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11TH INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE & DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE
MULTILINGUALISM AND DEVELOPMENT

MULTILINGUALISMS AND DEVELOPMENT

Selected proceedings of the 11th Language & Development Conference, New Delhi, India 2015

Edited by Hywel Coleman

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

DDU-GKY Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana Empowering India • Enrich grind poa mbh

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MULTILINGUALISMS AND DEVELOPMENT

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Multilingualisms and Development
(Selected Proceedings of the 11th Language & Development Conference,
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THE LANGUAGE & DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCES

The Language & Development Conferences take place every two years. They bring together professionals who share an interest in the roles that languages play in development. The conferences address issues of world, national, second and minority languages in relation to human, social, cultural and economic development. Details of the conference trustees, sponsors and conference hosts are available through the Language & Development Conference Series website at www.langdevconferences.org. All the conference publications can be accessed at the same website. Additionally, those published by the British Council can be accessed at www.teachingenglish.org.uk/publications.

1993 1st Language & Development Conference, Bangkok, Thailand

Theme: 'Issues in Language & Development'

- Kenny, B. and Savage, W. (eds). 1997. *Language and Development: Teachers in a Changing World*. London: Longman.

1995 2nd Language & Development Conference, Bali, Indonesia

Theme: 'Language and Communication in Development: Stakeholders' Perspectives'

- Crooks, T. and Crewes, G. (eds). 1995. *Language and Development*. Denpasar: Indonesia Australia Language Foundation.
- Crooks, T. (ed.). 1996. *ESP in Southeast Asia*. Denpasar: Indonesia Australia Language Foundation.

1997 3rd Language & Development Conference, Langkawi, Malaysia

Theme: 'Access, Empowerment, Opportunity'

- Abdullah, A., Crocker, T. et al. (eds). 1998. *Language in Development: Access, Empowerment, Opportunity*. Kuala Lumpur: National Institute of Public Administration (INTAN).

1999 4th Language & Development Conference, Hanoi, Vietnam

Theme: 'Partnership and Interaction in Language & Development'

- Shaw, J., Lubelska, D. and Noullet, M. (eds). 2000. *Partnership and Interaction*. Bangkok: Asian Institute of Technology.

2001 5th Language & Development Conference, Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Theme: 'Defining the Role of Language in Development'

- LoBianco, J. (ed.). 2002. *Voices from Phnom Penh: Development and Language: Global Influences and Local Effects*. Melbourne: Language Australia.

2003 6th Language & Development Conference, Tashkent, Uzbekistan

Theme: 'Linguistic Challenges to National Development and International Cooperation'

- Coleman, H., Gulyamova, J. and Thomas, A. (eds). 2005. *National Development, Education and Language in Central Asia and Beyond*. Tashkent: British Council Uzbekistan.

2005 7th Language & Development Conference, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Theme: 'Language and Development'

- Coleman, H. (ed.). 2007. *Language and Development: Africa and Beyond*. Addis Ababa: British Council Ethiopia.

2009 8th Language & Development Conference, Dhaka, Bangladesh

Theme: 'Language and Development: Sociocultural Issues and Challenges'

- Savage, W. (ed.). 2015. *Language and Development: Sociocultural Issues and Challenges*. Published online by the Trustees of the Language & Development Conferences Series.

2011 9th Language & Development Conference, Colombo, Sri Lanka

Theme: 'Language and Social Cohesion'

- Coleman, H. (ed.). 2015. *Language and Social Cohesion in the Developing World*. Colombo: British Council and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.

2013 10th Language & Development Conference, Cape Town, South Africa

Theme: 'Opportunity, Equity and Identity Beyond 2015'

- McIlwraith, H. (ed.). 2014. *The Cape Town Language and Development Conference: Looking beyond 2015*. London: British Council.

2015 11th Language & Development Conference, New Delhi, India

Theme: 'Multilingualism and Development'

- Coleman, H. (ed.). 2017. *Multilingualisms and Development*. London: British Council.

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Note on terminology

The contributors to this volume vary in the names that they use to refer to certain languages. No attempt to impose consistency is made here. Examples include:

- language with the ISO 639-3 identifier [ben]: ‘Bangla’ and ‘Bengali’
- language with ISO identifier [ory]: ‘Odia’ and ‘Oriya’
- language with ISO identifier [srb]: ‘Saora’ and ‘Savara’.

Specialists on the subject of super(-)diversity have diverse opinions as to whether the spelling of the term should be *superdiversity* or *super-diversity*. Their diversity of practice is maintained here.

Foreword

Alan Gemmell OBE
Director, British Council India

On an average day, a person living in Delhi could communicate in at least four languages – Hindi, with Urdu mixed in here and there at home, English at school or in the office, and a regional language such as Bengali or Punjabi on the phone with friends or family. As a relative newcomer to India, I have found the easy, casual fact of widespread multilingualism fascinating. As such, India was a fitting choice to host the 11th Language & Development Conference in November 2015, and the British Council was delighted to have the honour of playing the role of conference organisers. A focus on the theme of multilingualism and development was highly appropriate to the context.

Multilingualism is of course not confined to India. Both the benefits and the challenges are found around the world, including in the UK. In Scotland alone, over 140 languages are represented by children in school. In London, census data has shown that more than 100 languages are spoken by residents of 30 out of 33 boroughs or areas. In addition, a recent project successfully identified one speaker of every world language in London – a fascinating confirmation of the linguistic diversity that can be represented within a single city.

Language acts as a gateway to information, education, healthcare and other services – speakers of dominant languages may sometimes take this for granted. However, there is substantial evidence to show that minority language speakers can be marginalised – for example as a result of barriers to using technology, the absence of schools operating in a child's mother tongue or access to civic amenities, particularly for migrant communities.

Despite the challenges, language diversity brings vibrancy, culture and varied perspectives to any context and must be celebrated. The need for the active protection of multilingualism, and particularly minority languages, is increasingly clear, as nations and the world aim to forge new connections and integration with the aim of achieving more, together. At the same time, access to learning opportunities of dominant languages must be available to all, to ensure equitable access to information and learning and the celebration of our diversity.

The British Council is known for its work relating to the English language, including working with teachers to improve the way that it is taught within education systems and supporting learners of English directly through our teaching centres, our corporate training programmes and our online courses and resources. Our position is to support the development of English as a skill alongside the development of learners' mother tongues and other national languages, to help people achieve more for themselves and their communities. To this end, we actively support research into multilingualism in order to facilitate a shared understanding of what works and doesn't work in practice and where there are significant challenges. The 11th Language & Development Conference has been a cornerstone of that work in India and we will continue to build on the legacy outcomes and research agenda that is discussed in the appendix to this volume.

We are hugely grateful for the support of the Language & Development Conference trustees and the generous contributions made by our conference partners: the Deen Dayal Upadhyay Grameen Kaushalya Yojana of the Ministry of Rural Development of the Government of India; UNESCO South Asia cluster office based in New Delhi; Research Councils UK; Jawaharlal Nehru University's National Multilingual Education Resource Consortium and the Digital Empowerment Foundation. We would also like to thank the conference speakers and participants, of whom over 270 attended, representing over 30 countries. We hope that you will enjoy revisiting some of the most interesting papers presented at the conference in this volume, and visit our You Tube channel[1] to further investigate the excellent presentations that made the conference such a success.

Notes

[1] http://tinyurl.com/LangDev2015

Preface: Multilingualism and development

D.P. Pattanayak

I begin with a quote from Dr Minati Panda, a scholar in the forefront of Mother-Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB MLE) in India, which she uttered during one of the discussions in the 11th Language & Development Conference on the theme of Multilingualism and Development. The quote speaks for itself:

> *Unfortunately MTB MLE is practised throughout the whole world by semi-linguists and semi-psychologists. I have doubts about the rigour of understanding in both these groups. I am scared of linguistic determinism as much as psychologism. I also am worried about aspired heroism in this domain. This conference exposed me to a lot of these. We probably need far more honesty in order to work with and root ourselves in a good paradigm.*

There is no excellence in research, scholarship and education in language and linguistics in any university or institution in India. There is no high level research centre in multiple languages which interacts with linguistics, languages and cultures, education, pedagogy, psychology or anthropology. There is no meeting point between indigenous and contemporary knowledge with language as a medium of acquisition and transmission. We do not see languages as cultural causeways for maintaining cultural amity. Emeneau and Burrow put forward the idea of India as a Linguistic Area (Burrow 1965, Burrow and Emeneau 1984, Emeneau 1967). Many western scholars have contributed to this idea. Still we talk about language hierarchies, linguistic diversity, endangered languages, fragile states and killer languages.

The world is divided into two linguistic blocks, the Dominant Monolingual and the Multilingual. They operate under two logics: Either Or and Both And. One results in hierarchical relations, the other in complementary relations. Multilinguality can be sustained only if languages are in complementary relation. The world is not only multilingual; it is multi-ethnic, multicultural, multi-religious and bio-diverse. What is true of language is true of all multiple structures. Because of Either Or considerations there is so much conflict and such enormous amounts of money are spent for security; a fraction of this expenditure, if redirected, could solve many social problems. If we accepted languages as inherited assets a lot of problems would have been resolved.

Subhash (2013, 152) characterises multilingualism as 'constitutive of Indian diversity' and he continues:

> *Pattanayak (1981) argues how our educational system has consistently weakened the advantage of grass-root multilingualism that characterises our society. As Illich (1981) suggests, we need to make every possible effort to empower the languages of the underprivileged and tribal and endangered languages. Affirmative action is called for in this domain (NCERT 2005). To quote Pattanayak (1981), 'if participatory democracy has to survive we need to give a voice to the language of every child.' The National Curriculum Framework (NCERT 2005) strongly advocates multilingualism in school education. Multilingualism in education refers to the use of two or more languages as medium of instruction (UNESCO 2003). This confers definite cognitive advantages. Researchers have shown that there is a highly positive relationship between bilingualism/ multilingualism, cognitive flexibility, and scholastic achievement (Peal and Lambert 1962, Gardner and Lambert 1972, Cummins and Swain 1986). Bilingual children not only have control over several different languages but they are also academically more creative and socially more tolerant (NCERT 2005).*

When we were children scholars were speaking of the English language. Today the same scholars are speaking of the Englishes of the world. This is not reflected in our contemporary English pedagogy. English in the former colonial countries is not a language of knowledge. Emphasis is only on creative English literature. The same is true of the contemporary Indian languages. Those of us who speak in support of mother tongues or regional languages are suspected of being anti-English. In a multilingual country, multilinguality is sustained only if all languages are complementary to one another. When they are hierarchised conflict ensues. English in multilingual countries cannot grow as a substitute for the local languages or as a competitor. It can grow along with other languages as a partner. It has been our experience that English teachers who have worked with their mother tongues have contributed to both and made a name for themselves. Literatures, even in English, grew out of Indian soil. R.K.Narayan, Raja Rao, Mulk Raj Anand and A.K.Ramanujan were there.[1] Even today Indian English literatures are recommended for international recognition. Indians are not anti-English.

Before I close, I must speak a few words about our transition from an information society to a knowledge society.

Local languages are used for transmission of information and knowledge among smaller communities. The internet aims at spreading information and knowledge across the globe for bringing about social transformation with human development. When the internet is not accessible and many languages are not present in the internet human development is iniquitous. When new knowledge is neither created nor shared by a language, the community that uses that language is marginalised and left out of the development debate. In a multilingual world and a multilingual society, every language community in order to survive must create quality content through its own language, share that content internationally, regionally and locally, and receive

feedback. The beginning of the internet presented enormous opportunities for sharing information and knowledge through any language. But as the battle for cyber space developed among the powerful countries of the world and human and financial resources were so manipulated that many languages were marginalised and did not find a place in the internet, the digital divide began to expand. It is not enough that 'UNESCO is convinced that cultural diversity and multilingualism in the internet have a key role to play in fostering pluralistic, equitable, open and inclusive knowledge societies' (UNESCO 2016). It must be admitted that 'The internet is multilingual and culturally diverse where every culture and language has its own space' (UNESCO 2016).

When I was browsing in the small library of a non-governmental organisation, I found 45 meanings of 'development': child development and global development, urban development and rural development, economic development and cultural development. These terms do not mean one and the same thing. Language through development and development through language mean different things to different people. Multilingual education for all and multilingual education for tribal peoples, minorities and endangered languages are diametrically opposite. The latter enhances a sense of inferiority and results in the breaking of cohesion in society.

I congratulate the British Council for creating an opportunity for discussion of these issues of vital importance in the world's development debate.

Notes

[1] See for example Anand (1986), Narayan (1987), Ramanujan (2004) and Rao (1971).

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1

Development and multilingualism: An introduction

Hywel Coleman

Context

We live in a time of increasing intolerance of difference, of decreasing willingness to celebrate the diversity of humankind. We live in a time when public expressions of intolerance have become commonplace, when a presidential candidate can unabashedly describe immigrants from a country with which his nation shares a border in these words:

> *They're bringing drugs, they're bringing crime. They're rapists … Some of the people coming here are very violent people.*[1]

We live in a time when eminent writers find it necessary to return their national literary awards in protest, because they feel that their country's 'culture of diversity':

> *… is now under vicious assault [since those who] question superstition … – whether in the intellectual or artistic sphere, or whether in terms of food habits and lifestyle – are being marginalised, persecuted, or murdered.*[2]

We live in a time of increasing global homogenisation of education and of the language of education. A preliminary study carried out by the University of Oxford for the British Council concludes:

> *There appears to be a fast-moving worldwide shift, in non-anglophone countries, from English being taught as a foreign language (EFL) to English being the medium of instruction (EMI) for academic subjects such as science, mathematics, geography and medicine.* (Dearden 2014, 4)

As English is increasingly given the role of medium of instruction in primary schools, secondary schools and universities throughout the world, the educational functions of national, regional and local languages wither and die. And as the national, regional and local languages are gradually withdrawn from the education sector so these languages begin to disappear from other contexts as well: 'English is fast replacing local languages, even in domains such as the home' (Bunce et al. 2016a, 1).

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Despite these gloomy trends – away from tolerance and the celebration of cultural and linguistic diversity and towards intolerance and uniformity – there is evidence that in some contexts the phenomenon of societal multilingualism is actually increasing. At the 1984 annual meeting of the British Association of Applied Linguistics, held at the University of Leeds, D.P.Pattanayak – the first Director of the Central Institute of Indian Languages and author of the Preface to this volume – made this deliberately provocative statement about the ubiquity of multilingualism in the developing world:

> *For you, the monolingual [in the developed world], one language is the norm, two languages is a quantum leap ..., three languages are tolerable, more than three languages are absurd. For us [in the developing world], many languages are facts of existence, three languages a compromise, two languages are a tolerable restriction, one language is absurd.* (Pattanayak 1986, 143)

It is certainly the case that linguistic diversity is and always has been a fact of life in developing countries and India is a good example of this. For example, we learn from Durairajan (Chapter 19 in this volume, quoting Mohanty 2009) that 1,652 mother tongues are spoken in India, while Meganathan (Chapter 14, quoting the 2001 Census of India, GOI 2001) tells us that more than one hundred languages are spoken just in New Delhi, the country's capital. Elsewhere, it has been calculated that 75 different languages are used in India's education system and that 31 of these are used as media of instruction (Meganathan 2011, 83).[3]

It is also true that, when Pattanayak made his statement, societal multilingualism in developed countries was limited. Over the three decades that have elapsed since then, however, many countries in the developed world have also had to come to terms with multilingualism, because of global migration. For example, the UK Census of 2011 showed that respondents in London reported speaking 107 'main languages' other than English (*Evening Standard* 2013) although, rather confusingly, a year later the BBC reported that 'over 300 languages are currently spoken in London schools' (BBC 2014). Whatever the correct number of languages in London may be, what is clear is that societal multilingualism is now a characteristic of developed countries as well, at least in urban areas.

Not only is the phenomenon of societal multilingualism more widespread than heretofore, but multilingualism in all its guises is also receiving much greater attention than ever. This can be seen from, for example, the existence of India's National Multilingual Education Resource Consortium (NMRC, established in 2008)[4], the University of Birmingham's Centre for Research on Multilingualism (MOSAIC, also established in 2008)[5], UNESCO Bangkok's *Multilingual Education e-Newsletter* (published regularly since 2011)[6], the Southern Multilingualisms and Diversities Consortium (established in 2015)[7], and many other initiatives.

A sharp increase in concern with multilingualism in all its forms over the last decade can be seen if we look at a random selection of eleven international publishers' catalogues (Table 1). In the five years between 2007 and 2011 inclusive, 49 books were published by these publishers with the elements 'multilingual*', 'trilingual*' or

‘plurilingu*’ in their titles. However, during the period 2012–2016 the number of books with similar elements in their titles leapt to 123, an increase of 250 per cent.

Table 1: Frequency of ‘multilingual*’, ‘trilingual*’ and ‘plurilingu*’ in book titles in selected publishers’ catalogues, 2007–2016

Publisher	2007–2011	2012–2016	Total
Springer (including Palgrave Macmillan)	8	34	42
Éditions Harmattan (France)	14	28	42
Multilingual Matters	9	19	28
Routledge	3	20	23
Cambridge University Press	3	11	14
Bloomsbury	3	4	7
Oxford University Press	3	2	5
Wiley Blackwell	2	3	5
Orient BlackSwan (India)	3	1	4
Sage (India)	0	1	1
Regional Language Centre (Singapore)	1	0	1
Total	**49**	**123**	**172**

Thus it is in this context – increasing public intolerance of diversity, increasing homogenisation in education and the language of education, increasing societal multilingualism in urban areas, increasing attention to multilingualism by scholars and practitioners – that the 11th Language & Development Conference took as its theme ‘Multilingualism and Development’. The conference committee received 155 abstracts from around the world, of which 93 were accepted; 65 paper presenters then made it to the conference programme.[8] Of the papers which were presented during the conference, 45 were written up afterwards and of these 20 appear in this volume.

Exactly half of the 20 chapters deal with multilingualism in India, four chapters look at Africa (Kenya, Mauritius, Tanzania and the African continent in general), three use data from other parts of Asia (Afghanistan, Malaysia, Nepal) and three are set in European contexts (Spain and the UK). Why a collection which is concerned with the developing world should look at European contexts will become clear below. The chapters fall into four thematic groups:

- marginalisation and empowerment
- mother-tongue-based multilingual education
- multilingualism and the metropolis
- English in a multilingual world.

Inevitably, these categories are not watertight and the reader will notice overlap between them.

Marginalisation and empowerment

At a time when the very notion of social and linguistic pluralism is under threat from some quarters, we need to have strong arguments in our arsenal for celebrating multilingualism and using it as a resource in education and elsewhere. Discussions of the challenges and threats facing multilingual populations, therefore, are highly desirable. There is abundant evidence that many elements in society in developing countries – including women, indigenous peoples (referred to as 'tribal groups' in India) and speakers of minority languages – are at risk of marginalisation and of being denied full access to health, education, other government services, legal redress and participation in democratic processes if these are possible only through mainstream languages.

Four chapters from four different parts of the world – India, Afghanistan, Africa in general (with a focus on Tanzania), and Mauritius – constitute this section of the volume.

Rukmini Banerji, Chief Executive Officer of the Pratham Foundation in India, sets the scene in **Chapter 2** by taking us on a fascinating tour to four different parts of India. She shows how language use in communities and schools in each of these situations is unpredictably complex. She draws attention to the phenomenon of individual multilingualism, whereby a child may speak one language with the mother, another with the father and yet another with his or her friends in the street:

> *The children that we saw in the lanes ... seemed to navigate easily between the many languages that they heard in their densely crowded slum environment.*

Banerji also highlights how difficult it can be to work out appropriate ways of supporting children's learning in each context. What is clear is that standardised solutions are inappropriate. The chapter concludes with several bold recommendations, including the suggestion that textbooks may be all very well as reference texts but that, if they are given a central role in the teaching-learning process, they stifle creativity on the part of teachers and learners. Banerji argues that community-based education initiatives are likely to be far more effective than practices that are decreed by a central authority:

> *Policy makers can join us if they wish, but we have to stop waiting for policy makers to make the first move. I like to think that we can change India faster than the policy makers can.*

Staying in South Asia, in **Chapter 3 Megan Davies** takes us to a corner of Afghanistan where she has worked as a language development coordinator with the charity Serve Afghanistan. The chapter describes how, through the work of this charity, the Pashai language has been provided with an orthography, literary materials have been developed in the language and the language is now being used in education and in adult literacy classes. There is convincing evidence of the positive impact that these activities have had, not only on children's learning but also on the Pashai community's sense of identity: where less than two decades ago the Pashai felt 'a sense of shame' that their mother tongue was not Pashto and perceived that their own language

was ‘unimportant, unrespectable’, there is now widespread interest and pride in the language. For various reasons, however, the programme faces an uncertain future.

In **Chapter 4** we move to Africa, where **Birgit Brock-Utne** of the University of Oslo has been involved for many years in research and development activities relating to language. Brock-Utne gives us a broad overview of multilingualism in the continent, taking into account both its benefits and the challenges which it faces. Like Banerji in India, she observes that many Africans may find it difficult to identify which is their ‘first language’ if from birth they have been exposed to one language with their mother’s clan, another language with their father’s clan and a third language in the community outside the home. With regard to societal multilingualism, Brock-Utne draws attention to the piecemeal way in which the languages of Africa were first described, developed and written by European colonialists and missionaries; in consequence the continent is now much more linguistically fragmented than it needs to be. Brock-Utne is also very critical of contemporary language policies in many parts of Africa which still prioritise the former colonial languages, thus privileging the elites and marginalising majority populations.

The final contribution to the theme of ‘Marginalisation and empowerment’ is **Tejshree Auckle**’s detailed and meticulously documented exploration of language and ethnicity in Mauritius in **Chapter 5**. Auckle, a sociolinguist at the University of Mauritius, shows that the Island of Mauritius, with a population of just 1.2 million, boasts a kaleidoscope of around a dozen languages. The most important of these are Mauritian Creole, Mauritian Bhojpuri and French, which are the languages of almost 96 per cent of the population. Yet the country’s language of education, elections and government is English (spoken as a home language by fewer than 0.5 per cent of the population). The chapter indicates that, despite paying lip service to the concept of mother-tongue-based education, the Government has so far been able to make little movement in this direction. Auckle attributes this failure primarily to the influence of ethnic-based politics and she concludes that the Government has opted for ‘no overt language policy … as a valid form of language policy’. English fills the vacuum as it has no ethnic associations.

Some of the most important findings of the four chapters in the ‘Marginalisation and empowerment’ theme are:

- Many multilingual societies have extremely complex language profiles.
- Speakers may have a negative attitude towards their own language (but this can be overcome).
- Official language policy is highly problematic. It may constrain grassroots development; it may prioritise exogenous languages; it may even freeze like a startled rabbit in the headlights of superdiversity, unable to decide what action to take.

Mother-tongue-based multilingual education

Mother-tongue-based multilingual education (MTB MLE) has been widely promoted as a solution in contexts where there is a desire to help children become literate in

their first language in the early years of their education and then, at a later stage, help them to use a dominant regional or international language as the medium of learning. One of the objectives of the 11th Language & Development Conference was to examine this approach, not simply to *celebrate* MTB MLE success stories but also to *question*, *analyse* and *test the limits* of multilingual innovations.

Seven chapters fall into this grouping; four are from India while the others come from Nepal, Tanzania and the Spanish Basque region.

Chapter 6 is by **Carol Benson**, who specialises in international and comparative education at Teachers' College, Columbia University, New York. After a preliminary survey of multilingual education programmes in Bolivia, Cambodia, Eritrea, Ethiopia, South Africa and Sri Lanka, Benson focuses on the 'Integrated Plurilingual School' system in the Basque Country. These schools develop learners' competence in the Basque, Spanish, English and French languages, in a holistic and integrated manner, encouraging the transfer of skills which children have acquired in one language into the other languages. Benson argues that this approach could be a 'model' and an 'inspiration' for education systems in low-income contexts in the developing world. The chapter concludes with a warning about risks which must be avoided. In particular, Benson suggests, caution is needed to avoid rushing into the international dominant languages of French and English before learners have acquired a solid foundation in their first – albeit non-dominant – language, Basque. (We will encounter examples of this rush to English, even in systems which nominally promote multilingualism, in Nepal in Chapter 12 and in Kenya in Chapter 20.) Furthermore, Benson has identified a 'dangerous trend' of adopting the methodology of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) which 'negates the multilingual repertoire of both learners and teachers and fails to facilitate transfer between languages.'

In **Chapter 7**, **Sakshi Manocha** (research scholar in Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) in New Delhi) and **Minati Panda** (Director of the National Multilingual Education Resource Consortium) compare the experiences of Saora-speaking children in Odia-medium and 'MLE Plus' schools in the Indian state of Odisha. Odia is the dominant language in primary schools in Odisha; Saora is the language of a marginalised tribal group. In the Odia-medium schools the children's language and culture have no place. The researchers record the devastating consequences when a child, using his home language, innocently asks a classmate to pass him a book:

> *Rahul received a tight slap on his head … The teacher yelled at Rahul saying, 'Why were you talking in Saora? Speak in Odia.'*

The authors conclude with the heart-breaking observation that 'the students whose language and culture have no place in the school often drop behind; all one can hear is their silence and all one sees are their big vacant eyes.' In contrast, the experimental MLE Plus schools value and make use of the children's language, their culture and the understanding of their environment which they have already acquired. As recommended by Banerji (Chapter 2), planning the children's learning programme begins with a detailed investigation of their context. As a result, the 'world of activity' which the children create in the classroom is not so different from

that which they create in the playground. This is a positive start for MTB MLE, but the authors also point out that, however well-intentioned the teachers are, they sometimes experience difficulty helping children draw generalisations from their specific concrete observations. Effective MTB MLE requires not merely a change of language policy but also the involvement of highly trained teachers.

