

Editorial

Multilingualism and multiculturalism have been a hallmark of our society for centuries, and it continues to be so despite the challenges of liberalisation of economy, linguistic imperialism, our post-colonial mind set, etc. The domain-specific 'functional separation' of languages as well as the rapid population mobility in an increasingly globalised world are leading to linguistic, cultural, and religious diversity within schools too, and Indian classrooms are the epitome of this diversity. However, does this vibrancy of languages and cultures find space in our schools? True learning can never be imagined in a class where each and every child does not have a voice and an agency. To ensure that children ask questions, give opinions and share their cultural experiences, it is imperative that their languages find a space in the teaching-learning processes. A truly democratic class can thrive only in linguistic inclusivity.

We know that language is a tool that children employ to grasp various concepts across subjects. It is significant, therefore, that the tool at hand for a child is not alien to her. Otherwise, school education may become a burden to her, with grappling an alien tool and grasping the concepts of different subjects. Therefore, language of education is the most fundamental issue which is yet to be resolved even though almost all policy documents and commission reports after independence have recommended the use of children's mother tongue/home language during school years. Hence, there is a need to examine the current situation in this regard and the challenges involved therein.

The current issue of LLT is a Special Issue that seeks to engage with the important question of *The Language(s) of Education in India*. As its Concept Note argued, "A vastly heterogeneous and multilingual country like India *has* to grapple with the question of the language of education, opportunity and development."

Of the articles included in this issue, Raviya and Biva's article on the Pre-Macaulayan Period and Jolad and Doshi's article on the colonial legacy of English provide insight into the emergence of English as a medium of instruction in India in the colonial era. Medhi and Goswami's article on language ideologies and Sarma's article on

Assamese language and literature in Calcutta University reflect on the administrative perspectives of the three-language formula. An overview of constitutional provisions for language education are

provided by Chaudhary's article on the topic, complemented by Pallavi's article on monolingual ideologies in multilingual classrooms, Arya's article on the 'state of doubt, enlightenment, reasoning and reproduction of social cultural values' in a classroom, and Tripathi's article on challenges ahead in multilingual education in India. Dkhar and Kakoty's article on contextualising mother tongue-based multilingual education in the North-East and Sachdeva's article on design thinking for multilingual education explore the theme of New Education Policy and the multilingual state. Chatterjee, Gupta and Bosai's article, on tribal languages and mother tongue-based education in Arunachal Pradesh, investigates the theme of endangered languages and the need for revitalisation through the language of education. Ningthoujam's article on Chinese language education in India's Northeast region, Jeet's article on the gaping pit between education and employment in the context of vocational education in India, and Kak and Want's article on language teaching in government schools of Kashmir contribute to the theme of languages of school/higher education and technical education. Finally, Srivastava's article on English language assessment for social justice and Nair's article on 'Function-oriented Form-focused Instruction: Revitalising Second Language Classes' expand on the themes of socio cognitive advantages of multilingual education and content literacy and knowledge construction respectively. This issue also has two book reviews: Ayesha Kidwai has reviewed *Linguistic Diversity in South and Southeast Asia* while Minakshi Lahkar has reviewed *Language Education: Teaching English in India*.

The Interview section carries detailed discussion by the renowned linguist and litterateur Udaya Narayana Singh, on issues related to languages of education and self-expression. Under the Landmark Sections Lina Mukhopadhyay presents a metanalysis of qualitative research on teachers' professional development. This issue also has a report on 'Gunotsav', an initiative of the government of Assam. We hope this Special Issue will help readers appreciate the multi-dimensional and far-reaching import of the languages of our education and, by extension, of our expression and our very being.

Suranjana Barua, Indian Institute of Information Technology Guwahati; suranjana.barua@gmail.com

Mukul Priyadarshini, Miranda House, University of Delhi; shunya.mukul@gmail.com

Shiti Malhotra, Saint Mary's University; malhotra.umd@gmail.com