers are familiar with the concept of worksheets and workbooks. This study leverages on the familiarity and uses the worksheet approach to teach reading and writing. The design of the worksheet however has a role to play in the learning process. Sasmaz-Oren & Ormanci (2012) claim that a well-designed worksheet improves the achievement levels of students. Therefore, the design of our worksheet was carefully thought through. First, the principles guiding the design were discussed with the teachers and co-workers, and then detailed.

Designing the Worksheet

The assumptions that guided the worksheet design are as follows:

- Children learn from the process of constructing language
- Children learn to read words using already known letters
- Children learn language in an arbitrary order and not linearly
- Children can begin writing with any random letter and not necessarily the first letter of the alphabet
- Children acquire alphabets in the process of reading pictures and through writing
- Words that are common to the dialect and standard Kannada should be used











in the worksheet. This was later added as a part of the guiding principles.

The worksheet consisted of two columns. The first column had pictures and the second column provided space for writing. The children had to identify the picture in the first column and write the corresponding word in the second column and then read what they had written. The instruction on the worksheet stated, 'See the picture, write the word and then read out the word'. Some examples of words used in the worksheet were: "ಆಡು"/aaDu/[goat], "ಕಾಡು"/kaaDu/[forest], "ಕಾಗೆ"/kaage/[crow], "ಹೊಗೆ"/hoge/[smoke], "ಹೊಲ"/hola/[field], "ಮೊಲ"/mola/[rabbit], and so on (Table 1).

Table 1
Sample Worksheet

See the pictures, write the words and read

ಚಿತ್ರಗಳನ್ನು ನೋಡುತ್ತಾ ಪದಗಳನ್ನು ಬರೆ ಮತ್ತು ಓದು

ಚಿತ್ರಗಳು	ಪದಗಳು	ಚಿತ್ರಗಳು	ಪದಗಳು
	ಆ ಡು		ಕಾ _ _
	_ ಗೆ		ಯೊ _ _
	_ ಲ		ಮೊ _ _
	_ ಸ ರು		ಕೆ _ _ _
	ಕ _		_ ಳು

Since the children did not engage much with this worksheet, version two of the worksheet was designed in which the differences between the local Kannada dialect and standard Kannada were bridged. This second worksheet contained words that were common to the local dialect and standard Kannada.

Using the Worksheet

The process of using the worksheet was as follows:

(Teachers use the word 'sound' to refer to a 'syllable')

Teacher: (points to the first picture and asks), 'what do you see in this picture?'

Children: 'ಆಡು' /aaDu/[goat].'

Teacher: 'How many sounds (syllables) are there in the word 'ಆಡು' /aaDu/[goat]? What are they?'

Children: 'Two sounds, 'ಆ' /aa/ and 'ಡು' /Du/.'

Teacher: 'Which sound comes first, and which comes next?'

Children: 'First comes the 'ಆ' /aa/ sound, followed by the 'ಡು' /Du/sound.'

Teacher: Shows the written form given as an illustration and asks, 'Show me, which letter stands for the 'ಆ' /aa/ sound and the letter for the 'ಡು' /Du/sound?'

Children: Point to the letters that represent these two syllables.

In this way, children first learn two letters and further learning then is built on these two letters. The next picture is that of a forest "ಕಾಡು" /kaaDu/, and the second column has the letter "ಕಾ" /kaa/ followed by a blank. Children have already learnt the syllable "ಡು" /Du/ from the first word. With this prior knowledge, they complete the word "ಕಾಡು" /kaaDu/[forest], following the process outlined above. The third picture is that of a "ಕಾಗೆ" /kaage/[crow]. This word builds on the knowledge of the syllable /ka/ taught in the previous picture and anew syllable /ge/ is introduced. The worksheet builds a word chain, taking the children from the known to the unknown by introducing anew set of syllables at each stage, and helping them apply the knowledge of these syllables to the next picture. Such an approach triggers the curiosity of children as it encourages them to wonder which syllable they will learn next. Further, the children are initiated into reading and writing naturally and not as sequential processes.

The same process is followed for learning how to read and write sentences. For example:

The teacher shows the picture of a monkey climbing a tree and asks the children, 'what is the monkey doing?' The children answer "ಕೋಟಿಮರವರಾಕತ್ತೈತಿ" /kotimaraeerkataiti/ [The monkey is climbing a tree]. The teacher writes this sentence on the board and asks, 'now tell me, which is the first word in this sentence?' The children respond, "ಕೋಟಿ" /koti/[monkey]. The teacher then asks, 'Which is the second word?' In this way, the children read the entire sentence and then write it down, using their tacit knowledge of the rules of grammar.

Our informal conversations with the teachers of the Surpur government schools suggested that they felt motivated when they saw the demonstration of these worksheets and its impact on the learning of the children. One question that most of them asked was 'how many such worksheets should one prepare?' We used this question as an opportunity to deepen the teacher's knowledge of language learning. The discussion with the teachers went into the meaning of constructing knowledge of a language and what it entails. In the process of learning to read and write, the children are engaged in the cognitive processes of observing, comparing, predicting, identifying patterns, interpreting rules, and generalizing rules. In fact, the worksheet was prepared keeping all these processes in mind, so that children could learn to read and write on their own. As children acquire competencies in reading and writing, they move to a more abstract level of reading—reading without pictures. The role of a teacher is to create such learning opportunities. The worksheet is an example of such an opportunity. It is not necessary to use worksheets for all the alphabets. Instead, one can leverage on the cognitive processes that children use in reading and writing. Despite the success of the worksheet,

there was nevertheless a challenge in using it. The worksheet consisted of words in standard Kannada. When the children were asked to name the picture and words, they used the names from their dialect (Table 2)

Table 2
Dialect Words Used by Children in Place of Words in Standard Kannada

Words in standard Kannada	Words in the dialect used at home
ಆಡು[goat]/aaDu/	ಆಡ/aaDa/
ಕಾಡು[Forest]/kaaDu/	ಕಾಡ/kaaDa/
ಕಾಣಿ[Crow]/kaage/	ಕಾಣಿ/kaagi/

Discussing their answers with the teachers gave us an insight into the process of bridging the gap between standard Kannada and the local dialect.

Process of Bridging Standard Kannada with the Local Dialect

The insight we gained from discussions with the teachers was that the worksheet should reflect the words used in the local dialect rather than standard language. In collaboration with the teachers, the textbooks were examined once again and a list of words that were common to the local dialect and standard Kannada was prepared, for example, "ಕೋತಿ"/kooti/ [monkey], "ಕುರಿ"/kuri/[goat], "ಕೋಳಿ"/kooLi/ [chicken], "ನರಿ"/nari/[fox], and so on. These words were used to redesign the worksheet. The process of using the worksheet remained the same. We found that worksheets that use words common to dialect and standard Kannada made it easier for the children to acquire Kannada words and alphabets. Once they had acquired a few alphabets and words, the children used them to learn other words and alphabets in the standard Kannada. The children were able to identify, read

and write these alphabets even when they occurred in other words. In our view, there is no need to introduce all the alphabets one by one. The ability to analyze sounds or syllables or alphabets based on patterns and analogy makes it easier for children to learn new words.

The teachers felt that that the worksheet approach to reading and writing helped the children acquire language more effectively. To sum up, in the words of one of the teachers of a Surpur school, 'We struggle to teach these competencies to children of Class three. But you have succeeded in teaching these competencies to Class one students, and that too within a time frame of two months, helping them move to reading simple sentences.'

Disseminating Meaning-Based Approach to Reading and Writing

We worked with teachers of five primary schools across Surpur Taluk. The worksheets were used to teach standard Kannada. These were designed in collaboration with teachers to familiarize them with the processes involved in designing and using worksheets. The teachers saw the influence of the worksheet approach on the language competencies of students. Once the teachers were reasonably convinced of the effectiveness of this approach, we then shared and discussed it with a larger group of about 60 other teachers who came to the Kekkera Teacher Learning Centre (TLC) for their evening discussions. The teachers of the five schools, who used this approach led the discussion, and talked of its effectiveness, challenges, time duration, and their preparation. The TLC discussion prompted several teachers to see the value in the worksheet approach. The other primary school teachers (who were not a part of

the study) also began to use and design worksheets to teach competencies related to reading and writing.

Conclusion

The role of the teacher is critical in facilitating learning opportunities for students. For this, they must appreciate

the linguistic resources that children bring to the classroom, value them and plan and facilitate learning around these resources. This approach to developing literacy is more effective since it connects to the environment of the children (including their linguistic environment) and enhances the meaningfulness of reading and writing.

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Research Writing Skills of Ph.D. Scholars Across Engineering Disciplines: Supervisors' Perceptions of Writing Difficulties

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Key Words: Writing skills, Writing difficulties, Engineering research reports, Ph.D. theses, Supervisors' perceptions

Abstract

Drafting research reports for a Ph.D. thesis or a publication pose challenges to many researchers. This study assesses the writing skills of 56 Ph.D. research scholars from three leading engineering colleges in Tamil Nadu, India, using a standardised test scale (CEFR). It also presents the perceptions of 48 supervisors on the writing skills of the research scholars and the difficulties faced by them. The data has been analysed quantitatively. Finally, the study proposes recommendations for improving the writing skills of Ph.D. scholars.

Introduction

One of the crucial aspects of conducting and publishing research is adhering to conventions of research writing. This type of writing entails drafting technical documents; synthesizing earlier research; presenting the data analysed and the results inferred; drawing conclusions; making recommendations; composing research reports with clarity and finesse; and adhering to conventions of grammar, style and other aspects of academic writing. Generally, scholars in the sciences and engineering tend to receive less practice in academic writing as compared to those in humanities and social sciences (Kayfetz & Almeroth, 2008).

Various studies have examined the writing difficulties faced by engineering students (Evangeline & Ganesh 2016; Gengsheng & Xin, 2015). These studies report that engineering students make grammatical errors and lack the vocabulary required to present their ideas. For instance, according to Evangeline and Ganesh (2016), many students do not understand the difference between 'remember' and 'remind'. The motivation for this research stems from such findings on writing difficulties. We presume that an examination of the writing skills of scholars and the perceptions of their supervisors will offer some insights into the writing difficulties faced by them.

Literature Survey

Aliotta (2018) lists some of the typical conventions of academic writing: a well-defined, recognizable structure, a formal tone free from colloquialisms, writing centred on objectives and experimental evidence, an accurate choice of words that avoid ambiguity, an analytical approach that presents a logical and a

sequential flow of argument. Hyland (2002) highlights the variations in academic writing based on genre as well as on disciplines.

Acknowledging the importance of writing in English across different disciplines, scholars in India talk of the need to revamp the English curriculum (Evangeline & Ganesh, 2014) to focus more on building technical writing skills rather than on the literature. Although we had some knowledge of the writing difficulties faced by students, nevertheless, we wanted to assess writing skills in the context of Tamil Nadu, expecting that the findings would throw some light on the competencies as well as the problems that are barriers to effective research-writing, and provide directions for improvement. While most of the studies are from the researchers' viewpoint, this study considers the supervisors' perception of the difficulties as well.

To assess the written competencies of students, this study uses the international benchmark standards of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). This scale classifies language proficiency into six levels which are regrouped into three broad levels, namely, Basic (A1, A2); Independent (B1, B2); and Proficient (C1, C2) levels. Each level is accompanied by descriptive statements of abilities that the test-takers at a certain level display.

Research Questions

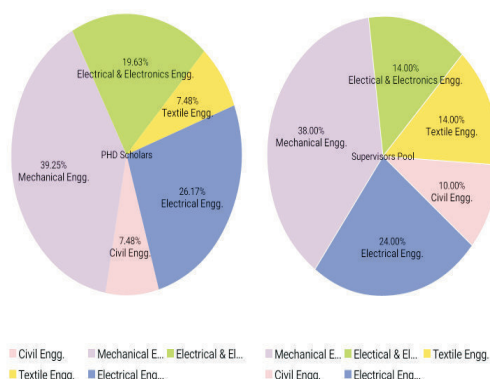
The study addressed the following research questions:

- a) What are the writing competencies of Ph.D. scholars according to the CEFR levels?
- b) What are the supervisors' perceptions of the writing problems that the scholars face?

Research Design

The participants consisted of 56 research scholars and 48 Ph.D. supervisors from three engineering colleges, namely, PSG College of Technology and Coimbatore Institute of Technology (CIT), both located in Coimbatore, and Bannari Amman Institute of Technology, Sathyamangalam, Tamil Nadu. The distribution of the sample is given in Pie Chart 1. The participants enrolled voluntarily following due ethical processes.

Pie Chart 1
Distribution of the Participants



IELTS Tasks 1 and 2 were chosen because science or engineering reports require scholars to interpret graphs or describe their findings and argue for their point of view in the discussion section of their thesis or a research paper. The third was a summarizing task from PTE and was chosen because scholars are required to read written research and summarize the findings. The fourth task, an IELTS Task 2 on a general topic was given to assess knowledge of generic conventions of writing and the ability to build a cogent argument. We presumed that the responses of the candidates to these tasks would give a fair sample of the writing abilities of the scholars.

Assessing Supervisors' Perception of the Writing Difficulties Faced by Students

Research supervisors are primarily responsible for correcting the papers of the research scholars. In this study, the supervisors were asked to rate the frequency with which they come across problematic areas in their students' writing on a ten-point scale for the seven criteria, namely, (i) Vocabulary (Technical and General), (ii) Flow Cohesion and Clarity, (iii) Grammar, (iv) Meta-discoursal aspects (summing up, raising reader expectation on what will come), (v) Formal academic style, (vi) Sentence structure and word order, (vii) Mechanics of writing (Punctuation, numbering and the use of abbreviations). A rating of 1 was given to the most frequently encountered difficulty and a rating of 10 was for the least frequently encountered difficulty

Test Items

The following tasks from the official print and online sources of two widely accepted standardized tests, the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) and Pearson Test of English (PTE) was administered to assess and determine the writing levels of Ph.D. scholars.

- Interpretation of a graph (IELTS Academic Task 1)
- Interpretation of a process diagram (IELTS Academic Task 1)
- Summarizing Task (PTE Academic)
- Essay talking about the advantages and disadvantages (IELTS Academic Task 2)

Findings: Assessment Using the CEFR Framework

The written responses of the scholars were assessed by three experienced language professionals, who had a good understanding of CEFR scales. The results of the assessment have been presented in Table 1, as follows:

Table 1
Results of CEFR Levels of Writing Skills of the Research Scholars

CEFR levels: A brief description	CEFR levels of research scholars	Percentage of research scholars
A1: Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type.	A1	0%
A2: Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.	A2	2%
	Between A1 and A2	3%
B1: Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar, or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions, and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.	B1	86%
B2: Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.	B2	8%
	Between B1 and B2	Nil
C1: Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects showing controlled use of organizational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.	C1	1%
C2: Can summarize information from different spoken and written sources and reconstruct arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation.	C2	0%
Can express themselves spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, and differentiate between finer shades of meaning even in complex situations.		

Table 1 clearly shows that out of the 58 research scholars, 86 per cent show B1 Level competency; 8 per cent show B2 level competency. Although B1 and B2 levels share similar competencies, B2 level is more advanced. Students at this level provide a more detailed descriptions and make nuanced arguments about the advantages and disadvantages of various options. Very few (1 per cent) have a C1 level competency wherein their text on complex subjects are organized with connections and use of appropriate cohesive devices. This is the mastery level

of language competency. These findings show that most of the research scholars are independent users of English and need to work towards mastery level.

Findings: Perception of Supervisors

The ratings of the supervisors help us to understand their perceptions of the difficulties faced by the scholars. A rating of 1 was given to the most frequently encountered difficulty and a rating of 10

was for the least frequently encountered difficulty. The results of this appraisal are presented in Table 2, the last column of which gives the weighted average, which is more accurate than the general

average. The sum row presents the sum of weighted rankings, i.e., $(17 \times 1 + 13 \times 2 + 4 \times 3 + \dots = 135)$ divided by adding the ranks assigned for difficulty $(1+2+3+4+5+6+7+8+9+10=55)$.

Table 2
Frequency of Difficulties in Students' Writing According to Supervisors' Perceptions

Criteria	#1 (most frequent difficulty)	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10 (least frequent difficulty)	Sum	Weighted average (percentage in brackets)
Vocabulary	17	13	4	4	3	3	2	1	1	0	135/55	2.45 (24.5)
Flow, cohesion and clarity	12	15	5	5	4	2	0	1	3	1	154/55	2.80(28)
Grammar	9	11	7	5	5	4	5	0	1	1	175/55	3.18 (31.8)
Metadiscoursal aspects	0	1	1	3	3	3	9	7	9	11	360/55	6.55 (65.5)
Formal academic style	3	1	2	4	8	6	0	11	6	7	315/55	5.73 (57.3)
Sentence structure and word order	0	4	5	8	8	4	6	7	6	0	271/55	4.93 (49.3)
Mechanics of writing	0	0	1	1	0	0	3	2	6	35	448/55	8.15(81.5) (81.5)

The findings show that according to the supervisors, vocabulary was the most problematic area for students, followed by flow, cohesion and clarity, and then by grammar. The frequency of difficulties in the remaining areas are considerably lower, with the mechanics of writing being the least problematic. The finding that vocabulary is the most difficult aspect of writing for engineering students is like the findings reported by Evangeline and Ganesh (2016). Most of the students in this study have reached the B1 level of competency. To meet the expectations of technical and academic writing, they must make a leap from B1 to at least B2 level, after which they can enrol for customized programmes on research

writing to equip them with advanced level research-writing skills.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Considering the criticality of writing in engineering courses, the performance of the researchers in this sample show a scope for improvement. If the English course in engineering colleges does not prepare students for writing scientific and technical texts, then the employability of students are drastically reduced. The inadequate English language competencies of the students will also act as a barrier to contributing to the field

of engineering. As mentioned in the beginning, what is needed is a change in the curriculum and CEFR gives a direction to the change based on the benchmark. It articulates the expectations at various levels and suggests what needs to be done for students to go to the next level. Tono (n.d.) discusses three e-tools or apps that can be used to address the vocabulary problem in accordance with the CEFR levels. These are:(i) The Flash Card Vocabulary Builder, (ii) The Can-Do-Sentence Builder and (iii) The Can-Do Task-Based Spoken/Written Corpus Collection Tool. Students can use these tools to learn independently. Some scholars have made a plea for redefining English curriculum in accordance with the CEFR framework, so that students are guided through the different levels of competencies (Üstünlüoğlu, Zazaoğlu, Keskin, Sarayköylü & Akdoğan, 2012; Arslan, 2017). The intention of this study is not to suggest that this is the only direction available to improve English language competencies of engineering students. A few other solutions could be introducing an intensive course in academic writing with due credits in the course work, setting up writing centres in institutions with the help of language departments, assigning language mentors, etc.It is emphasized that

cosmetic changes may not be feasible. Instead a systematic, structured framework not only guides the assessment of competencies, but also suggests the steps for improvement.