Shivani Nag, the author of **Chapter 8**, is based at Ambedkar University Delhi and has also been involved in the NMRC. Her chapter parallels and contrasts with the preceding chapter by Manocha and Panda; while the latter authors compared the MLE Plus programme in Odisha with mainstream Odia-medium education (in which use of the learners' home language of Saora was strictly forbidden), Nag compares the same MLE Plus experiment with another Saora-medium MLE programme in the same state. The author finds, first, that – despite their superficial similarities – the programmes are based on fundamentally different principles. As Manocha and Panda have already shown in Chapter 7, and as Benson proposed in Chapter 6, the ultimate objective of the MLE Plus approach is to create balanced multilingual members of society who will be comfortable and confident users of all their languages (first language, state, national and possibly international language(s) as well). In contrast, the ordinary Saora-medium MLE programme appears to have as its ultimate objective a smooth transition away from first language to other more dominant languages in the education system. In this approach, therefore, the use of the first language in the early years of education is not an end in itself but is simply intended to facilitate this transition. Nag also notices that MLE Plus integrates language development and conceptual development and links both to the cultural capital which children bring with them. In contrast, she finds that the ordinary MLE approach is not culturally embedded. Finally, when she visits classrooms, Nag finds that MLE Plus classes are busy dynamic places where children are using their language to make sense of the world around them, whereas the ordinary MLE lessons tend to be more formal and orderly teacher-dominated affairs.

Uma Maheshwari Chimirala, author of **Chapter 9**, is an English teacher based in the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh. Her chapter is a fascinating study, carried out by questionnaire and interview, of the attitudes of teachers in English-medium government secondary schools in her state towards 'other languages'. This term refers to all languages other than the official medium of instruction, i.e. English in most cases and also Telugu, Oriya, Marathi and Hindi when those languages are being taught as subjects. Almost every teacher admits to using 'other languages' when teaching, but only about 70 per cent say that they permit their learners to use these languages in the classroom. The reasons given by teachers for their language choices range from the pragmatic ('to facilitate the learners' learning'; several teachers noticed which language learners used when talking to themselves while carrying out calculations in mathematics) to the ideological ('learners have a constitutional right to use their own language'). Chimirala comes to the conclusion that a powerful and unhelpful 'monolingual mindset' – probably derived from the teaching and training that teachers themselves have experienced – pervades the thinking of teachers, even the most pragmatic among them. She also identifies an undercurrent of hostility towards English in teachers of other subjects who, among other things, feel that English is unfairly privileged in the education system.

Chapter 10, by **Noah Mtana**, a language lecturer at Jordan University College, and **Kalafunja O-saki**, a specialist in science education at Dodoma University, takes us to Tanzania. The authors note that the approved medium of instruction in Tanzanian primary schools is Kiswahili (although the country possesses many local languages), while in secondary schools English is the only permitted language of instruction. Because English is so poorly taught as a subject at the primary level, many pupils are unable to participate effectively at the secondary level. In practice, many teachers try to help their learners by code switching into Kiswahili, although they feel guilty doing so. Mtana and O-saki describe an initiative which attempts to legitimise the use of Kiswahili in secondary lessons, so empowering learners to participate actively in the learning process. This initiative has a parallel with the attempt to 'unleash potential' by encouraging the use of children's home languages in primary schools described in the following chapter.

In **Chapter 11 Stanley John**, Assistant Professor in the District Institute of Education and Training in Bastar in the Indian state of Chhattisgarh, describes a situation in one block (sub-district) where adult literacy is still abysmally low and parents' understanding of the importance of education is minimal. The children who make it to primary school come from several different language backgrounds, but teachers are mostly monolingual speakers of Hindi; communication in the classroom is consequently extremely difficult. However, a modest innovation has transformed classroom interaction, according to John's observations. Lists of common vocabulary items in six prominent local languages are included in each lesson; when children see their own language being validated in this way they come to life. Teachers also find the word lists helpful as they provide an entry into the children's world.

In comparison with the modest small-scale innovations in Tanzania and India discussed in Chapters 10 and 11 respectively, **Chapter 12** is a wide ranging and comprehensive survey of multilingual education at the national level in Nepal. The author, **Pushker Kadel**, is Director of the Language Development Centre, a Nepalese non-profit-making organisation (http://ldcnepal.org/). Kadel begins by presenting the language situation and the legislative context in his country, showing that there is an urgent need for mother-tongue-based education and that the post-monarchy political situation provides a fertile context for MTB innovations. Several pilot programmes have already been introduced, involving both government and non-government organisations, and their benefits seem to be clear. Nevertheless, many challenges have been encountered. These include poor coordination and political uncertainty, doubts about the quality of state schools, differences of opinion about the scripts which should be employed for previously unwritten languages, lack of training for teachers and the lure of English medium education which many parents find more attractive. The issue of English as a medium of instruction (EMI) – as a manifestation of what Mohanty (Chapter 16) calls 'the craze for English' – is one to which we will return in the fourth section of this volume ('English in a multilingual world').

To summarise, some significant findings from the seven chapters that deal with mother-tongue-based multilingual education are:

- The essence of MTB MLE lies in the statement by Brock-Utne (Chapter 4): '... children learn best when they understand what the teacher is saying.'

- There are multiple interpretations of the term MTB MLE and of its scope. It may be used just as a first step in the transition away from the home language to a more dominant national or international language. It may be a means of helping children to understand their world. Or it may be a simple small-scale use of word lists in several home languages.
- MTB MLE may take place informally, as when teachers use the children's home language to facilitate communication, although they may feel guilty about doing this.
- MTB MLE may be an approved part of the educational process, although in reality it may be ignored in the rush to English.
- Even when MTB MLE is implemented, teachers' understanding of what they are supposed to be doing may be limited.
- Apart from the difficulties that may be experienced by inadequately prepared teachers, many other challenges are likely to be encountered in introducing MTB MLE (Kadel, Chapter 12).
- Several authors report enthusiastically about the benefits of MTB MLE (e.g. Davies in Chapter 3, Manocha and Panda in Chapter 7 (the 'MLE Plus' programme), John in Chapter 11).
- However, Banerji (Chapter 2) recommends caution in assuming that MTB MLE programmes automatically bring learning benefits. ASER results suggest that many intervening factors also play a part and, therefore, further research is required.

Multilingualism and the metropolis

More than 54 per cent of the world's population now live in urban areas. Asia is by far the most urbanised continent (North America is the least urbanised) while the rate of urbanisation is most rapid in Africa (UN-Habitat 2016, 6-7). Developing countries throughout Asia, Africa and Latin America face multiple challenges, including providing access to quality health care, education and opportunities for sustainable livelihoods for their people. The increasing cultural and linguistic diversity of urban centres raises critical issues, such as the language requirements necessary to provide minimum safety and security to migrants, access to civic amenities and public services, and support for the transition to urban lifestyles and consequent requisite life skills. The phenomenon of linguistic superdiversity is a feature of all megacities throughout the developing world.

Such linguistic diversity is not a new phenomenon in Asia. For instance, in the early 19th century Thomas Stamford Raffles recorded that Batavia – now Jakarta – had a population of 33,000.[9] In 1817 the population was made up of at least 19 different ethnic groups, each of which, undoubtedly, spoke its own language. In other words, each language had on average approximately 1,700 speakers (five per cent of the population). The most numerous groups were the Chinese (33 per cent), the Balinese (23 per cent) and the Javanese and Malays (ten per cent each).[10]

Curiously, the linguistic diversity of cities in the developing world has received relatively little attention; languages in remote rural locations are much more likely

to be subject to academic study. Taking Indonesia as an example, again, we find that language diversity in urban settings has largely been ignored, even though Indonesia is home to 707 living languages (Lewis et al. 2016). The small number of exceptions includes Grijns' (1983) house by house mapping of languages in a Jakarta *kampung* (urban village) and the more recent work by Goebel (2010) and Errington (2016) in the provincial capitals of Semarang and Kupang respectively. (Incidentally, both Goebel and Errington discovered that migrants from other parts of Indonesia are under some pressure, when in public spaces, to adopt the language of the respective cities' indigenous inhabitants.) Another example from a limited field is Kitamura's study of Chinese in the linguistic landscape of Jakarta (2012).

Urban linguistic superdiversity is, though, a relatively new phenomenon in the cities of the global north (thus confirming Pattanayak's 1986 observation) and – because of its recency – has attracted considerable research attention, particularly inspired by the work of Vertovec (for example Vertovec 2006) and Blommaert (e.g. Blommaert 2013). Three contributions in the present volume examine issues relating to multilingualism in metropolitan contexts. Chapters 13 and 15, by Simpson and Sarangi respectively, make use of data from linguistically diverse cities in the UK while Chapter 14, by Meganathan, looks at the linguistic landscape of New Delhi.

James Simpson, a Senior Lecturer in the School of Education at the University of Leeds, draws on the work of the TLang project which, at the time of writing, is investigating linguistic and cultural transformations in superdiverse areas in a number of cities in the UK. In **Chapter 13**, Simpson examines the concepts of 'superdiversity' and 'translanguaging' and illustrates them with findings from the TLang study. He finds that the term 'superdiversity' (or 'hyperdiversity') is not without its critics; some observers have argued that it is unclear how superdiversity differs from diversity and that the term is Eurocentric in nature and shows a lack of historical perspective. (Indeed, we might reasonably ask whether Jakarta in 1817 – with one language for every 1,700 members of the community – provides an example of linguistic superdiversity.) Be that as it may, the fine-grained analyses of the linguistic landscape carried out by Simpson and his colleagues reveal complex and interesting relationships between the written language found in public places, the economic standing of migrant communities and how long those communities have been settled in the UK.

Meanwhile, translanguaging, Simpson suggests, is the practice of people who find themselves in superdiverse contexts (such as the children in the lanes whom Banerji observed in Chapter 2 and the 'frequent and effortless translanguaging' which Kral and Smith observed in Sarawak in Chapter 21). Simspon argues that state language policies which privilege certain languages fail to recognise the reality of superdiversity and the fluid translanguaging that members of superdiverse communities practise. Instead, he concludes, 'Pedagogical responses are required that reflect and value the translingual reality of contemporary urban life.'

In **Chapter 14 Ramanujam Meganathan**, from the Department of Education in Languages in the Indian National Council of Educational Research and Training,

explores the linguistic landscape of New Delhi. His approach, therefore, exactly mirrors that employed by Simpson in the preceding chapter. Meganathan has collected almost 500 cases of signs in public spaces in New Delhi and he has analysed the frequency with which particular languages are used in these signs, either alone or in combination with other languages. One surprising finding is that English is by far the most frequently occurring language. Another surprise is that so few of the many languages spoken in Delhi make an appearance in the written linguistic landscape. Meganathan explores the reasons for the appearance of certain languages and the invisibility of others. He notes that both national and state language policies influence practice (although the two policies do not match perfectly); other influences include ethnicity, religion, post-colonial national pride and the influence of neo-liberal globalisation. The author also notes the roles that Delhi's panoply of languages play in the 'official' and 'carnival' lives of the city. He concludes that the dominance of English in the capital must be seen 'with some apprehension' – a warning that points us forward to the discussion in the final section of this book ('English in a multilingual world').

In **Chapter 15** we return to the UK to look at linguistic diversity in healthcare settings. **Srikant Sarangi**, the author, is Director of the Danish Institute of Humanities and Medicine at Aalborg University and also Honorary Professor at Cardiff University, Wales. Sarangi provides examples of minutely detailed analyses of interaction in clinics (between doctors and patients) and in oral examinations (between candidate doctors and examiners). When patients do not share the same language as the clinician and where they lack basic knowledge relating to health, they can experience 'communicative vulnerability', which in turn can have serious consequences for them. Meanwhile, in the oral examination – a type of gatekeeping process which restricts admission to the medical profession – minor aspects of performance, such as pronunciation, may play an unreasonably significant role. In both contexts, discrimination occurs. In the light of these findings, Sarangi makes detailed suggestions for further research. For example, the substantial body of research into participation in classroom events which already exists may be able to provide pointers for research into participation in clinical events. Similarly, the 'robust body' of discourse-oriented research in healthcare contexts which already exists in the developed world should inspire similar investigations in developing countries.

The three chapters in the 'Multilingualism and the metropolis' section indicate that:

- Megacities in the developing world – particularly in Asia – are among the largest conurbations in the world. A larger percentage of the population in Asia lives in urban areas than anywhere else, while the process of urbanisation is taking place faster in Africa than elsewhere in the world.
- Nevertheless there is a paucity of research which concerns itself with the linguistic superdiversity of cities in the developing world.
- Although linguistic diversity – superdiversity – has come late to urban areas in the developed world, research in these contexts is already showing how people use languages in the street, in service encounters such as healthcare and in family settings.

- Research in the framework of linguistic landscapes, however, is already underway (e.g. Kitamura 2012; Meganathan Chapter 14, this volume).
- Suggestions have been made for replicating, in developing countries, research which has already been undertaken in the developed world.

English in a multilingual world

The metaphor of a 'mosaic' is used by Auckle in Chapter 5, by Simpson in Chapter 13 and Mohanty in Chapter 16 to describe the multitude of languages in multilingual contexts. The English language often appears as one of the tiles in the mosaic and therefore demands attention, if for no other reason than its ubiquity. A rapidly growing phenomenon in many developing countries – including India – is the demand for private 'English-medium' schooling, fuelled by parental dissatisfaction with the free education provided through national or regional languages by government schools. There is evidence that some parents from the poorest and most marginalised groups are willing to pay for this so-called 'English-medium' schooling. The final theme in this volume, therefore, examines the role of English in multilingual societies and, in particular, subjects the low-cost English-medium schools to scrutiny. Six chapters appear here, one from Kenya, another from Malaysia and the rest from India.

In **Chapter 16 Ajit Mohanty** – Professor of Jawaharlal Nehru University and Founder Director of India's National Multilingual Education Resource Consortium – poses some demanding questions about the role of English in education in developing countries. In particular, he questions the practice of low-fee private schools which claim to be providing English-medium education but which in reality fail to teach English and fail to teach the subjects which are supposedly being delivered through English. Mohanty provides an insight into the speed with which these low-cost 'English-medium' schools are being introduced: in the State of Bihar there was an increase of 4,700 per cent in the number of pupils in such establishments between 2008 and 2013! The children in these 'doom schools' are 'doomed to failure', according to Mohanty. He compares them with the 'Doon schools', elitist and extremely expensive English-medium single sex boarding schools modelled on British so-called 'public' (but actually private) schools. The original Doon School was founded in 1935 in the Doon Valley in northern India and exists to this day (www.doonschool.com).[11]

Mohanty also observes that the rhetoric of English and the guarantee of development which it appears to offer permeates popular consciousness worldwide. In reality, however, the choice of English as a dominant language of development benefits only the elite and disadvantages the many. What is needed is a totally new paradigm in which English would be taught and used as just one component in an egalitarian language policy. Mohanty's paper was presented as the opening plenary of the 11th Language & Development Conference. It had a powerful impact on participants, set the tone for the conference and is referred to by eight contributors to this volume.

Mohanty uses the image of English as a 'killer language'. He is not the first to use this expression; probably the earliest use was by Glanville Price, a Welshman writing about the languages of the UK, who saw English as the 'killer' or near-killer of the indigenous languages of the British Isles (Price 1984, 170). More recently Rapatahana

and Bunce (2012) and Bunce et al. (2016b) have used the image of English as a Hydra, a rampaging multi-headed monster. Meanwhile, Mohanty and Panda (2016), inspired by a poem by an Odia poet, use the image of an aquatic snake which captures a frog as it tries to leap away, but the frog, even as it is about to be devoured by the snake, jumps up to capture a dragonfly; for Mohanty and Panda this parallels the relationship between English as an international language which is devouring national languages even as those national languages are themselves devouring local languages. By pure coincidence, Coleman (2016), inspired by the iconography of Java and Bali, develops the image of a voracious *naga* (a mythical serpent) which devours tail first a medium-sized *naga*, which at the same time is devouring several smaller beneficent *nagas*; again this represents English devouring Bahasa Indonesia, the national language, while at the same moment Bahasa Indonesia is devouring the many local languages of Indonesia.

The contribution by **Giridhar Rao** of Azim Premji University, Bengaluru, appears as **Chapter 17**. In it, Rao discusses four contexts: the hierarchisation of languages, the education of indigenous peoples, rural children in government schools and rural children in low-fee private schools. His analysis shows that English offers tantalising promises for marginalised groups. While research has revealed that government schools produce very poor results the low-fee private English medium schools do no better than the government institutions. Rao concludes, therefore, that the idea of English as a path to better education is false. Rather, as Mohanty found in the previous chapter, Rao believes that English is of benefit only for those who are already privileged. English promises much to the majority but delivers little and, in consequence, it has become a source of social division – just as Mahatma Gandhi had feared might happen eight decades ago.

We stay with low-fee English-medium schools in **Chapter 18** by **Padmini Boruah** of the English Language Teaching Department at Gauhati University, Assam. Boruah understands why parents find English to be so attractive, but she recognises also that the quality of the majority of low-fee private schools is extremely poor because they are completely outside the ambit of the government. These schools are subject to no external inspection, adhere to no external standards and are interested only in maximising their income. The core of Boruah's chapter is an innovative and detailed examination of the way in which English is used as the medium of instruction in one school and the precise English language competencies which children develop over the first four years of their primary education. It must be noted, however, that the school where the study was carried out – though low-cost and English-medium – is exceptional in that it is a model school established by a university. Boruah concludes that the pupils achieve a reasonable degree of confidence in speaking and writing English, but that the 'pseudo-immersion' process which they experience in school gives them no grammatical competence in English and no ability to use the language creatively. The children are 'polite in English' but lively in their home language. For the longer term, there are indications that the children are experiencing subtractive bilingualism as English gradually replaces their home language. The implications are serious: if a well-established school with well-qualified teachers is having this effect on its pupils, what is happening to children in the equivalent low-quality institutions?

Geetha Durairajan, the author of **Chapter 19**, is a Professor at the English and Foreign Languages University in Hyderabad, India. She begins by acknowledging, as have Mohanty (Chapter 16), Rao (Chapter 17) and Boruah (Chapter 18) before her, that Indians need to be empowered through proficiency in English but that this cannot be at the cost of other languages. She too is critical of what she terms the 'pseudo-English-medium schools' (Mohanty's 'doom schools'). Thereafter Durairajan's focus is rather different. Recognising the intrinsically multilingual nature of the country, she has scoured the archives of English language teaching research in India over the last three decades and has managed to identify 19 studies which, in various ways, have experimented with using learners' 'first or more enabled language' as a 'mediating tool or scaffold' in the learning and teaching of subsequent languages. Methods of building on learners' L1 resources include class discussions in the L1 before a task begins, providing bilingual word lists and carrying out translation activities for awareness raising. The impact of these experiments has also been varied; apparently some learners have felt 'empowered', others have acquired an ability to reflect on their use of language, others feel more confident speaking the target language and yet others have improved their writing skills. Finally, Durairajan identifies three implications of these fascinating studies for future work: teachers should be encouraged to experiment in their own classes; language learning materials do not always need to be monolingual (in particular, test rubrics should use a language that learners are sure to understand); and learners should be assessed in terms of competency bands which need not be language specific.

Sandra Steiger, a teacher of English as an additional language, adopts a similar approach in her chapter. **Chapter 20** reports on a small scale action research programme which she ran in two private rural primary schools in Kenya. The official Kenyan policy is that education in the first three years of primary school should employ the mother tongue as medium of instruction before English becomes the medium from Year 4. In practice, however, English is widely used as the medium right from the beginning of primary school. One of the schools participating in Steiger's programme implemented a 'punitive English-only' approach; this included the use of the *muntu*, a ring which is placed round the neck of a child who is heard speaking a language other than English; the ring is then passed on from child to child during the day as they catch each other out not speaking English. At the end of the day all students who have worn the *muntu* during the day are punished.[12] The second school in Steiger's study adopted a more relaxed policy in which Kikuyu (the home language), Kiswahili and English were all given roles. Steiger reports that the action research created 'more reflective practitioners' in both schools and even led to a 'liberation' from the excessively strict English-only policy in the first school. Nevertheless, external factors still constrain both schools from adopting language policies which would be truly supportive of their pupils' learning.

Chapter 21, by **Thomas Kral and Shannon Smith**, is the final contribution to the discussion of English in a multilingual world. Both Kral and Smith were previously Project Managers on the English Language Teacher Development Project in Malaysian Borneo, which provides the setting for their study. The authors describe the situation in Sarawak, one of Malaysia's states, which possesses a large number of indigenous

and Chinese languages and in which 'frequent and effortless translanguaging' takes place in society. However, the Malaysian government approves the use of only one language – Bahasa Malaysia (BM) – in government and the education system (with a partial exception for Mandarin), yet BM is nobody's first language in Sarawak. The language teacher mentoring project in which Kral and Smith were involved encouraged teachers to use local languages and English when carrying out small-scale action research projects and in reporting the findings to their peers; this approach was popular, empowering but did not gain the approval of the authorities. The authors conclude by highlighting the challenges faced when the government, the local community and project actors all have different perceptions of language and language in education.

The six chapters in the final section of the book, supplemented by chapters in earlier sections, have identified the following phenomena relating to 'English in a multilingual world':

- There is a widespread 'rush to English' in education systems, leapfrogging over 'intermediate' languages.
- There is a widespread rush away from government schools towards private schools, particularly to schools which claim to be English medium.
- The English language in general and English-medium education in particular offer tantalising promises.
- However, those promises are rarely fulfilled. English may be beneficial for an elite minority but not for the majority; English therefore becomes a source of social division (Brock-Utne, Chapter 4; Mtana and O-saki, Chapter 5; Mohanty, Chapter 16; and elsewhere).
- In some contexts, English arouses hostility (e.g. among teachers of other subjects, who feel that English is unfairly privileged, see Chimirala, Chapter 9).
- Use of childrem's home languages may be effective in helping children to learn English (Durairajan Chapter 19).

Conference outputs

Ever since the start of the Language & Development Conference Series in 2013, each conference has produced a volume of conference proceedings. Additionally, beginning with the 9th Language & Development Conference in 2011, the Language & Development Conferences have endeavoured to generate an 'output' of some sort. Thus the Sri Lanka Conference of 2011 produced a set of eleven 'Lessons Learnt' concerning language and social cohesion (Coleman 2015, 9-10). Then the 10th Language & Development Conference, held in South Africa in 2013, issued 'The Cape Town Letter: To our leaders' (Knagg 2014) regarding the importance of language in social and economic development, with nine recommendations.

The 11th Conference, likewise, has produced an Agenda for Research and Action relating to multilingualism and development, based on input from conference participants. The Agenda, preceded by an analysis of participants' input, can be found in the Appendix to this volume (Chapter 22).

Conclusions

The alert reader will have observed that this introductory chapter has discussed the issue of multilingualism at length but so far has said little about *development*. For many years the Language & Development Conferences have adopted a human development approach influenced by the work of Amartya Sen (1999). Sen argues that development brings freedom to determine how to live one's life; this means freedom from hunger, freedom from oppression, freedom to educate one's children as one thinks best, and – by implication – freedom to use and be educated in one's own language (see Matsinhe 2014, Coleman 2015). In this volume, Mohanty (Chapter 16) explores this approach:

> *Development is viewed as related to human freedom, dignity, choice and participation and, more importantly, to reduction of inequality and discrimination.*

Putting this in the specific context of healthcare, Sarangi (Chapter 15) argues that 'a development agenda needs to remain responsive to multilingualism and multiculturalism' because the overall goal must be to maximise access to healthcare and minimise the frequency of 'adverse events' in spite of linguistic diversity. If policy and practice are not alert to issues of multilingualism and multiculturalism then risks of 'deficit, dominance, disadvantage and discrimination' arise.

A similar human development approach permeates all the contributions to this volume.