Limitations of the Study and Scope for Future Work

For assessment purposes, we used only tests that were available in the exam materials and not under very strict exam conditions A more intensive and reliable real-time test under a strictly timed exam would have yielded more reliable test scores. Further, level testing could have been done more than once to ascertain the proficiency levels of the scholars. In some cases, supervisors themselves were mainly at the B2 level, with a very few at borderline C1 Level. Hence, it is difficult to know if they could articulate the difficulties faced by the students in their entirety. Future research work can focus on testing broader samples. A strategy study on the efforts made by scholars to hone their research skills during multiple revisions of their drafts could be another area of study.

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What Does it Take for Children to Link Words to Their Grammar? A Study on Learning Universal Quantification

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Key Words: Determiners, 'Every' as a universal quantifier, Numerical quantifiers, Universal grammar

Abstract

It is a matter of great wonder how children can link words with grammar and make appropriate sentences. Achieving this in a second language is equally remarkable. For example, words or phrases used to express quantification—every, all, some, none—refer to some numbers or sets of individuals/objects that do not have ready referents in the real world, unlike the referents of lexical noun phrases (NPs) such as “Rita”, “the blue book”. So, learning the meaning of quantification noun phrases (QNPs) or their scope in sentences is a complex task. In this paper, we will report a study conducted on thirty 5 to 7-year-old ESL learners' understanding of the scope of “every”. The implications of the findings for ESL teaching are briefly discussed.

Introduction

What leads children to link words to grammar? In their mother tongue, children begin to demonstrate this link by the time they are 24 months old, when they produce two-word utterances by combining nouns and verbs. Research in language acquisition in children bears testimony to the fact that children master their first language by the age of 4 or 5 years, when linking between words and their grammar becomes quite robust. This linking, according to Brown (1973), is possible because human beings are endowed with an innate language learning capacity. This capacity allows children to link words according to the corresponding rules of grammar (word order, pluralization, tense usage, etc.), thereby lending meaning to their utterances. Alongside, children keep acquiring lexicon from the linguistic environment, they are exposed to. This process helps to increase their repertoire of vocabulary and gradually build a mental network of lexicon, and connect to relevant grammar (Gentner, 1982).

Children also learn to use complex vocabulary in a semantically appropriate manner and acceptable grammatical sentences. For instance, some vocabulary items need them to understand the logico-semantic meanings of determiners such as 'the' or quantifiers 'all' or 'none' and apply their meanings in sentences. These items are particularly difficult because they do not have ready reckoners; their logical referents are not present in the external world, unlike lexical NPs such as 'John' or 'an apple'. Establishing the links between vocabularies, their logical interpretation and application in grammar involves the working of the innate language faculty, also known as the Universal Grammar (UG) (Chomsky, 1957).

In this paper, we propose to study the development of the logico-semantic properties of specific kinds of NPs and

QNPs, and their referential interpretation. We will also study the knowledge of quantification in young ESL learners in India to understand how children establish abstract and complex links between word meaning and their grammar for which they never receive any explicit instruction.

Quantifiers in English

In a language, there are various kinds of NPs. Of them, lexical NPs such as 'a blue chair' or 'Mr. Krishnan' have a one-to-one mapping of the form to a unique referent, namely a real object or a person in the external world. The reference is a perceptually salient feature that a child can easily extract from the environment; therefore, the acquisition of concrete nouns happens quite early in children (Gentner, 1982). Pronominal NPs, such as 'he', 'him', 'his book', fall in the second NP category, and they derive their reference from other NPs present and as understood from a discourse. Nevertheless, this category is more abstract as a child needs to attach a syntactic value of co-referencing to retrieve the actual referent of each pronominal NP from the context of its use. The third kind of NPs are quantifying NPs (QNPs). These are of two types:

Numerical quantifiers: For example:

1a. One cat has whiskers.

1b. Three cats have whiskers.

Determiner quantifiers – Such as most, many, every, each, all, none, any, a/an – that can be expressed as 1(c-d). Some examples include (Chierchia & McConnell-Ginet, 2000, pp. 113-114):

1c. Every cat has whiskers.

1d. All cats have whiskers.

In this paper, we will look at the learning of the determiner quantifier 'every'.

A QNP has two parts: the first is the quantity it denotes (e.g. all, none, a, an) and the second is the corresponding individuals or members that it refers to. What delimits the referents of the QNPs is not clear from the context. It therefore involves a cognitive understanding of the quantity that a QNP such as 'every' specifies. To understand the quantity entailed by 'every', a child must understand the concept of 'a set' or 'collection of objects', and the 'referents' to which they are bound. In other words, the quantifier can 'delimit' its referential meaning or 'scope' in a grammatical sentence. For example:

2a. Everyone likes Loren.

The semantic content of this sentence can be expressed in a truth-condition manner in (2a') as:

2a'. John likes Loren, James likes Loren, Mary likes Loren . . .

If the domain of discourse only involves these three people, then "everyone" in (2a') refers to all of them. However, if there are some additional individuals for consideration who like Loren, then such individuals would also be referred to in (2a'). Thus, understanding the meaning of QNPs such as 'all', 'every' and 'none' involves an understanding of a collection of a set of entities and sometimes of the referents present within a set. So QNPs move beyond referring to specific properties of individuals to 'generalizing a set of properties to a set of referents' (a collection of individuals). This generalizable property of QNPs is crucial to link these words to their grammar, and is a part of Universal Grammar (UG). Children acquire such words and their links to L1 grammar by the time they are three years old.

Issues Faced by Children in Learning the Referential Meaning of 'Every'

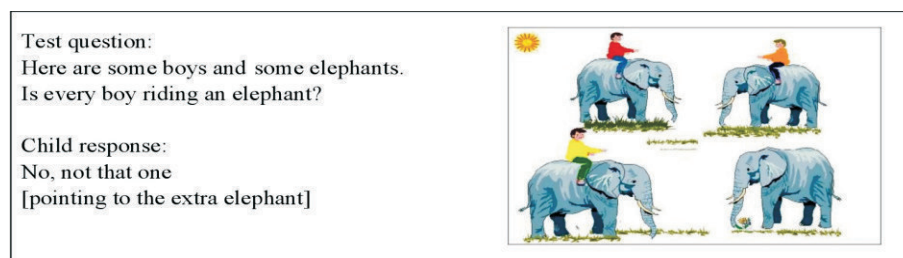
Young children's interpretation of the universal quantifier 'every' in English has been the subject of debate over the last 40 years. Children respond differently to sentences containing lexical NPs and quantifying NPs. Let us look at the following sentences to see how children interpret lexical versus quantifying NPs:

3a. John_i scratches him_i.

3b. Every boy_i scratches him_i.

Sentence (3a) requires overextending the referencing of the lexical NP 'John' to an antecedent not mentioned in the sentence. So, the lexical NP 'John' and the pronominal NP 'him' maybe interpreted by children to refer to the same individual or someone else. However, the adult interpretation is that they refer to two different individuals. Research shows that in (3b), the quantifying NP 'every boy' is not misinterpreted by children as they can distinguish between 'everyone' and 'him' to be from two different sets of individuals (Philip, 1995). An analysis of L1 quantification data (Inhelder & Piaget, 1964; Philip, 1995; Brooks & Braine, 1996; Crain & Thornton, 1998) supports the claim that children of various language backgrounds between the ages of three and five years, fail to correctly assign 'scope' to sentences with the universal quantifier 'every' (Figure 1)

Figure 1. Example item and a child's response (Crain & Thornton, 1998)



Children say 'NO' as they interpret sentences such as 'Every boy is riding an elephant' in a non-adult way. This is because when they find an extra object, in this case 'an elephant', they are not able to generalize that in the other three pictures wherever there is a boy, he is riding an elephant. So, the scope is over the event 'a boy riding an elephant'. The non-adult like interpretation is called the 'symmetrical interpretation' or a bias for a one-to-one mapping between the agent and the object. Children fail to fix the scope of 'every' across the entire event (e.g. a boy riding on an elephant) as a set.

The Study

We examined the young ESL learners' knowledge of the universal quantifier 'every'. Following Crain and Thornton (1998), we used their unique methodology of examining the knowledge of quantification for different types of verb frames. We looked at two frames: the transitive and the intransitive frames, to answer the question: Do ESL learners correctly interpret the referential property of 'every' in transitive and intransitive constructions?

Participants

Thirty children (16 girls, 14 boys), with the mean age of 7 years and 7 months (ranging between 5 years 5 months to 7 years 5 month) learning English as a second language participated in the study. They were enrolled in Grades I and II in two English medium schools in Hyderabad. They had Hindi, Bengali, Telugu, Kannada, Tamil and Malayalam as their L1s.

Methodology

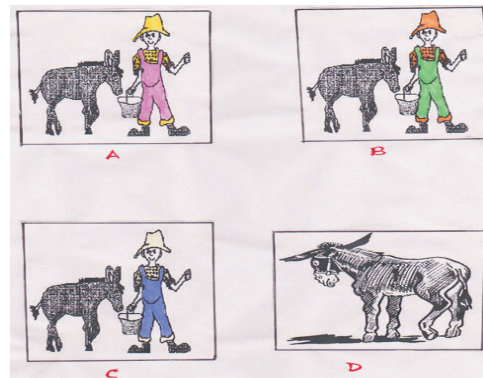
The task used to collect data was a picture based truth- value judgment task, adapted from a study by Crain and Thornton (1998). The comprehension of the scope of 'every' was tested across ten verbs (Table 1) using two frames (Figures 2 and 3)

Table 1
List of Verbs and Frames

Transitive Frames	Intransitive Frames
Is every farmer feeding a donkey?	Is every boy jogging ?
Is every man bathing a dog?	Is every bird flying ?
Is every woman holding a baby?	Is every girl drinking ?
Is every hunter riding a horse?	Is every woman cooking ?
Is every girl walking a dog?	Is every boy swimming ?

The students were given some cue cards. Each cue card had four panels, out of which three panels had pictures depicting actions, and the fourth panel had a picture indicating a static action with either an extra object or an extra subject condition.

Figure 2. Extra Same Object Condition



1. What do you see in the pictures?
2. Is every farmer feeding a donkey?
[adult answer is "yes"]

Figure 3. Extra Same Agent Condition



1. What do you see in the pictures?
2. Is every farmer feeding a donkey?
[adult answer "no"]

Findings

The overall performance of the 30 learners on all ten instances of the use of the universal quantifier 'every' was high, with the rejection of the 'extra agent' condition: 82 per cent for transitive frames and 86 per cent for intransitive frames. Looking at this performance, it seems that all children have knowledge of the scope of quantification and do not differentiate between transitive and intransitive frames.

However, in the extra 'object' condition of transitive verbs, the accuracy of response dropped to the range of 30 per cent to 10 per cent. The incorrect response occurred when children were unable to reject the condition and say 'yes, every farmer is feeding a donkey', as the last picture has only one donkey. This gives us evidence that children are applying the rule of the symmetrical bias that is found in L1 acquisition, and therefore are not able to detect the extra 'object' condition.

Further, the performance of children across the five transitive verbs showed that the application of the scope of 'every' is differential (Figures 4 and 5):

Figure 4.

Extra Same Agent Condition

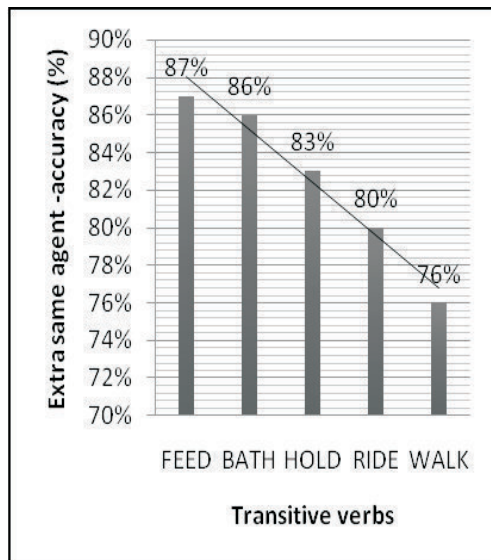
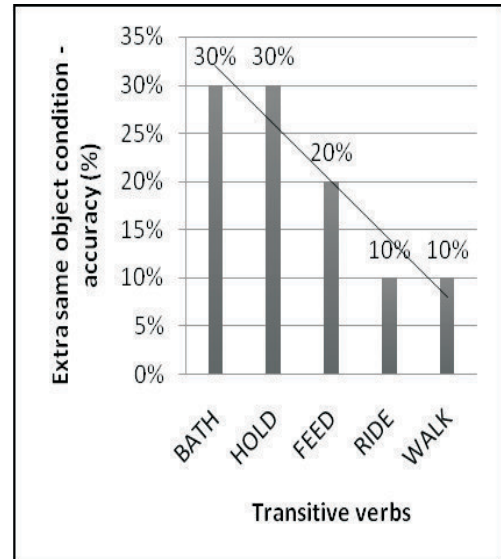


Figure 5.

Extra Same Object Condition



This finding highlights an interesting feature of the concept of quantification. The concept is tied to verb sub-types occurring in the transitive frames: verbs such as 'bath', 'hold' and 'feed' presupposes a 'patient/theme', whereas 'ride' and 'walk' are seen as unergative verbs (bodily action). This feature is conceptually available in both L1 and L2.

The responses of young ESL learners in our study indicates that they are at a stage where the referential properties of 'every' is still partial, as they are not able to interpret the extra 'object' condition. They will take more time to get the adult-like interpretation. Nevertheless, overall, the children's responses are systematic and prove that their knowledge of link words such as QNPs to their grammar is UG governed (for an advanced version of this study refer to Mukhopadhyay & Bhattacharya, 2020). Previous research on quantifiers in child language acquisition has shown that children use quantification in their spontaneous speech, not before two and a half years; and, even till five years of age, they continue to face difficulties in using sentences with quantifiers. This is because they find the interpretation of the distributive properties of quantifiers to be

very ambiguous (Philip, 1995; Brooks & Braine, 1996; Crain & Thornton, 1998). Quite naturally then, the problem of interpreting quantifiers and their scope poses a learning complexity for the second language development, even though exposure to quantification through L1 is early. So, research on English speaking children and ESL child learners reveals that quantification and its application to sentences is a challenging issue.

Conclusion

Based on the children's learning of referential properties of 'every', we would like to propose that ESL teachers consider

ways of building on the knowledge of this category of vocabulary, with its complex links between word meaning and grammar. To this end, they can focus on teaching grammar and the meaning of quantification in a contextualized manner. They can also design picture-based tasks and short story-based tasks to draw children's attention to the referential properties of quantifiers in an interesting and interactive manner. Task-based learning will be useful for concept learning and solving math word problems. Overall, drawing links between the meaning of phrases and their grammatical features make for an exciting area of exploration in the SL learning context.

Acknowledgement

We are thankful to all the children who participated in the study and to Professor R. Amritavalli and Professor Shruti Sircar for their valuable comments on this paper.

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Storytelling as a Pedagogical Tool to teach English in a Government Primary School

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Sonalika Garai is an English resource person at Azim Premji Foundation. She works mainly with English language teachers in government schools in Almora district of Uttarakhand. Her research focuses on trying to understand how the children of a remote hilly district acquire the third language, English, despite no exposure to it. While working with teachers, she tries to experiment with the process of learning English in children.

Key Words: Storytelling, Baat-cheet, Reading, Dramatization, Writing.

Abstract

This paper attempts to give an insight into how story telling can be used as a Pedagogical tool to develop English language competencies. This is an Action Research conducted in a Government School in Almora district of Uttarakhand, on 16 children of Classes Four and Five. The research shows how through storytelling, English vocabulary building, sentence construction, reading, writing and dramatization can be developed.

Introduction

Storytelling as a Pedagogical tool is being increasingly used in the classroom. As a Pedagogical tool, stories are told not just for entertainment or engagement but with certain educational purposes. In the study, the purpose of storytelling was to develop in children English language capabilities consisting of the ability to tell a story, develop vocabulary, construct sentences, increase reading and writing skills and be able to dramatize a story. This Action research was conducted in a government primary school in Almora district of Uttarakhand. 16 children of Classes Four and Five participated in the study, of whom 6 were fluent in reading in English, 6 were able to decode, while 4 had little knowledge of letters. The teachers were involved throughout the process of action research.