The same alert reader will also have noticed that the theme of the 2015 Conference was 'Multilingualism [singular] and Development' whilst the title of this volume is *Multilingualisms* [plural] *and Development*. What has become overwhelmingly clear from the studies gathered here is that 'multilingualism' is not a single monolithic phenomenon. We have been shown evidence of:

- *Naturally occurring societal multilingualism* (e.g. Auckle's complex multilingualism on the island of Mauritius in Chapter 5; Simpson's new migrant communities in Leeds in Chapter 13; Meganathan's communities in New Delhi in Chapter 14)
- *Naturally occurring individual and familial multilingualism* (e.g. Banerji's 'gully languages' in Chapter 2; Brock-Utne's observation in Chapter 4 that many people in Africa are multilingual from the moment they begin speaking; and the members of Simpson's Czech family in Chapter 13 using multiple languages as they eat together)
- *Formal legislated multilingualism* (e.g. language in education policy, such as Steiger's official mother-tongue-based multilingual education policy in Kenya in Chapter 20, which in fact is frequently ignored in practice; Meganathan's state and national language policies in New Delhi in Chapter 14 which do not match up and which in any case are increasingly flouted); *lip service multilingualism* is commonly encountered in association with *formal legislated multilingualism*

- *Ludic or joyful multilingualism* (e.g. John's observations in Chhattisgarh in Chapter 11, where children play with their own and each other's languages after seeing word lists in six languages)
- *Parallel monolingualism* (e.g. classrooms in Banerji's observations in Kokrajhar, Assam, in Chapter 2, where the children speak several languages but cannot communicate with each other)
- *Multilingualism exclusively for the marginalised* (but the dominant community do not need to take any action); Pattanayak in his Preface says that such programmes enhance 'a sense of inferiority' and result in 'the breaking of cohesion in society'
- *Multilingualism For All* (e.g. Benson's report in Chapter 6 on attempts in the Spanish Basque Country to ensure that speakers of dominant and non-dominant languages alike are equipped with competence in four languages)
- *Endangered multilingualism* (which occurs in contexts where Mohanty's 'double divide' (Chapter 16) is found; as the double divide strengthens, societies are in danger of moving towards *aspirational monolingualism*; Rao's discussion of the false hope offered by English medium schools in India in Chapter 17 also belongs here, as does Boruah's analysis of the impact of an English medium school in Assam in Chapter 18, which in effect is practising subtractive bilingualism)
- *Repressed multilingualism* (seen when children are punished for speaking their own languages, as in the Odia-medium schools observed by Manocha and Panda (Chapter 7) and in the Kenyan schools observed by Steiger in Chapter 20)
- *Guilty multilingualism* (where teachers employ their pupils' home languages to facilitate communication, even though this is a disapproved practice, e.g. in the secondary schools seen by Mtana and O-saki in Tanzania in Chapter 10, and in some secondary schools in Andhra Pradesh described by Chimirala in Chapter 9)
- *Facilitative multilingualism* (e.g. Durairajan's survey of research into the ways that English teachers successfully draw on their pupils' first languages in Chapter 19; some of Mtana and O-saki's teachers in Tanzania, some of Steiger's teachers at the more relaxed school she studied in Kenya in Chapter 20, and Chimirala's teachers in Chapter 9 – those who do not feel guilty about what they are doing – also belong in this category)
- *Confident multilingualism* (e.g. among the Pashai in Afghanistan, described by Davies in Chapter 3, who formerly felt shame that their first language was not Pashto; having become literate in their own language, they now feel pride in being Pashai speakers; however, this case also has some of the characteristics of *fragile multilingualism*)
- *Transitional multilingualism* (for example, the 'ordinary' Saora medium MLE programme described by Nag in Chapter 8 which serves only to effect a smooth transition from the home language to a more dominant language)

- *Enhanced multilingualism* (for example, the MLE Plus Programme in Odisha, based on an ethnographically and linguistically thick description of the learners' context, as discussed by Manocha and Panda in Chapter 7 and again by Nag in Chapter 8)
- *Fragile multilingualism* (e.g. the mother-tongue-based education programmes in Nepal, described by Kadel in Chapter 12, which are beset by political, managerial and motivational programmes)
- *Vulnerable multilingualism* (e.g. the situations which may occur when members of migrant communities seek access to healthcare in the UK, as described by Sarangi in Chapter 15, where discrimination is a potential risk).

This is not an exhaustive list. To speak of plural *multilingualisms*, therefore, seems essential.

Notes

[1] www.foxnews.com/politics/2015/07/04/trump-stands-by-views-dangerous-mexican-illegal-immigrants-admits-surprised-by.html

[2] http://indianculturalforum.in/2015/10/06/nayantara-sahgal-returns-her-sahitya-akademi-award/

[3] For comparison, *Ethnologue* suggests that there are 447 living languages in India (Lewis et al. 2016).

[4] The NMRC is part of Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India. It undertakes research and development, organises symposia and publishes research reports http://nmrc-jnu.com/index.html

[5] MOSAIC facilitates and undertakes research in all aspects of multilingualism, making use of the specialist human resources available in the University of Birmingham. www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/education/research/mosaic/about/index.aspx

[6] Apart from publishing the *Multilingual Education e-Newsletter*, UNESCO Bangkok also hosts the Multilingual Education Working Group (MLE WG) and organises a triennial conference on Language and Education. www.unescobkk.org/education/multilingual-education

[7] The SMDC is coordinated alternately by the University of South Australia's Research Centre for Languages & Cultures and the University of the Western Cape's Centre for Multilingualisms & Diversities Research. https://southernmultilingualisms.org/

[8] Approximately one third of those potential speakers whose abstracts had been accepted were unable to attend the conference because of financial and other constraints.

[9] For comparison, the 2010 Census showed that the population of the Greater Jakarta Metropolitan Region was 28 million people (Firman 2011), making it one of the largest conurbations in the world.

[10] The peoples listed by Raffles included Chinese, Europeans, Indians and at least twelve ethnic groups from different parts of what we now know as Indonesia (Raffles 1817 [1978], Volume II, 246).

[11] It is interesting to compare Mohanty's comments on the pedagogical value (or otherwise) of low-cost English-medium private schools in India with a purely economic analysis of the value of low-cost private schools in Nigeria (Cambridge Education 2016). The Nigerian study concludes that low-cost schools serving children from low-income families could save the State of Lagos GBP 2.39 billion over ten years. The report says nothing about teachers and their qualifications, what happens in classrooms or which languages are used in schools.

[12] The Kenyan *muntu* is almost identical to the notorious *nod* practice which my own grandfather experienced in primary school in West Wales in the 1880s. A child heard speaking Welsh had

to wear a sign round their neck which read 'Kick Me!' Other children were permitted to kick the offender until he or she could pass on the *nod* ('mark') to somebody else heard speaking the banned language.

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MULTILINGUALISM, MARGINALISATION AND EMPOWERMENT

2

Language and learning: The challenges of primary education in India[1]

Rukmini Banerji

Introduction

I was a little bit intimidated at being asked to contribute to a Conference on Multilingualism and Development because it is well known that I know nothing about language. Nevertheless the conference organisers seemed to think that it was important to invite me, so I am very indebted to them for allowing someone who claims no expertise in language to make a contribution like this. What I would like to do is to put, at the end of my chapter, a list of recommendations for practitioners who are in the field and who often wish that they had more weapons, more strategies, more ideas and more resources.

What I would like to do first is to share some of the challenges which the Pratham Education Foundation (www.pratham.org/) has encountered in its work. I will do this by taking you to four different contexts. We work across India, we work in both rural and urban areas, and we work mainly with primary school children. We will look at a cross section of experiences in four different contexts. I will pull out some lessons and share with you how we interpret these situations. Next, I will tell you something about the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) and this is followed by a brief discussion of the strategies that we have begun to use in different parts of India. Then I will end with the list of recommendations.

Context 1: Multiple languages in a Mumbai slum

I will begin by taking you to a slum area in Mumbai. I started my life with education and children in places like this. Almost twenty years ago, a colleague of mine (from when I had worked in America previously) came to visit me. She was Rebecca Barr, an American scholar and an early literacy expert.[2] As we walked down the lanes in one of Mumbai's slums, Rebecca continuously tried to match the theory which she believed in with the context that she saw around her. At one point we had a heated argument about 'home language' and 'school language'. I argued that it is very difficult to say that, in places like this, there is a home language. There is certainly a *gully* language, a language of the lane, and there is certainly a mother tongue, the language the mother speaks. But sometimes the mother tongue and the father tongue are different as the mother and the father speak different languages. Sometimes older brother and

H. Coleman (ed.). 2017. *Multilingualisms and Development*. London: British Council. ISBN 978-0-86355-840-5

older sister tongues are also different because they have different kinds of friends. Therefore the children that we saw in the lanes, at least orally, might not have been adept at any one language but they seemed to navigate easily between the many languages that they heard in their densely crowded slum environment.

I remember challenging Rebecca to say that her theoretical frameworks – which presumably are some of the theoretical frameworks used the world over – did not fit this circumstance. If that was the case, I asked, then whose responsibility was it to create the theoretical frameworks that would help people like us to work in contexts like this? Unfortunately, my colleague passed away a few years after that encounter, but this question has continued to haunt me. Every time I walk down streets like the one where we argued in Mumbai I feel ill equipped. I feel perfectly equipped to talk to the children and have fun with them, but I feel ill equipped to know what is the right strategy to deal not just with the children but also with their families, so that we can strengthen the richness of the environment they come from and not take away from it.

Context 2: Classroom language in a village in Jharkand

Let us go now to a very different environment far away from Mumbai. This is a school in a village in the Dhanbad district in the north eastern part of the state of Jharkhand. Because I spend a lot of time with children, I like to think I am good with them. But the great thing about working with children is that they keep you humble. Just as you think you are good with them, something happens to make you question your own abilities. It was in a classroom in a village school in Dhanbad that something like that happened to me. The class was a mix of Standards 1, 2 and 3 children (i.e. Primary Years 1 to 3). I started talking to them and I thought that I was talking in an engaging way. But the children's faces were completely blank and there was no response whatsoever, so I changed tack and said something different. Still there was no reaction. I myself am from Bihar so my Hindi was not very different from the Jharkand variety. Then it dawned on me that perhaps these children spoke another language altogether. Indeed, it turned out that they were more familiar with Bengali – which I also happen to speak – so when I started speaking in Bengali they warmed up and they began to react.

Then I wrote some Bengali sentences on the board and they went back to being completely non-responsive. What we saw there was that these children were comfortable in oral Bengali, but, if they had to read, you had to write Bengali words in Hindi script. As you know, good Bengalis would not want to write Bengali in Hindi script! But we had to adopt a strategy like this in order to take the children along with us.

Later, when we took a walk in the children's neighbourhood, we found that Bengali was the language of only one of the communities there. There was a big Santhali population who spoke Santhali at home; they also did not speak Hindi in school. As for the written scripts visible in the village, actually there was not much written language at all, but what could be seen was in the Santhali language written in the Devanagari script.

When I talked to the teacher, I found that the regular teacher was qualified and had all the right degrees, but she was a Hindi speaker and did not speak any of the languages of the children. I asked her, 'What do you do every day, because within ten minutes I was frustrated by being in that classroom?' The teacher told me very flatly, 'I do what good teachers are supposed to do, which is to teach from the textbook.' The textbook, of course, was in Hindi.[3]

Luckily for everyone, there were 'para teachers' (assistant teachers) in many of the schools in these states. Para teachers are local people, so the para teacher and the children had a whole subterranean life together, speaking their local language, while the regular teacher and her textbook had a lofty life in which none of the children were engaged. Consequently, thanks to the para teachers, the children orally knew a lot of things, but, in writing, they did not know very much because they were not being taught with the 'Bengali in Hindi' script with which they were familiar. Again, we left the village feeling that in this situation so much more needed to be done.

Context 3: The language of school books in Bihar

The third context which I would like to introduce you to is Bihar. There is a well-known cartoonist there called Pawan; everybody in Bihar recognises him because he has a cartoon every day in the *Hindustan* newspaper (www.facebook.com/Pawantoon). As it turns out, he also writes for children. We in Pratham asked Pawan to write some very simple children's books for us. We had an argument because he wanted to write one of the books in Bhojpuri. He had a daughter, about four years old, and the book was really about her. Her name is Chulbuli and the story was about Chulbuli making a drawing. So I said, 'Why don't we create two versions of the same story – one in Bhojpuri and one in Hindi – and give them to the children and let's see what the children say?' The cartoonist was convinced that the children would say that the Bhojpuri version was better. I was very keen that the children should have their own view, but I did not care one way or the other what their preference was.

What the children actually said was that the Hindi version is the way a book should be, whereas the Bhojpuri version uses the language that they speak to each other but that 'it should never be written like this'. So they actually made fun of Pawan. (Because many of them were his daughter's friends it was okay for them to make fun of him.) They said, 'You don't know what you are doing. You're not supposed to write books like *this* [in Bhojpuri], you're supposed to write books like *that* [in Hindi], but when you talk to us, you can talk to us like *this* [in Bhojpuri].' We left the issue unresolved for a while, but eventually I was able to convince Pawan to use Hindi because the book would have a much wider readership that way, both within Bihar and elsewhere. What we learnt from that case was that the children had a very strong view about what things should be like. When both versions of the book were available they did not even look at the Bhojpuri version after a while. What concerned them was whether they could read the story or not and that led them to choose the Hindi version.

Context 4: Complex patterns of language in Assam

The final context that I want to take you to is in Assam, in particular the district of Kokrajhar in lower Assam. If you Google Kokrajhar all you will find are pictures of

violence, because there has been so much trouble there recently (including ethnic violence tied up with language). A colleague of mine has been working there for some time and she started working there because she was very dissatisfied with the way that we in Pratham were dealing with children in Assam. She felt that we needed a much more nuanced view of what goes on there. What she did taught us a great deal. At first, she spent almost a year just mapping out the different kinds of language use found in the ten villages where we were planning to work. Some of these language uses I was already familiar with: what language does your mother speak? what does your father speak? what does your teacher speak? what is the language of the textbooks in your school? And so on. But there were many other uses that, frankly, we had not thought about previously. As we went from school to school, analysing these language uses, we realised that, although it is well known that this is an area where the Bodo language predominates, there was also much more going on there linguistically than we had anticipated.

The language of instruction in the school and the language of the textbooks were the most obvious ones. Some teachers could speak both the textbook language and the Bodo language, but some teachers had themselves been taught in totally different languages so their previous experience had not been in any of the languages that they were now having to use in the schools. But the most interesting finding for us was that there were schools where the children did not have a common language that they could use together in the playground. This meant that, even in the playground, they were segregated by language (and their languages were also associated with their other background characteristics). So, although the children were physically in the school together, they occupied completely different worlds. It took someone who did not speak any of their languages to come there and bring the children together, to cooperate, to try and help this outsider to understand what they were doing.

In one such school in Kokrajhar our colleague observed that the children did not share a common language. Moreover, she spoke Assamese but she could not speak any of the children's languages. Undaunted, our colleague noticed that there was a river right next to the school. Using gestures and pictures (she was also a graphic artist) she asked the children if they knew how to fish; of course everyone knew how to fish. Then my colleague managed to communicate that she did not know how to fish. So the children decided that they would show her how to fish by taking her to the river and demonstrating directly what needs to be done. When they came back to the classroom after the fishing lesson the children discovered that their guest was also unable to read and write any of their languages. To solve this problem the children drew an instruction manual on how to fish, then different children added words from their various languages which they thought were important in this business of fishing. The manual, therefore, was created by the children working together to rescue this poor woman who did not know the basic facts of fishing. Wherever we allow children the responsibility of creating something together, we find imaginative things like this emerging.

Here is another example from my own direct experience. I speak Marathi very fluently but grammatically not very well. In Marathi-speaking areas this is of great amusement

to children, who respond by saying '*aap itne bade hogye ho, abhi tak aapko theek se ayi nhi*', 'so let us teach you'. That often gets a whole group of children quite united in teaching you what you should have learnt: 'How did you get so big and not know the basic things?' So I strongly recommend knowing some language fluently but not accurately as a way of really getting close to children; it brings out the best in the children to take you along with them.[4]

As we went on, we also saw that there were different uses of language in the market, the newspapers and the police station (for example to file an FIR or First Information Report, when somebody reports a crime to the police for the first time). In the context of Kokrajhar the police station is a very important place and a much larger proportion of people have to deal with the police than you would find elsewhere. Add to all of this that Bodo is written in both Hindi and Devanagari scripts. This created a situation where – once we had become aware of all these complications – we were almost paralysed with indecision about what was the best thing to do.

The Annual Status of Education Reports (ASER)

Looking at all of the features which I have told you about in these four contexts we have come up with some ways of dealing with our current realities. I will discuss these in the next section. But first I would like to take a quick detour to tell you something about ASER, the Annual Status of Education Reports (www.pratham.org/programmes/aser), since it is ASER that was my passport to participation in this Conference.

Table 1: ASER's reach and people involved

Reach	People involved
• 577 rural districts • 16,497 villages visited (30 villages per district) • 341,070 households reached (30 households per village) • 600,000-700,000 children surveyed (all children aged 3-16 per household)	• 500+ district level organisations • 1000+ master trainers • 25,000+ volunteers

As Table 1 shows, ASER is a big survey, covering between 600,000 and 700,000 children in nearly 16,500 villages. Pratham has carried out the survey every year for the last ten years, from 2005 to 2014. In 2015 we had a break, to review where we are.

The survey asks three simple questions:

- Are children in school? (In India most children are in school now.)
- Can children read a very simple text?
- Can children recognise numbers and do very basic arithmetic operations?

Now that India's enrolment numbers are very high we can take a look at what is actually happening at school. The pattern that we find is clear and it occurs everywhere, all over the country, in all rural districts. Children are asked to read a

Table 2: Percentage of children enrolled in different grades who can read at least Standard 2 text (All India, rural areas)

Standard	Children able to read Standard 2 text (%)
3	23.6
5	48.1
8	74.6

simple story in one of twenty different languages, whichever is appropriate for their particular location. The difficulty level of the story is roughly at the Standard 2 level. As you can see from Table 2, by the time that children reach Standard 5, regardless of the language they study in, roughly half of them can read the simple story at Standard 2 level. By Standard 8 about three quarters of them can read the Standard 2 story. Our surveys show that over these last ten years not much has changed; if anything, there is a slight declining trend. So, whichever language we are operating in, we still have a long way to go in building this basic reading capability.

Furthermore, this is not the only capability which needs to be developed; there are many more things which children need to be able to do. This is just the tip of the iceberg, to give you a sense of what we do and how far we have come.

This issue of language is clearly very important for small children when they are beginning to learn to read. Therefore in 2011 we decided to explore what languages children experienced at home and in school. We showed children a list of the 'Scheduled Languages' (the 22 languages recognised in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India) and asked them which of these languages were used in school. We also showed them a list of 122 'major languages' (identified by the 2001 Census of India) and asked them which of these languages were spoken at home.

Table 3: Percentage of children reporting that home and school language are the same ('Hindi-speaking' states only)

State	Children who say home and school language are the same (%)
Madhya Pradesh	96.7
Uttar Pradesh	93.9
Haryana	78.5
Bihar	47.0
Jharkand	38.8
Uttarakhand	33.5
Rajasthan	23.1
Himachal Pradesh	11.4
Chhattisgarh	0.6
Total	**66.2**

Table 3 shows the results just from the nine 'Hindi-speaking' states. Before doing this study we were very aware that in largely tribal dominated areas, in the North East and in places like Kashmir, children were using one language at school but speaking completely different languages at home. Therefore when our findings confirmed this pattern we were not surprised. But what did surprise us – as Table 3 reveals – was that even in the Hindi-speaking heartland many children told us that they do not speak Hindi at home, even though the medium of instruction at school is Hindi. In Himachal Pradesh, for example, only 11 per cent of children said that their home language was the same as the school language.

Now, we recognise that ASER is a rough and ready tool and that we have a very large number of surveyors collecting data for us, so we cannot claim that our findings are perfectly accurate. Nevertheless, our survey clearly reveals that, in some of the largest states in India, many children come from families where one language is spoken at home but their teachers speak a different language in school. This accounts for the fact that our children are making much slower progress in the early years of school than we would like.[5]

Undoubtedly, textbooks in India are created based on the latest knowledge and with the best of intentions, but they do not recognise where children are coming from. Unfortunately, I do not see any serious attempt to address this issue, especially in the early grades. We should all be trying to deal with this matter, to really understand what it is that the children bring to school and what it is that they are capable of doing. When you actually work with children, if you listen to them and read something to them, they replace the words that they do not know with words that they do know, so long as the two languages are closely related. But, if the home and school languages are very different in structure, then what happens is what I experienced in Dhanbad (Context 2 above), that is to say, blank faces and waiting for the bell to go and the lesson to end so that you can go outside and have a good time and leave these adults to their own business.

A few more facts revealed by ASER may be useful:

- 48 per cent of mothers of the children participating in the survey had never been to school
- 25 per cent of fathers of these children had never been to school
- more than 75 per cent of children have no print material at home other than their school textbooks (not even newspapers).

Regarding the mothers, we hear a lot about 'mother tongues' but we rarely hear about the 'mother's voice'. The mother is probably proficient in the language in which she operates at home – at least orally – but she may not be at all comfortable communicating in the language of the school.

Three quarters of children in India do not have any other print material at home other than their school textbooks. Therefore, parents' and children's attitude to printed material is the attitude which we would all have if the only print material to which

we had access was textbooks. I have nothing against textbooks; they are needed but they are not enough. I have to say that textbooks are not what I choose to read before going to sleep at night! Therefore we still have a long way to go in developing attitudes to reading and building a range of language capabilities. It is going to be difficult to achieve this if children do not have first-hand interaction or exposure to anything other than a textbook.

Some states have invested in producing books for children, but the need is still immense. Take Hindi children's books, for example: a 'large' print run is usually only 3,000 copies[6] and yet there are 100 million children in the Hindi-speaking area alone. Even in many large cities it can be extremely difficult to find books for children which are not textbooks. Newspapers have a much wider distribution than books and we have had good experiences with some newspapers which are aware of children among their readership. Children are also aware of religious books, but we treat religious books very seriously; we tie them up and keep them away from children. Something of the same attitude can be found in schools; in one school after another we find that books are very carefully kept in libraries, away from children, because books should be respected and not allowed to get torn or dirty.

We need some radical new thinking regarding making reading materials available for children. First, it would help if we had a law that said that no children's book should be kept inside a closed cupboard! That might help to some extent, but then we also do not tend to take our laws very seriously. Then somebody needs to calculate how many books are really needed for 240 million children: if every child is to have one book to read every night then how many books need to be printed and how many need to be in circulation? Also, our National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme should be involved in building libraries rather than digging ditches. We need to take some brave steps like these.

Our procedures

I would like to tell you now about what Pratham has been doing in two of the contexts I have described above: Kokrajhar in Assam (Context 4) and the state of Jharkand (Context 2).

In Kokrajhar we found that many different languages were spoken. For example there are some individual schools where the children speak Rabha, Santhali, Bodo, Bengali and Nepali. Many of these children do not talk to each other because they do not share a language. In situations like this we decided that the best thing to do is to build the ability to talk. Each child speaks in his or her 'language of comfort'; in some cases, the language of comfort may be a mixed-up language. That does not matter. What is important is that the best place to begin is with whatever language is comfortable for the child.

Our teams in Kokrajhar spent a lot of time collecting stories. This meant that we had to talk to mothers, grandmothers, anyone who would talk to us, so that we could identify what was common in the narratives of that area. Our first job in such communities was not teaching reading, not teaching grammar, not teaching language. Instead we tried to teach the children how to communicate with each other, teaching

them how to understand one another, even if this meant speaking in languages that we only half understood. What was important was building confidence and convincing the children that we were going to make progress together (see Box 1).

Box 1: Steps towards reading	
Step	**Activity**
Starting point	Building skills in the 'language of comfort'
Materials	Using familiar stories, narratives, activities
Stages (oral at first)	• confidence • communication • comprehension • creativity
Process	Using known and practised building blocks to move towards less comfortable language

Sometimes I find that, in sticking very closely to what is commonly known as 'language', we forget some of these things. It is extremely important to build children's confidence in expressing themselves in whatever form and whatever way they find comfortable, so that they can move further with confidence. We used these 'known' building blocks and moved slowly, first in completely oral ways, towards whatever language was the less comfortable for the children (in this case, Assamese).

Many of the activities which the children carry out involve enacting, because it is possible to act without having to speak too much as well. In such activities, when children are acting in a play or doing something else together, there is comprehension. Sometimes this leads to misunderstandings: very often parents will tell us that we are not 'teaching' their children because the children are having too much fun. But perhaps one of the first things to do is to have some fun, because after that we can move on to the more serious business of whatever this 'learning' is all about.

We have been working in between 60 and 70 schools in Kokrajhar for three or four years. I can assure you that all the children there are very good performers by now! Some of them are not good readers yet but they can tell you a story and they can act it out for you in many different ways. I believe that these are important life skills to have and I am convinced that these children will learn to read in due course, even if they have not done so already.

Moving now to Jharkhand, I will describe briefly the work which we have undertaken in the district of West Singhbhum in the south of the state (not Dhanbad which was discussed in Context 2 above). Paschim (West) Singhbhum is an area in which many of the children speak Ho. We tried to develop both basic arithmetic skills and basic reading skills for children in Standards 3 to 5, as Table 4 shows.

Table 4: Number of children achieving Standard 2 level before and after 40 days of focussed learning improvement (Standards 3-5, West Singhbhum, Jharkand)

Reading			Arithmetic	
Skill	**Before (n=46)**	**After (n=45)**	**Skill**	**After (n=45)**
Story	0	15	2 digit subtraction with borrowing	36
Paragraph	0	11		
Word	12	19		
Letter	15	10		
Reading beginner	19	0		

After an intervention of 40 days of focussed learning improvement for children in Standards 3 to 5, the number of children able to read a simple Standard 2 level story increased from 0 to 15. Meanwhile, those able to read a simple paragraph (but not yet a complete story) at the Standard 2 level increased from 0 to 11. There was some progress in reading, then, but it was not overwhelming and we would normally expect faster progress than this. In contrast, in arithmetic, the same children made much faster progress; by the end of the intervention 36 of them were able to solve Standard 2 level problems such as two digit subtractions.