Preparation

Preparation for the study took almost one week, in which we worked two hours each day., I focused on two elements:

- Selection of the story: Krishna Kumar (n.d) talks of the competencies required for storytelling by teachers and discusses what should go into the selection of stories, for example, the story should be worth listening to, it should be relevant to life, students should be able to read it and so on. Based on these thoughts, an English story was selected, in which certain words and sentences occurred repeatedly (repeated words are given in italics in the story). The story was translated into Hindi.
- A day-specific plan was prepared from baat-cheet (discussion), for reading and writing.

Process

The selected story was first narrated to children accompanied by actions and gestures. On the first day, the story was

narrated in Hindi with a few English words and sentences. On subsequent days more of English began to be used. The story narrated to students is given below.

Once upon a time, an elephant lived in a jungle. He had no friend[s]. One day, in search of a friend, he went into the jungle. Suddenly, he met a monkey. The elephant said to the monkey, "brother monkey, brother monkey, will you be my friend?" The monkey said, "no, no, no, you are so big, I am so small. You can't swing like me. I will not be your friend". The elephant was very sad but the next day he went to search of friends again. He met a rabbit. The elephant said, "sister rabbit, sister rabbit, will you be my friend?" [The] rabbit said, "no, no, no, you are so big, I am so small. You can't enter my burrow. I will not be your friend". The elephant was very sad. Next day he met a frog. The elephant said, "brother frog, brother frog, will you be my friend?" The frog said, "no, no, no, you are so big. I am so small. You will squish me. I will not be your friend". The elephant was very sad. [The] next day, the elephant saw, all the animals running. The elephant asked the fox, "why are you running?" The fox said, "there is a lion, he wants to kill us and eat us". The elephant kicked the lion and the lion fell far away. All the animals became [sic] very happy and they made friends with the elephant.

Baat-Cheet (Discussion)

After narrating the story, I asked the students a few questions to start the discussion.

1. What do you think, why were the animals not making friends with the elephant?
2. What kinds of friends do you like?
3. What do you think of the elephant kicking the lion, was he right to do so?

The real names of children have been given hereafter seeking the teacher's

permission and the conversation recorded is as follows:

Some of the answers to the first question were:

Anjali and Somika of Class Five: */Kyonki haathi bahut bada tha aur baki janwar chote the, aur unko haathi se dar lagta hoga.* / [The elephant was very big and the other animals were small. They were probably afraid of the elephant.]

Babli and Sangeeta of Class Four: */Kyonki haathi aur khargosh mein to dosti nahin ho sakti.* / [An elephant and a rabbit cannot be friends.]

Me: Why?

Children: */Kyonki dosti samaan samaan mein hote hain.* / [Friendship happens between equals.]

Me: */Samaan samaan matalab?/* [Equal means?]

Children: */Matalab same size ka hona chaahie.* / [The size should be the same.]

Me: */To iska matalab jo tumse bade hote hai, unse dostee nahin karoge? Matalab mujhse dosti nahin karoge?/* [That means, you, you will not be friends with people older than you? You will not be friends with me?]

Kapil: */Kyon nahin karenge, aap se kar sakte hain.* / [No, we can be friends with you.]

Babli: */Mujhe jo achchha lagega usee se dosti karungee.* / [I will make friends only with people I like.]

Regarding the third question, the children had the following answers:

Divanshi: */Achchha kiya haathi ne. Sher ko maarana chaahiye.* / [The elephant was right. The lion should be killed.]

All the children agreed.

Me: */Achchha socho tum log apane pasandita chikan khaane ja rahe ho, tumhaare munh se kisee ne khaana chheen liya aur tumhen laat maar diya, to tumhen kaisa lagega?/* [Just think you are eating your favourite chicken dish and someone comes and snatches it away

from you and then kicks you. How would you feel?]

Children in chorus: */Bilkul achchha nahin lagega.* / [We will not like it at all.]

Kapil: */Main bhee use laat maar doonga.* / [I will kick him too.]

Me: */To phir haathi ne sher ke saath jo kiya woh theek kaise hai?/Usne to uske munh se khaana chheen liya.* / [Then how can what the elephant did be right? He snatched the food out of his mouth.]

The children thought for some time.

Babli: */Phir madam haathi ne galat kiya us sher ko laat nahin maarna tha.* / [Then what the elephant did was wrong. He should not have kicked the lion.]

Kapil: */Nahin sher ko maarna chaahiye. Pichhale haphte hamaara kutta uthaake le gaya. Mere saamne aaye to main maaroonga.* / [No, the lion should be killed. Last week it killed my dog. If it comes in front of me, I will kill it.]

Me: */Achchha tumhe kya lagta hai sher tumhaare ghar kyon aaya hoga? Use insaan achchha lagta hai kya?/* [Why do you think the tiger came to your house? Does he like humans?]

Anjali: */Nahin, sher bhee hamse darate hai.* / [No, the tiger is also afraid of us.]

Me: */Phir? socho, har saal jangal mein ham aag laga dete hainna?/* [Just think, every year we set fire to the jungle.]

Me: */To, sher ko kaisa lagta hoga?/* [How do you think the lion/tiger feel, when they see the fire?]

Kapil: */Achchha nahin lagta hoga madam.* / (They couldn't be liking it.)

Me: */Ab jangal mein aag lagaane se kya hota hai?/* [What happens when we burn the jungle?]

Children together: */Jaanavar mar jaate hain aur ped jal jaate hain.* / (The animals die and the trees are destroyed.)

Me: */Socho, agar kharagosh aur hiran mar jaayenge to sher kyak haayega?/* [Just think, if rabbits and deer die what will the lion eat?]

Somika: /Haan madam, iseeke liya[sic] sher hamaare gaon mein aake kutte aur bakree ko uttaake le jaate hain[sic]./ [Yes madam, that's why the tiger snatches our dogs and goats.]

Me: /Bilakul. Agar ham jangal mein aag nahin lagae to sher ko hamaare gaon aane kee jaroorat nahin padegee. Aap ko kya lagata hai?/ [Exactly. If we do not set fire to the jungle, it will no longer be necessary for lions to come to our village. What do you think?]

Children: /Haan madam. Jangal mein aag nahin lagaani chaahie./ [Yes madam, we should not set the jungle on fire.]

Me: /To haathi ne theek kiya kya?/ [So what the elephant did was right?]

Amit: /Haathi ne to theek nahin kiya. Lekin apne dost ko bhee bachaana hai na museebat se./ [What the elephant did was not right, but he had to save his friends.]

Me: /Ye bhee bilkul sahee baat hain./ [Yes, that is also a valid point.].

Towards the end of the discussion, everyone agreed that jungles should not be burnt; and one should save one's friends when they are in danger.

Discussion on Vocabulary and Sentence

The next day, the same story was retold entirely in English, with actions, gestures and repetition of words; and the children understood the whole story. The story was repeated a few times until the children themselves started telling the story. They found some dialogues funny, which they kept repeating throughout the day and had a good laugh. After narrating the story in English, I wrote a list of words on the blackboard: For example: Once upon a time, In search of friends, ...

Me: Once upon a time /Iska matalab kya hai?/ [What does it mean?] The children thought for a while.

Me: Once upon a time there was an elephant; /Kya matalab hai isaka?/ [What does it mean?]

Children: /Bahut samay pahale ek haathi tha/ [Once upon a time there was an elephant.]

Me: /Very good. To socho, once upon a time ka matalab kya hai/. Once upon a time I had a doll.[Just think, what is the meaning of "once upon a time".]

Children: /Ek samay mere paas ek doll thee[sic]/ [Once upon a time, I had a doll.]

Me: /Very good. To batao tumhaare paas once upon a time kya kya tha jo ab nahin hain?/ [So tell me about what you had once upon a time, but not now.]

Anjali: /Mere paas ek sundar dress thee./ [I had a beautiful dress.]

Me: /To tum aisa bologe, once upon a time I had a beautiful dress./ [Say it like this.]

Somika: /Once upon a time I had a pen./

The same process was followed for other words on day three.

Questions-Answers and Reading

On the fourth day, the morning assembly was extremely chaotic as the children started fighting over whose turn it was to tell the story in English. The teacher solved the problem by creating a storytelling calendar. In the classroom, I wrote the story on a chart paper and asked the children to read it one by one. Fourteen out of sixteen students read it easily, with minor problems. If one of the students struggled with a word, the others supported them. I asked questions in English to track their story comprehension. The children responded to the questions in Hindi. When I asked them to answer in English by referring to the story on the chart, they were able to identify the line that had the answer and then respond in English. This whole

exercise was very meaningful in terms of assessing oral and reading comprehension of the students.

Dramatization of the Story

The story was dramatized by the children with minimal intervention from me. When I asked whether they remembered any discussions from the story, the students recited several sentences. Together, we made it into a play; more characters were added keeping in mind the number of children. After just two to three rehearsals the children were able to enact the story confidently. When the play was presented before the local community, everyone was in awe to see the children of the government school performing in English.

Writing

On the fifth day of classroom practice, we ventured towards writing. Since animals were the main characters in the story, I picked an animal, say "tiger", and asked the children to tell me about it. To help the children, I asked them about its appearance, colour, food habits, etc. The children described the tiger in Hindi, and I translated their descriptions in English and wrote the words one by one on the blackboard. I managed to elicit almost 20 words from the children. We discussed words such as "wild" and "domestic" animals. Some of the other words we discussed were: yellow, long tail, foul smell (the children said that when there is a tiger close by, they get a foul smell), meat, chicken, dog, jungle, four legs, two eyes, etc. Following this, I helped the children to form sentences using these words. To begin with, I made two-three

sentences in English to help them. Some of the sentences I made were: The Tiger is a wild animal. It has four legs. Together, we made 15 sentences around tigers using the vocabulary of the children. By the end of the seventh day, the children had written seven paragraphs on different wild and domestic animals found in their vicinity.

Conclusion

The use of storytelling as a pedagogical tool had many positive outcomes. The confidence the children gained through this process was particularly noteworthy. Even learners like Pooja and Kapil, who initially had no interest, took part in English storytelling during morning assembly, reading exercises and drama. By the end of the seventh day, all sixteen students could narrate and enact the story with comprehension; fourteen could read and thirteen started writing sentences in English. Their writing had grammatical and spelling mistakes but demonstrated their interest in writing independently. Their teacher was surprised to see the progress made by the children within a limited time.

This study gives a fair idea of the potential of a story to create an opportunity for discussion, boost the learners' ability to listen and think, provide an opportunity for speaking in a new language with comprehension and develop reading and writing skills. In rural government schools, where children are mostly from the underprivileged section of the society and have little or no exposure to English, a story provides them with a wholesome exposure to the language, generates an interest in learning and allows them to explore it. This powerful tool can break the traditional notion that children of government schools cannot learn the English language.

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Democratizing Translation Using Digital Methods

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Key Words: Digital translation, MediaWiki, Possible meaning, Digital terminology data banks, Translation memories, Human Aided Machine Translation (HAMT), WhatsApp, Online dictionaries, Web repositories, Video conferencing.

Abstract

Translation is seen as a highly-skilled professional activity, which limits the number of practitioners and hence its reach. Three members of the NGO IT for Change that works with government schools attempted to translate a text from English to Kannada, using easily accessible digital tools. The NGO also supported teams of student-teachers and professional teachers in using these tools for translating education materials. The aim was to make the translation a participatory exercise "by teachers, of teachers, for teachers", and improve the availability of education resources in Kannada.

Resource Gap

The volume of materials (articles, papers, media) in English far exceeds that of Indian languages. Wikipedia has over 6 million articles in English while Kannada has less than 30,000 (<0.5 per cent). Hindi, at 140000+, has the highest number of articles amongst Indian languages. This can make not knowing English a disadvantage, even though factors such as one's ability (text fluency) and desire to read also play a part in mitigating this disadvantage. English, however, is spoken by around 10 per cent of Indians (List of Wikipedias, n.d.). If we could translate the English articles into a local language content, they could reach many more people. The availability of contextual reading materials is also vital in developing an interest in reading in young minds. Translation can provide greater access to written literature as well as oral resources; and translation of articles on education-related topics would help teachers and teacher educators to broaden and deepen their understanding of education. It could also promote learning in the target language as well as teacher development.

This article discusses how a three-member team from IT for Change (ITfC) used digital MediaWiki platform technologies (MediaWiki, n.d.) for a simpler and quicker translation. Wikipedia content was used for translation because it is an open-source, under the "Creative Commons" licensing, which allows for its content to be modified and derivatives to be produced.

Complexity of Trans-Creation

Translation cannot merely replace words from one language with the equivalent

words from the target language (meta phrase). In translation, one must look for words with potential for bearing possible meanings (Sarukkai, 2013), or affective instead of formal equivalence (Shivaprakash, 2020). A translated text must bring the source text closer to the local culture. Engaging in the process of translation helps readers understand and learn from the culture of the people who speak the source language (SL). It also introduces new ideas into the target language (TL). Translated resources must be crisp, not elaborate explanations or commentaries on the source text.

Translation is a complex process; it requires several skills. The translator must be competent in reading and writing in the SL as well as the TL, and first understand the content in the SL and then write it in the context of the TL.

Translation requires excellent vocabulary, knowledge of phrases and idioms in both languages to reflect cultural nuances in translation, as well as a reasonably good knowledge of the domain. The challenge is to capture the essence of the article so that a TL reader can have the same experience as a SL reader, yet situated in their own context. Given these complexities, 'translation' is sometimes termed as 'trans-creation'.

Conventional Translation (Pre-Digital)

The conventional translation is a manual process. The translator tries to get equivalent words and phrases for SL in the TL, referring to bilingual dictionaries and thesauruses if required. The process of translation and error correction can be time-consuming and effort intensive. This method severely limits the number of people who can translate.

Translation Using Digital Methods: APU Publications

Digital technologies used in translation include Human Aided Machine Translation (HAMT) such as Google Translate and Machine Aided Human Translation (MAHT) such as online dictionaries, which takes lesser time to consult compared to printed dictionaries. Digital terminology data banks that list special-purpose terminology enhance translation efficiency and accuracy, as well as translation memories, as previously translated texts are available digitally (Bhattacharyya, 2004). In MAHT, the translation is done by humans, unlike HAMT.

A three-member team from ITfC worked on the translation using simple, easily accessible desktop and cloud-based technologies to translate English articles (SL) from APU journals into Kannada (TL). The members of the team, work in school education projects and are not professional translators.

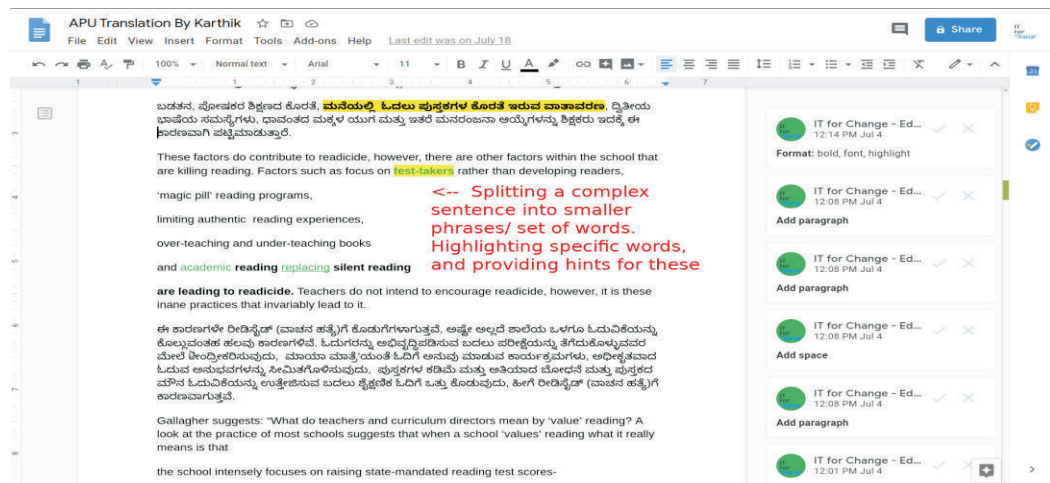
Translation Process

The translator (T1 or T2) completed the initial translation of an article with the help of an online machine-translation tool such as Google Translate and *ShabdKosh*, and web repositories such as *Kanaja* and *Baraha*. They also consulted mono and bilingual digital dictionaries available online as well as offline on a computer or a mobile phone and listed the different meanings of a word/phrase identified through a simple "search/find" process. Oft-repeated terms used in education were stored in a simple tabular format on another cloud document on Google Sheets, to allow for easy reference. The team simultaneously accessed both dictionaries as well as Google Sheets.

The translator made paragraph-wise sections of the document and provided the TL translation just below the SL paragraph. The digital document therefore became a bilingual document, with the translated section available right below the original, for easy comparison (Screenshot1). This document, with full editing rights given to all members, was uploaded as a cloud document on Google Docs. A common Gmail-id was used by the team members to access it.

Screenshot 1. A Paragraph Translated into TL

(Below the Relevant SL Section; Read the Comment in the Image. The "track change" is indicated by the font colour in Green, in Contrast to the Regular Text in Black.)



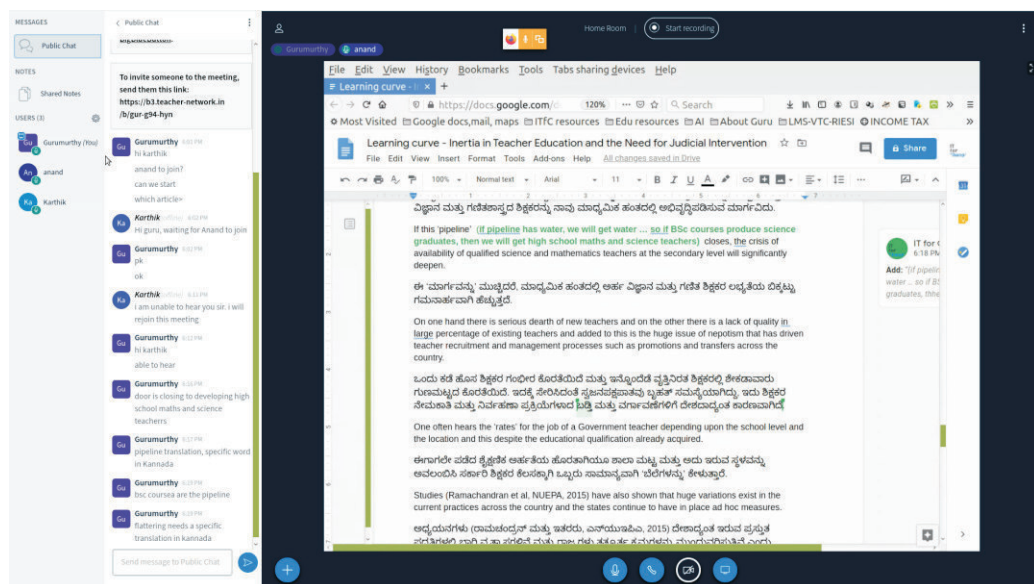
T3 "broke" complex sentences in the source text into meaning-holding units, adding punctuation marks such as "," or "-" or line-breaks for easier comprehension. T3 used the "track changes" feature of the document editor, so that his additions, modifications and deletions were highlighted. This allowed T1 and T2 to identify the original text and the changes made by T3.

Once the translation was complete, the team met on the free and open-source BigBlueButton video conferencing/webinar platform (like Google Meet or Zoom) for a collaborative review of the translation (Screenshot 2). The bilingual document was shared on the platform using the screen-share feature

to help the three members work on the same section simultaneously. All three translators also simultaneously edited the Google document on their computers.

T1 and T2, who worked on the TL text, did direct edits for real-time comprehension of the TL document and changes during the discussions. T1 read out the content in the TL, and T2 and T3 simultaneously assessed the quality of the translation. T2 reviewed the flow of the TL text and focused on SL-TL meaning equivalence. T3 checked if the spirit of the SL content had been adequately captured in the TL, and on its appropriateness in the education context. T2 made corrections, as required.

Screenshot 2. Concurrent Editing on the Video-Conferencing Platform
(BigBlueButton – to Review and Revise the Translation)

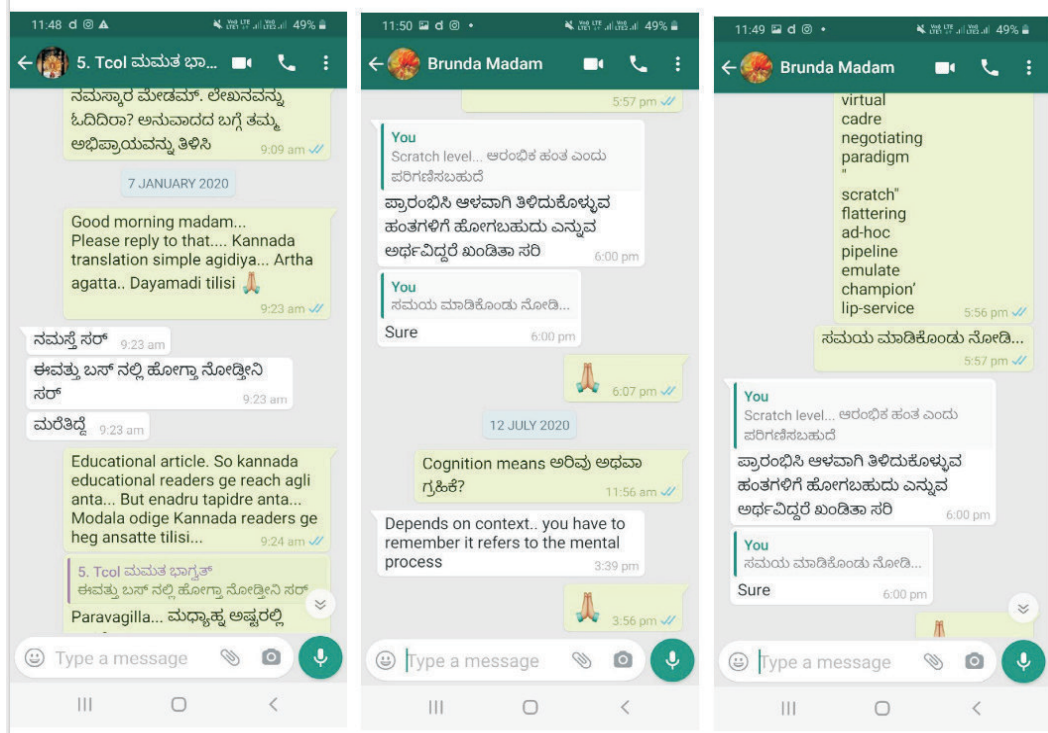


The translation process usually generates multiple interpretations of the SL as well as multiple expressions in the TL. The decision to choose a particular word or a phrase in TL depended on "maximum meaning", according to Sarukkai (2013). Whenever doubts or debates could not be resolved, the Kannada and English

Wikipedia pages were accessed to find equivalent words for the terms being debated (English Wikipedia, n.d). These dialogues helped to arrive at a consensus on the interpretation of the phrase in SL and/or the word/phrase to be used in the TL. Then the words/sentences were edited and revised by T2. Where the team

did not agree, T1 sought help from external experts by sharing the word or phrase or sentence in both SL and TL through asynchronous social media (WhatsApp) (Screenshot 3).

Screenshot 3. WhatsApp helpline



Once the draft translation was complete, T1 shared it with a friend in the Kannada teachers group over mail, to seek their review and comments. Since the translation was aimed at providing resources for the Kannada language/Kannada medium teachers, their review could help assess if that purpose had been achieved. After that, the translated article was mailed to APU for publishing on their website.

The subsequent step could have been to host the article on a Wiki, instead of (or along with) a static web page, so that readers/teachers could further refine/improve the translation. No translation can ever claim to be complete; this is true for any material creation process. We were able to implement this Wiki process of "infinitely iterative

improvement" in another translation project of ITfC. Our "Wikipedia content translation" (Content Translation, n.d) project was a practicum for student teachers of two teacher education institutions where we taught the "ICT Integrated Learning" course.

Translating to Kannada Wikipedia

Papert and Harel (1991) refer to constructivism as "learning to create and creating to learn". Similarly, NCERT (2013) discusses "connecting and learning" and "creating and learning" as essential themes for integrating ICT into teaching-learning; these are equally relevant to translation. By connecting people, one can facilitate collaboration amongst

diverse participants. Digital tools enable the creation of materials in the TL, which can by itself be a developmental process. Wikipedia is an example of the confluence of these "connecting" and "creating" themes. Online encyclopaedias allow anyone with a digital device and internet connectivity to add to its repository. Several editors can edit the same page, across space and time.

We asked students to make two-member teams, with one member who was comfortable in English and the other, in Kannada. The former had to try to understand and interpret the article on the English Wikipedia page and that the latter had to write the translated article on the Kannada Wikipedia page (Kannada Wikipedia, n.d). Alone, each would have found this task impossible; together, they could attempt it. We taught students to use HAMT; they created the initial version of the English Wikipedia page in the Kannada Wikipedia, using the auto-translate option available in the Wikipedia content translator. We also taught them to use the voice to text feature, available on their digital devices such as google doc, where the team could read the SL, orally translate into text in the TL, which the software converted to text. This text was copy-pasted into the Kannada Wiki page.

The MediaWiki approach allows continuous refinement, instead of having to get it perfect the first time. This makes it easier to begin translation and then improve it gradually. Further, with this approach, the possibilities of involving teachers in translation on a large scale becomes possible. ITfC's Karnataka Open Educational Resources (KOER Project), which has both English and Kannada MediaWiki repositories, adopted this approach. Teachers and ITfC members created content on either repository or translated the content into the other repository, at different points in time.

HAMT tools often capture our translations and refine them, making machine translations more reliable over time. For instance, Google Translate uses the translations of its users to improve its translation engine. Regular use of online translation tools can refine both the tools and their associated repositories. These tools are examples of artificial intelligence (rather machine learning) that are unarguably beneficial to humanity. The ownership of the translation, however, should be public rather than private, for it to fully benefit society and not held ransom to the owners' commercial interests

As HAMT's accuracy increases, translation can become automated. However, HAMT will be more error-prone for complex articles, like many in the education domain. MAHT, however, will continue to be relevant. Thus, while the use of digital tools and methods can certainly simplify the process of translation, they cannot fully replace it.

Benefits

Conventional translation processes require immense expertise, which narrows down the number of people who translate. The digital methods discussed in this article can make trans-creation a much broader activity, enabling many more people to participate in it. We encouraged around 250 student-teachers to translate English Wikipedia pages and publish it on Kannada Wikipedia. Another 300+ teachers edited KOER (Karnataka Open Educational Resources) content in English and Kannada. In fact, this approach also serves as a professional development activity. The APU translation project was part of a continuous professional development program for our translation team, and gave us excellent opportunities to engage deeply with important texts in education. We used these translations in our work with

Kannada medium government schools. Teachers in Karnataka widely use KOER content.

If teams of teachers having diverse linguistic skills, or those teaching languages, can be encouraged to come together to take on the translation of articles relating to the education domain, it will have two benefits:

- a) it would increase the number of articles available in the target language,
- b) it would support the continuous professional development of teachers.

The scalability of the translation exercise depends on institutionalizing the energies and scaffolding the process. If we see participation as a spectrum, this model moves us further in the direction of democratization of resource-making. In this article, the SL was English. However, a similar approach would work for other SL's as well, as most Indian teachers are multilingual.

IT for Change is an NGO working for a just and equitable digital society, and believes in CCVYSA copyright (Creative Common BY Share and Adapt)

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Mentoring of Teachers: The Much-Needed Change in the National Education Policy 2020

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Key Words: Mentoring, Teachers, Higher education institutions, National Education Policy 2020

Abstract

Mentoring teachers is the foundation on which the edifice of education stands. Though armed with subject competencies, novice faculty need nurturing and guidance in methodologies to deal with classroom engagements and exigencies. As compared to the West, India lags in formulating formalized well-structured mentoring programs to capitalize on the nuanced relationship between a mentor and mentee, which if utilized optimally, reaps several benefits both for teachers and students. This paper brings to the fore the lack of attention given to mentoring programs for faculty under the National Education Policy 2020, particularly in higher education institutions, and argues for remedial measures to improve classroom practices.

Introduction

The much-awaited National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) talks of inter and multidisciplinary, inclusive and holistic education to meet the target of 100 per cent gross enrolment ratio in school education by 2030, and an increase of 50 per cent in higher education by 2035. The NEP, with its focus on skill and vocational training with multiple entry and exit point is the need of the hour, and the academic bank of transferable credits is in keeping with global practices. Inclusiveness and standardization are its underlying principles, as is evident in the proposal to set up the Higher Education Commission of India (HECI), with its key verticals that will govern the regulation, the setting of standards, funding and accreditation of academic institutions. Furthermore, to foster student-driven research and to augment research competencies, the National Research Foundation has been envisaged. What is also appreciable is the promotion of local and first languages in the primary years. Additionally, the NEP has factored in the critical component of mentoring of students and teachers in schools, right from Anganwadi workers to school teachers.

The mentoring of teachers in Higher Education, is, however, not adequately delineated in NEP 2020. This is a fault line that will have far-reaching implications and will end up destabilizing the promised goals and do more harm than good, if not taken seriously. The pre-service training of teachers in schools as mentors is inherent in the curricula of Bachelor of Education (B. Ed.); this needs to be strengthened in their in-service continuous professional development as well. The training component is entirely missing in faculty engaged in teaching

students in colleges and universities. Bryant-Shanklin and Brumage (2011), argue for the refocusing of traditional pre-service/postgraduate education programs using the concept of mentoring. Mentoring, as a concept in India, has never been formalized into a structured programme. A loosely interpreted term and concept, mentoring has always been associated with guiding students, which includes remedial measures to augment classroom pedagogy as well as imparting life skills when needed.

Mentoring in West

Mentoring programs for faculty have received considerable attention in the West. The increased attention is evident from the fact that teacher mentoring programs have nearly doubled in most states in the United States of America in the last two decades (Furlow, 2019, n.p.). The attention is mostly due to a very high attrition rate, as new and inexperienced teachers who had neither training nor support in actual classroom engagements chose to leave their teaching careers in the initial years. The tasks expected from them as Furlow asserts, are 'monumental', and include: a thorough understanding and implementation of learning outcomes as prescribed by state standards, management of the classroom, development of strategies to balance varying needs of students and different learning styles, amongst a host of other challenges. He rightly states that novice teachers enter their first class and is expected to deal with different competencies and sensitivities like a 'seasoned veteran' (Furlow, 2019, n.p.).

In the West, as part of the mentoring programmes, novice teachers are paired with experienced teachers, who help the former understand the nuances of

classroom engagements and exigencies. Not only does this help in the professional development of both the mentor and mentee teachers (Danielson, 1999), but it also lowers the attrition rate of new teachers (Boyer, 1999). According to Boyer, there was a decrease of 20 per cent in the attrition rate of new teachers had the much-needed support in the beginning. Her report was backed by other studies (Feiman-Nemser & Parker, 1992; Gold, 1996; Scott, 1999; Hegstad, 1999). These studies also show that mentoring benefits both, the mentee and the mentor. Furlow concludes, 'the experienced teachers were particularly enthusiastic because they believed that mentoring allowed them to help others, improve themselves, receive respect, develop collegiality, and profit from the novice teachers' fresh ideas and energy' (2019, n.p.). Such mentoring programmes bear fruit only if the mentors are trained to foster the right elements in mentees, which include managing diversity, understanding deep-rooted biases and prejudices, promoting inclusivity, cultivating equity and stimulating understanding and empathy. The focus of this mutually beneficial relationship is far more on strengthening emotional intelligence than on augmenting the curricula to be taught.

Mentoring, Modelling and Coaching-Relationship

The mentor-mentee relationship in teaching is a complicated and a nuanced one, which is influential, and creates a positive impact between novice teachers and students. Backed with the support of experience and wisdom, novice teachers are no longer intimidated by the challenges of classroom experiences.

Koki (1997) explains the term 'mentoring' as a concept distinct from 'modelling' or 'coaching'. According to him, modelling is 'the process of serving as a model. A model is a tangible embodiment of an idea or ideal (a product) (p. 2)'; coaching is 'assistance that one teacher provides to another in the development of teaching skills, strategies, or techniques generally within a formal three-part structure: peer-conference, lesson observation, and post-conference' (p. 2). For Koki, mentoring includes modelling and coaching, as the mentor serves as a model of the teacher's role in education. Koki sees mentoring as a comparatively more comprehensive concept. The three-part mentoring process includes coaching as an instructional technique. He further adds that mentoring includes 'cognitive coaching', a term that is gaining currency as a significant part of mentoring. His argument is based on a study by Gay (1995): 'to be effective, the mentor must be able to demonstrate a range of cognitive coaching competencies, such as posing carefully constructed questions to stimulate reflection, paraphrasing, probing, using wait-time, and collecting and using data to improve teaching and learning. Mentoring, like coaching, is a collaborative process' (Koki, 1997, p. 3).

Mentoring as Continuous Professional Development

For continuous professional development, the young faculty should be associated with an experienced and proficient senior as a mentee. The right mentor will make a huge difference and go a long way in nurturing a much more impactful educator. The attributes of a good mentor

include experience in pedagogy, good communication and interpersonal skills, open-mindedness, higher levels of emotional intelligence and besides, as Koki suggests the mentor should be '... people-oriented, open minded, flexible, empathetic, and collaborative' (p. 4). The relationship though bounded within a hierarchy of senior-junior and experienced-novice, should not be treated at par with that of a teacher-student. The mentor is neither a supervisor nor an evaluator, but a guide, who aids the transition of a new teacher in crossing over from one side of the desk to the other. Koki supports the views of mentoring of mentors for an effective mentor-mentee relationship. The trainer is effective only if they have had the right training too. So, mentors should also be trained. 'Mentors should be enrolled in an ongoing mentoring training program. Training in communication and active listening techniques, relationship skills, effective teaching, models of supervision and coaching, conflict resolution, and problem-solving are often included in training opportunities for mentors' (p. 4).