So the question we faced was why the children made only modest progress in reading while at the same time they made much faster progress in mathematics. What we discovered eventually was that these Ho-speaking children were actually experiencing problems in their first language. We tend to assume that, orally at least, children know their first language well enough. But what we found was that the children had a very low knowledge of vocabulary, even in Ho, so expecting them to have even a modest vocabulary in Hindi was unrealistic.

Our first job, therefore, was to help the children develop a much stronger language competence even in Ho before attempting anything else. Moreover, we noticed that some of the sounds that occur in Ho also occur in Hindi, so there was no problem there, But several Hindi sounds are not found in Ho and so of course the children could not even hear them. Therefore, in selecting the Hindi stories that we were going to use, we had to keep these things in mind. If we want children to become confident, to develop comprehension and to start building some reading skills, we need to think about what is familiar and what is unfamiliar for them. Thinking in terms of 'comfortable language' and 'uncomfortable language' then is more useful than thinking about a particular language such as 'Ho' or 'Hindi'.

Conclusions

We in Pratham are a large group of practitioners who are very comfortable with children but we are not particularly savvy with theories about multiple languages. In that context and bringing together everything discussed above, what conclusions can we draw about what we should be doing and what are the big questions in front of us? I have five conclusions that I would like to place in front of you.

The first is that we find it very useful, in every situation, to listen carefully to what the children are doing. This is because there are so many clues from what they tell us that help us to take the next step. Also, there are many things that they can do and building from where they are seems like a more productive way to proceed (even if they seem to have a leg in several different languages at the same time).

Second, we find that ready-made material – anything that is printed and becomes like a textbook – seems to get frozen. It becomes highly valued and has high status but is rarely used. What we feel works better is to develop a healthy strategy which is alive and kicking, which can be taken into a situation and put to work. That strategy should lead us to what should be done next rather than a set of ready-made materials which then freezes everybody's initiative. Ready-made material is good for reference. However, very often ready-made material leads people to believe 'It is all here. Nothing else is needed. I don't need to think on my own.'

The third thing we find is that, in many discussions about education, we hear a lot of polarising of views. In contrast, in our work with children we tend to find that things fall into a continuum rather than black and white sharply distinguished categories. We feel that it is important to look for healthy and constructive ways in which to keep this continuum alive and avoid dichotomies. Children themselves seem to be able to navigate this continuum, for example with their mother's language at one end and English at the other end. In reality we are all at different points on this continuum and others like it and we are all moving at different rates towards our objectives. Our task as educators is to keep this richness alive and avoid getting boxed into two different places. Perhaps this is what is meant by James Simpson (2017) and other speakers in the Conference when they talk about 'translanguaging'.

Next, we need to help theory and practice grow together. In many cases we find that the theory grows in one place and practice grows in another place; we struggle to fit the two together. There are people – not many – who have grown theory and practice together, who have been influenced by the previous research but who are still open to the many ways in which things can grow. Should universities and people like us be closer together? Whether it is in teacher training, whether it is in universities, whether it is in communities, how can this process of theory building and solution making move together in a more effective way that really pays due respect to the richness we have before us? How can we come together in a way that is more integrated and cuts across the different situations in which we find ourselves?

Next, we need a huge reading movement in this country and we have to take it into our own hands to bring this about. By reading I do not just mean reading, I mean enjoying, engaging, and understanding; for me reading comes with all of that. So, we have recently launched what we call the *Lakhon main Ek* campaign (www.lakhonmeinek.org). Literally, this means 'one in a hundred thousand'. India has 600,000 villages and what we would like to encourage, over the next couple of months, is for ordinary people in 100,000 communities to see how many children in their neighbourhood can read. If they discover that there are children who cannot read or who are struggling with basic mathematics, then they can give a little of their time to help these children.

We have a peculiar situation in India where aspirations for education are rising tremendously but everybody feels that improving education is somebody else's responsibility, whether it is a private school, a tutor, a teacher, a government school, or someone else. We want to change this attitude and create a community-based approach which recognises that this needs to be done by all of us. We are looking for the most enthusiastic people in 100,000 communities. For example, these could be high school students who appreciate that they are able to read and wish to share their skills with others less fortunate. All kinds of people whom you would least expect seem to be showing great interest in this initiative. Then, having aroused this interest at the grassroots level, the next challenge for us will be supporting these enthusiastic volunteers. If we as common people see that somebody near us is not reading then we need to do something about it. And that something need not be boring, it could be fun! Policy makers can join us if they wish, but we have to stop waiting for policy makers to make the first move. I like to think that we can change India faster than the policy makers can.

Notes

[1] With the author's approval, this chapter is an edited version of a transcript of the author's conference presentation. The author's responses to questions which followed her presentation have also been incorporated into the chapter. The original presentation can be seen between 6.32.00 and 7.24.00 at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C5-NQjlT9Yw&index=42&list=PLUwf3cy5FZzgBPbUCLKj_KGy9ezdXwKRy.

[2] For some examples of Rebecca's work see Barr 1985 and Barr and Johnson 1996.

[3] On the issue of teachers and textbooks, we recently finished a study of about 5,000 classrooms in Bihar. No doubt there are some teachers who are extremely good at using textbooks, but what we found was that 'teaching the textbook' dominates over any other kind of behaviour. I use the term 'teaching the textbook' deliberately, because for most teachers their concern is exactly that, rather than 'teaching the children'. They feel that by a certain point in the school year they must have completed a certain number of lessons in the book. The lessons are taught one after the other as they appear in the book and children are expected to be able to tell the teacher what the content of the already taught lessons is. We found no active engagement strategies, no discussion of lesson content, no room for expression of any type. The teaching of writing is also completely driven by what lies in the textbook.

[4] An example of drawing on what children know and what they can do can be seen in something we call *galti maaf sudharo toh sahi*. These are cards, each of which contains a paragraph with mistakes in it. Teachers often get upset if we show deliberate mistakes to their pupils because they believe that printed material should be error-free. But actually children love correcting mistakes. We use the cards as prompts for little competitions where children working in groups have to see how many mistakes they can find in the texts. We have not evaluated this formally but experience convinces me that this procedure helps children to improve their ability to write. There are many other ways of getting children to lead what happens in the classroom. They can do this without training. It is the teachers – not the children – who need training.

[5] There is an important question here as to whether ASER test results confirm the widely held assumption that using the home language in school has a positive impact on learning. We have been looking at this, particularly in the early grades, but even a very preliminary analysis does not always show the one to one relation which we might expect between use of the home language in school and successful learning. There seem to be many contextual factors which intervene, such as the parents' language competence and the scripts that the home and school languages are written in. We are starting to explore these other influences, particularly in border districts where there may be two dominant languages. Once we have a deeper understanding

we will be in a better position to decide what our strategies should be. (This is an example of how, in all our work, we move iteratively: we have an idea, we test it, we come up with some action items and then we move on to the next step. We need to be on a continuous learning curve, taking nothing for granted.) A great deal of research has already been done, but much more is still needed, particularly in the Hindi heartlands where education indicators are often lower than elsewhere in the country.

[6] Putting aside the National Book Trust (www.nbtindia.gov.in/default.aspx), which is a government publishing house.

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3

Empowerment of the Pashai of Afghanistan through language development and multilingual education

Megan Davies

Introduction

Afghanistan, like many countries in the region around it, contains a variety of ethnolinguistic groups. There are believed to be 40 living languages, ten of which are in danger of extinction (Lewis et al. 2016). Among the groups with a vigorous linguistic vitality are the Pashai (alternative spelling Pachaie), who are spread over five provinces of eastern Afghanistan and who, in spite of sharing the same name, are made up of at least four mutually unintelligible linguistic varieties. These are currently considered to be four separate languages, pending the results of an ongoing linguistic survey. This chapter focuses on the Pashai of Nangarhar province. Within Nangarhar province, the Pashai are primarily located in the northern districts of Dara-i Noor (sometimes spelled Dara-i Nur) and Kuz Kunar (alternatively referred to as Shewa). The Pashai in these districts number around 125,000. Dara-i Noor is a rural area consisting of villages running up and down a valley. Shewa is set at the base of this valley, opening up into the plains around the city of Jalalabad, a main commercial hub for the region. The variety of Pashai found in these areas is identified as Southeast Pashai (Lewis et al. 2016).

Afghanistan experienced an intense civil war from 1992-1996 until the Taliban took control of the majority of the country (including Pashai lands) in 1996. During 1997 and 1998, Dara-i Noor district experienced an influx of displaced persons as a result of insecurity in the region.

This chapter examines the impact of the community development project – run by the non-governmental organisation Serve Afghanistan – on the Pashai community through its work in language development (LD) and multilingual education (MLE). The chapter will demonstrate ways that the Pashai have been empowered through the progress made in these areas. First, an overview will be given of the history of the project, followed by an update on the state of the project at the time of writing in 2016. The chapter then describes changes in language attitudes in both Pashai and Pashtun communities and examines prospects for continued work beyond 2016 for Pashai LD and MLE. In the conclusion of the chapter, the positive changes observed

H. Coleman (ed.). 2017. *Multilingualisms and Development*. London: British Council. ISBN 978-0-86355-840-5

among the Pashai are reaffirmed and LD and MLE are presented as foundational elements of the empowerment and transformation of communities.

Much of the information for this chapter was gathered in a group interview with Saber Alimi, the manager of the Pashai Community Development Project and a member of the project since it began in 1999; Carloes Brink, the technical advisor for the project; Sohrab Sadiq, the project's MLE and literacy specialist and security advisor; and Sher Alam, the project's field supervisor. Sohrab Sadiq and Sher Alam are Pashai, while Saber Alimi is part of the majority Pashtun tribe. I conducted this interview primarily in Dari, though Pashto, Pashai and English were also used at times. The interview was carried out in an effort to record the work done by the project and the outcomes that had been observed in the community.

History of the Pashai Community Development Project

This section is an overview of how the Pashai Community Development Project has grown and progressed with time. Particular focus is given to the foundational work prior to the start of Pashai LD and MLE; the growth of community interest in literacy classes in Pashto, the lingua franca; the first efforts of including LD and MLE into the project; and the official start of mother-tongue-based multilingual education (MTB MLE) for the Pashai.

Preparing a foundation

The linguist Sung-Chan Kwon first became acquainted with the Pashai of Dara-i Noor while overseeing the relief efforts of Serve Afghanistan during the influx of displaced persons in the late 1990s. As a linguist, he was naturally interested in the language of the Pashai, which at that time had no orthography or formal development. Alimi recalled that when the project officially started in 1999, both he and Kwon had a long-term desire to provide educational opportunities and language development for the Pashai, but the nature of Taliban control, along with the attitudes and desires of the people in the community at the time, made it clear that starting a new project with a focus on language would not be received well. The need for education was obvious, given the limitations and restrictions on education put in place by the Taliban, but these same restrictions put a firm stop to any plans envisioned by the development workers.

The daily struggles of a life of economic poverty shaded the desires of a large number of the Pashai. In families where having well over six children was common and the lack of jobs for people in a geographically isolated area with little education was a stark reality, simply making ends meet for day-to-day life was a constant challenge. So the Serve project team used the relationships that they had developed with the community during their period of relief work to evaluate what the greatest desires and felt needs of the people were. The result was an animal husbandry programme, where especially poor and disadvantaged families were selected to receive a cow each. The first calf born to each cow given to a family was returned to the programme and then given to another family.

In time the animal husbandry programme spread throughout the Dara-i Noor and Shewa districts and later into the neighbouring Laghman province. It was also

expanded to include the distribution of goats in addition to cows. Alimi noted that within a few years there was a visible improvement in the overall economic situation of many Pashai families. People were starting to be able to look beyond the day-to-day struggles and consider what the future had to hold for them and for their children. Another significant change around this time was the fall of the Taliban in 2001. This allowed the project team members to work more freely in the community. The combination of these factors opened the door for the addition of an education focus to the project.

'We want literacy!' (in the lingua franca)

As members of the project once again assessed the felt needs of the Pashai community around 2001, they started hearing more and more requests for educational opportunities. Under the Taliban, there had been no education at all for girls and even for boys education was a huge challenge. The language of instruction in all schools in the area was Pashto (the language of wider communication), which was unfamiliar to most Pashai children. This naturally created a huge barrier for children to be able to succeed in the school environment.

The Pashai people saw that their lack of education, particularly in the Pashto language, prevented them from pursuing job opportunities that might improve their prospects in life. So the requests that Serve members started receiving were primarily for adult Pashto literacy classes. These classes were started and were received positively by the community. However, there was little to no awareness among most Pashai people that education was possible in their mother tongue. Sadiq and Sher Alam recalled that, for some people, there was a sense of shame that their mother tongue was not Pashto and the thought of bringing an unimportant, unrespectable language into the classroom was unimaginable. For others, there was ambivalence or even a sense of pride at having a unique language. But for these there was still an awareness of the reality that Pashto was the language of opportunity. It had always been the language of instruction in schools and no one saw any point in questioning the status quo. So, while interest in education grew among the Pashai in the early years of the 2000s, this interest was limited to the language of wider education.

Initial language development and multilingual education efforts

The arrival of the linguist Ju-Hong Yun in the community development project and the fall of the Taliban around the same time initiated the start of a new phase in the project's history. Alimi shared that one of the first milestones of Yun's work was organising a conference to establish an orthography for the Pashai language. This took place in 2003. A large group of community elders, religious leaders and other influential people representing a variety of dialects up and down the valley met over the course of several days. Yun presented his suggestions for an orthography that would be more phonemic in nature than the orthographies of either Pashto or Dari, the two national languages. Members attending the conference also shared their opinions and suggestions and, by the end of the conference, an official orthography was agreed upon by all present. The decision was made by the elders of each of the Pashai villages. One outcome of that process is that community support for the

orthography has been very strong. The orthography has never been made official on a government level, however, so the recognition it has earned is limited to the local area.

In addition to establishing an approved orthography, the Pashai Orthography Conference of 2003 also established a committee that could meet in the future for two main purposes. The committee would make decisions about the practical application of the orthography and it would also approve materials that would be printed by the project. This committee, named the Pashai Language Committee, continues to function as a decision-making body for the Pashai language to the present day.

With an approved orthography, project members could start to develop printed materials in the Pashai language for the first time. Practical application of the orthography proved to be a major challenge and consequently the Pashai Language Committee met frequently to discuss and negotiate the best way to spell words that appeared in the first books. A literacy primer (Yun 2006) was the first major book published by the project. Several short story books along with a picture dictionary were also published around the same time. Early literacy books continued to be produced throughout the following years. The issue of how to use the orthography practically was an ongoing struggle with each of these books. This struggle often centred on dialectical differences from one village to another.

Another struggle which the project members faced as the first Pashai books were released was the suspicion of many community members. The community was aware that the organisation had international ties and that the project's technical advisor was a foreign man. Rumours started spreading that there were hidden agendas behind the books being produced. Sadiq shared that the staff of the project responded by asking respected members of the communities to personally review the books and state whether the contents merited the suspicions voiced by many. With time, the rumours were proved to be ill-founded. Sher Alam pointed out that community acceptance of the Pashai books became visible as more and more people began purchasing them.

Following the printing of the literacy primer in 2005, the first Pashai literacy courses started in 2006. These courses were offered to adults. Initially, the community interest in these courses was very limited. The project did not provide students with all the materials needed for the course (such as paper and pens) nor did it pay students to attend the course. These had become common practices by other non-governmental organisations in the area. As a result, many people complained about a lack of generosity on the part of the Serve community development project. However, the project members believed that the long-term outcome would be both greater and more sustainable if students were attending the course for the purpose of learning rather than for receiving economic benefits. Over time, the complaints from the community stopped and eventually nearby communities started requesting to have Pashai literacy courses started in their areas as well.

Community interest in the Pashai language was clearly growing and a technical advisor experienced in early childhood education, Carloes Brink, became a new member of the project in 2010. According to Brink, four project team members travelled to Chiang Mai, Thailand, in 2010 to receive training on how to start up an MTB MLE programme for children. The combination of all these factors set the stage for the start of the Pashai School Preparation and After-School Programmes.

Mother-tongue-based multilingual education officially begins

Pilot courses for the Pashai School Preparation Programme (SPP) began in 2010 and the programme officially began in 2011. Each year a new set of ten courses begins, five for boys and five for girls. Children are around five years old when they enter the programme and they have two years of courses before first entering the government school system. The courses aim to give the children pre-literacy skills first followed by literacy skills in their mother tongue. As they near the time to enter the first grade and start attending the government schools (where the language of instruction is Pashto), then the courses go through a transfer primer, where the literacy skills they already learned in Pashai are transferred over to the Pashto language.

Once the first set of ten classes had finished the two-year school preparation period in 2013, the After-School Programme (ASP) was launched. In the ASP, the lessons are focused on reviewing the material covered in school that day, but allowing for explanations and discussions to happen fully in Pashai, rather than in Pashto, to ensure that children grasped the meaning of the lessons taught at school. The ASP has a duration of three years, so students attend while they are in 1st to 3rd Grades. In total, the SPP and ASP have a five-year programme cycle (two years SPP + three years ASP). The year 2015 marked the first completion of the whole cycle.

The state of Pashai MLE and LD as of 2016

The Pashai SPP system of starting ten new classes each year continued through 2016. Neighbouring villages requested that the programme be expanded into their areas, but project funding did not allow for such an expansion. The Pashto and Pashai literacy courses previously mentioned also continue to be offered as part of the community development programme. While MLE was being offered through the Serve project courses, it was still not included in the government schools. Schools in Dara-i Noor continued to use Pashto as the official language of instruction. While the Afghan constitution recognised Pashai as one of the minority languages of the nation (Islamic Republic of Afghanistan 2004) and a curriculum committee was instituted by the government to develop curricula for each of the recognised minority languages, no curriculum had yet been developed that could be used by the Dara-i Noor schools. A Pashai curriculum, developed by the committee for teaching Pashai as a subject, was delivered to the community by the Afghan government in both 2009 and 2015. Unfortunately, the Pashai used in the textbooks was the Pashai of a different province – a variety unintelligible to the Pashai of Dara-i Noor. While the government had certainly made efforts to incorporate MLE in state-run schools, the status quo of Pashto being the language of instruction for Pashai students did not seem likely to change anytime soon.

In spite of the challenge of incorporating the Pashai language in the education system, Pashai language development was seeing significant progress as of 2016. Although there was a long gap in producing Pashai-language literature between 2010 and 2014, production was resumed in 2015. The gap can be largely attributed to the lack of a linguist in the project location during part of that time. Yun, who was very active in developing materials in the 2000s, was forced to leave the country in 2008 for security reasons. After that he continued working with the Pashai project remotely and continued printing books up until 2010. I joined the project in 2013 and from 2015 several new books were added to the literature base, including collections of riddles, poems and short stories. During this time, project staff also received training in literature development so that they could continue this work regardless of whether a foreign linguist was present to guide the process.

An important step in the development of any language is the production of a dictionary. As of 2016, work was underway on a dictionary that will formalise a Pashai lexicon and provide translations into Pashto and English. Pashai people have shown interest in such a dictionary for the prestige it will bring to their language. An increasing interest in learning English, particularly among the younger demographic, also feeds the demand for the dictionary. However, this is a very large undertaking and a first printing is not expected until around 2018.

Changing attitudes

The work done in the areas of LD and MLE in the Pashai community has resulted in a change of attitudes towards the Pashai language. This section shows first how that change has been observed among Pashai people and then how it has been manifested in nearby Pashtun communities.

Changing attitudes among the Pashai

In the time since the MTB MLE programme was started in 2011, reactions from the community have been overwhelmingly positive. Parents regularly report that those of their children who are enrolled in the programme perform notably better in school than those children who are not participating. Final examination scores for Grade 3 students in a Dara-i Noor government school were collected in the spring of 2016. They showed that a sample of 20 students who had taken part in the MTB MLE programme received an average mark of 88.7 per cent. In comparison, a sample of 20 students from the same class who had not taken part in the MTB MLE programme scored only 52.0 per cent on average.

On a personal level, an example of extraordinary transformation can be seen through the story of Muska[1]. Muska had had hearing problems since birth and as a result was considered by some members of her family to be intellectually disabled. When she was given the opportunity to join the Pashai SPP, her mother discouraged her enrolment, citing an inability to learn. However, Muska's father believed that she should be given a chance to attend, so she joined the programme. Nearly two years later, Muska demonstrated that she was very capable of learning and actually outperformed some of her older siblings in some subjects. Her parents decided to let her start first grade in the government schools, an idea they had previously resisted.

The Pashai MTB MLW programme had not only impacted the course participants; it also had a clear impact on teachers in the programme. Many of these teachers also teach in government schools. As they saw the benefits of using Pashai as the language of instruction in the project courses, they started to incorporate this as a method in the government schools as well. Sadiq and Sher Alam noted that Pashai was being used more often for offering explanations and for answering questions in the government classrooms of Dara-i Noor.

With more children taking part in the SPP and ASP and more adults taking part in Pashai literacy courses, interest in the Pashai language slowly began to grow. This could be seen by the observation that in the early 2000s community members expressed interest in receiving education only in Pashto. As of 2016, interest in Pashai language education was regularly being expressed to project members by community members. Interest in the Pashai language is also evident by the rate at which Pashai printed materials are purchased and by the amount that people are willing to pay for the books. Sher Alam recalled that when a book of Pashai proverbs was published in 2010, the public willingly paid an equivalent of US$ 5.00 per book.

Changing attitudes among Pashtuns

Native speakers of Pashai are not the only ones to have experienced a change in attitude regarding their language. Some changes have also been observed in the attitudes of ethnic Pashtuns in the areas near Dara-i Noor and Shewa. Alimi, himself a Pashtun, described the attitude of most of the Pashtuns he knew in the 1990s regarding the Pashai language to be either negative or ambivalent. Words considered offensive by many Pashai were used by Pashtuns to refer to the language. Sadiq also noted that there was a perception among the Pashai that Pashtuns regarded them as 'only being good for bodyguards and doormen' since the average level of education was much lower among Pashai than Pashtuns.

While an ambivalent or even condescending attitude towards Pashai was still present – perhaps even prevalent – among Pashtuns at the time of writing, more and more examples of positive language attitudes are showing up. Each of the project members knew of cases of Pashtuns purchasing Pashai books in order to learn Pashai words and phrases; they added that Pashtuns who are familiar with the books made available by the project have shown a greater respect for the language.

Looking ahead

There is much to be encouraged by when looking at the LD and MLE work done among the Pashai. But there are also a lot of unanswered questions left for the years beyond 2016. The question of sustainability is one of the most pressing issues facing the project. As of 2016, essentially all of the work that has been done was being funded by foreign donors (as is common with much community development work that has taken place in Afghanistan since 2001). But foreign funding to Afghanistan in general and to the organisation Serve Afghanistan in particular has been reduced drastically in recent years. That trend is likely to continue in the coming years. Increasing instability in other countries of the Middle East and Africa, in combination with a greater realisation of the prevalence of corruption throughout

many organisations in Afghanistan, has caused donors to turn elsewhere when deciding where to send financial aid. From 2013 to 2014 alone, the Serve Afghanistan budget was cut by around 20 per cent (Serve Afghanistan 2014) and similar cuts have been made each year since then. Foreign funding is not a sustainable method of supporting Pashai LD and MLE. If the government were willing and able to take responsibility for incorporating MTB MLE in the public schools, then the SPP and ASP would no longer be needed. Unfortunately, it will likely be many years before the government will be able to take on such a task, if it ever does. Increased course fees were considered, but the current course fee of US$ 0.30 per month per child was already a strain for some families who participate in the programme. Increasing fees to the level needed to cover the salaries of all teachers would leave few (if any) students financially able to take part in the programme.

The reality as of 2016 is that the future of Pashai MLE is very uncertain. However, this is not a problem that is unique to the Pashai. In countries around the world where governments are either unable or unwilling to take on the burden of implementing MLE, more creative strategies need to be developed. These may include creative strategies for government advocacy or they may be entirely other ways of finding funding and support. But it is a problem that will not have a simple or easy solution.

Making Pashai LD sustainable is another important question, although one with more possible solutions than are evident for the future of MLE. A step towards sustainability has already been taken as local staff members received training on how to produce books in their mother tongue. The software program Bloom, produced by SIL and made available at bloomlibrary.org, sped up this training process. It is designed in a very simple way for the purpose of being intuitive to use even for people with low-level computer skills. The program offers templates for a variety of types of easy-reading books.

In order to expand the Pashai literature base, the project is considering how it might be able to incorporate the resources made available by the African Storybook Project. Participants in the 11th Language & Development Conference heard how the open source stories which the project makes available can be utilised far beyond the African context. These stories have been used effectively in Nepal, a setting much more similar to Afghanistan than those the stories were originally designed for (Norton et al. 2015). There are still many technical and logistical details to work out regarding how these stories would be used by the Pashai, but they provide an important resource for expanding the Pashai literature base.