Need for Mentoring Programs in India

What India lacks is a systematic, formalized, structured mentoring programme for teachers to help them deal with the increasing heterogeneity in classrooms and also where the student-teacher ratio is abysmal. Teaching for more than twenty-five years in several constituent colleges of the University of Delhi has shown me that ad hoc faculty, after completing their Master's degrees and the National Eligibility Test (NET) for lecturer's certificate, have the requisite subject competencies. They are however at a loss when it comes to dealing with classroom issues. They do not know how

to deal with issues such as varying language proficiencies and learning abilities, and more significantly with multitudinous emotional problems including low self-esteem, lack of confidence, higher anxiety levels and/or attention deficits. The general apathy towards gender, class and caste compounds the problems. The lack of required understanding of the potency of the spoken word which may reflect biases or entrenched prejudices also needs to be addressed. A good mentoring programme not only helps new faculty deal with the classroom issues, but also helps to increase their confidence levels (Holloway,2001). To give an example, very often, novice teachers are subject to covert derision by students, because their pronunciation may be different from conventional pronunciation as they come from different parts of a very diverse India. This derision undermines their confidence, and they enter the classroom with a greater degree of trepidation. Backed by the support of an experienced faculty as a mentor, an inexperienced teacher can ignore their trepidation and instead, gain confidence from their subject knowledge. They will also understand that this situation can be used to convert the students' immaturity into a deeper understanding of diversity.

While it has been established that the advantages of a mentoring programme for teachers far outweigh the effort, time and the cost involved, the lack of it in colleges and universities in India is mitigated somewhat by the orientation programmes offered by the Academic Staff Colleges of central universities. However, these are limited to those teaching in a permanent capacity and are not accessible to adhoc faculty, who, in their initial years of teaching are often deprived of the right guidance. These extensive four-week-long programmes should be made available to

ad hoc or contractual teachers, or even to those teaching as guest faculty, although the nature of these programmes needs to change substantially. Detailed analysis of case studies and simulated classroom interactions can be included in the programmes to augment the expected learning outcomes, while discussions on pedagogical strategies and methodologies should find space along with discussions on the NEP 2020. Additionally, sessions with psychologists and other communication experts will help new initiates prepare for the dynamics of a classroom. This is an essential part of pre-service training, as much if not more than the green flag of NET certification.

The Indian education system has hitherto not paid much attention to developing an effective, well-structured mentoring programme for teachers, who were left to swim in the deep waters of the classroom on their own. While some learnt from their own mistakes, in contrast, others moved to other less daunting pastures. It is clear though that the framers of the New Education Policy 2020 have taken cognizance of its import and impact.

A National Mission for Mentoring shall be established, with a large pool of outstanding senior/retired faculty—including those with the ability to teach in Indian languages—who would be willing to provide short and long-term

mentoring/professional support to university/college teachers (NEP 2020, p. 43).

Unlike other aspects of reforms in the education system which have been detailed to a large extent, mentoring of teachers has found mention in a single sentence (see above) in a 66-page document. The promise and hope are that this National Mission will take care of the fault lines inherent in our system, which are yet to transform thousands of graduates into a generation of skilled future-ready workforce.

Conclusion

Mentoring teachers lies at the core of the education system, as it has immense transformative potential. It is not about passing on the torch of knowledge from the mentor to the mentee but a belief in 'commitment to education, hope for its future, and a respect for those who enter into its community' (Shadiow 1996, p. 277). Head, Reiman and Thies-Sprinthall (1992), add that mentoring values the person. Mentoring is a promise that the NEP 2020 has made, and we hope it is for keeps both in letter and spirit. We also hope that it does not remain a crevice, a fault line that will only widen the gaps in the foundation on which the entire edifice of education stands

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Integrating Math with Kannada Language: Reflecting on my Experience

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Key Words: Integrated approach, Integrating Math with Kannada, Competencies, Resources, Reflections

Abstract

This is an experiential study to integrate Math with Kannada. It is based on the belief that an integrative approach can help students to visualize Math concepts by making them less abstract when used in the context of stories and poems. The purpose of this study was to get an experience of integrating Kannada and Math and understand what it entails. The study was conducted in a government school and the participants included students of Classes 2, 3, 4 and 5, who were yet to achieve basic competencies in Kannada and Math. The study is concerned with the experience of designing and implementing the integrated approach. The earlier version of this paper was presented at the Seminar, "Teachers in the Current Scenario of School Education", held at Mysore in April 2018.

Introduction

Making connections is necessary for meaningful learning. In the process of learning, children make connections between the new knowledge they have just learnt and their prior knowledge; between knowledge and the real world; and between subject knowledge and their experiences. Integration is a critical means of making connections. An integrated approach to curriculum ensures active participation of the learners in the learning processes and creates opportunities for them to apply their skills across their learning. For instance, if children learn the skill of inductive thinking by arriving at the rules of grammar, this skill can be applied in the case of Math learning. The advantages of this approach have led to the development of more integrated curricula.

According to Beane (2005), curriculum integration involves meaningful learning that is organized around issues important to teachers and students. The word "integration" holds multiple meanings (Drake & Burns, 2004). One meaning is that of a multi-disciplinary approach, where teaching is around a set of identified themes and subjects are integrated around these, as, for example, water, family and environment. The other is an interdisciplinary approach where integration is within a discipline. In language learning, for example, the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing are integrated. Still another approach is the transdisciplinary approach, as in project learning, where a local problem is selected and students address this problem, bringing with them several skills such as communication skills, research skills, social skills, leadership and collaboration, to mention a few. The theme-based approach is popular in the Indian context, particularly in early

childhood education (NCERT, 2015). This approach requires a reorganization of the curriculum based on themes. In this study, since the scope for reorganizing the curriculum is extremely limited, I used an approach that negotiated the Math and the Kannada language curriculum.

Why Math?

Math was selected as a theme because in the initial years of schooling, children find it challenging to understand Math. This is because Math textbooks use standard Kannada, and the home language of children is either a dialect of Kannada or Telugu or Urdu. They have little access to mathematical terms in Kannada. Moreover, they are not familiar with the Kannada script. So, when Math is taught in Kannada, many children are not able to visualize the context. Despite these problems, children have an intuitive sense of basic Math. When I gave an addition problem without context, the children found it difficult to give the right answers. However, when I used a story to contextualize the same problem, many children were able to give the correct answer. The children's answers indicated that Math and language could be integrated. I believe that this approach will help to meet the goals of Math education discussed in the National Curriculum Framework (2006).

The purpose of this study was to get an experience of integrating Kannada and Math and getting an understanding of what integration entails. An integrated approach was tried out in one Government school on 83 Class 5 students, which included both boys and girls. The classes were held outside of school hours, for about 45 minutes in the morning and 45 minutes in the evening. I also tried to assess the impact of integration on the learning of Math and Kannada, through a

pre and post-test. Although the purpose of the test was to evaluate the effectiveness of the approach, I was more concerned with the process of designing and implementing the approach.

Process

I used a five-step process, namely: listing competencies, selecting participants, identifying resources, preparing a workbook and preparing and administering a pre and a post-test.

Listing Competencies

First, I listed the competencies that I intended to focus on, both in Math and Kannada. These competencies were used to guide resource preparation as well as design the pre-test.

In Kannada, the competencies targeted are as follows:

- Reading and writing alphabets
- Identifying vowels and consonants.
- Reading and writing consonant clusters (example: ಹತ್ತನೇ /"hattanee" [tenth], /ಬೆಟ್ಟ /"Betṭa" [hill],)
- Reading at least 50 words with syllabic structures of 3, 4 and 5 syllables

In Math, the study looked at the following skills:

- Writing the names of the numbers
- Compare Numbers: Greater than and lesser than
- Reading-writing three-digit numbers.
- Place value
- Simple addition and subtraction
- Decimals
- Recognizing Math functions based on symbols

Selecting Participants

The next step was to select the participants from among the students. I was aware that most of the students studying across Classes 2-5 had not achieved their grade level competencies. Hence, I limited the skills to basic competencies in Kannada and Math (listed earlier). Since I have been working in the school for more than 15 years, I had a clear idea of the children who had not acquired these competencies. The findings from the pre-test confirmed my general observations. The number of participants selected is given in Table 1 as follows:

Table 1: *Number of Participants Selected for the Study (N=83)*

Classes	2	3	4	5
Number of Student Participants	19	21	22	21

Identifying Resources

The third task was to identify the resources that had scope for integrating Math and Science against the backdrop of the competencies listed earlier. This was a real challenge because there were very few resources. I used poems and stories with a focus on the required competencies. The pieces selected were:

- G.P. Rajarathnam's poem "Ondu, Eradu, Baalele Haradu" [One, two, spread the banana leaf] (Figure 1) and a story. These resources were used to teach number concepts (one to ten), quantity and ascending and descending order of numbers.
- A story on decimals
- A folk song on a variety of measurement tools (e.g.: basket of fruits; a cup of sugar, a full hand length (called maaru) of flowers). The poem also talked of kinship across generations (Figure 2)

- A rhyming song using numbers and consonant clusters (otthaksara), e.g., ಹತ್ತೊಂದುಹನ್ನೊಂದುಮತ್ತನಕಡುಬುಇನ್ನೊಂದು [ten and one is eleven, soft Kadabu (a sweet) another one – where eleven and another one rhymes in Kannada)

Figure 1

Poem by G.P. Rajarathnam

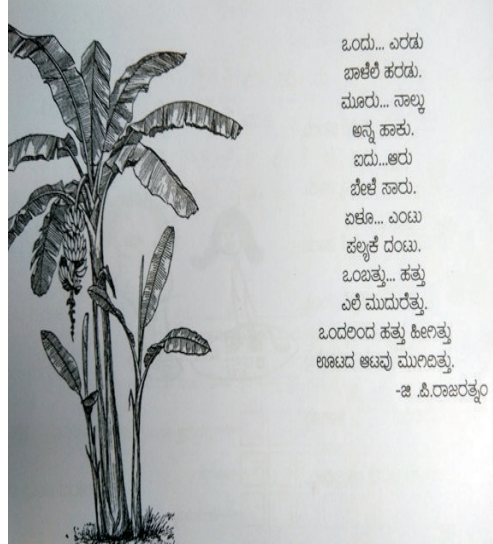


Figure 2

Part of the Folk Song (Along with a Rough English Translation)

ನಂಮುತ್ತಾತಂದನೇಬೆಟ್ಟಕ್ಕೋದೊಂದುಮಾರುಮುತ್ತಿನಸರತಂದ
ಸೂರಲ್ಲಿಮಡಗುಲಂದ್ರೆಊರೋರ್ಗೇಲ್ವಾಕೊಟ್ಟುಬಂದ
(My great-grandfather went to the first hill to get one length of pearl chain.
Keep it in the attic I said, but he distributed it to everyone in the town.)
ನಂಮುತ್ತಜ್ಜಿಎರ್ಡನೇಬೆಟ್ಟಕ್ಕೋದೊಂದುಮೊರಬಂಗಾರದೊಡ್ಡೆತಂದ್ಡು
ಸೂರಲ್ಲಿಮಡಗುಲಂದ್ರೆಊರೋರ್ಗೇಲ್ವಾಕೊಟ್ಟುಬಂದ್ಡು
(My great-grandmother went to the second hill to get two measures of gold.
Keep it in the attic I said, but she distributed it to everyone in the town.)
ನಮ್ಮಪ್ಪಮೂನೆಬೆಟ್ಟಕ್ಕೋದಮೂರುಮಂತ್ರಿಬೆಳ್ಳಿಕಡಗತಂದ
ಸೂರಲ್ಲಿಮಡಗುಲಂದ್ರೆಊರೋರ್ಗೇಲ್ವಾಕೊಟ್ಟುಬಂದ

(My father went to the third hill to get three baskets of silver.

Keep it on attic I said, but he distributed it to everyone in the town.)

ನಮ್ಮಮ್ಮನಾಲ್ಕನೇಬೆಟ್ಟಕ್ಕೋದೊಂದುನಾಲ್ಕುಕೊಳಗಹೂವುತಂದ್ಡು
ಸೂರಲ್ಲಿಮಡಗುಲಂದ್ರೆಊರೋರ್ಗೇಲ್ವಾಕೊಟ್ಟುಬಂದ್ಡು

(My mother went to the fourth hill to get four pots of flower.

Keep it in the attic I said, but she distributed it to everyone in the town.)

Preparing a Workbook

For the stories and poems selected, I prepared exercises keeping in mind the Kannada and Math competencies of the children. In Rajarathnam's poem, the exercises were centred around number concepts, indicating numbers using symbols, and adding length to alphabets by using the corresponding diacritics of the letter (e. g. ಇ :ರಿ, ನಿ, ದಿ).

For decimals, the students had to prepare decimal grids and count the number of words; for each story or poem, the workbook had both Kannada and Math exercises. In the rhyming poem, children had to segment the consonant clusters. I used two types of consonant clusters, namely:

a) Consonant clusters of the same letters (swajathi – the subscript is of the same letter to which it is added; example:

/ಅಕ್ಕ/[sister], and

b) Consonant clusters of different letters (vijaathi – the subscript belongs to a different letter to which it is added; example: ನಿತ್ಯ/[daily]- here the subscript represents /ಯ/ "y" and is added to /ತ/ "t")

Preparing and Administering Pre and Post-Tests

The pre and post-tests were used to assess the skills listed in the competency list. Students had also to summarize the story of *Panje Mangesh Raya*. The findings of these tests are given in Table 2.

Table 2: Findings of Pre and Post-Tests

Pre-Test			
No of Students who took the test (N)	Percentage of students who achieved language competencies	Percentage of students who achieved Math competencies	Percentage of students who showed story comprehension
83	12	8	2
Post-Test			
81	37	46	17

It is evident from Table 2 that the students benefited from the integrated approach to Kannada and Math. A higher percentage of students achieved grade-level competencies in Kannada, Math and story comprehension. While this finding is encouraging, it must be taken with caution because seven months is too short a time to assess the real competency achieved and besides, whatever was achieved could be because of Pollyanna effect.

Reflections on my Experience

The key learnings of my seven-month engagement with integrating Math with Kannada include:

1. The approach of integrating Math with Kannada is more engaging for the children and makes them active learners.
2. This approach also helps children to increase their Kannada proficiency because they are gradually introduced to textbook Kannada through stories and poems.
3. Math concepts when contextualized through stories and poems become

more concrete; this helps children to visualize Math operations.

4. The facilitator must know the art of storytelling and reciting a poem to capture the imagination and interest of the children. Developing this skill is an essential requirement.
5. The identification of resources is a challenge because of their paucity. One must work with writers who write for children to come up with authentic and enjoyable stories as well as poems that can be used to integrate Math and Kannada. If the stories and poems are not authentic, there is a danger of learners not connecting with them.
6. Preparing authentic exercises is also a challenge. The study has practice exercises on counting the number of words and letters as a part of a Math exercise. While this is acceptable as a starting point the complexity of the exercises must be increased.
7. A work of this nature requires a strong rapport with not only the children but also the schools.
8. In this study, breaking up the 190 minutes into two sessions, one in the morning and one in the evening was suboptimal. Instead, it is better to go in for one block of 190 minutes.

One needs to explore in-depth whether resources are either available or can be

prepared for all Math concepts that primary school children have to learn.

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Notes and Comments

Do Young People in Japan Like to Read? Let's Take a Closer Look

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Key Words: Pleasure reading, Reading attitudes

Abstract

As part of literacy instruction, teachers use reading programs that use rewards to motivate students to read (Kohn 1999). Underlying such programs is the assumption that young people are not interested in reading and need a system of reward and punishment interventions to motivate them to read. This assumption is not supported by us.

Mori (2015, cited in Milliner, 2020), affirms that because '... most young people, at least in Japan ... do not seem to have (a) strong ... affection for books ...' (Mori, p, 130). We have to intervene in our school programs in order to make sure students read.

To support this claim, Mori presented data from a newspaper article showing a decline in the amount of reading as students get older, with fewer books read per month by older students:

Table 1: *Books Read per Month*

Level	Books/month
Elementary	11.4
Jr. high school	3.9
Sr. high school	1.6

Data from Mori (as cited in Milliner, 2020)

What is clear from the data in Table 1 is that the students did a considerable amount of reading in elementary school and still read a respectable four books a month in junior high school.

The results of a government survey conducted in 2019 by the Agency for Cultural Affairs, Japan report similar findings. (https://www.bunka.go.jp/tokei_hakusho_shuppan/tokeichosa/kokugo_yoronchosa/pdf/r1393038_02.pdf). Almost 84.5 per cent of 16-year-old high school students (n = 1960) said they read two books per month or less.

A Decline in the Interest in Reading?

Both the newspaper article and the government survey reports give us data on how much the students were reading, but not their attitudes towards reading.

Data from the United States suggests that the decline in reading does not represent a lack of interest in reading. Krashen and Von Sprecken (2002) reviewed studies in

which subjects were asked a straight-forward question: "Do you like to read?" They reported that attitudes toward reading was positive for all ages tested, and there was very little evidence for a decline in interest in reading as children get older. Krashen and Von Sprecken conclude that "overall, there is no doubt that the research shows that children and adolescents in the US say that they like to read" (p. 16).

Another research shows that interest in reading is stimulated by reading aloud to children at home and that more access to books consistently result in more reading (Krashen, 2004).

Results from the 2019 Japanese government study suggests that young people (16-year-olds) in Japan do value reading indeed, but mainly for practical reasons: 61 per cent said they valued reading because of the new information it provided but only 23.5 per cent valued reading because it was enjoyable.

We need to take a closer look. Is there really a decline in the propensity to read in Japan? Is the decline in the amount of reading the result of factors that discourage or even prevent pleasure reading, such as lack of access to reading material, the pressure of schoolwork, etc.? Milliner (2020) quotes Mori as saying that the pressure of "busy lives" is in fact, the cause of the decline in the amount of reading students report as they get older. However, in our reading of Mori, we did not find any claim that reading habits were related to "busy lives".

We must have more detailed and careful analyses before we conclude that young people in Japan do not like to read, and we jump to solutions such as reward and punishment (demonstrated to be ineffective and even counterproductive; Kohn 1999; McQuillan, 1997) as the solution.