Another step towards making Pashai LD more sustainable has been taken by setting up a system for selling the Pashai books that have been printed. Several thousand books produced by the project were still sitting in storage in early 2016. When the production of books stopped in 2010, the project also largely stopped selling books. As new books once again started coming off the press, the need for a more organised and efficient system of selling them became apparent. While the new system for selling books was still in its early stages at the time of writing, project members hope that the money collected from the sale of the books can be used to

print more books in the future, and thus eliminate the need for outside funding for the printing of Pashai books.

Of course, developing literature is only one aspect of language development. In other areas, such as lexicography and the documentation of grammar, the need for significantly more academic expertise must be met. Local ownership is essential for the sustainability of any project and, at the time of writing, local staff members did not have the skills or education to take ownership of these technical areas; consequently, they were dependent on a foreign linguist. Sher Alam and Sadiq both pointed out that several staff members would like to get further training in linguistics, but there is no formal linguistics education available in Afghanistan and many barriers face Afghans who want to study abroad. Will the project continue to be dependent on foreign linguists, or is there a way that the Pashai themselves can fully take the lead in the development of their language? Although this is not the most pressing matter facing the future of Pashai LD, it is one that ought to be considered.

One further point to be aware of when evaluating the future of LD and MLE in Pashai is the nature of the security situation. Both official sources and most Afghans are in general agreement that the overall stability and security of the country has deteriorated since the fall of the Taliban in 2001 (Hodes and Sedra 2013). The rapid emergence of ISIS in the same province as the Pashai of Dara-i Noor underlies the fragility of the situation in the region (Gunaratna 2016). However, as a humanitarian, non-governmental organisation, there is little that Serve Afghanistan or the Pashai Community Development Project can do to directly stop the growth of either ISIS or the Taliban. There is always a possibility that the spread of armed opposition groups could significantly slow down or completely stop the work that is underway; however, at the time of writing, the best way the project can proceed is to continue fostering and nurturing the community support and ownership that has been growing ever since the project's inception in 1999.

Conclusion

The development of the Pashai language and multilingual education have had a clear impact on the people of Dara-i Noor and Shewa. The changing language attitudes that have been observed and reported are an especially encouraging outcome. If a language group does not have a high level of respect for their own language (or for their own culture, which is closely intertwined with language), then they have no reason to expect value or respect from outsiders, particularly from those of a majority language group. A positive language attitude provides the foundation for the empowerment of a whole ethnolinguistic group.

Serve Afghanistan's community development project among the Pashai, and the MLE and LD that have taken place as a part of that project, have certainly had the result of empowering Pashai individuals. More students are excelling in the school environment and more people are becoming literate in their mother tongue. And these changes have taken place in the midst of one of the more volatile areas of an already war-torn country at a time when the regional security situation is deteriorating. Of course, the empowerment of individuals does not automatically lead to the empowerment of whole communities, but it is also not something that should

be ignored or taken lightly. The changes that have been observed and noted in this chapter have the potential to become the first steps in a much wider and longer-term transformation. Language development and multilingual education are tools that are bringing about the empowerment of the Pashai people.

Notes

[1] Name has been changed to protect the student's privacy.

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4

Multilingualism in Africa: Marginalisation and empowerment

Birgit Brock-Utne

Introduction

In this chapter I explore the implications of linguistic diversity with a special focus on Africa. Most Africans are multilingual in African languages (Prah and Brock-Utne 2009). Under which circumstances can the multilingualism of Africans be looked at as an advantage and a source of empowerment? Under which circumstances does this multilingualism lead to marginalisation? In contexts where a specific African language is spoken by the great majority of people, why is the language of instruction still a foreign language mastered only by a small minority? To what extent is the use of English as a language of instruction – in multilingual and so-called Anglophone African countries – empowering or marginalising? Who is empowered by this use and who is marginalised? How relevant are the theories of language of instruction developed for minority populations in the US and Europe for the situation in Africa? What is the role of the African elite when it comes to promoting African languages as languages of instruction? What is the role of parents in the multilingual contexts of Africa? What language do they want their children to be learning in? What are the reasons for their choice?

Many of my examples are taken from Tanzania, a country of special interest since one African language, Kiswahili, is mastered by 95 per cent of the population and is the language of instruction for the seven years of primary school. Yet Kiswahili is still not the language of instruction in any secondary school. In the rural areas among small children Kiswahili is not a language they master well (Brock-Utne and Qorro 2015). The 2014 Education and Training policy, which promotes the use of Kiswahili as the language of instruction in secondary school and higher education, makes Tanzania an interesting case. But the strong clause for Kiswahili, now cited frequently, is followed by another clause which strengthens English as a language for learning and teaching. This makes the policy somewhat self-contradictory. It is as if the government wants to leave all doors open and does not dare to make the bold step of supporting all the way the national language, Kiswahili (which is spoken by almost the whole nation).

The fact that the 2010 education policy of the island of Zanzibar, where everyone speaks Kiswahili, has reverted back to the use of English as the language of

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instruction in mathematics, science and ICT (information and computer technology) from the fifth grade in primary school illustrates some of the confusion surrounding the language of instruction problem among politicians, parents and the general public in so-called Anglophone Africa.

In 2014 Malawi adopted a new language policy which amounts to a reversal of the previous policy under which Chichewa (the national lingua franca) used to be the medium of instruction from Standard (Grade) 1 up to 4. Previously, from Standard 5 onwards, a switch to English as the medium of instruction used to be the case. From the school year 2014-2015 English is to be the language of instruction from the first grade. According to the 1998 population census in Malawi[1], only 0.18 per cent of Malawians declared English as their language of household communication. In sharp contrast, over 70 per cent of the people identified Chichewa as their language of household communication (Republic of Malawi 1998). The Education Act of 2012, which has replaced the 1962 Act, was cited as the source of the new policy. Section 78 (1) of the new Act provides that 'the medium of instruction in schools and colleges shall be English' (Republic of Malawi 2012).

The new language policy of Rwanda is likely to have disastrous effects on the learning of school subjects for thousands of children. Since independence from Belgium, Rwanda had retained French as the official language and so was termed a 'francophone' country, although the whole population, Hutus and Tutsis alike, speak Kinyarwanda and many of them also speak Kiswahili. In Parliament, in administration at the national level and in the Supreme Court, Kinyarwanda is the language predominantly used. Before the genocide Kinyarwanda was used as the language of instruction in the first three grades, then a switch to French occurred. Michele Schweisfurth (2006) mentions that the Government of Rwanda after the genocide insisted on a trilingual education policy (Kinyarwanda, French and English) to secure greater equity between groups who favoured one or the other language. A trilingual policy might have been good for Rwanda, provided that Kinyarwanda – a language that is spoken by 99.4 per cent of the population, according to the Government – had been the language of instruction with French and English learnt as foreign languages (as subjects). In 2008, the international 'development' partners and the new elite in Rwanda decided to do away with French and to introduce English from the first grade of schooling. This did not work and in 2011 Kinyarwanda was reintroduced as the language of instruction, but only for the three first grades and then a switch to English as the language of instruction occurs. In many schools, especially in the capital Kigali, English is the language of instruction from the very first grade of primary school. This policy was implemented in violation of recommendations by UNESCO and the African Union.

Towards the end of this chapter, two strategies are discussed, one at the micro or classroom level and the other at the macro or state level. The first has to do with coping strategies used by teachers in multilingual classrooms, like code-switching and translanguaging. The latter has to do with strategies used by governments, like Prestige Planning.

Africa as a continent

In a lecture on the detrimental effects of the structural adjustment policies on the economic development of Africa, Charles Abugre (2010), the leader of the millennium development campaign for Africa, reminded the audience that within the borders of Africa one could place all of China, all of India, all of the US and most of Europe. How can anyone have the audacity to prescribe a single policy for this enormous continent?

But there *are* some similarities between the countries in sub-Saharan Africa which have to do with their colonial past, the work of missionaries, the policy of colonial governments and now the donors, or so-called 'development partners', using rescheduling of debt payments as a reason for imposing conditionalities leading to greater inequality within African countries (Brock-Utne 2000, 2015a, 2016). In a chapter on Africanising institutional culture, Thaddeus Metz (2015) discusses the concept 'western' and also what it would mean to Africanise institutional culture. He describes five central dimensions by which a university could Africanise its institutional culture: through the curriculum offered, the research undertaken, the language used, the aesthetics taught and the way governance is carried out.

Except for South Africa's use of Afrikaans in some universities there is not a single country in sub-Saharan Africa that uses an African language as the language of instruction at secondary or tertiary level. Even languages with millions of speakers like Kiswahili (131 million speakers) and Hausa (53 million speakers) are not used as languages of instruction at higher levels of education[2].

The demographics of language and linguistic diversity

The identification of language communities in Africa has been approached in a way which favours the recognition of practically all dialects and phonological variations as separate languages. Many of the missionaries who came to Africa and wrote down African languages in order to bring the Bible to the people in their language 'never looked at African societies outside the framework of colonial boundaries or the immediate areas of missionary settlement and evangelical zeal' (Prah 2005, 39). The fragmentation approach adopted by missionaries from Europe and the US has led to written languages which are in effect dialects much closer to each other than many Norwegian dialects.

In the book *The Role of Missionaries in the Development of African Languages* (Prah 2009a), African scholars from all over the continent note that, much as the work of missionary groups laid the foundations for the literary rendering of African languages, the wider object of African education was not their principal aim. The central purpose of missionary endeavours was to use African languages to win African souls for Christianity. The authors show that missionary approaches to the writing of African languages have – because of rivalries between missionaries from different countries in Europe and the US, through the unsystematic selection of languages and the use of western linguists who were not native speakers – created classificatory confusion, multiplication of ethnicities and effectively an African Tower of Babel. In the northwest of Namibia, for example, where most of the indigenous population

live, several OshiWambo dialects are spoken. Two of these dialects, OshiNdonga and OshiKwanyama, have been written down as if they were separate languages. While OshiNdonga, the earlier of the two dialects to be written down, was put into writing by Finnish missionaries, OshiKwanyama was put into writing by German missionaries. However, there are other OshiWambo dialects that differ from each other far more than the OshiKwanyama and OshiNdonga so-called 'languages' (Brock-Utne 1995, 1997; Brock-Utne and Holmarsdottir 2001; Laukkanen 2009).

Since the great majority of written African languages today were first codified and put into print by European or American Christian missionaries, the first written texts in most sub-Saharan African languages have typically been Christian in nature (Moore 2004) . For example, the first published book in Yoruba was John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* (1860), followed by the Yoruba Bible (1900). In Xhosa, *Pilgrim's Progress* appeared in 1867 and was followed by the Bible in 1887. And in Zulu the first written publication was the New Testament in 1865, followed by the entire Bible in 1883. No book in Zulu was written by a Zulu until 1922 (Moore 2004). Makalela (2005) notes that missionaries from different European countries such as Germany, England and Holland were deployed in various parts of South Africa to evangelise the natives. These missionaries included Isaac Hughes (1789-1870), who developed the seTswana orthography, and Andrew Spaarman (1747-1820), who developed the isiXhosa orthography.

Not fully understanding the varieties spoken, they encoded closely related dialects as distinct languages. For example, the Sotho dialects were encoded separately as Southern Sotho, Northern Sotho and Western Sotho (later renamed seSotho, sePedi and seTswana) (Makalela 2005). We often find that exactly the same dialect is written differently on paper; for example, Soto in South Africa and Sotho in Lesotho are dialectically the same but have different lexical spellings because they were put into writing by different missionary groups. In West Africa, there are also different dialectical variants of Akan (also called Twi) which vary only marginally.

The practice of language fragmentation is still popular with SIL International (formerly the Summer Institute of Linguistics), a leading group in the work of rendering African languages into script and translating the Bible into African languages. Sozinho Francisco Matsinhe, a sociolinguist from Mozambique, argues against SIL when, in their *Ethnologue*, they state that there are 39 languages in Mozambique. This number, he claims, has been reached by counting dialects as languages: 'In other words, for SIL, the distinction between language and dialect is irrelevant' (Matsinhe 2005, 139).

The demographics of language and linguistic diversity in Africa are not really different from what obtains in other parts of the world. As Ngugi wa Thiong'o (2004, 35) notes:

> *The existence of many languages is not a particularly African problem. I am not even sure if it is a problem at all. Still, the assumption persists that many languages are incompatible with unity and a continental African identity. It was this that made Cheikh Anta Diop, in 1948, respond to 'the objection, usually raised, that Africans can never have linguistic unity,' with the dismissive rejoinder, 'Africa does not need such linguistic unity any more than Europe does.'*

The Centre for the Advanced Study of African Society (CASAS) is a Cape Town-based non-governmental organisation and research institute that promotes African languages all over the continent (apart from the Arab-speaking regions). CASAS' research shows, according to Kwesi Kwaa Prah, its Director, that 90 per cent of the total population of sub-Saharan Africa can be grouped into 23 language clusters; in fact 12-15 such languages would suffice for 75 per cent to 85 per cent of the population (Prah 2005, 2009b). CASAS' scope and political profile is Pan-African and its scientific focus is linguistics. It was established in 1997 to lay the foundation for the development of African languages based on unified orthographies for cognate[3] and proximate languages, which had to that date been written differently (Prah 2005; Brock-Utne and Mercer 2012, 2014).

Multilingualism in Africa

Most Africans speak several African languages, among them usually a regional one that could well be used as a language of instruction in higher education. A Tanzanian school inspector tells how he grew up with three different languages (Kimizi 2009). He would speak one of them with his father's clan, another and very different one with his mother's clan – they all lived in the same compound – and Kiswahili with his friends. He could not say which one was his mother-tongue or L1 (first language). Adama Ouane from Mali, the former Director of the UNESCO Institute of Lifelong Learning, also tells that he grew up with three different African languages simultaneously and, like Kimizi, cannot tell which one is his 'mother-tongue' or first language (Ouane 2009). Africans are now increasingly moving within and between countries and are as a result becoming more and more multilingual in African languages. Prah (2009b) found that in Nima, Ghana, 69 per cent of those interviewed spoke at least four languages while 41 per cent spoke five languages or more.

This multilingualism is in many instances a great advantage for Africans. They are able to negotiate prices in one language with the man who sells fish, in another language with the woman who sells mangoes, in a third language with the man who mends the shoes.

The African economies are characterised by a small formal economic sector and a large informal sector. According to Walther (2007, 30) the informal sector of the African economy accounts for 75 per cent of existing jobs, 80 per cent of new jobs and 50 per cent of national wealth. The languages of the informal economy are the African languages and there is a multitude of them. The informal sector is highly innovative and creative, accommodates those with little schooling, trains the majority of the youth with very little support from national governments, and has a huge demand for technical and vocational training. Djité (2008) points out that most communication in this sector takes place in African languages. The training should naturally also take place in these languages. Walther (2007, 90) points to the fact that there is almost a total lack of knowledge about the types and levels of skills developed in the informal economy 'or the specific occupations and trades that structure its activities.' He points to a need to map these skills and professions. Ouane and Glanz add 'For the development of training programmes relevant to multilingual contexts, such mappings need to shed light on the linguistic and communication competencies already in existence' (Ouane and Glanz 2010, 17).

Africans can speak one language with their own clan, a different language with the clan of their spouse. The speaking of the different languages helps to establish rapport, to develop friendships and to gain a deeper understanding of the people whose language you use. With each language you learn, you learn more of the culture of the people speaking that language. Your own perspective is widened. If you do not speak the language which people around you speak, you are easily marginalised.

If you come to Norway and intend to live there and do not learn Norwegian, you will feel marginalised. But if the other languages you speak are African or Asian languages you will be more marginalised than if you are a fluent English speaker. You will still not get into the Norwegian culture, get hold of the gossip, jokes, fun stories, but you will be able to communicate with Norwegians. Those who have English as their first language have an advantage over us who are born into languages with fewer speakers. They can afford to be monolingual. We cannot. Robert Phillipson (2003, 164) – in his book *English-Only Europe?* – mentions that announcements advertising employment in the European Union (EU), or in a body partly funded by the EU, frequently state a preference, or even a requirement, that the applicant should be a native speaker of English. A complaint to the EU Ombudsman against this practice was filed in May 2002. The complaint referred to 400 advertisements of this nature and cases of discrimination of continental Europeans who had studied in Britain but were not native speakers of the English language.

Multilingualism in itself does not lead to marginalisation but a state policy dictating that a foreign language, which does not belong to the repertoire of the speaker of a multitude of African languages, is the language of instruction in school works to the disadvantage of the African learner.

Theories on language of instruction: Need for a paradigm shift

In a book edited by Kwesi Kwaa Prah and myself (Prah and Brock-Utne 2009) the authors discuss the inadequacy of many western language learning theories when applied to the African continent and the necessity of working for a paradigm shift in the thinking on bilingual/multilingual education in Africa. Most theories on bilingualism originate in the US, Canada, Europe and other industrialised countries and have been formed on the basis of experiences in those parts of the world. They do not fit the situation in Africa. Concepts like bilingual teaching, second language learning, additive and subtractive bilingualism, immersion and submersion programmes, early and late exit, maintenance and transition programmes are all taken from the west, partly applied to affluent situations in Canada, partly applied to immigrant and minority children from third world countries being integrated into school life in their new home country. Neither of these situations resembles the situations in Africa. Most Africans are at least bilingual in African languages. Yet they are not called bilingual unless one of the two languages is a foreign language.

Normally, when the concept 'bilingual' teaching or 'second language learning' is used, it means using the African child's mother tongue or familiar African language as a stepping stone to the use – also as the language of instruction – of an ex-colonial language. The fact that children learn best when they understand what the teacher

is saying is overlooked. So is the fact that the ex-colonial languages are foreign languages to most Africans.

What is the role of the African elite in the multilingual contexts of Africa?

The Kenyan author Ngugi wa Thiong'o (2004, 30) had this to say about the African intellectuals:

> *The linguistic incorporation of the African educated elite into the European bourgeois memory is an active contributor to Africa's backwardness. In that sense every educated African who remains doggedly locked within the linguistic walls of European languages, irrespective of his avowed social vision (of the right or left), is part of the problem.*

In a conference on Languages and Education in Africa (the LEA conference) held at the University of Oslo in June 2006 – where all five keynote speakers were Africans and many of the best known African sociolinguists were present and many of them presented papers (Brock-Utne and Skattum 2009) – a discussion among the Africans took place in one of the plenary sessions. The question was why the languages of instruction in all African countries were still the ex-colonial languages, normally from the fourth grade in primary school and sometimes even from the first grade. The participants talked about donor policies, the publishing industry in the donor countries, politicians and the general public. But at one point an African participant took the floor and said:

> *We cannot solely put the blame on the donors. The African elite must also take part of the blame. And let us face it, we who are here belong to the elite. We are part of the problem. We send our own children to private English medium schools. Some of us even speak English to them at home.*

Another African participant then asked for the floor and said: 'Yes, that is correct. We intellectuals are part of the problem. But we are also part of the solution.' I believe this is true. The change has to come from the intellectuals but it will be a battle among them. A battle between those who want to retain their own privileged position and those who feel a solidarity with the masses of people and know that a country will not develop on the basis of five per cent of the population. These academics will help parents see that their wish for their children to master English is not best achieved by having English as the language of instruction.

In the struggle for Indian independence Mahatma Gandhi warned that English represented cultural alienation. Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India (educated at Cambridge University and imprisoned by the British before independence) expressed in a letter (cited in Gopal 1980, 25):

> *... real progress in India can only be made through our own languages and not through a foreign language. I am anxious to prevent a new caste system being perpetuated in India – an English knowing caste separated from the mass of our public.*

Phillipson (2003, 6) comments:

> *In fact, an English-using caste has emerged, because the management of multilingualism in India has largely been left to market forces. These strengthen the position of users of English, here as elsewhere. Roughly 30 million Indians are fluent users of English, but they account for under five per cent of the population.*

Phillipson mentions that there are elites in Africa and India who speak exclusively in English to their children. Ali Mazrui called them the Afro-Saxons. It is not uncommon for Indian grandparents who do not speak English to have no language in common with their grandchildren. Phillipson also laments, 'The young upwardly mobile, internationally oriented generation of Indians and Africans have more in common with "global" culture than with the mass of inhabitants of India and Africa' (2003, 75). When it comes to Africa the language of the elite is not always English, though English is more and more becoming their second language. Their first language is the language of the colonial power of their country, French in the so-called francophone countries and Portuguese in the so-called lusophone countries. I have met several intellectuals from Mozambique who speak only Portuguese and English and are not able to talk with their grandparents.

What is the role of parents in the multilingual contexts of Africa?

In connection with a World Bank loan to the education sector in Zanzibar and a consultancy report (MEVT and University of Bristol 2005) showing that competence in English was very low among primary school pupils – even among those who had an extra year for preparing to use English as the language of instruction in secondary school – Zanzibar decided to introduce a new curriculum (MEVT 2006). Changes were introduced from the first grade, but the major change of concern to us here is the decision to make English the language of instruction from grade five in mathematics and science subjects in all government primary schools (MEVT 2006; Babaci-Wilhite 2013, 2015). The new curriculum was implemented in the first grade from 2010 which meant that the first cohort reached grade five in 2014. This was the year in which children now had to study the difficult subjects of mathematics, science and ICT in English.

On Tuesday 24 November 2009 I had a meeting with the Deputy Secretary in the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, Abdulla Mzee Abdulla, in his office in Stone Town, Zanzibar (Brock-Utne 2013). He has a Ph.D. from the University of Bristol. He said that both he and Professor Pauline Rea-Dickens, who was the lead author of the consultancy report, knew that children learn best in a language which is familiar to them. But he was not in the Ministry as an academic. He was there as a politician. His job as a politician was to listen to what his constituency wants and the parents want their children to be taught through the medium of English. The Deputy Secretary is correct. Parents *want* their children in the so-called Anglophone African countries to be taught in English even from the first grade. But why is this their wish? The Tanzanian researcher Martha Qorro (2005) tried to find this out. She found that in spite of the fact that 80 per cent of parents (from a sample of 212 from four different regions of Tanzania) admitted that their children understood very little when

the teaching was in English still 66.5 per cent of them wanted 'very much' that the teaching should be in English and a further 30 per cent wanted it 'to some extent'. When they were asked why they wanted this most of their answers had to do with the wish that their children should master English well because 'English is an international language,' 'English enables us to communicate with many more countries,' 'If Kiswahili is used the children will fail to get employed and to communicate with foreign companies' and 'English medium is better in secondary schools because a lot of universities in the world use English as language of instruction.' The last statement is not true. Most countries in Europe use their own language as medium of instruction both in secondary school and at university. The other arguments are reasons for learning English well but not for having English as the language of instruction. We are here up against a misconception which is very common among lay people, namely that the best way to learn a foreign language is to have the language as a language of instruction. This is not true, especially not in a situation where you hardly ever hear the language outside formal schooling.

A review undertaken by a research team jointly put together by the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, Hamburg, and the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), Tunisia, found that the interconnectedness between language, communication and effective teaching and learning is generally misunderstood outside expert circles (Alidou et al, 2006). At the moment, those who stand the most to lose from having a foreign language used as the language of instruction consider it as an undeniable 'truth' that having English as the language of instruction is the best way to learn English. This is a false belief, as much research has shown. It is, however, a belief that donors, the former colonial powers, the publishing industry in the west and the African elite have an interest in promoting. These power groups are, however, dependent for their positions and political powers upon the obedience, submission and cooperation of their subjects. They have an interest in promoting and maintaining the misconception that having a language that teachers and students can barely communicate in will be of benefit for them. In reality this policy leads to Africans learning less than they could have, had they been taught in a language they know well.

Foucault (1988) claims that a belief system gains momentum (and hence power) as more people come to accept the particular views associated with that belief system as 'common knowledge'. Some ideas, being considered undeniable 'truths', come to define a particular way of seeing the world. It is possible to alter misconceptions. When the masses of Africa understand how this misconception holds them down and works to the advantage of the powerful, the allegedly powerless may unite to do away with the misconception. At one point in time, it was common knowledge that neither women[4] (Brock-Utne and Haukaa 1980) nor blacks[5] (Koloti 2000; Seepe 1997) could learn mathematics. Now the common knowledge is that women and blacks have the same ability for learning mathematics as men and whites have. It may become common knowledge in Africa, too, that children learn better when they understand what the teacher is saying. The academics who know this may help the general public to do away with the misconceptions they nurture.

How do teachers cope in the multilingual classes in Africa?

The phenomenon of code-switching – switching between the official language of instruction and a language which children are familiar with and master well – is very common in Africa. The teachers normally know what works in their classrooms. I am reminded of an incident in one of the classrooms in Khaylitsha (a black township near the airport in Cape Town) where we conducted an experiment as part of the LOITASA[6] project.

An experimental class was asked to teach in isiXhosa in some subjects in fourth, fifth and sixth grades and we provided them with material in that language. Other classes were control classes and were supposed to carry on in English, which was according to the official policy of the school. One day when I walked into one the control classes, I was surprised. The teacher taught mostly in isiXhosa. I asked her afterwards 'Aren't you teaching a regular class and required to teach in English?' 'Yes,' she answered, 'that is what I am supposed to do, but if I do that, the children do not understand anything. It would be like teaching dead stones.' I have heard the same from teachers in secondary schools in Tanzania who code-switch between Kiswahili and English all the time.