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Call for Papers for LLT 20 (July 2021)

Language and Language Teaching (LLT) is a peer-reviewed periodical. It focuses on the theory and practice of language learning and teaching, particularly in multilingual situations. Papers are invited for the forthcoming issues of *LLT* (*LLT* 20 onwards). The references must be complete in ALL respects, and must follow the APA style sheet. All papers must include an abstract (100-150 words) and a set of key words (maximum 6 keywords). Papers MUST be written in a style that is easily accessible to school teachers, who are the primary target audience of this periodical. The articles may focus on the learner, teacher, materials, teacher training, learning environment, evaluation, or policy issues. Activities focusing on different languages are also invited. The article must be original and should not have been submitted for publication anywhere else. **A statement to this effect must be sent along with the article.**

The upper word limit (including the abstract, key words, references and a short bio-note) for each contribution in different sections of LLT is:

Article: 2000-2200 (it could be extended to 3000 words if it has some theoretical significance);

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Book Review: 1000-1500; Classroom Activity: 750; Report: 1000

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Papers must be submitted as a word document in MS Office 7. Please send the fonts along with the paper if any special fonts are used. For images, please send jpeg files.

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Interview

Iqbal Judge (IJ) Talks to Professor Joga Singh (JS)

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Iqbal Judge retired as Professor and Head, PG Department of English, PG Government College for Girls-11, Chandigarh after three decades of teaching. She now volunteers as a mentor to underprivileged young people. Her abiding interests include material production, teaching and campaigning on gender issues.

Professor Joga Singh is an acknowledged authority on linguistics. He has been instrumental in popularizing linguistics in Punjab, with over 50 research papers and five books to his name. He has guided more than 80 research scholars. A passionate advocate of education in the mother tongue and President of the Campaign for Language Equality and Rights Trust, Delhi, Professor Singh has toured widely, debunking myths about prioritizing English medium education.

IJ: Professor Singh, please tell us about your work and areas of interest?

JS: I can divide my linguistic activity into three parts: my research work, the popularization of linguistics, and mother tongue advocacy. My first research work was my M.Phil. dissertation on *Semantics of Adverbials of Location in Punjabi*, followed by a Ph.D. thesis on *Case and Agreement in Hindi: A GB approach*, which attempts to explain the complex interaction between case on [the] one hand and aspect, modality, transitivity, and agreement on the other. Lately, I have just completed the draft of a book on grammar in Punjabi titled *Aao Viaakran Labhiye* (Let's discover grammar).

IJ: How did your interest in linguistics develop?

JS: I must say it was by chance. I lived in a village and was late in submitting my application for postgraduate studies. Only the Department of Linguistics at Punjabi University, Patiala accepted my application!

Once I joined linguistics, my interest grew because I seem to have some innate urge to know about how things work. Thanks to Professor H.S. Gill and his associates like Professor Surjeet Lee, semiotic studies were already entrenched in Punjab. There was a lot of focus on the relationship of language to human life. When I joined Osmania University in 1983, I came in contact with Professor Chekuri Ramarao, which I consider a blessing. His wide range of academic and societal concerns and the knack for theorizing were immensely helpful.

I am fascinated by the warp and weft of language, in the structural sense, and was more engaged with its syntactic aspects till two decades back; but then, I started

seeing language being used as a rabid instrument to produce and perpetuate inequalities, discrimination and failure.

The neglect of and the discrimination against mother tongues and its dreadful consequences struck me. So, I am now in the battlefield, waging a war against the Indian powers that be, for Indian mother tongues.

IJ: You are credited with introducing the transformational theory in Punjab, and for your work in lexicography.

JS: Yes, that does give me some satisfaction. I have been editor of Punjabi-Punjabi and English-Punjabi dictionaries produced by the Department of Linguistics and Punjabi Lexicography of Punjabi University, Patiala. We coined/compiled about 8,000 linguistic terms in Punjabi, which was [sic] used for translating of books on mathematics, botany, pharmacy, physics, and political science into Punjabi.

Now, more than ever, I am engaged in the advocacy of mother tongues. I think that knowledge cannot play its emancipatory role unless it becomes commonsense. So, I work for dissemination of knowledge about language in an idiom accessible to common people. My booklet titled *International Opinion on Language Issues: Mother Tongue is the Key to Education, Knowledge, Science and English Learning* is available in 10 Indian languages, and I'm happy that it has generated and renewed enthusiasm among the mother tongue activists in India.

IJ: When you became the Chairperson of the Linguistics Department at Punjabi University, Patiala, the student enrolment in your department increased manifold. How were you able to achieve this? What

did you do to influence students to join linguistics?

JS: Yes! Student's enrolment increased tremendously from eight to about eighty. The major challenge, I think, for linguistics is that literary departments have occupied the space of language studies. In Punjab, this point was being strongly raised by the teachers of the Department of Linguistics, [and] by Professor Joginder Singh Puar in particular. The Patiala department had been a lively place earlier, but then, there weren't many students. So, the first challenge was to consolidate the ideological ground prepared by the elders. Also, due to those earlier efforts, the Punjabi B.A. and M.A. courses of the Punjabi University, Patiala, had a better share of language-related content in the curricula. The content exposed students to language studies, and in a way, compelled prospective Punjabi teachers to know at least something about linguistics.

The second challenge was the widespread perception that linguistics was an obscure and difficult kind of discipline. I addressed this by moving around in Punjab and talking about language structure in a simplified idiom and accessible Punjabi. I also spoke about the importance of mother tongue and the academic and career opportunities opened by linguistic studies.

The third challenge was of a technical kind. Anyone who had already done another postgraduate course was not eligible for admission into M.A. Secondly, only the graduates with language major in the B.A. degree courses were eligible for admissions to M.A in Linguistics. I got these conditions removed, and it immensely helped enrolment to increase. We were also able to restart the M.Phil. [programme] with great success.

And there were some non-academic reasons too. The culture in the linguistics department, compared to other departments in the University was such that the students felt comfortable and could converse with teachers as equals. This tradition was already there before I took over.

IJ: From some of your videos on YouTube, it seems that you are a strong advocate of mother tongue education. What drove you to focus on this?

JS: This again was by chance, as life generally is in India. In 2001, the Department of Punjabi Language Development asked me to present a paper in their Conference, titled, Futuristic Perspectives for the Development of Punjabi in the Global Context. Researching about the global linguistic situation in terms of the medium of education and language(s) of use in other formal linguistic domains, and their correlation with educational outcomes, international trade, economic growth, scientific and technological growth and development in general, learning of foreign languages and the global linguistic trends opened my own eyes. The presentation at the conference threw me entirely into mother tongue advocacy. What draws me into things like this is perhaps my tendency not to remain aloof from what happens around [me].

IJ: Advocates of MT education are often viewed as being inimical to English (and other local languages) nowadays. Would bilingual or even multilingual education be a bridge of rapprochement between the two? How could this be brought about?

JS: Dr. Iqbal, matters of historic

proportions cannot be decided to bring about the rapprochement. There is no convincing evidence that bilingual or multilingual education is a better option for education, or even for learning English. Also, the vested commercial and elite interests make such accusations (of being inimical to English) for exploiting popular perceptions about the English language.

IJ: What is the rationale for English to be made mandatory for teaching in elementary schools?

JS: Irrationality is the rationale. It is due to the perception that English is the panacea for all educational ailments, and it is a sure Aadhaar Card for entry to "heaven"; but such perceptions happen when we learn with eyes and ears shut and not by opening and using them.

IJ: Would you agree that teaching of English (to all) from the very beginning will help reduce the status of English as the language of/ for the elite?

JS: We can entertain this question only if we believe in the wrong perception that teaching English from the very beginning helps to learn English better than delayed exposure. Teaching English from Grade 1 has been there almost everywhere in India since the nineties. I don't think children have learnt any English with that. Secondly, foreign language medium widens the disparities in the country instead of reducing them.

Thirdly, aren't there hierarchies/disparities in the monolingual countries too?

Also, and which is more important, why should we flirt with English as the status marker, and that too when we have a far more accessible and immensely

beneficial option of eliminating this elite and non-elite (linguistic) division by taking English out. Why ask all to stand on their heads to make them (look) equal when we have the best option to request all to stand on their feet! Furthermore, it is not merely a question of equality; it is a question of taking India (educationally) forward.

IJ: What is your perspective on three-language formula or mother tongue implementation at the elementary/ primary level?

JS: Almost all prosperous countries of the world have only one-language formula at the initial stage. On average, a second/foreign language is introduced around the 9th year of the child's age. Firstly, the learning of any language other than the mother tongue should be optional. Secondly, given the global mobility of the younger lot, we can start second/foreign language teaching from Grade 6.

IJ: What is your opinion on the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 recently rolled out, with reference to the language/s of instruction at all levels? How feasible do you think the ideas are in practice?

JS: I don't think anyone can produce a more confused, vague, and unprofessional policy than that. It proposes home language/mother tongue/local language/regional language as the medium of instruction till Grade 5, and preferably till eighth class and beyond: It doesn't utter a word on what is to be done where all of these are different. And it also adds an omnipotent qualifier 'wherever possible'. The vagueness in the policy is deliberate to keep the whims and

fancies of the government decision makers and the greed of private education players in full play. The ambiguity will ensure that mother tongue medium is not possible anywhere.

Also, this policy intends to ultimately entrench the murderous onslaught of privatization and commercialization unleashed on Indian education; and privatization/commercialization has only one leg, the English medium, to stand on. So, NEP will make English keep ruling Indian lands, hearts, and minds more firmly, ironically in this *Raashtravadi* era. The NEP also recommends science to be taught bilingually from Grade 6, so that the students can handle English medium well in higher classes. Thus, it is abundantly clear that there is no intention of providing higher education in mother tongues. Secondly, there is no evidence which shows that the English medium is a better option than the mother tongue medium for learning English well. The NEP itself states "a language does not need to be the medium of instruction for it to be taught and learned well" (p.13). This means that the medium of instruction is not essential for learning a language. What an amusement, thus, the proposal of bilingual teaching of science is!

An implication from this is that the NEP framers are either totally oblivious of the expert opinion, or are making false statements. The NEP also states, "As research clearly shows that children learn languages most quickly between the ages of 2 and 8 . . . children will be exposed to different languages early on . . . starting from the Foundational Stage onwards" (p. 13). It is a totally a [sic] false claim. A recent MIT study (with 6 lakh subjects) proves that the age after 15 is better than earlier for learning a second/foreign language.

The bane of Indian policy making, on the medium of instruction at least, is that it is rooted in stereotypes, impressions and myths. As for the feasibility of ideas in NEP, it contains only confusion and opinions counter to the attested ones. Can we implement confusion and such views? I don't think so.

IJ: What arguments/steps do you find in the NEP that have been taken to convince the country that mother tongue education is not against the teaching of English as a language?

JS: I don't find any arguments/steps except "songs of praise" for mother tongues, but it all is just hollow rhetoric, and NEP proposes no effective instruments for mother tongue education.

IJ: In Punjab, the State government has introduced English as the medium of instruction from Class one onwards. What is the impact of studying through English on mother tongue, on the cognitive development or acquisition of English? Could you mention any studies done in this regard?

JS: Unfortunately, we don't have any empirical study on that, or at least I am not aware of, but some trends are quite visible. People aren't too enthusiastic about entering the English medium stream in government schools; some of those who opted for English medium are reverting to Punjabi medium now; about one lakh and fifty thousand students have migrated from private schools, mostly English medium ones, to government schools this session alone. The awareness that has been generated lately about the advantages of mother tongue based education has played a significant role in this.

IJ: The teaching of English has been the subject of much research, especially in the context of Second Language Acquisition (SLA). Innovative techniques keep pouring in. Do you think the teaching of Punjabi, though it is the mother tongue, could be made more engaging through any such methods?

JS: I see SLA and the mastery of mother tongue as two different phenomena. We need to learn a second language, generally, for very restricted purposes. But mother tongue is a vehicle of our whole human existence in the anthropological, social, cultural, aesthetic, historical and cognitive senses. So, the means to acquire these (in a broad sense of the word) have also to be very different, though they could share some commonalities.

IJ: With an increasing number of Punjab's population settling abroad, where Punjabi is more likely to be spoken only at home or within the Punjabi community, how do you think it will impact the use and development of the language? Is there a possibility of the tongue slowly dying out, and what will be the impact of this?

JS: It will largely depend on the concentration of the Punjabi population in the respective place or country, their efforts for their language, and the response of the respective administrations. In the globalized world, multilingualism has also become a career/economic advantage. Many factors are in operation. The results will depend on the play of these factors. The signs are positive at some places but negative elsewhere.

IJ: From the general information available through the IELTS exams services, Punjab has the highest number of candidates in

the country, who seek education abroad. The urgency to learn English is visible through the mushrooming of English and IELTS training centres across the state; youngsters voice the regret that they were not taught English at an early age. The majority opinion that English is the language for global trade, education, science, etc. is deeply entrenched. In this context, how can the counter-argument for MT education (i.e. education in all subjects in Punjabi) be made convincing enough for them?

JS: I can think of three pieces of evidence to counter the opinion that English is the language for global trade, education, science and other advancements.

- a) Some countries have implemented mother tongue education and are developed in education, trade, economics, and human development;
- b) international opinion and the results of investigations on the issue also show this;
- c) lessons from successful international practices on mother tongue support this

To make the counter-arguments convincing, we must take this information to all the stakeholders. The negative consequences of English medium schooling is also out in the open now. As far as learning of the English language is concerned, the statements in black and white from agencies such as the British Council and UNESCO are eye-openers. They do marvels in making the counterargument convincing enough.

IJ: What measures can be taken in this regard, and by whom?

JS: We need to spread the word (truth) far and wide, to bring people on common

platforms, to engage with the policymakers and powers that be to get the favourable policy instruments created and implemented and to resist all harmful policies and practices actively; and the message must go in peoples' languages. We need to work mainly on three fronts. We need to bust the myths about language: that English is not the only language of science, knowledge and global communication; that the best way to learn English is studying in English medium; that our languages do not have the capacity to communicate modern concepts; and, that the country needs one common language to be united.

The second front is to break the hegemony of English, and to a certain extent of Hindi and also of other languages, over the rest of Indian mother tongues; and this has to be done with legal instruments. Still, a lot can be done in informal domains just by using mother tongues in these domains.

The third front is the creation of content in the mother tongues.

As for the question who is to do it, everyone will have to play a part in the realm one is associated with: the mother tongue activists, the academicians, the intelligentsia, the political activists, etc. The results will be in accordance with the amount of effort we all put in.

IJ: At this juncture in your life, how do you see your roles as an academician and as an activist?

JS: As an academician, I need to pass whatever I know about linguistics and language structure to the next generation. I have just completed a book on *An Introduction to Grammar* in Punjabi. My next plan is to write an accessible introduction to linguistics in Punjabi. As an activist, I want to take the attested facts and arguments and other information related to language policy issues and discussions far and wide in Punjab and India. I also want to bring more and more people—mother tongue activists working for other Indian language mother tongues together—so that we can bring about the much-needed change.

IJ: Professor Singh, your life goals and activism are a refreshing change from the idea of armchair scholars locking themselves up in ivory towers! Indeed, your passionate commitment to the cause of MT education and your constant endeavour to strengthen the roots of Punjabi language among the people is laudable and inspiring. Thank you very much for allowing the readers of LLT to engage with you!

JS: My sincere thanks to you, Professor Ramakant, and the LLT team. *Sarbatdabhala!* (May all be benefited)

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Landmark

Learning Deficit, Shift of Identity and Visual Ethnography

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Key Words: Learning deficit, Identity shift, Visual ethnography, Bharat Bhasha Mandakini, Utopian ideas

Abstract

The landmark article discusses a visual ethnography programme called *Bharat Bhasha Mandakini*, a project that talks of language against the backdrop of ecology. Such an approach consists of creating films, tied not to language teaching initiatives, but focussing on language in its eco system—covering the land and its people, culture and performance, literature. and language and language teaching. The planning and process of the program is discussed. The approach adopted in this program makes language teaching enjoyable, helps to deal with the problems of learning deficits by focussing on linguistic diversities in classrooms and contributes to the preservation of languages. This 'utopian' idea provides space for two opposing views to dialogue to create a synthetic construction on the linguistic landscape.

The Ground Reality: Challenges and Consequences

Periodic assessment surveys such as *the Annual Status of Education Report* (ASER) or *the National Achievement Survey* by National Council of Educational Research and Training (2017) gives us the following information about India's learning deficits. About one-fourth of children in the 14-18 years age group are unable to either count currency or add weights (ASER 2014); one out of every seven children cannot recognize a map of India, and over one-third of children cannot name the capital cities of India. About 79 per cent cannot name the state they live in and 58 per cent are unable to locate it on a map (Banerjee & Duflo, 2015). We have somewhere stepped off the path of the 'learning ladder' (Govinda, 2020) and landed ourselves in the quagmire of un-education, where schooling and education have ceased to be effective. We wrongly believed that the languages of the colonial masters could be adapted as a quick fix for all our divergences. For this situation to change, one must give positive encouragement to the plural ethos in planning for languages, culture and education through a set of organized State interventions.

The first challenge for lifting those at the bottom of the learning pyramid to higher levels of attainment comes from diverse, multilingual classrooms found in both State-run and private schools of India and other developing nations (Singh, Singh & Banerjee 2020). The 'public schools' impose a monolingual regime from the top, branding the students from different ethnicities as aberrant or 'deviant', without attempting to equip them with a metalinguistic knowledge base. Some schools use 'translingual' practices (Anderson & Lightfoot, 2018), and follow an 'additive' bilingualism method, in which

the first language continues to be developed (and the first culture valued) (Sridhar, 1994). However, many others use a 'subtractive' bilingualism method, where the second language (English or Hindi) is added at the expense of the first language and culture (Mohanty, 2008), thereby diminishing one's base language. Then, there is the linguistic distance between the 'standard' variety of our school languages (*Maanak Hindi* or standard colloquial Bengali or *shista-vyaavaharika Telugu*) and the dialectal or mother-tongue background of students, especially those from rural backgrounds. Underlying the imposition of the standard language is the belief that by imposing certain performance norms, 'civilisation' is taught. Here language is a means to indoctrinate children into a certain way of life. It is not easy to get out of this mentality. Such a practice has implications for the identity of the children.

Shifts of Identity

A consequence of this dismal situation is that our linguistic landscape shows a significant degree of change over the last many decades. Several people, for various reasons, shift their linguistic identity from a smaller mother-tongue to a bigger and better-known label. This shift has been talked about by many (Dasgupta, 1970). Haugen (1974), reminds us that literary and linguistic scholars should pay attention to all smaller speech forms of an area, rather than devote energy to discover grammatical patterns of only well-known major languages. Since the UNESCO began ringing alarm bells about vanishing mother-tongues, many activists and scholars devoted to the preservation of literature and language are engaged in writing grammars and dictionaries of these varieties. However, unlike preservation of species by biologists, languages cannot be preserved by putting them into artificial environments such as grammars and dictionaries or high literature (Mühlhäusler, 1992). Nor can

they be isolated, because human beings are 'interacting species' (Morgan, 1969, p. 34). These measures do not yield any success 'unless the question of language ecology is seriously asked' (Mühlhäusler, 1992, p. 164). These ideas justify the reason for embarking on a project of visual ethnography of languages, about which not much is written. Some of us at the Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL), Mysore, believed that this move might give impetus to language survival and revival, by focusing on all its functional aspects, literary function as well as the function of learning or gathering knowledge.

The Emergence of the Bhasha Mandakini Project

In 2003, during the premiership of Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee, *Gyan Darshan*, a TV program was launched by IGNOU, under which various organizations were expected to create and feed-in interesting teaching-learning programmes. Under the direction of the Language Bureau, Ministry of Human Resource Development, and with the active encouragement of the then HRD Minister Professor Murali Manohar Joshi, language organizations were asked to create televisable teaching materials. The Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan came up with a programme titled *Bhasha Mandakini* to teach the *Shastras* and science concepts in Sanskrit. Later, they decided to concentrate on the teaching of spoken Sanskrit through this project.

Developments in tele-education facilitated the *Bhasha Mandakini* programme. The Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE), designed jointly by NASA and ISRO in 1975 began a large sociological experiment of beaming programmes on health, hygiene and family planning to 2400 Indian villages

spread over six states. With the commissioning of Indian National Satellite System (INSAT) in 1983, these programmes became more robust. In 1990, Jhabua Developmental Communications Project (JDCP) and Training and Developmental Communication Channel (TDCC) demonstrated the efficacy of tele-education in response to criticism against tele-education. The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) set up a dedicated educational service under EDUSAT in October 2002, later launched by GSLV in September 2004. The ISRO embarked on a major media and education initiative through EDUSAT. Several conferences of vice-chancellors and institutional heads were organized to appraise the educationists on the capabilities of EDUSAT (operationalized in 2004) and how they could utilize this facility. The pivotal role of education as an instrument of social change and universalization of education was top priority at the time.

In 2003-2005, CIIL began the *Bharat Bhasha Mandakini* programme along with other programmes such as Bangla Online (http://www.bangla-online.info/PromotionalSite/PromotionalSite_Index.htm), Learn Kannada Programme (<http://www.ciil-learnkannada.net/>) and Tamil Online (<http://www.tamil-online.org/login/signup/login.asp?language=Tamil>). These were aired on the mainstream media and online portals. In many ways, these language programmes were to complement the new initiative. The idea was to ensure that the *Bharat Bhasha Mandakini* programme was created and developed without being tied up to purely language teaching initiatives.

In February 2004, the MHRD held a meeting at IGNOU to explore the possibility of CIIL creating a more professional set of films. CIIL, among the MHRD Institutions, housed one of the finest film studios, with many documentaries on Indian scripts and

languages made during the tenure of its first director, Professor D.P. Pattanayak. CIIL was well-known for its over 50 episodes on Hindi Language Teaching created for All India Radio, beamed in Karnataka many times.

CIIL's *Bharat Bhasha Mandakini* project thus emerged in 2004 and over the next six years, produced over 600 memorable documentaries of 22-23 minutes each, covering the universe of language, literature, culture and society of at least four speech communities—Bangla, Tamil, Kannada and Marathi. In all, about 230 film directors have worked on CIIL's *Bharat Bhasha Mandakini* project since 2004.

Bhasha Mandakini Project: The Process

The first workshop for the preparation of the television script for the *Bhasha Mandakini* project was held at Mysore from 29th March to 7th April 2004. In August 2004, a detailed meeting on *Bangla Bhasha Mandakini* workshop was held at the initiative of the Departments of Comparative Literature and Film Studies, Jadavpur University. About 44 film specialists, film directors and producers, poets and fiction writers, linguists, scholars in literature and social science, language teachers, scriptwriters and anchors as well as representatives from AIR and other media participated in the workshop. The details of the project were finalized in the workshop; it was decided to involve film and documentary specialists, anchors, actors, recitation specialists as well as linguists and culture specialists for the proposed *Visual/Virtual Encyclopedia of Indian Languages*. About 560 episodes on four major languages and 49 more episodes on eight smaller languages of Sikkim were created. The best possible anchors, actors, voice-over specialists, camera and other technical crew, editors and experts were involved to retain audience interest in the program.

Getting Soumitra Chattopadhyay, Dhritiman, Goutam Ghosh, Shriram Lagoo, Amol Palekar or Sabyasachi among others to anchor these productions enhanced their quality.

Initially, the narration and the sub-titles were in English, irrespective of the language being taught. Later, the programme was modified such that the background narration and subtitle language could be changed in the program if one wished to. An agency was engaged to create Hindi or Tamil versions of these documentary films. So, the same episode could be used in many different languages. Along with being educative, the programmes were entertaining, as they combined multimedia lessons, classroom interaction, demonstrations, narrations, drama and a tour of the actual locations. In the next section, I will elaborate on the structure of *Bhasha Mandakini* series meant for teaching about language and culture to the uninitiated.

Language Teaching through Television

In the *Bhasha Mandakini* films, all the language skills (speaking, writing or script, reading and recitation, and listening or conversational strategies) were covered, with an emphasis on communication (pragmatic aspect). Target learners were assumed to be speakers of Indian languages with proficiency in English, but speakers of other languages could also use them. All the episodes had four focal points, and this remained the defining feature of this experiment. These points were: (i) Land and people, (ii) Culture and performances, (iii) Literature, (iv) About language and language teaching.

Starting and sustaining a television series devoted to Indian languages required complex programming. For this purpose, a

multi-pronged approach was thought necessary. These episodes focusing on teaching a particular language were produced by the CIIL in-house, as well as through outsourcing and with the help of academic and technical resource persons. Talented filmmakers, NGOs, and voluntary organizations were identified under each language group, allotted topics and asked to come up with a script idea for 22-26-minute episodes. The PoC (Proof of Concept) was created which included background research, a detailed script, details of production, etc. Each such proposal was vetted carefully by the experts under the direction of the director of CIIL. Each proposal and script had to pass through various layers before an agreement was executed between the Institution and the filmmaker. CIIL also engaged subject scholars who would prepare a detailed academic script based on background research. In many instances, these scripts came up through script-writing workshops. The English narrations were appropriately dubbed and subtitled by Lingadevaru Halemane in 2009. This work, unfortunately, could not be continued, due to his demise in 2011.

There is no doubt that an ambitious plan or a massive project of this size was nothing short of a utopian idea—to prepare a visual encyclopaedia of Indian languages that would remove the drudgery from language teaching activities and make them more attractive. Of course, much more could have been done if time permitted, and some work in that direction had started.

Concluding Remarks

We believed that our programme of language and educational development could be based on utopian ideas to create a speculative landscape which escapes from "time, death and judgement", but "the society it outlines is not the crystallisation of a personal vision but a provisional and synthetic construction"

(Parrinder, 1985, p. 116). 'Utopography' is not an individual dream, but a collective project. This collective project of utopography would have to reconcile two opposite views—one emanating from the heterogeneous space dotted by linguistic and cultural majorities and the other from minorities that have been living together for a long time. Each one has its way of looking at life; one is viewed from above, and the other has to do with the view from below. As we progress with our plans to bring in more equity, these two views could be problematized to see how or whether things have changed for the 'other India' (Singh & Singh, forthcoming) after 1947, and if so, what drove the forces of change.

Economists tell us that the 'impressive aggregate growth' across developing nations has only but trickled down to the poor (Ahluwalia, Carter & Chenery, 2009). The disparity between growth and social development, we are told, is directly linked to the lopsided distribution of wealth and opportunities. While growth is usually managed and viewed with a top-down perspective, social development takes place from the bottom-up, and we speculate that the disconnect between these two viewpoints is partly the reason for our not fulfilling our commitment to the poorer sections of society—the BoP (Bottom of the Pyramid) (Wagner & Castillo, 2014). It is now becoming increasingly evident that for the effective and successful implementation of social engineering policies in India, what we require is an inclusive dialogue. Furthermore, this dialogue must consider the voices of diverse cultural and ethnic groups and an amalgamation of the top-down and bottom-up perspectives, bringing us to the critical question of finding the space for such a confluence.

In planning for the preservation of languages and culture, or in our efforts to ensure appropriate learning methods for young adults and children, we may

therefore have to think collectively and debate as to what kind of change we would like to have. The question is, what kind of a landscape would we like to create? Whether our wish-list or plan would be fulfilled or not is for the future to tell, but there does not seem to be any

substitute for utopia. We hope CIIL or some other organization will eventually take up the cause of language teaching through television on a larger scale now that online teaching-learning has made so much headway in India. As of now, that is only a utopia.

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Classroom Activities

Building Vocabulary Using Digital Platforms

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Theme: Speak about Your Favourite Vacation (Asynchronous Activity)

Skills: Fluency of Ideas and Vocabulary

Subskills: Collaboration and communication skills, Questioning, Vocabulary development, Audio/video recording skills

Requirement: Access to WhatsApp

Classes: 6-8. The activity can be adapted for older students as well.

Learning Objectives: To enable learners to:

- enhance collaboration and communication skills
- develop questioning skills
- build vocabulary
- develop skills of audio and video recording

Duration: 30 minutes including pre-during and post-task activities

Procedure: This activity uses WhatsApp because of its many advantages for learning:

WhatsApp encourages collaboration, extends learning time, allows flipping the classroom by getting students to work outside the classroom, allows sharing of images and videos and recording voice messages.

Task:

- Ask students speak about their favourite vacation spot/location and record it using WhatsApp audio or video.
- Get the students to share their recordings with their peers.
- Encourage the students to ask questions or comment on the recording of their peers.
- In this activity, the focus must be on fluency and not on errors.

Instructions

1. Ask every student to prepare an audio/video individually.
2. The students should begin by introducing themselves.
3. They should talk about their favourite

- vacation spot/place-name the spot and why they chose this spot.
4. They should attach only one picture (if any) of the vacation spot along with their date of visit. Ensure that no outdated or personal picture is attached.
 5. They should talk about what they like and what they do not like about the place.
 6. Teacher helps students to form a WhatsApp group within a specified time.
 7. Students share their audio/video with their friends.

Extension Activity

Students can:

- Select their friend's audio/video recording
- Listen to the recording multiple times
- Through voice message, ask questions and share their views

Reflections

- Did the students enjoy using WhatsApp?
- What did they like the most?
- What did they learn from this activity?

Theme: Storytelling through YouTube and Lingro to Teach New Words (Synchronous Activity)

Skills: Vocabulary related to personal expression and pronunciation, reading and writing skills.

Requirement: Access to YouTube

Class: Class 3 students who have English as a subject and English language proficiency ranging from beginning to intermediate level

Learning Objectives:

- To identify the central theme in story
- To be able to pronounce new words correctly
- To be able to construct sentences

- focussing on form and meaning
- To develop skills in using YouTube and Lingro

Duration: 37 Minutes

Procedure: Ensure that students are familiar with YouTube and have access to it.

1. Warm-up activity (3 minutes): Show picture cards of food items to the students. Ask them to identify healthy and unhealthy food items.
2. Story listening (8 minutes): Get the students to listen to the animated story, "Glimpses of a Surgery" on YouTube.
3. Word reading (3 minutes): After the story, read aloud the new words from the story.
4. Guessing meaning (5 minutes): Ask the students to predict the meanings of the new words based on their context.
5. Locating the meaning: (8 min): Introduce the students to Lingro and teach them how to find the meanings of the new words using Lingro.
6. Pronunciation task (5 minutes): Make the students listen to the new words and practice speaking them aloud as they hear them.
7. Writing task (5 minutes): Ask the students to use the new words to make new sentences.
8. Ask the students to share their sentences with the class.

Extension Activity

- Ask the students to find the meaning of a few other new words (frantic, uproar, sniff, instantly, recovering, tiny, wagging, caretaker and surgery) using Lingro. They are free to seek the help of their parents or siblings.
- Get the students to write sentences using the new words.
- Ask the students to try and use these words in their daily routine.
- Ask the parents to try and record the usage of these words and upload it on YouTube.
- Share the uploaded YouTube videos with a wider audience.

What is Where? : A Fun Way to Learn Prepositions

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Objectives

- To observe and understand the idea of relative position
- To articulate the idea of relative position in a language the learner is comfortable with

Level: Grade II

Preparation: The teacher needs to look around the classroom and take note of the objects that are there and their relative positions.

Time: 60 Minutes

Procedure:

1. Ask the children to look around the classroom and draw at least 5 objects that they can see, in relation to where they are placed. Tell them that they have 10-12 minutes to look around as well as to draw. They can talk and discuss what they will draw with each other during this time. In the meanwhile, the teacher can walk around the classroom to see how their work is progressing.
2. Once the children have completed this task; ask them one by one to name the things that they have drawn. There should be no repetition. While the

children are naming the objects, the teacher can write the names on the board. (Examples of objects include fans, photo frames, tables, chairs, etc.)

3. Read the list of objects from the board. Choose one object from this list, for example, a photo frame of Gandhi. While choosing the object, keep in mind that it should be a unique thing so as to avoid any confusion while describing it. Then circle that object on the board.
4. Next, ask the children to describe in one sentence the relative position of the object, in this case the photo frame. Each child has to say something new to describe the relative position of the chosen photo frame. Tell the children that they must listen carefully, as a sentence that has been already uttered cannot be repeated. Give each child one minute to think of a sentence and then speak it out aloud in front of the class. Give a few examples of sentences such as: तस्वीर दीवार पर लगी है [The picture is on the wall]; दीवार के बीचों बीच लगी है [It is in the middle of the wall]; छत के नीचे की तरफ लगी है। [It is on the lower side of the wall]; फर्श के ऊपर टेबल है और टेबल से ऊपर तस्वीर है। [The is a table on the floor and there is

a picture on the table]; इस तस्वीर के पास एक और तस्वीर है [There is another picture next to this picture] If the students are unable to make sentences, the teacher can add phrases such as, 'left of the window', 'towards the school entrance', 'roughly 5 feet above the ground', etc.)

5. If a child is not able to think and articulate a sentence in the given time, it is okay. Ask them to keep thinking and to raise their hand when they are ready to share the sentence with the class.
6. When one round is complete, with every child having shared a sentence with the class, another round can begin; two or three such rounds can be played with children.

7. Note down all the sentences spoken by the children.

Note: This activity can be played in any language, be it Hindi, a regional language or English. However, conducting it in English in Grade 2 would not be very productive as most of the students are not that fluent in English at that age. The activity can be repeated with another object in some other position.

Noting down the sentences is important for various reasons: 1) At the end of the activity, the sentences can be read to the children, 2) If this activity is repeated after a month, the teacher can observe the changes that have taken place in children's language in terms of sentence structure, ability to describe, vocabulary, etc.

Book Review

Making and Using Word Lists for Language Learning and Testing

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Making and Using Word Lists for Language Learning and Testing

Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, (210 pages).

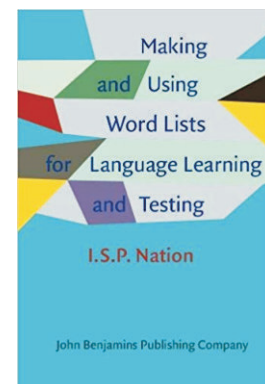
Nation, I. S. P.

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e-Book ISBN 9789027266279

Reviewed by: Veena Kapur



"Vocabulary is not an end in itself. A rich vocabulary makes the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing easier to perform" (Nation 1994, p. viii).

In his book *Making and Using Word Lists for Language Learning and Testing* Nation posits fundamental issues in vocabulary studies. The theoretical framework of the book focuses on past and current research on vocabulary, targeting those who know something about the teaching and learning of vocabulary and want to use word lists in an informed way for an academic purpose. Of the 16 chapters, 10 chapters are written by Nation and five chapters by Nation in collaboration with

other scholars. Chapter 15 is by Dang and Webb.