In a chapter on translanguaging in the multilingual classroom Ofelia Garcia and Sarah Hesson note that, traditionally, language-in-education policies in schools have insisted on the use of the standardised variety of the language or languages of instruction. As a result, many language-minoritised students, speakers of different varieties of the language(s) used in schools, have high rates of academic failure. Educators are simply not doing enough to leverage the complex and dynamic languaging that students bring into the classrooms (Garcia and Hesson 2015, 221).

The translanguaging framework has been applied mostly to study of the language practices and the teaching and learning of bilingual and multilingual students in the US (Garcia 2009; Garcia and Wei 2014). Garcia and Hesson give examples of innovative teachers who use a translanguaging framework in their classroom, that is, at the micro-level. Though Garcia and Hesson applaud the teachers who create multilingual spaces in their classrooms and are concerned about the right of every student to work in a familiar language, they claim that translanguaging cannot happen only from the bottom up, that is from a micro-perspective. Organised language management policies must also take up translanguaging from the top down (Garcia and Hesson 2015, 233).

The South African sociolinguist, Leketi Makalela, has found that the translanguaging framework can be adopted wonderfully to the multilingual situation of his country (Makalela 2014a). He claims that using a translanguaging framework, which recognises alternation of languages as a norm in contemporary societies, would be a reorientation of multilingual and bilingual education towards the African value system of Ubuntu. It would be:

> *... a catalyst for restoring social justice for the people whose languages were historically denigrated to the lowest social status. It offers insights on rethinking the South African multilingual space to accommodate fluid discursive resources*

> *where interdependence is highly valued over independence of value systems.* (Makalela 2014b, 2)

Makalela (2015a) sees translanguaging – especially in the fluid context of South Africa, where the black majority population speaks many African languages – as closely connected to the Ubuntu ideology and argues that African multilingualism should be interpreted from the value system of Ubuntu. He reports on a study carried out in a rural area of Polokwane, in the north of South Africa, where all the linguistic resources of the learners were used in teaching them how to read and write (Makalela 2015b). Through this approach the learners improved their results significantly both in their home languages and English. He concludes:

> *The success of this approach in this context lends support to an Ubuntu languaging model which propagates multilingual literacy strategies that validate interdependence and fluid, versatile communicative resources. These resonate with the ancient value system of Ubuntu. In Ubuntu languaging, there is an embodiment of African multilingualism where one language is incomplete without the other.* (Makalela 2015b, 190)

Elsewhere, Makalela has written on the language policy of South Africa. He claims that the policy is not progressive, since the nine African languages are the same languages that the apartheid government used to divide the blacks into Bantustans or homelands. It would have been more progressive, he claims, if the written forms of most of the black languages had been merged into a Sotho variety and a Nguni variety (Makalela 2005). This is the same as the argument voiced by Neville Alexander (1989). Most of the Nguni languages (isiXhosa, isiZulu, siSwati and Ndebele) are just dialects of each other, they both claim. So also are the Sotho so-called languages (Northern Sotho, Setswana and Southern Sotho). In a chapter on the standardisation of South African dialects into languages P.A.Mulaudzi notes that the work that had been going on in South Africa since the early 1930s to harmonise the orthography of Nguni and Sotho languages into common scripts was stopped by the apartheid government. In 1961 the Prime Minister, H.F.Verwoerd, halted the harmonisation process:

> *The committees which were formed before 1961 for Sotho and Nguni languages were dissolved. From this date onwards the emphasis was on promoting language as a central marker of ethnic identity.* (Mulaudzi 2002, 268)

Through legislation the apartheid government of South Africa separated different groups of people demographically into separate homelands on the basis of their vernaculars. The vernaculars became the defining feature of state nationalism. Language as a central marker of ethnic identity in South Africa was so vigorously promoted that language was used as the primary criterion for assignment to an ethnic group and to a certain homeland. It is quite clear why the apartheid government did not want the harmonisation of varieties of Nguni and Sotho (actually just dialects of each other) to be continued: they did not want the black majority population of the country to unite.

In a piece of research which Makalela (2015c) conducted he found that learners who had been taught through a translanguaging model had a better grasp of the subject matter and did better in all subjects, including English, than those learners who had been taught in English only. The learners received the assessment questions in several languages and were allowed to answer in the language of their choice.

In Soweto people speak both a number of Nguni languages and a number of Sotho languages; consequently a language is developing which has vocabulary from both Sotho and Nguni languages. The national anthem of South Africa has verses in both the Sotho and Nguni languages. The translanguaging paradigm therefore seems well suited for communication in classrooms among the majority population in South Africa, especially where the teacher also masters several language varieties. But it is difficult to see how translanguaging practice can serve the black population before the languages are harmonised into a common written form, maybe one Sotho and one Nguni variety. The harmonisation work done by CASAS will be of great help in this endeavour. However, research examining the work of CASAS, its successes and challenges shows that the process of getting the harmonised languages adopted by political bodies is slower, more difficult and more unpredictable than the linguistic work itself (Brock-Utne and Mercer 2014; Brock-Utne 2015b).

Prestige planning

Kamwangamalu (2015) suggests that language-education planning needs a paradigm shift. Rather than critiquing inherited colonial policies, he proposes what he calls *Prestige Planning* for African languages. This proposal entails associating African languages with an economic value on the labour market and requiring academic skills in these languages for access to employment. The focus is on the reception (and not on the production) of language planning. Kamwangamalu (2015) argues that until African languages are associated with a market value, English will continue to dominate the educational systems of African Commonwealth countries, much as it did in the colonial era. The call for prestige planning for African Languages is made against the background of theoretical developments in language economics (Grin 1996; Vallancourt and Grin 2000). Kamwangamalu proposes prestige planning for African languages if these languages are to become, like English, an instrument of upward social mobility; he argues that prestige planning:

> *... entails associating African languages with an economic value on the labour market and requiring academic skills in these languages as one criteria for access to employment.* (Kamwangamalu 2015, 14)

While the translanguaging approach being used especially among the black learners in South Africa or the code-switching approach used in many other African countries are strategies used on the micro-level, prestige planning is a macro-strategy which requires political willingness to change the power relations in a country. It is a strategy that would lead to the development of the majority population of Africa and thereby the African continent.

The elite would, however, not be able to uphold the privilege they have today when a foreign language, not well mastered by the majority population of Africa and the

teachers of this majority, is the language of instruction. The children of the elite survive in this system since their parents can afford expensive private schools with good teachers, private tutoring after school hours, textbooks, DVDs and so on. The majority population without these resources become slow learners and drop-outs.

The prestige planning which Kamwangamalu calls for could in the case of South Africa, for instance, mean that for a South African to get a job in any public establishment the candidate would have to show proficiency in both a language spoken by the white and coloured population (English or Afrikaans) *and* a language spoken by the black majority population of South Africa (a Sotho or a Nguni language).

Though the prestige planning will be of great benefit for the majority population of Africa and for the survival and development of the African languages, it should also be mentioned that there is nothing wrong in learning English or another ex-colonial language well and becoming highly proficient in those languages. The problem arises when a foreign language, like English, becomes the medium of instruction. As mentioned, many Africans, including both parents and politicians, are not aware of the great difference between learning a foreign language as a subject and having that language as a language of instruction. In the latter case the language becomes a barrier to learning subject matter, to developing one's own language and also to learning the foreign language well (Brock-Utne 2012, 2014, 2015b). The student subjected to this type of teaching loses on three fronts.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have discussed the fact that most Africans are multilingual in African languages. It is a great advantage to be able to speak to different groups of people in their language. It means establishing better rapport, developing better relationships and getting better prices when bargaining. It is also of great advantage for workers within the informal sector of the African economy (which accounts for 75 per cent of existing jobs and 80 per cent of new jobs). The languages of the informal economy are the African languages and there is a multitude of them. It would be a great advantage if the languages of vocational training could be African languages. Vocational training is highly needed within the informal economy and may lift this sector into a more formal economy.

Multilingualism in itself does not lead to marginalisation. A state policy dictating that a foreign language, which does not belong to the repertoire of the speakers of a multitude of African languages, is the language of instruction in school clearly works to the disadvantage of most African learners. While the children of the elite can cope in this system, the masses of African children cannot. It is high time that African governments instituted policies which help children learn. They cannot learn when they do not understand what the teacher is saying and cannot do well in examinations when they do not understand the language of the exam questions.

Notes

[1] This was the last census to include a question about which language was spoken in the family.

[2] www.nairaland.com/901689/top-most-spoken-languages-all

[3] Structurally cognate languages have a similar grammatical structure, as they share a common ancestry.

[4] Even at the time I went to elementary school in Norway, the girls had fewer weekly lessons in mathematics than the boys had. There was a belief that girls could not learn mathematics and would not have any need for it. Instead we had home economics, a subject the boys did not have. In our mathematics textbooks there were some tasks marked with an asterisk (*); following each asterisk there was a note which read 'The girls do not need to do this task.' The same was true in the final exam (Brock-Utne and Haukaa 1980).

[5] My black South African students have had considerable trouble with the statistics part of our methods course. They told me that during the apartheid period the black South African population hardly had any instruction in mathematics because the leading powers of the day did not think that the blacks had the brains to learn this subject (Koloti 2000; Seepe 1997).

[6] LOITASA (Language of Instruction in Tanzania and South Africa) was a research project which ran for ten years (2002-2012) with Norwegian funding. The three partners were the University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania, the University of Oslo in Norway and the University of Western Cape in South Africa. The project produced ten books, four published in Tanzania, four in South Africa, one in the Netherlands and one in the UK. Twelve students took their PhDs connected to the project and more than 30 students wrote their master theses conducting field-work connected to the project.

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5

Vernacular languages in an English-dominant education system: Mauritian Creole, Bhojpuri and the politics of ethnicity in multilingual Mauritius

Tejshree Auckle

Introduction

UNESCO's 2009 world report on cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue makes a strong case for the implementation of mother-tongue-based multilingual education (MTB MLE) programmes which allow for the co-existence of both local vernacular languages and other socially prestigious tongues such as English (UNESCO 2009). The success of these MTB MLE programmes hinges, as it suggests, quite significantly, upon deliberate governmental intervention at the levels of language policy and planning. For instance, though the report bemoans the efforts of most multilingual nations which have set up their own MTB MLE programmes as being, at best, half-hearted, it also celebrates the tentative steps taken by countries such as Cambodia and Zambia which have formally introduced a few minority languages as media of instruction at lower primary level (UNESCO 2009).

Such forms of overt language planning are believed to be instrumental to the maintenance or even, possibly, the revitalisation of minority and/or endangered languages (Schiffman 1995). However, as Shohamy (2006) highlights, many communities rely on covert language policies which make no explicit reference to language in any legal or administrative document. Instead, they draw quasi-exclusively from inferences derived from other forms of constitutional provisos. This dichotomy between covert and overt language policy and planning will be at the heart of this chapter as it seeks to explore the challenges faced by post-colonial Mauritius in implementing its own MTB MLE programme through the introduction of the vernacular languages of Mauritian Creole (MC) and Mauritian Bhojpuri (MB) as optional subjects at primary level. Indeed, despite its optimistic report to UNESCO's International Bureau of Education in 2011 (UNESCO 2011) regarding the concurrent teaching of MC, MB and English, given the absence of an overt language policy governing the Mauritian educational system, decisions taken by the Ministry of Education and its stakeholders operate in what is essentially a legal and constitutional vacuum.

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Indeed, following its independence from the United Kingdom in 1968, postcolonial Mauritius has maintained its commitment to an English-medium education system, paying scant consideration to the vernacular languages of MC and MB. Consequently, the introduction of MC and MB at primary level in 2011 was initially greeted with cautious optimism. However, as the country's latest contribution to UNESCO's *World Data on Education* (UNESCO 2011) reveals, official provision for the inclusion of these two subjects in the weekly timetable of primary school students is yet to be made. While the highest Weekly Time Allocated (WTA) of 500 hours is dedicated to the teaching of English, at the moment, despite the Government's purported aim to promote multilingualism in both the vernacular languages and English (MECHR 2009), in practice, this does not seem to be the case. In keeping with the above, this chapter provides an insight into the key factors which contribute to the minoritisation of MC and MB within an education system which seeks to be supportive of the tenets of MTB MLE. Its aims, therefore, are three-fold:

- Firstly, it will examine the way(s) in which covert language policy and planning construct English as a valuable social, cultural and linguistic resource.
- Secondly, it will elaborate upon existing ethnic politics which serve to further undermine the position of vernacular languages vis-à-vis English.
- Thirdly, it will examine the ways in which such ethno-political issues impact negatively upon attempts made by the local Ministry of Education to put forward an overall language policy for Mauritius.

Using the reports penned by officials from the Mauritian Ministry of Education as its empirical base, the following sections will attempt to provide as comprehensive a picture as possible of the covert language policies that currently exist in Mauritius and will subsequently correlate the observations drawn from these with the prevalent ethnic dynamics on the island of Mauritius. Finally, this chapter will view this correlation between ethnicity and covert language policy and planning as contributing to the emergence of English as a key player on the Mauritian linguistic stage.

Covert language policy and planning in Mauritius: An historical perspective

Known for its temperate tropical climate and picturesque beaches, Mauritius often claims the international limelight as an idyllic and highly sought-after tourist destination. Along with its dependencies of Rodrigues and Agaléga, the island is also reputed for its relative political stability as well as for the purportedly harmonious co-existence of a multi-ethnic and multilingual populace (Selvon 2012). In actual fact, behind the picture-perfect postcard image of Mauritius as an oasis of peace and tranquillity lies a far more complex – and, arguably, fractured – reality.

Indeed, despite being marketed to tourists as a multilingual haven, it is only the Mauritius metropole which, due to its three successive waves of colonisation, offers a true picture of cultural and linguistic *métissage* (Eriksen 1994). In contrast, due to vastly different patterns of human settlement, the people of Rodrigues and Agaléga can trace their origins to the former slaves who were transferred to these islands by the colonial powers in control of Mauritius (Selvon 2012). In truth, the Mauritian

‘mongrel’ culture (Eriksen 1999, 14) owes its social, cultural and linguistic hybridity to historical serendipity rather than to meticulous planning. Discovered by Arab and Portuguese sailors in the early 16th century, the first human settlement of Mauritius was carried out by the Dutch who, in deference to the Dutch Prince Maurits van Nassau, bestowed the name *Mauritius* upon the island (Correia 2003).

Following the departure of the Dutch, in the 18th century, the island was taken over by the French who, during their century-long rule over the island, introduced French as the language of the judiciary and colonial administration (Miles 2000). In addition, in contrast to their Dutch predecessors, who had opted against creating a long-term European settlement on the island, the French transformed Mauritius into a thriving sugar-producing plantation economy (Kalla 1984). The metamorphosis of Mauritius into an administrative and an economic success is attributed both to iconic Governors such as Mahé de Labourdonnais and to the successive convoys of slaves that were brought from:

> *Mozambique and elsewhere in East Africa (40-45 per cent) and from Madagascar (30-35 per cent). … Small numbers of slaves were transported to the island from Seychelles, Cape Verde, Rio de Janeiro, and West Africa. … Benin has also been suggested as a source of Mauritian slaves.* (Miles 1999, 213)

One of the direct consequences of such a rich diversity in slave origin was the genesis of a French-based MC which is currently spoken by over 90 per cent of the Mauritian population (Statistics Mauritius 2011a).

The year 1810 marked a turning point in the linguistic history of Mauritius. Vanquished by the British, the French had to abandon all political claims to the island. However, they refused to relinquish their cultural and linguistic sovereignty over the country. Indeed, though unusual in the history of colonial conquest, the terms of the 1810 Act of Capitulation which marked the transfer of political sovereignty from French to British colonial powers, guaranteed the supremacy of French. Commenting upon the linguistic conundrum that was the British colonial era in Mauritius, Miles (2000, 217) elaborates:

> *The 1814 Treaty of Paris reinforced this understanding. Implicitly, the French language was preserved. Mauritius thus continued to be a French and French Creole speaking society under the relatively unintrusive umbrella of British sovereignty. The one significant exception to Anglo-Saxon aloofness was the judiciary. In 1845 it was decreed that English would become the language of the higher courts.*

One immediate consequence of a British-style judiciary was the abolition of the slave trade and eventually of the institution of slavery itself. This decision proved to be quite unpopular amongst the Mauritian Plantocracy who were dependent upon slave labour in their day-to-day operations (Allen 1999). In an attempt to assuage the worries of the former slave owners, the British colonial powers set up an apprenticeship system that would encourage the former slaves to continue working for their erstwhile masters. They would, instead, be known as ‘apprentice labourers’ and would be paid a nominal fee in exchange for their services. The majority of the

freed slaves opted out of the apprenticeship system, resulting in a shortage of labour which was addressed through the large-scale import of Indian indentured labourers from India (Allen 1999).

Consequently, Mauritian society underwent a dramatic demographic and, above all, linguistic change. With the arrival of Indian indentured labourers, Mauritius made the transition from a trilingual (French, MC and English) speech community to one which was resolutely multilingual. Bhojpuri, Marathi, Gujarati, Tamil and Telugu were now added to the Mauritian linguistic mosaic, with Hindi and Urdu utilised in liturgical contexts as well (Miles 2000). Over the years, constant contact between the Bhojpuri brought to Mauritius by the indentured labourers, MC and the other languages, has resulted in the localisation of the language to the Mauritian context (Baker and Ramnah 1988). Indeed, while its 'syntax remains typically Indo-Aryan, ... its lexicon has been changed – expanded might be a more appropriate word – by the adoption of MC terms on a very substantial scale' (Baker and Ramnah 1988, 45).

The subsequent arrival of Chinese traders from mainland China resulted in the insertion of Chinese (particularly, Hakka Chinese) into the Mauritian multilingual matrix. After 156 years of British rule, on 22 August 1966, when the Colonial Legislative Assembly unanimously approved a motion requesting the independence of Mauritius and its island dependencies of Rodrigues and Agaléga from the United Kingdom, there was already a well-established 'four-part harmony' of Mauritian languages with MC as:

> *the uncontested lingua franca; French as the inherited language of social and cultural prestige; English as the language of education, law, public administration and to a [small] degree commerce; and the panoply of Indian and Asian languages.* (Miles 2000, 217)

A similar situation is visible in contemporary Mauritius where MC and MB remain the languages most commonly spoken by the population at home. These are followed by French which tends to be spoken mainly by the descendants of the former French colonisers. English and the multitude of Indian and Asian languages are, today, the least spoken languages in Mauritius. A summary of the most common languages spoken in the home domain on the island of Mauritius is provided in Table 1.

Speakers of immigrant languages such as Afrikaans along with those who speak more than one language in the home domain account for the remaining 1.68 per cent of the total population residing on the island of Mauritius.

The road to independence was one that was marked with inter-ethnic conflict of such a magnitude that it has left a lasting impact upon the field of language policy and planning. The right to vote was granted to the Colony of Mauritius during the constitutional reforms carried out by Governor Mackenzie-Kennedy in 1948 – a decision which was, understandably, met with a lot of resistance from many plantation owners (Selvon 2012). Yet, much to their surprise, despite multiple General Elections which were carried out every five years, the Mauritian populace did not immediately vote for independence. It took nearly two decades for the Independence Party, a coalition led by the Mauritian Labour Party, to win a landslide victory at the 1967

General Elections, resulting in the eventual accession of Mauritius to independence (Selvon 2012).

Table 1: Languages usually spoken at home on the Island of Mauritius[1]

Language usually spoken at home	Number of speakers	% of total population
MC	1,030,005	86.09
MB	65,284	5.46
French	50,863	4.25
Oriental languages (Hindi, Urdu, Bengali, Gujarati, Marathi, Tamil, Telugu, Sinhala, Arabic and others)	21,290	1.78
English	5,558	0.47
Chinese languages (Hakka, Mandarin, Cantonese and others)	3,276	0.27
Other	20,107	1.68
Total	**1,196,383**	**100**

Sadly, the same multi-ethnic population that cast its vote in favour of independence soon developed second thoughts: their unease regarding the potential dominance of one ethnic group vis-à-vis others kept on growing (Simmonds 1982). Two months before independence, on 7 January 1968, communal riots broke out. A state of emergency was declared on 22 January 1968, prompting the British Colonial Office to call for back-up troops from Singapore (de Smith 1968).

It is within this context of 'murderous' inter-ethnic cleavage (Simmonds 1982, 186-187) that the necessity of having one language capable of representing the needs of this nascent nation was mentioned for the first time (Virahsawmy 1968). A Mauritian linguist who has spent 40 years working tirelessly for the overt recognition of MC, Virahsawmy's first foray into language politics and the delicate issue of language policy and planning took place shortly after 25 people had lost their lives and many others had been injured during communal riots. Writing to the popular daily *L'Express* (2 February 1968), Virahsawmy argued that:

> *The recent outbreak of violence seems to suggest that in general Mauritians of one community often cannot find any element in common with their fellow countrymen belonging to a different ethnic group. What we must all do is find in the Mauritian context all the cross-cultural elements which most, if not all, Mauritians have in common. Mauritius has a language that is spoken by a great majority of the population as a mother tongue.* ***For the rest it is a highly effective lingua franca****.* (emphasis added)

The above lines are particularly noteworthy because they carefully avoid making any explicit reference to either MC or MB. In fact, throughout his article, although Virahsawmy continues to use the terms 'mother tongue' and 'lingua franca', he

consistently avoids categorising any one of the vernacular languages as either one or the other. Clearly, he wished to mitigate rather than exacerbate the simmering racial tension.

This ambiguity at the textual level was accompanied by his political activism for the Mouvement Militant Mauricien (MMM), a political party working for, amongst other things, the recognition of the linguistic rights of the Mauritian Creole community (Boswell 2006). Boswell further notes that – although the Franco-Mauritians, as the descendants of the French colonisers, are also eligible for the appellation of 'Creole' – in Mauritius the terms 'Creole' or 'Ti-Creole' (literally translated as 'small Creole') are used exclusively to refer to the descendants of Mauritian slaves (Boswell 2006). Reading between the lines, therefore, it was fairly evident to most Mauritians that the common language that Virahsawmy was promoting as a potential national, if not official, language was, in fact, MC. To make matters worse, at that point in time, though MC was gaining ground as the mother tongue of a lot of Mauritians, contrary to what Virahsawmy (1998) claimed, it was not yet the language of the 'great majority' (Eisenlohr 2006). In addition, the mother tongue of the anonymous 'rest' who would, ostensibly, use the language as a lingua franca, was MB – a fact which is conveniently ignored by Virahsawmy. Unsurprisingly, his attempt to influence the decisions of the prospective Government of independent Mauritius regarding the adoption of an overt language policy only managed to further fan the fire of ethnic discord (Eisenlohr 2006).

One month later, on 12 March 1968, Mauritius celebrated its Independence Day. British troops that had managed to control any upsurge of violence withdrew from the island, leaving it vulnerable to the ethnic and, by extension, linguistic insecurity of its own citizens (Simmonds 1982). The possibility of another communal riot was a strong one and since Mauritius has never invested in a standing army, it could not rely on the muscle power of its troops to stem any outpouring of violence (Dommen and Dommen 1999). Since MB was associated with the Indo-Mauritian community and MC with the Creole one, the new Government, therefore, existed in a precarious position: any decision seen as favouring one ethnic group at the expense of another could have potentially destructive consequences. Consequently, the Government took a series of measures designed to placate a population that was already on the edge. Clamping down upon all forms of perceived political dissent, the prime minister, Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, suspended all General Elections until further notice (Darga 2004). In fact, it was nearly twenty years before a General Election was held. Another key decision was to maintain all the legal and institutional provisions made during French and British colonial rules. In essence, there was a tacit maintenance of the provisos set out in the 1810 Act of Capitulation (Sookhoo 2012; Houbert 1981). French was to continue to be the dominant language in many public domains such as the media while English was maintained as the language of administration, the judiciary and the education system (Selvon 2012).

Present day Mauritius has opted to maintain the status quo. This means that, as far as the education system is concerned, decisions taken in the late nineteenth century by Governor Higginson and his successor, Governor Phayre, are still being upheld (Kalla 1984). Although both Higginson and Phayre were initially in favour

of compulsory education in the vernacular languages, English and French, there was significant pressure from socio-cultural lobby groups in favour of the teaching of all the languages associated with a particular ethnic group (Kalla 1984). So, for instance, instead of being able to provide education in MB, MC, English and French, the Colonial Office was also requested to include languages such as Hindi as well (Ramyead 1985). Thus, although both Higginson and Phayre tried their best to come up with an education system that would be responsive to contemporary linguistic needs, the inability to include all the languages that a particular ethnic group might end up claiming as being uniquely theirs put them off (Kalla 1984). Understandably, both governors were also fairly apprehensive regarding the potential consequences that the inadvertent exclusion of a language deemed to be 'ancestral' by a particular ethnic group would have (Kalla 1984). By the early 1940s, when Governor Mackenzie-Kennedy started working on the constitutional reforms that he wished to bring about to Higginson's earlier draft, he commissioned S.Moody to prepare a report on the education system of Mauritius (Barnwell and Toussaint 1947). The Moody Report, as it eventually became known, was scathing regarding the possibility of implementing MTB MLE on the island. In Moody's words:

> *Mauritius [is] a house divided against itself, each section of the community fighting selfishly for its own ends, regardless of what happen[s] to Mauritius as a whole, and as if believing that any gain by one section of the community mean[s] a corresponding loss by another section. It appear[s] improbable that Mauritians would ever form a nation, a single people.* (Moody 1943, cited in Barnwell and Toussaint 1947, 244-245)

Bearing in mind the feelings of ethnic one-upmanship which already festered in the hearts of many, Moody, instead, advocated an English-medium education system with Oriental Languages such as Hindi, Urdu, Tamil, Telugu and Marathi being offered to students as optional subjects (Barnwell and Toussaint 1947).[2] MC and MB, despite being two of the most widely spoken languages on the islands, were thus initially ignored by the British Colonial Office and subsequently by successive governments of independent Mauritius.