The author begins with the basic premise that vocabulary lists are made to guide the design of a teaching and learning program that aims at receptive knowledge of vocabulary. However, the detailed analysis brings out in stark relief, the importance of vocabulary lists for productive purposes and those designed for the analysis of texts and vocabulary test construction. The book also highlights the factors that need to be considered when frequency-based word lists are created, including the purpose for which the word list is to be used, the

design of the corpus from which the list will be made, the unit of counting and what should and should not be counted as words. The author draws on research to show the current understanding of these factors, providing practical guidelines for making word lists for language teaching and learning.

The book is divided into five sections entitled:

- The uses of word lists (one chapter)
- Deciding what to count as words (eight chapters)
- Choosing and preparing the corpus (two chapters)
- Making the lists (four chapters)
- Using the lists (one chapter)
- In addition, the book has three appendices followed by references, and an author and subject indexes

The introduction sets the tone of the book, as it highlights the basic questions that the book attempts to answer. The author emphasizes the fact that the book is written with preconceived biases, stressing that these biases are explained in the book itself. The technical terms that are interspersed within the analysis are also explained here.

The first section: 'The Uses of Word Lists', in the author's own words, "is a kind of justification for the rest of the book" (p.3). The author focusses on what word lists can be used for, and the important role they can play in learning a foreign language such as English. This chapter explores the important factors affecting the making of word lists, the unit of counting and the collection of texts (nature of corpora) used for making word lists. The occurrence of words in a text of 1000 words can be described by Zipf's law. The generalizations that follow from Zipf's law has major implications for course design. Nation brings to the fore that good vocabulary course design gives attention to the most useful words first, excluding words outside the high frequency lists.

Word lists based on range, frequency of

occurrence and dispersion are excellent guides for choosing words for systematic teaching and learning of vocabulary. The author further stresses that a well-balanced course has four equal strands, namely, meaning-focused input, language-focused learning, meaning-focused output, and fluency development. Shortlisting the well-defined strands of a well-balanced language course provides directions to course designers. The chapter is comprehensive, with separate sections on specialized vocabulary, language testing, factors affecting the making of the word list and finally influential word lists. The influential word list section discusses a variety of word lists like Micheal West's A General Service List of English Words (GSL), Coxhead's Academic Word List and subject-specific word lists. These early word counts show a growing awareness of the effect of the nature and size of the corpus on words occurring in a count. This section also gives a historical perspective of word lists. A breakthrough in the construction of word lists came with the availability of computing resources; as in all other areas of knowledge, it put an end to manual counting. The next breakthrough was the availability of digital corpora and word lists based on them.

Section two: 'Deciding What to Count as Words', defines which forms in a corpus are counted as words. The author discusses Nagy and Anderson's 1984 study that analyses what counts as a word. They use the criteria of relatedness among words, in terms of the similarity of their current meanings rather than the dictionary route of looking at historical derivations. It is a highly detailed discussion that clarifies the linguistic basis of a word. Each of the chapters in this section looks at a different category of words. The categories covered are lemmas, word families, affixes, homoforms and polysemes, proper nouns, hyphenated words, transparent compounds, multiword units, acronyms and function words. These chapters attempt to describe the words in the

category, look at the justifications and difficulties involved in distinguishing such words and suggest resources for finding items for the category. They also cover the number of items and the frequency of items in the category. Each word-type discussion concludes with a short recommendation by the author on the factors that need to be included in the criteria for deciding what will be counted as a particular kind of word.

Section 3 entitled 'Choosing and Preparing the Corpus', begins with a discussion of corpus selection and design. Here, the authors clarify that the written and the spoken distinction is the primary one, both for vocabulary and grammatical features. However, the author points out that the comparison of discourse features suggests that TV sitcoms and movies may be a useful addition to a corpus of spontaneous dialogue, thus incorporating contemporary language usage. The chapter also discusses the distinction between various text types from a vocabulary perspective. The authors suggest that frequency lists can only reflect the corpora they are derived from. It is therefore suggested that mixing the types of texts in the corpus produces mixed results. The authors define four text types: interactive, reported exposition, imaginative and narrative, and academic writing. Each text type is roughly equidistant from its neighbour in terms of vocabulary similarity with conversation followed by narrative, then general writing followed by academic writing. The chapter also brings to the fore the major distinctions between the British and American versions of the English language, which can involve a preference for certain words but only involves a limited number of different words for the same concept. It however involves systematic spelling differences, the issue being to decide if the spelling differences

are to be treated as members of the same lemma or as different lemmas or families. Another issue that is of singular importance is the proportion of text types in a corpus. The academic word lists needed to be equally valuable to students, regardless of the subject they study.

Section 4 titled 'Making the Lists' stresses on the range of purposes for making the lists should be kept in mind while preparing word lists. It includes a discussion on the criteria of range, frequency and dispersion, and more subjective criteria. The author stresses that the purpose and audience for a word list needs to be clearly described, which in turn provides the basis for evaluating the list.

The chapter on critiquing a word list is replete with a wealth of details. It incorporates questions for critiquing a word list and specifications for the British National Corpus (BNC)/Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) lists. This is followed by listing the criteria used to make word families. The writing of the present book has resulted in several improvements to the BNC/COCA lists. It is pertinent to mention here that the word families were developed over several years and low frequency family members continue to be added to the existing families.

The last three chapters of this section focus on specialized word lists and on making an essential word list for beginners. They also focus on how word lists can be used for course design, language teaching and learning, designing graded reading programs, analysing vocabulary load of texts and developing vocabulary tests.

Besides the theoretical framework, the book also provides practical guidelines for making word lists for teaching and testing English language.

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Language and Identity: Selected Papers of Robert B. Le Page

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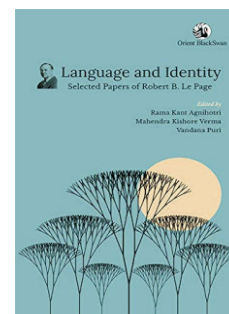
Language and Identity: Selected Papers of Robert B. Le Page

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Agnihotri, Rama Kant, Verma, Mahendra Kishore & Puri, Vandana (Eds.) (2020).

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Reviewed by: Udaya Narayana Singh



While writing about the dramatic art of Le Page, Josette Féral (2009) said that “his audiences, no matter what their cultural origins, unconsciously find in his work the model of today's constructions of identity, and the values linked to them.”(<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10486800902770804>). Way back in 1985, in his magnum opus on the question of 'identity', Le Page had expressed his disagreement with the popular conceptualization of the terms 'language' and 'dialect' that are often taken for granted in the existing literature. For him, sociolinguistics had to begin

looking at the 'individuals' occupying the centre-stage, because it was the speakers who held the clue to the mysteries and intricacies of language. He argued in several of his works that it is usually the decision of the individual to negotiate and arrive at a variety of language that would reflect the identity they had chosen. In other words, linguistic identity is dependent on the speaker's choices. Further, linguistic ecologies change rapidly and are a highly diffused phenomena, a fact that is clearly reflected in the decadal choices citizens of a multilingual country make in

declaring their mother-tongue in the census operations. In comparison to this stand, Christian Mair (2003) argued that in "Labovian sociolinguistics the main emphasis is on the subconscious choice between the linguistic variables in spontaneous speech." (p.196)

The volume of Robert Le Page so sensibly arranged and ably edited by his students, Agnihotri and Verma, along with Vandana Puri, is an anthology that is meant to provoke theoretically minded sociolinguists to question 'the given' further. It is equally useful for the field workers who work in the area of language mix. It is arranged in four sections, devoted to 'Theoretical Aspects'(nine papers), 'Pidgin and Creole Studies'(five chapters), 'General'(five interesting topics ranging from myths, snobberies, metaphors, vernacularisation and language barrier), and 'National Language and Identity' (three papers). This anthology has not only so much variety, but also a very interesting 35-page long transcript of conversations between Le Page and the first two editors. The discussions on Le Page's ideas on language, identity and speech variation reminded me of 1974 volume of Herman Parret from Mouton *Discussing Language*, in which he had included very lively dialogues with Chafe, Chomsky, Greimas, Halliday, Lakoff, Lamb, Martinet, McCawley and others. Even for someone like me who had seen, met, heard and read Le Page, the discussions are very enlightening.

It was not unknown to Creolists that between a 'ready-to-use' finished patois and a jargon that is still evolving—thanks to the intervention of many codes in use simultaneously by the individuals and in a space—there would be many intermediate speech varieties, creating a multidimensional model and a methodology to study them. Where others

'taught' how to eliminate such heterogeneities, Le Page encouraged all to look into the making of these 'neglectful' varieties. His point was that it was from a close consideration of the speakers' moves in this jugglery of speech that a wholesome conceptualization of 'language' would appear. The 'linguistic flux' was always thought to be too difficult to record, capture and analyse, but it is through these speech strategies that speakers wanted to reveal their identities. If sociolinguists wanted to shove these nuances under the carpet, it would be a great defeat for the discipline, he thought. This outlook took him to "find a more satisfactory way of talking about observed phenomena than current linguistic theory provides" (Le Page, 1973, p.31). Speakers of pidgins and creoles go about "weighing up their chances of being accepted in one role or another role, creating for themselves the [linguistic] stereotypes for these roles" (Le Page, 1973, p.40). This, he strongly argued would truly discover the making of 'communicative competence' of the individuals and their acts of identity, as conceived by Dell Hymes. Le Page's work in Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Lucia, and his analysis of what is often brushed aside as idiosyncrasies make a very strong point for redefining language as a "closed and finite rule-system" (Le Page, 1988, p.21). He rightly pointed out that our aim should be to account for "la langue, that is, the systems inherent in the linguistic behaviour of networks of individuals" (Le Page, 1988, p.22)

Overall, I believe by bringing out these papers in one volume, the editors have done great justice to this scholar of unusual calibre who dared to think differently in the early stages of development of sociolinguistics.

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Report

Audio Resource Creation: Online Course for English Language Teachers

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Background

IT for Change (ITfC) and the English Language Teachers Association, Telangana (ELTA) collaborated to design and conduct an online course on 'Audio Open Educational Resource (OER) Creation for Language Teaching'. The course was based on the NCERT National ICT curriculum, 2013 themes—Creating and Learning (teachers learnt to create audio OER) and Connecting and Learning (teachers accessed articles related to language teaching on the web and interacted with their peers).

The Objective

The course objectives were as follows:

1. To explore digital methods for language learning; to learn to use Audacity FOSS (Free and Open Source Software) to create audio OER; to publish the created resources on a public repository.
2. To understand the philosophy of OER (community ownership with the ability to re-use, revise and redistribute resources).

3. To access articles about English Language Teaching (ELT) on the web and present them in the webinars for peer feedback and learning.

Course Design and Processes

The course consisted of a mix of synchronous and asynchronous learning activities. The synchronous activities included online webinar sessions using the Free and Open Source Big Blue Button (BBB) platform. We conducted two 90-minute webinars per week, for four weeks. The webinars explained concepts of language learning and included demonstrations and practice of Audacity. Since the participants were teachers, and were themselves conducting online classes, the webinars were held in the evenings. Asynchronous learning included installing relevant applications, reading assigned articles, accessing OER audio repositories and creating audio resources. The participants were encouraged to share their audio OER on a WhatsApp group created for the course.

Each participant was also assigned an article about ELT, which they had to read and present to other participants during the webinars. This activity helped participants fully engage with the piece of writing and be conversant with the ideas in the other papers presented in the webinars.

The course objectives, schedule, content, reading materials, OER audio repositories and sample audio resources, methodology, course requirements and resources were shared on the workshop page (https://teacher-network.in/OER/index.php/ELTA_Audio_OER_course), so that the participants would be prepared for the webinars, thereby enhancing the interactions.

Course Content

The course oriented the teachers to the importance of audio resources in developing listening and speaking skills. Teachers learnt to use Audacity to record themselves and add music and sound elements to create audio resources which they could use in their classrooms. The participants were also taught advanced features of Audacity, including volume adjustments (fade in/fade out, noise cancellation and reduction), incorporating multiple tracks for various purposes, changing pitch, etc.

Each participant was expected to select a topic (prose/poetry) and create an audio resource based on it. Most participants created and shared audio resources by the end of the course.

Lastly, the participants were assigned readings related to language teaching that covered Krashen's hypotheses, digital storytelling, NCF position papers on English and Indian language teaching, articles from journals, etc.

Participants

The course participants comprised language teachers including experienced and novice teachers from both high school and middle school. Some were new to digital technology and required an additional support to become comfortable with it. While over fifty language teachers registered for the course, thirty of them completed the course by attending five webinar sessions.

Participants who created and shared their audio OER and presented the article that they had accessed and read, received a certificate of completion from IT for Change and the English Language Teachers Association, Telangana.

Outcomes

Participants became familiar with the usage of digital resources for language teaching-learning. They learnt how to use Audacity to create and enrich audio resources. They also prepared at least one audio on their selected topic and shared it for publishing on a public repository. The webinar sessions were highly interactive, and the participants were enthusiastic about learning new skills. The audio OER created by the teachers were published on SoundCloud, an online OER audio repository (see <https://soundcloud.com/ELTA-audio-workshop-july-2020>). Many of these were extremely powerful, melodic and soulful resources that would help teachers in creating a significant impact in the classroom. Participants also strengthened their capacities for aesthetic appreciation of audio resources through discussions in the webinars and peer feedback on the audio resources made by them. Participants were exposed to resources available on the web related to language teaching and became aware of the need to access freely available online resources to improve their understanding of language teaching-learning.

Our Reflections

The course aimed to encourage teachers to think of themselves as creators and visualized every teacher as a creator. The act of material-making can be an emancipatory process of teacher development.

The course also aimed to support teachers in becoming active users of digital technology by creating resources, rather than just being passive users. When technology is seen as something that is done to teachers, it compromises their agency. When technology-based resources are created by teachers, owned by them and used for the benefit of teachers the resources become relevant and aid teacher agency.

Language and Language Teaching (LLT)

Objectives

Published twice a year in January and July, Language and Language Teaching (*LLT*) reaches out to language teachers, researchers and teacher educators on issues and practices relevant to language teaching. The primary focus of the publication is language pedagogy in elementary schools. *LLT* proposes to establish a dialogue between theory and practice so that practice contributes to theory as much as theory informs practice. The purpose is to make new ideas and insights from research on language and its pedagogy accessible to practitioners while at the same time inform theorists about the constraints of implementation of new ideas.

Guidelines for Submission of Manuscripts

1. MS word version of the manuscripts (British spellings) should be submitted to the Editors of *LLT* via email at the address(es) given below: jourllt@gmail.com. If need be, you may also send them by post to: Vidya Bhawan Society, Fatehpura, Udaipur 313004, Rajasthan, India.
2. Language and Language Teaching (*LLT*) welcomes original papers/articles that have not been published elsewhere and have not been submitted elsewhere for publication at the time of being sent to *LLT*. The declaration to this effect should be sent along with the contribution. Copies of letters granting permission to reproduce illustrations, tables, or lengthy quoted passages should be included with the manuscript.
3. Word limit including the reference, abstract and a short bio note is as follows: Articles: 2500; Interview: 3000; Landmark: 3000; Book Reviews: 1500; Classroom Activities: 750; Reports: 1000.
4. The first page should contain the article title, author(s) and their affiliation(s). It should also contain the abstract and keywords.
5. For correspondence, contributor should provide his/her name, phone number, complete mailing address and email address.
6. The style for writing numerical expressions should be consistent throughout the manuscript.
7. Notes should appear at the end of the text and before the references. Footnotes are not permitted. Each endnote used in the article should contain more than a mere reference.
8. Single quotes should be used throughout the article. Double quotes should be used only within single quotes.
9. All the references must be cited in text or endnotes, and follow the APA style of referencing in the text. For example: (Chomsky, 2010: p. 27) or (Labov, 2010, p. 56) or (Halliday, 2010, pp. 56-57)
10. A detailed list of references in alphabetical order must be provided at the end of the article following the endnotes. All details should be provided like: the author's name, name of the book/ name of the journal with issue number, publisher, place of publication, year and page range/ number (in the case of chapter from an edited book, journal, magazine, weekly, periodicals, newspapers).
11. Page numbers for all direct quotations should be provided. Direct quotations of 45 words or more should be indented.
12. Tables and figures should be clear, readable and comprehensible.
13. Book reviews must contain details like name of the author/editor and book reviewed, place of publication and publisher, year of publication, scanned copy of the cover page, number of pages and price.
14. *LLT* is a refereed journal. All manuscripts are subject to the usual process of anonymous review.

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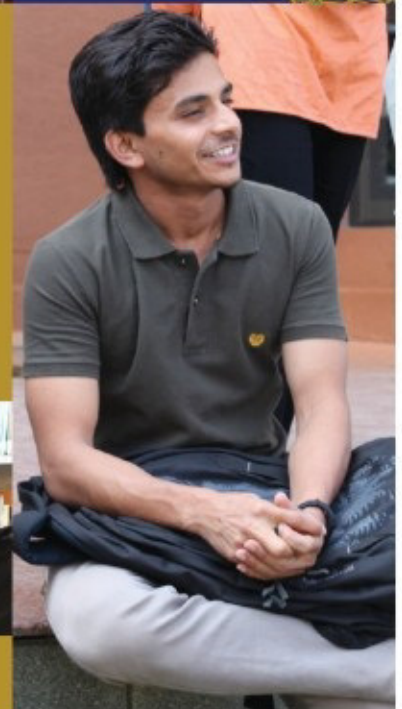
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'There are many aspects of human emotions and knowledge which cannot find expression in words and must therefore get spaces in 'lines and colours, sounds and movements'.

Tagore

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