Fearful of the potentially violent consequences of putting forward an overt language policy, deprived of any kind of military support in the eventuality of a communal riot and unwilling to disrupt the tenuous inter-ethnic peace that prevailed on the island, contemporary Mauritian politicians tend to use covert forms of language policy and planning as a shield. As the following section highlights, when encouraged to resort to overt forms of language planning by UNESCO, for instance, the Mauritian government comes up with resourceful ways to side-step any potential ethnic minefield.

Move from covert to overt forms of language policy and planning: An exercise in futility?

The Mauritian government's unwillingness to adopt more overt forms of language policy and planning has been repeatedly condemned by many international bodies. For instance, both the 2011 and 2012 Reports on Human Rights (US Department of State 2012a, 2012b) have drawn attention to the repeated violations of the linguistic rights of speakers of MC and MB. Indeed, all General Elections held in Mauritius

routinely fail to provide any kind of formal polling material in a language other than English. In a country where only 0.08 per cent of O-Level students manage to score an A in English language (Bhoobdasur 2016) even a relatively high functional literacy rate of 88 per cent is of no help (UIS 2013). In fact, instructions provided to voters are couched in a variety of English that is inaccessible to the majority of them. In a similar vein, from the early 2000s onwards, most reports published by the Committee on the Rights of the Child which works under the aegis of the Human Rights section of the United Nations, has criticised the Mauritian government for its inability to provide students with access to an MTB MLE programme (Republic of Mauritius 2011). Indeed in 2014 an 'alternative report' on the Rights of the Child, prepared by a consortium of 14 NGOs, argued eloquently that '[t]his is to the disadvantage of children and consists of a form of discrimination' (ADEPED and others 2014, 25). To further compound the issue, since its Independence, Mauritius has been a signatory to both the United Nations Convention against Discrimination in Education and the African Union's Convention on Cultural Charter for Africa (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2015). In theory, thus, the country has committed itself to protecting, supporting and sustaining all the languages that exist on the island. In practice, as the above-mentioned reports indicate, for the past 45 years, the covert neo-colonial language policy adopted by successive Mauritian governments has been in deliberate breach of the numerous provisions made in the multiple conventions aimed at protecting the basic linguistic and human rights of its citizens.

Reacting to the constant barrage of criticism from multiple international bodies, from the year 2008 onwards, Mauritius attempted to bring about a few fundamental changes to its education system. Firstly, it opted for a change in rhetoric. So, for instance, on the 'Geography and People' page of the Government of Mauritius website, it is proudly announced that 'English is the official language' (Government of Mauritius 2015). Furthermore, in its 2008 report to UNESCO, the Government strongly asserted that '... there is no language barrier' separating students who join the education system at primary level from their teachers who were still required to teach in either English or French (MECHR 2008, 25). The Government also wished to enlighten UNESCO regarding its adoption of an overt form of language policy:

> *The choice of the language of instruction used in school is considered to be of utmost importance and needs to be given attention especially in socio-economically disadvantaged areas where both family and community exposure to the English language (the* **'official'** *language of instruction and assessment in schools) is limited.* (MECHR 2008, 20; emphasis added)

Secondly, although the Government did not set up the much awaited MTB MLE programme, it finally decided to offer MC and MB as optional subjects at primary school level. The introduction of both vernacular languages occurred in two phases, as Table 2 shows.

It would seem that the Mauritian Government has finally managed to overcome its aversion towards committing itself to overt forms of language policy and planning. In response, a group of civil society organisations declared that 'this initiative has been very much welcomed by most of the civil society' (ADEPED and others 2014, 25).

Table 2: Summary of events leading to the introduction of MC and MB at primary school level (adapted from MEHRTESR 2011)

Phase	Action taken
Phase 1	The *Akademi Kreol Morisien* (Mauritian Creole Academy) was set up in September 2010. Concurrently, the Mahatma Gandhi Institute was tasked with the standardisation of MB. It was decided that a special slot would be created for MB so that it could be taught alongside Hindi during Oriental Language classes.
Phase 2	The first document from the *Akademi*, *Lortograf Kreol Morisien* (Mauritian Creole Orthography), was published in September 2011 (Carpooran 2011). In July 2011, pedagogical material prepared by the Mahatma Gandhi Institute was also released to the Ministry of Education. Both MC and MB were introduced at primary school level in January 2012. From 2017, both MC and MB will count as 'optional subjects' during the grading process for the Certificate of Primary Education (CPE).[3]

Unfortunately, a more in-depth appraisal of the measures adopted by the Government reveals that, far from taking the criticisms made by international bodies seriously, the country was simply trying to pay lip-service to them. If close attention is paid to the jargon utilised by the Ministry of Education in its 2008 submission to UNESCO, it can be noticed that the word 'official' is, in fact, bracketed with single inverted commas (MECHR 2008). So, while many postcolonial nations such as Tanzania had forged ahead in their designation of a *de jure* official language (Mohammed 2015), Mauritius still felt the need to hide behind punctuation to indicate its ambivalent position regarding its formal adoption of both a national and an official language. It also needs pointing out that any formal statement regarding the official status of either English or French by the Government of Mauritius is in breach of the 1989 judgement of Justice R.Ahnee who, when faced with a request to allow evidence to be presented, explained and debated upon in MC, retorted:

> *I am not aware of any text of law which says that English is the official language of Mauritius.*[4] (Carpooran 2003, 204)

This judgment has never been formally challenged by any member of parliament, neither has there been any amendment made to the Mauritian Constitution regarding the language situation in the island. The information provided by both the main governmental webpage and the Ministry of Tourism (for example, Ministry of Tourism and External Communications 2015) is, therefore, deliberately erroneous. As for the data submitted to UNESCO by the Ministry of Education (MECHR 2008), the use of the

single inverted commas would appear to be a fairly ingenious way to skirt around the boundaries of the law.

Equally worrying is the information relating to Mauritius contained in the UNESCO publication *World Data on Education* (UNESCO 2011).[5] This shows that, despite all the measures implemented in 2011-2012 to ensure that MC and MB would be taught at primary school level, no official provision had been made regarding the inclusion of these two subjects in the weekly timetable for primary school students. It should be kept in mind that, although concrete measures regarding the implementation of MB and MC were adopted in 2011, the actual decision to include both languages in the education system dates from 2004. Indeed, it was following explicit instructions from the Ministry of Education in March 2004 that a first attempt was made to standardise MC in 2004 (Hookoomsing 2004). In the document submitted to the Ministry of Education in September 2004, Hookoomsing wrote:

> *In a letter dated 31 March 2004, the Ministry of Education and Scientific Research informed the University of Mauritius that the Government had agreed to 'a proposal of this Ministry to entrust to the University of Mauritius and the Mauritius Institute of Education, under the responsibility of Prof. Vinesh Hookoomsing, Pro Vice-Chancellor of the University of Mauritius,* ***the task of proposing a harmonised way of writing Mauritian Kreol with a view to making use of that language in the education of young Mauritians'.*** (Hookoomsing 2004, 6, emphasis added)

This request culminated in the publication of the proposed 'harmonised writing system', produced by *L'Akademi Kreol Morisien*, in 2011 (cf. Carpooran 2011). This document acknowledges the contribution of Hookoomsing (2004) and clearly sets out the modifications made to *Grafi Larmoni* in the new orthographic system that it puts forward. In essence, therefore, although MC and MB were introduced in the education system in 2012, provision for their inclusion at primary level was already made as early as 2004. As a result, it was expected that when the data that would eventually appear in the 2010-2011 *World Data on Education Report* were generated, provision would have been made for the imminent introduction of these languages in the classroom. As mentioned above, this was not the case.

In fact, instead of updating its data to reflect the ongoing changes at the level of policy – and eventually of practice – the *World Data on Education* report simply reproduces a table that it attributes to the Mauritian Ministry of Education (UNESCO 2011). This table, generated in 2001, was designed to provide an insight into the Weekly Time Allocated (WTA) for each subject and indicates that the highest WTA of 500 hours is dedicated to the teaching of both English and French. In contrast, MC and MB, both considered as optional subjects by the Ministry of Education, do not appear in the list of optional subjects on offer. Inferring from the number of hours allocated to both these subjects, it is possible to speculate that MC and MB could be allocated a minimum of 50 and a maximum of 200 minutes of weekly teaching time.

The 2015 Education for All Report that Mauritius submitted to the International Bureau of Education (MEHR 2015) attempts to remedy this oversight by

acknowledging the inclusion of MC and MB at lower primary level. Yet, although it repeatedly mentions that the timetable has been updated to include more extra-curricular activities, it conspicuously chooses to omit any allusion in the WTA to optional subjects. As a matter of fact, cursory references to MC and MB are made only twice in this 59-page long document.

As the above arguments reveal, although the Mauritian government appeared to be finally moving towards an overt form of language policy and planning for the island, the measures taken to valorise MC and MB are, arguably, mainly cosmetic. MC and MB are, indeed, on offer as optional subjects: whether they are actually taught at lower primary level or whether the quality of the teaching offered to students is at par as that offered for other optional subjects such as Oriental Languages, is debatable. The absence of a clear-cut WTA seems to suggest that the teaching provided (if any) and the quality of that teaching, are both at the discretion of individual schools – a fact which should be deeply worrying.

Language policy and planning in postcolonial Mauritius: The politics of ethnicity

The above points give rise to one pertinent question: why would the Mauritian government deliberately choose to be Janus-faced? A tentative explanation is provided by Ramanathan (2005) who argues that despite successful decolonisation, in many postcolonial nations, inconsistencies regarding language policy and planning still exist. The only way to understand such inconsistencies is to place them back within both their colonial and neo-colonial contexts. As far as Mauritius is concerned, Houbert (1981 75) asserts that:

> *Mauritius became independent on 12 March 1968 and was then said to be the paradigm of the small, isolated, poor, dependent country, only emerging from the colonial era to fall immediately into neo-colonialism – the Third World's Third World.*

Although Houbert's description of postcolonial Mauritius is far from flattering, it is a fairly accurate picture of the situation in which Mauritius found itself post-Independence. Geographically isolated, dependent on the revenue generated by the sale of sugar and inhabited by a multi-ethnic populace whose rioting could be quelled only through military intervention, Mauritius was, according to Houbert, unable to raise itself to the standard of a 'first world' developing country by using its new-found political autonomy to take decisions which would be of optimal benefit to its multilingual populace. Instead, even as it acceded to the status of a Republic in 1992, it still seemed to exist in the thrall of quite a few key decisions taken during colonial times (Houbert 1981).

At the linguistic level, this meant that decisions taken by Governor Higginson who, between the years 1851-1857, was the first key Colonial figure to try and establish a comprehensive language policy in Mauritius, were perpetuated. In 1854, when Higginson lobbied the Colonial Office in London for the introduction of compulsory education in Mauritius, his intention was to provide education in Indian languages such as Tamil alongside English (Kalla 1984). Although his request was granted by

the Colonial Office, he met with the resistance of both the former slaves and the French-speaking Plantocracy (Higginson to Labouchere No. 78, 15 October 1855, in Higginson 1851-1857). At that point in time, the Creoles as well as their former masters already had access to fee-paying French-medium Catholic elementary schools (Kalla 1984). Attendance was poor, especially so far as the impoverished Creoles were concerned. An MTB MLE programme, though also fee-paying, was deemed to be more socially advantageous to the indentured labourers who were in a position, if they so wished, to invest part of their wages in the education of their offspring. This gave rise to widespread discontent amongst both the Creoles and the French Plantocracy. To pacify them, Higginson, with the blessing of the Colonial Office, decided to offer generous grants to all Catholic elementary schools (Kalla 1984). Even today, all schools operating under the aegis of the Catholic Church are still known as Roman Catholic-Aided (RCA) Schools. Unsurprisingly, the grants proposed by Higginson are today funded by the Mauritian government.

These aids served their purpose: education was finally accessible to the children of indentured Indian labourers. Yet, it was a victory that left a bitter aftertaste. The ethnic divide created when two ethnic groups opposed Higginson's decision to provide education in the vernacular languages as well as English and French has proved to be difficult to bridge. Until 2003, 50 per cent of all the seats available in RCA primary and secondary schools were reserved for students of the Catholic faith (Bahadoor 2003). In 2002, when the Ministry of Education tried to bring about strategic reforms to the education system, the Bureau d'Education Catholique (BEC, the Catholic Bureau of Education) was sued by a parent who felt that such a practice was discriminatory. In January 2003, in a Supreme Court judgement pronounced by Chief Justice Ariranga Pillay and Judge Kestoe Matadeen, faith-based admission to RCA schools was deemed to be anti-constitutional (Bahadoor 2003). Given that MC was introduced by BEC in all RCA schools prior to the direct intervention of the Ministry of Education in 2011 (Bahadoor 2003), the resulting co-association between MC and the Creole community is not hard to understand.

As for MB, it suffered from Higginson's lack of familiarity with MB and Hindi, which eventually led him to mistakenly label MB as Hindi (Barz 1980). Consequently, MB was never formally introduced into the education system. When, in 1947, the Colonial Office approved the recruitment of teachers from India, provision was made for the employment of teachers specialising in Hindi, not in MB (Barz 1986). The conflation between MB and Hindi was further maintained by the Mauritian government when it gave explicit instructions for MB to be taught by teachers of Hindi 'as a corollary of Hindi Language' (MEHR 2014, 2). It was also decided that standard MB would be written in Devanagari, the same script used to write Hindi. In fact, one of the avowed missions of the Ministry of Education during the standardisation phase of MB was to protect the 'purity' of the language by ensuring that students learn a variety that is untainted by lexical insertions from MC (Mauritius National Assembly 2011). As explained by the then-Minister, Dr Vasant Bunwaree, during the Second Reading of the Bhojpuri Speaking Union Bill in the National Assembly, lexical insertions from MC would, in the long run, dilute what he considered to be the essence of MB (Mauritius National Assembly 2011). An excerpt from Dr Bunwaree's speech is reproduced in Box 1.

Box 1: Dr Bunwaree's recommendation regarding the variety of MB which should be taught (National Assembly 2011)	
Original text	**Translation**
We must put ourselves the question: which Bhojpuri? Parce que quand je les entends parler, on est en train de parler le Bhojpuri populaire. Mais ce Bhojpuri est une variante du Créole, peut-être. Donc, il faut faire attention … Ce n'est pas cela qu'on veut et on va commencer le Bhojpuri l'année prochaine effectivement dans les écoles. Donc, on va faire attention que se soit le Bhojpuri qu'il faut.	We must put ourselves the question: which Bhojpuri? Because when I hear them talk, they are speaking a type of popular Bhojpuri. But this Bhojpuri is a variant of Creole, maybe. So, we have to be careful … It's not what we want and we are going to effectively start [teaching] Bhojpuri in schools next year. So, we will ensure that it is the Bhojpuri that we need.

The linguistic purism as displayed by the Minister of Education in Box 1 and various other officials of his Ministry was anticipated by Eriksen when he predicted that the ethnic distrust prevailing between the Indo-Mauritian and the Creole communities would, sooner or later, contribute to the reification and essentialisation of cultural and, by extension, linguistic boundaries (Eriksen 1994).

The accuracy of Eriksen's predictions can be attributed to another unfortunate decision taken during colonial times and perpetuated by successive Mauritian governments post-independence. Censuses carried out by the Colonial Office in both 1952 and 1962 required heads of households to provide information about the members of their households, including ethnicity and four aspects of their use of languages:

1. 'languages you can read and write or read only'
2. 'mother tongue'
3. 'language currently or most often spoken in the home'
4. 'additional language occasionally spoken' (Government of Mauritius 1962).

While the above questions appear to be, in themselves, unproblematic, when viewed in conjunction with the specific instructions provided by the Statistics Office, they can be considered as being ethnically divisive. These were (Government of Mauritius 1962, cited in Statistics Mauritius 2011b):

> *Column M – Languages. Mother Tongue – This is a very important question – It is intended to supplement column E, 'Ethnic Group' […].*

Indeed, the additional instructions provided by the Statistics Office appear to encourage respondents to think in ethnic terms. By 1962, the mother tongue of the majority of Mauritians was either MC or MB (Eisenlohr 2006). However, if as per the above instructions, a person claimed to belong to any of the four ethnic categories

put forward by the Statistics Office – namely Indo-Mauritian, Sino-Mauritian, White or Coloured – it was expected that (s)he would list a language that (s)he perceived as being more connected to his/her ethnic group as his/her mother tongue. So, for instance, an Indo-Mauritian of Tamil faith might list Tamil instead of either MB or MC as his mother tongue. A sense of belonging to a specific ethnic group comes with an accompanying sense of responsibility and accountability to that particular community. In the case of Mauritius, this implies that respondents' self-reports are often erroneous. For them, the instructions provided by the Statistics Office are simply another means through which they can show their allegiance to the ethnic group that they belong to.

When, in 1983, the Government of Mauritius carried out its second post-independence census, although it modified the labels attributed to each column, respondents were, once again, encouraged to respond in ethnic terms. Rajah-Carrim (2005, 328) cites as example the case of the National Telugu Federation which published an announcement (Box 2) in one of the leading daily newspapers of the island:

Box 2: Instructions provided by the National Telugu Foundation (Cited in Rajah-Carrim 2005, 328)
National Telugu Federation All Telugus of Mauritius are asked, as regards the new population census, to write in the columns 11-12-13: Telugu-Telugu-Telugu. Thank You

As the announcement suggests, by the early 1980s, the language issue had taken such an overtly ethnic connotation that no legal action was taken against the National Telugu Federation for interfering with the smooth running of the census by attempting to script the answers of Telugu speakers ahead of time. Even more disturbing was the fact that by the early 1970s, Telugu had already been replaced by MB as the mother tongue of migrants from southern regions of India (Ramyead 1985). The instructions provided by the National Telugu Federation were, to all intents and purposes, designed to mask the fact that, so far as Mauritius was concerned, Telugu was already a dead language. There were no native speakers left.

The examples above indicate that the conflation between language and ethnicity which started during colonial times was equally prominent in postcolonial Mauritius. According to the Constitution of Mauritius (National Assembly 1968), similar to the descendants of all indentured Indian labourers who hail from different parts of India and who speak a panoply of Indian languages, the Telugu-speaking population are to be classified as 'Indo-Mauritians'. Therefore, the autonomy of the Telugu-speaking people as a distinct ethnic group has no legal basis. Yet, it did not deter the National Telugu Federation from requesting its members to list 'Telugu' instead of 'Indo-Mauritian' in the column marked ethnicity (Rajah-Carrim 2005). The above scenario is familiar to all Indo-Mauritians who are aware of the intra-ethnic cleavage that exists in

their midst. Indeed, the practice of grouping Mauritians of Hindi, Urdu, Tamil, Telugu and Marathi speakers under the same over-arching ethnic label of 'Indo-Mauritian' is one which is contested by many (Eisenlohr 2006). Given the significantly larger population of Hindi-speaking individuals, the apprehension that the latter four groups will find themselves marginalised when decisions regarding language policy are taken is a strong one (Eisenlohr 2006).

This tension is of a much higher magnitude in the case of inter-ethnic conflict between the Indo-Mauritian and other communities (Boswell 2006). It would be overly simplistic to blame the Mauritian government for its lack of commitment towards developing an MTB MLE programme which favours MC, MB as well as English and French. Language policy and planning do not exist in a socio-politico-cultural vacuum. To answer the question put forward in the opening lines of this section: the Mauritian government chooses to be Janus-faced because it has no other option. In the case of Mauritius, *no overt language policy* should be considered as a valid form of language policy and planning!

The long awaited deterrent effect of the 1968 communal riots has failed to materialise. In 1999, Port Louis was once again shaken by violent rioting as protestors took to the streets to vent their anger following the death of Creole singer Kaya during the reign of a Hindu-dominant government. The country came to a standstill for a whole week as the Mauritian Police fought to re-establish order (Boswell 2006). In the light of the above, it can be argued that the multiple recommendations made by UNESCO's *Policy Guide on the Integration of African Languages and Cultures into the Education System* (UILL 2010) for African nations to establish an MTB MLE programme were, in fact, quite inopportune so far as Mauritius was concerned. Indeed, while Mauritius was one of the signatories of the *Policy Guide*, the memory of the 1999 riots was too raw for the Mauritian government to risk advocating the teaching of vernacular languages. Similar to the situation which prevailed in 1968, any perceived partiality towards either MC or MB could have easily sparked another spate of violence. As Ramanathan (2005) rightly points out, overcoming the colonial legacy is a challenge that many postcolonial nations such as Mauritius are yet to meet. In a country where a whole government can collapse because the National Anthem was translated into MC (Eisenlohr 2007), English appears to be the only medium, endowed with a strong enough veneer of neutrality, to keep ethnolinguistic insecurity at bay.

Conclusion

In 1998, one year prior to the communal riots which would hit Port Louis, ethnolinguistic insecurity was responsible for another instance of social unrest. The then Minister of Education, a member of the Tamil-speaking community, threatened to resign from his post when the Tamil language appeared in third instead of first position on Mauritian bank notes (Carpooran 2003). Indeed, in Mauritius, the utility of banknotes transcends their financial significance as mere currency. Instead, they act as symbolic representations of multi-ethnicity by bearing the effigy of a prominent figure hailing from every ethnic group living on the island. When the first banknotes were printed by the British Colonial Office, an arbitrary decision was taken to write down the value of each note in English, followed by Tamil and eventually by Hindi (Carpooran 2003).[6] When the new banknotes were printed, much to the displeasure

of the Tamil-speaking community, Hindi was upgraded to second position. Once again, protestors took to the streets to denounce what they perceived to be the partiality of a Hindu prime minister towards his own community. Similar instances of ethnolinguistic insecurity are by no means rare. The image of the 'rainbow island' that Mauritius strives so hard to project is one that can crack at any time.

An interesting analogy is provided by Eriksen (1994, 556) who notes that

> *[s]tatues of nineteenth-century [British] governor Sir William Newton … and Queen Victoria have been erected in front of the [Mauritian] parliament (and nobody would dream of removing them).*

English has an equally significant symbolic role to play: it is the only language which has escaped any overt form of ethnic labelling. The introduction of an MTB MLE policy could prove to be a source of discord due to the conflation between language and ethnicity. As other presenters at the 11th Language and Development Conference (for example Matsinhe 2015 and Benson 2017) have argued, education in the vernacular languages is, indeed, laudable – but it can hardly be considered as a goal when its adoption could endanger the peace, harmony and prosperity of an insular, postcolonial nation. It seems, therefore, fitting to end this paper with this compelling question: at what cost education in the vernacular languages?

Notes

[1] Adapted from Housing and Population Census, Volume II, Table D8 (Statistics Mauritius 2011a). The statistics in Table 1 are for the Island of Mauritius only. Statistics for the Republic of Mauritius as a whole also include the island dependencies of Rodrigues and Agaléga. However, since this chapter discusses only the island of Mauritius, the table excludes figures from Rodrigues and Agaléga.

[2] Note that the Higginsonian regime subsumed MB and MC under the overarching labels of Hindi and French respectively (Kalla 1984). Phayre and Moody opted to utilise the labels used by Higginson. As a result, all pre-independence census figures need to be interpreted with caution. Many of the speakers claiming Hindi as mother tongue were, in fact, speakers of MB. The census made an exception in the case of MC by creating a separate category for it (Government of Mauritius 1962). Presumably, this was done at the urging of the former French colonial masters who did not want the 'Patois Creole' (Kalla 1984), as it was then known, to be conflated with French. Figures for MC, appear therefore, to be far more reliable than those for MB.

[3] The Certificate of Primary Education is a compulsory examination targeted at students of Standard VI (Upper Primary). Their results will eventually determine the secondary school allocated to them. Unsuccessful candidates are able to re-take the examination another two times. Those who are unable to clear this examination are encouraged to enrol in local polytechnics (UNESCO 2011).

[4] Until 1989, the use of English or French in most formal interactions such as those taking place in the courtroom or the parliament was, by and large, considered as being mandated by the law. In 1989, a mother and son duo, accused of murder, petitioned the court to request that all courtroom testimonies be provided in MC. This was when Judge Ahnee clarified that Mauritius did not have any official language (Hein 2014).

[5] Note that the UNESCO publication *World Data on Education Report* makes use of information provided in 'National Reports on Education, supplemented with data from other sources' (UNESCO 2016). Additional information is available at www.ibe.unesco.org/en/resources/world-data-education.

[6] Carpooran (2003) suggests that the only reason why Tamil appeared in second position was to represent the fact that Indian immigrants from south India reached Mauritius before their north Indian counterparts.

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MOTHER-TONGUE-BASED MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION

6

Multilingual Education for All: Applying an integrated multilingual curriculum model to low-income contexts

Carol Benson

Introduction

As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, the forces of globalisation are raising people's aspirations for proficiency in internationally dominant languages. Some believe that survival in the global linguistic market means abandonment and loss of non-dominant languages; however, this presupposes that individuals must give up one language to acquire another, a myth representing monolingual, subtractive thinking. If we instead take a multilingual perspective, we see that the individuals who are best adapted to bridging local, regional and global worlds will be those who can speak, read and write a repertoire of languages and, in addition, promote intercultural understandings. Rather than trying to erase people's home languages in an effort to assimilate them to a dominant language and culture, schools should maximise learners' existing linguistic and cultural resources and build on them. Likewise, monolingual speakers of dominant languages need opportunities to learn local as well as international languages.

This chapter calls for a policy of Multilingual Education for All (MEFA), echoing the historic call by UNESCO for Education for All (EFA) that has guided the development discourse for over two decades (UNESCO 1990). I see MEFA both as a way to reach previously marginalised people with inclusive education and as a way to meet current and future needs for multilingual world citizens. In an effort to operationalise the call, I describe an approach developed in the Spanish Basque Country to integrate the teaching of three or four languages across the curriculum and I suggest ways it could be adapted to meet needs in low-income multilingual contexts. Parts of this argument have been made elsewhere (Benson and Elorza 2015) and are expanded here, taking a comparative and international perspective. This integrated multilingual curriculum comes from contexts of language revitalisation, where community languages brought close to extinction through suppression are being brought back into use through educational programmes (Elorza and Muñoa 2008). My purpose is to apply that curriculum to low-income contexts where learners' own languages are being brought into the curriculum or expanded to permit access to quality basic education. What the two situations have in common is the recognition, promotion and protection

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of non-dominant local or heritage languages in combination with the teaching of regional and international languages. Both situations focus, and rightly so, on learners whose languages and cultures have previously been marginalised. However, because the Basque multilingual curriculum is consistent with current language and learning theories, it is argued that all learners, including members of dominant groups, would benefit greatly from Multilingual Education for All.

Some relevant terms

This section reviews some terms that are useful in discussing languages and language and literacy learning. In accordance with Kosonen (2010) I use *non-dominant languages* (abbreviated as NDLs) to refer to the language varieties spoken in a certain context that are not considered the most prominent in terms of number, prestige or official use by the government and/or the education system, while a *dominant language* (DL) has official status and high prestige, is spoken by dominant groups and learned by others (Benson and Kosonen 2012). While these terms are not fixed nor completely dichotomous, they help us avoid problematic references to minority/majority and to highlight the power differentials that educational programmes must address if they are to maximise learners' linguistic and cognitive resources.

García (2009) defines *bilingual* or *multilingual education* (MLE) programmes as those that intentionally and explicitly teach more than one language; they usually teach using more than one language as *medium of instruction*, either sequentially or simultaneously. Scholars and practitioners working in low-income contexts use the term *L1-based MLE* (Kosonen and Benson 2013), also known as *mother tongue-based bilingual* or *multilingual education* (Alexander 2005; Heugh 2008) or *first language first* (UNESCO 2005), to call attention to the need to use learners' home languages (L1s, which may be plural for some individual speakers) rather than unfamiliar languages as the basis for beginning literacy and learning. Cummins' (1981) notion of *common underlying proficiency* explains how literacy and cognitive skills/knowledge developed in one language become available to the learner in another language as that additional language (Lx) is acquired. Transfer of literacy skills across languages is a semi-automatic process that can be facilitated by teachers through explicit comparison and contrast exercises (Cummins 2009). Further, transfer is multidirectional, so all of an individual's languages contribute to her/his linguistic and cognitive development (Bialystok 2001).

Multilingualism, often considered an extension of bilingualism, is increasingly being seen as a distinct phenomenon (Cook 1995; Grosjean 1989; Herdina and Jessner 2002). For example, it is argued that the complex interactions between languages that go on in the mind of a multilingual individual build on a qualitatively different linguistic system from that of a monolingual or even a bilingual. As Jessner (2006: 35) points out:

> *[I]n contrast to the hypotheses of Cummins, and Kecskes and Papp, all of whom describe a kind of overlap between the two language systems, DST [dynamic systems theory] ... presupposes a complete metamorphosis of the system involved and not merely an overlap between two subsystems. If this is applied to multilingual development, it means that the interaction between the three*

systems results in different abilities and skills that the learners develop due to their prior learning experience.

As a consequence of this *dynamic process*, the language proficiency of multilinguals develops and changes in relation to the sociocultural conditions surrounding them, depending on the domains of use and the functions of the various languages in their everyday lives. There are serious implications of this dynamic process on the education of learners who already use two or more languages in their homes or societies, because this means they already have a wealth of oral skills upon which to construct *multiliteracies.* This is done through *multiliteracies pedagogy,* which builds on the rich cultural and linguistic identities that learners bring to the classroom, exposing them to new modalities like information technologies and helping them gain critical insights into how knowledge and society are constructed (New London Group 1996; Cummins 2009). The development of *critical literacies* has been proposed to problematise the dominance or non-dominance of languages in society. Critical literacies are linked to *multiculturalism*, which promotes respect for all languages, cultures and people, and intercultural awareness (Luke 2013). *Interculturalism*, the ability to mediate between languages, cultures, and peoples, is an integral feature of Latin American bilingual programmes, and has been operationalised to emphasise Indigenous knowledge and values while challenging existing inequities between groups (López 2006).

What different contexts for multilingual curriculum development have in common is that they aim to maximise learners' multiple linguistic resources and to prioritise non-dominant languages. A range of strategies have developed for promoting multilingualism and multiliteracies based on learners' existing languages and experiences as well as on the aspirations of their families and societies and the needs of their educational curricula. In the next section I discuss MLE in low-income multilingual contexts where learners' own languages are potentially great resources, while aspirations for additional languages are high.

Respecting learners' languages in low-income multilingual contexts

This section takes examples from multilingual countries like Ethiopia, Cambodia and Bolivia, where I have been involved in the application of L1-based MLE to improve student achievement and opportunities (Benson 2011, 2013). In low-income contexts like these, the non-dominant languages (NDLs) spoken by learners and their teachers are gradually being brought into education systems that have traditionally been dominated by more prestigious languages. Dominant language-based education systems exist due to (post-)colonial policies favouring exogenous languages (such as Portuguese in Mozambique, Spanish in Bolivia), or due to monolingual state policies favouring dominant groups (such as Khmer in Cambodia). Those multilingual countries with traditions of educational use of NDLs have tended to use widely spoken regional languages like Kiswahili in Tanzania or state languages in India (e.g. Mohanty's 2006 critique of India's three-language formula) – and even then only for the lower primary level, after which there is an abrupt 'transition' (adopting a term from bilingual education, which was meant to represent a systematic, staged switch from L1 to Lx

medium) to a dominant language. The more common practice has been for informal (oral) use of local languages where teachers share learners' NDLs, but this practice is admitted only with shame and the conviction that it is against the official policies of education ministries (Mohanty 2006; see also Benson 2004).

The educational needs of low-income, rural and non-dominant communities are great. Particularly in contexts where there is further overlap with gender and Indigeneity, large numbers of people are prevented from getting basic education of a reasonable quality that will help them lead healthy, secure lives. The gaps in educational access, quality and achievement between non-dominant and dominant groups have become a main concern of development organisations like UNESCO, which in turn leads donors, governments and NGOs to undertake efforts to achieve Education for All (per the Jomtien accords)[1] and monitor accomplishment of the Millennium Development Goals.[2] The relationship between medium of instruction and achievement of these goals has increasingly come under discussion in the past two decades, with a landmark conference in 2010[3] bringing a large number of scholars, policymakers, politicians and educators to the table. US-driven efforts to reform the teaching of early literacy through large-scale testing of a limited set of reading skills has admittedly brought attention to language of instruction issues, even while raising concerns about assessing literacy in context (Hoffman 2012) and according to particular linguistic features of the non-dominant languages in question (Schroeder 2013). Increasingly, educators are recognising that learners from non-dominant linguistic and cultural backgrounds can be offered more equitable educational services, particularly in basic literacy, if their own languages are used. In some countries, this approach works in parallel with democratic social or political movements to develop policies and practices that bring NDLs into schools via bi- and multilingual and intercultural curricula.

Three examples of educational policy favouring multilingual education for all are South Africa, Bolivia and Sri Lanka. In the first case, with democracy and the removal of apartheid in 1994 came a designation of 11 official languages, nine of which are Indigenous African languages (Republic of South Africa 1996). Educational policies that followed called for the use of people's own languages as mediums of instruction at the primary basic level and, in the case of African language speakers, access to competence in Afrikaans and/or English, respectively the nationally and internationally dominant languages; interestingly, the policy went further to call for speakers of the two DLs to have access to competence in at least one of the nine NDLs (Heugh 2009).

At about the same time, in 1994, Bolivia was undergoing a social and educational revolution, passing the Education Reform Law, along with laws implementing democratic ('popular') participation and decentralisation of education (López 2005). While this approach was clearly directed toward the Indigenous majority of the country, there was also a clause in the Reform policy calling for the Spanish-speaking dominant elite to learn an Indigenous language. In both South Africa and Bolivia, there is anecdotal evidence that learners from dominant groups have actually had some opportunities to learn NDLs, particularly if they attend progressive private schools; however, the literature also reveals fears that elite schools take much-

needed Indigenous language speakers away from the teaching staffs needed to implement high-quality bilingual programmes (e.g. López 2005).

The third example is Sri Lanka's experiment in nation-building by teaching each group the other's language. The policy of teaching the Second National Language (2NL) has been in place for many years, but a 2006 study found implementation lacking, despite the fact that attitudes were generally positive. A follow-up study by Perera (2015) echoes concerns from Bolivia and South Africa that aims are not achievable due to lack of teachers and trainers. All of these cases demonstrate how important it is for policies to be appropriately resourced.

The strongest NDL-based educational policies in low-income countries today are being implemented in Ethiopia and Eritrea, but they stop short of promoting NDL competence on the part of speakers of the nationally dominant (Amharic and Tigrinha, respectively) or internationally dominant (English) languages. Both call for L1-based teaching and learning during the entire eight-year primary school cycle, with the DLs taught as subjects in the curriculum. This eight-year L1 policy is effectively practised for the most widely spoken NDLs and partially practised for others, with documented success in terms of student achievement (Heugh et al. 2012; Walter and Davis 2005). It is unfortunate that both policies require trilingualism for NDL speakers but only bilingualism (with English) for speakers of the national DLs (Benson et al. 2012).

Along with policies enabling or promoting MEFA, a range of practices are documented in the literature on multilingual education in low-income settings, particularly in teacher professional development. Where NDLs are newly entering the curriculum, attention must be paid to teachers' oral and written language proficiency in both NDLs and DLs, as well as to their use of language teaching methodologies. In contexts where NDLs are widely spoken, for example in multilingual African countries, it is often possible to mobilise an adequate supply of qualified teachers who are NDL speakers, as long as they are offered some training in writing their own languages and in teaching them, and assuming they can be placed with learners who share their language (Benson 2004). However, where NDL communities have not traditionally had access to formal education, there may not be people who speak, read and write these languages. This raises the question of how to initiate an L1-based MLE programme: with NDL speakers who are not qualified teachers, or with qualified teachers who are not from the NDL community?

There are a number of strategies designed to address NDL teacher shortages, most of which are stop-gap measures. It should be noted that once the first generation of bi- or multilingual learners completes their education cycle, there will be a pool from which to draw qualified NDL-speaking teachers. One common practice, the use of parent volunteers or NDL para-professionals to help non-NDL-speaking teachers interpret the curriculum, may facilitate classroom communication but tends to keep the NDL in a subordinate position (Vu 2010). Another practice, that of attempting to give qualified teachers enough proficiency in the NDL to teach, requires a great deal of training and raises issues of cultural compatibility between teachers and learners. In our experience, the most promising practices promote the education and

training of NDL community members who have the appropriate linguistic and cultural background. One example is Bolivia's development of *bachilleratos pedagogicos*, or pedagogical secondary schools, where Indigenous girls were trained in L1-based bilingual education methods while learning the secondary curriculum (Benson 2004). An even more successful model empowering local community teachers has been developed by CARE in Cambodia and is in the process of being adopted by the Cambodian government for certain non-dominant groups. In this model, community volunteers are given training that is tailored to provide L1 literacy and pedagogical skills alongside academic content so that teachers can eventually be recognised as qualified by the Ministry of Education and Training (Lee et al. 2014).

Planning for teacher trainer needs, the University of Limpopo in South Africa has developed a highly innovative Multilingual Studies BA programme which prepares bilingual teachers and other professionals using Sesotho sa Leboa/Sepedi and English, alongside additional South African NDLs and world languages (Ramani and Joseph 2010). These and other measures are being developed to allow for multilingual educational opportunities to be offered in low-income contexts, where admittedly the first priority is to provide access to basic education and literacy for people from ND linguistic and cultural communities.

An integrated multilingual curriculum from a language revitalisation context

This section presents a programme developed in contexts where learners have not had the opportunity to develop proficiency in their families' (heritage, usually non-dominant) languages and where educational programmes are designed to help the linguistic community regain youthful speakers while using languages with which they are familiar. I suggest that the innovative Integrated Plurilingual School model as practised in the *Ikastolas*[4] of the Spanish Basque Country (Elorza and Muñoa 2008; EHIK 2009; Elorza 2013) is a model or at least an inspiration for low-income settings. The European revitalisation context is admittedly better resourced, but its aims are similar: to protect and promote non-dominant languages and cultures and learner self-esteem while maximising their multilinguistic repertoires. European regional and minority language communities face the daunting task of developing multilingual education models that answer to the needs of the globalised world without compromising the recovery and promotion of languages that have been lost or partially lost due to political and/or social repression. Educational models for these communities should, as Fishman (2001, 43) puts it, 'counterbalance [globalisation] by a greater emphasis on cultural values, skills, attitudes and beliefs that stem from and reinforce their own identity.' In such contexts, schools must be active agents in *reversing language shift* (Fishman 2001), as they are engaged not only in ensuring knowledge and transmission of the NDL, but also in promoting its social use, in the educational context as well as in the surrounding community.

Multilingual models in revitalisation contexts need to address a variety of sociolinguistic settings and types of learners depending on their contact with the NDL. For some learners, the NDL is their L1, still preserved and used in their homes and/or their local environments. In other cases, learners' identities and origins

correspond to non-dominant groups, but the NDL is no longer spoken by them or their families. Finally, there might be learners belonging to the dominant group, or to other incoming ND groups, who choose to be educated in the heritage NDL of the local community for diverse reasons ranging from identity factors to instrumental motivation. Revitalisation models have not traditionally engaged with all of these types of learners in equitable ways, so these recent efforts are innovative and encouraging.

Multilingual programmes have been developed across Europe but are becoming more prevalent in the officially bilingual autonomous communities of Spain (Galicia, Catalonia, Valencia, Balearic Islands, Navarre and the Basque Autonomous Community). Earlier bilingual models involving the NDL heritage language and the state dominant language have been extended to include English as a language of international communication as well as major languages such as French.

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe 2002) defines *plurilingual competence* in a social and action-based manner: proficiency in multiple languages with the capacity to efficiently use the appropriate language to fulfil the tasks necessary in each specific context and situation of the learner's life. Accordingly, the School Language Project of the *Ikastolas* (EHIK 2009) integrates four languages: Basque (the NDL) as the main language of education (through immersion or maintenance depending on the learner's background), Spanish (the state DL), English (the international *lingua franca*) and French (a neighbouring language). The four languages are given different roles at each level of schooling depending on their presence in the learners' environment outside school, their linguistic proximity and the level of learners' cognitive development (Elorza and Muñoa 2008:92). Consistent with the principle of *interdependence* (Cummins 1981), and the holistic and dynamic nature of multilingualism (e.g. Grosjean 1989; Cook 1995; Herdina and Jessner 2002), as explained above, the teaching and learning programmes for all four languages have been integrated into a common curriculum that makes the best of, as well as fosters and nurtures, the unique proficiency of the multilingual student (Elorza 2013). The foundation of this curriculum is learners' *common underlying proficiency* (Cummins 1981), which facilitates comparison, contrast, and interaction among languages and allows for the transfer of skills and metalinguistic knowledge acquired in one language into learners' additional languages.

According to Elorza (2013), the complementary framework for multilingualism in the Basque model has the following characteristics:

- *Development of oral and written skills for comprehension and production*. Listening, speaking, reading and writing are taught in similar ways in the four languages, reinforcing strategies that learners can use throughout their language development. New skills are introduced in the non-dominant language (Basque), then transfer is facilitated through comparison and contrast exercises into other languages.
- *Exposure to discursive styles and text genres*. Although there are distinct differences between the cultures associated with the languages of the

curriculum, the complementary framework is based on a set of common characteristics of written language. These characteristics are related to text structure, organisation of content, linguistic functions and rhetorical resources within a range of text genres. For instance, the characteristics of a story, letter or encyclopaedia entry are presented in one language, then applied and developed further in other languages.

- *Facilitation of metalinguistic awareness*. The ability to talk about languages and their characteristics is known as metalinguistic awareness. To some extent, bi- or multilingual individuals develop metalinguistic awareness automatically (Bialystok 2001), but the Basque model facilitates acquisition through processes of observation and analysis. Cross-linguistic work like comparison and contrast and translation exercises reinforce metalinguistic awareness, which facilitates the transfer of skills between languages (Jessner 2006, 2008).
- *Language attitudes and intercultural awareness*. The curriculum encourages learners to attend to societal attitudes towards the different languages and their associated cultures. This helps learners consider their own motivations and personal choices about how and when to use or learn the languages of the curriculum. The programme intentionally prioritises the learning of Basque, a non-dominant heritage language, alongside other more dominant languages, to promote the empowerment of learners' communities and to expand the number of active speakers (and readers and writers).

Benson and Elorza (2015) argue that the integrated language curriculum should be a model for planning coherent and efficient education that results in multilingualism and multiliteracies. Such an approach allows for new content to be introduced in learners' stronger languages, for the content load to be shared between languages in which learners have more balanced proficiency and generally for unnecessary repetition or contradiction to be avoided. This type of curriculum makes the learning of each subsequent language easier and faster, because all of the previous linguistic knowledge built up by the multilingual learner is taken into account when a new language is introduced.

Applying the multilingual curriculum in low-income contexts

The Basque experience in multilingual curriculum development opens up a range of possibilities for experiences in low-income multilingual contexts. First, those children who come to school with communicative capacity in two or more languages, along with those who arrive monolingual, will have the opportunity to expand their language proficiencies. Next, multiple literacy skills will be increasingly useful in learners' lives, no matter whether they are from non-dominant or dominant groups. Finally, an integrated multilingual curriculum offers a way to practise what is currently known in theory about language learning, transfer and literacy development in multiple language settings. The aims set for each language are appropriate, calling not for native-like proficiency in all but for a holistic multilingualism, which involves developing a range of proficiency levels in various domains with overall benefits to communicative and social competence.

If an integrated multilingual curriculum is to be applied to education in low-income contexts, there is a need to think more creatively as well as strategically about how

classrooms can better be organised. First, teachers need to be placed according to their linguistic proficiencies as well as their methodological practices, in relation to the demands of the curriculum. This means that teachers need to be trained to maximise their own as well as their students' linguistic and literacy-based resources. It is unrealistic to expect teachers to be highly literate and proficient in all of the languages called for in the curriculum (e.g. Benson 2004). This means that classrooms need to be organised in different ways so that teachers can specialise in the languages they know and teach best.

The multilingual curriculum has important implications for assessment, which is routinely done only in dominant languages in low-income contexts, with dismal (and arguably invalid) results. Adopting realistic proficiency levels for each language, and specifying the assessment criteria for each, represents a way forward, but we should not stop with language assessment. Because non-linguistic content is taught through two or more languages, it should be assessed through two or more languages. This would give learners an opportunity to show what they know and for teachers to effectively diagnose learning needs.

It must be acknowledged that moving from a monolingual dominant language-based approach to a multilingual one represents a paradigm shift for educators and academics as well as parents and community members. One risk, as pointed out by Benson and Elorza (2015), is the adoption of multilingual modes or methods without challenging the power imbalances between dominant and non-dominant cultural and linguistic communities. As mentioned above, both Bolivia and South Africa have included clauses in their educational language policies to support the learning of non-dominant languages by learners from dominant groups, but these policies lack widespread implementation. If such countries adopted an integrated multilingual curriculum, they could make greater progress towards promoting non-dominant language proficiency as part of all learners' linguistic repertoires. An added benefit could be improved communication and mutual understanding, and an equalising of the educational playing field.

Another potential risk in applying a multilingual curriculum in low-income contexts is that dominant languages like English or French may be added before non-dominant languages are fully developed in learners' linguistic repertoires. This has happened even in the Basque Country, where schools rush into working in dominant languages without focusing on Basque development, or where Basque and other DLs are taught without consideration for learners' existing linguistic proficiency in languages like Mandarin or Quechua (Etxeberria and Elosegi 2008). An equally dangerous trend is to adopt Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) methodology, which focuses on monolingual dominant language teaching of non-linguistic content (e.g. Marsh 2002). This methodology negates the multilingual repertoire of both learners and teachers and fails to facilitate transfer between languages.

Despite the risks in putting an integrated multilingual curriculum into practice in low-income contexts, the benefits are potentially great. Building on learners' existing linguistic repertoires, maximising the efficiency of cross-linguistic transfer and modelling multilingual behaviours are all aspects of putting a multilingual curriculum into practice.

Conclusion

This chapter has argued in favour of a policy of Multilingual Education For All (MEFA) and I have described how the Basque integrated multilingual curriculum could be an inspiration for low-income countries in promoting the use of learners' own languages, whether dominant or non-dominant, while developing multiple linguistic, cognitive and intercultural resources that will stand them in good stead in this increasingly interconnected world. Implementing MEFA involves creating a paradigm shift in the way we have seen classroom teaching, curriculum and assessment, and thus represents a challenge for all educators. However, taking a multilingual approach is the right thing to do; it is consistent with prevailing theories about languages and literacy learning, promoting multilingualism and multiliteracies by teaching all languages to realistic levels, raising learners' metalinguistic awareness and facilitating cross-linguistic transfer.

An integrated multilingual curriculum recognises, promotes and protects non-dominant local or heritage languages while teaching regional and international languages. It is likely to promote more equitable power relations and mutual understanding, and as such should leave no-one – least of all members of dominant groups – monolingual. As a result, multilingual education for all has the potential to transform the lives of all learners as well as the societies in which they live.

Notes

[1] See e.g. www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/education-for-all/the-efa-movement/jomtien-1990/

[2] See e.g. www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/achieving-the-millennium-development-goals/mdgs/

[3] The International Conference on Language, Education and the Millennium Development Goals was held on 9-11 November 2010. See UNESCO (2010, 2012).

[4] *Ikastolas* are Basque-medium schools committed to the promotion and development of the Basque language and culture. The *Ikastolen Elkartea*, a network of over 100 schools, organises curriculum development, publication of Basque-medium materials for all subjects and levels, in-service teacher training programmes, evaluation services and programmes to foster Basque cultural practices.

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7

Comparing the learning and participatory trajectories of Saora children in 'MLE Plus' and Odia-medium schools in Odisha

Sakshi Manocha and Minati Panda

Introduction

School and schooling experiences are not the same for every child. Children belonging to different social groups, classes, races, abilities and disabilities are positioned and viewed differently in the social world of the school. Various research studies have pointed out that children belonging to dominant groups enjoy numerous advantages in the classroom as their culture, their histories and their voices are echoed in the school syllabi. In contrast, the students whose language and culture have no place in the school often drop behind; all one can hear is their silence and all one sees are their big vacant eyes (Mohanty 2000; Aikio-Puoskari 2009; Yonjan-Tamang et al. 2009). The design of the school and the curriculum give facility and legitimacy to children belonging to dominant groups to use their cultural capital in the school and assert their voices; they are seen as active participants with the potential to go ahead in life. *Au contraire*, children belonging to minority groups who do not have access to this cultural capital are looked down upon by the school authorities and are at the risk of being labelled or categorised negatively and are often blamed for their poor achievement levels.

A wide range of literature has highlighted that language and cultural barriers restrict the ability of minority and indigenous or tribal children to comprehend and learn in class because the medium of instruction and the cultural practices of the school are very different from their own language and cultural practices (Mohanty 2006, 2008, 2009; Jhingran 2005; Heugh 2000, 2009). As a result, linguistic minority children are unable to perform well in school and are 'pushed out' of the school under the cloak of being 'dropouts'. In order to address the issue of high dropout rates and the poor educational performance of tribal children in India, mother-tongue-based multilingual education (MTB MLE) programmes were initiated in Odisha and Andhra Pradesh in 2006 and 2007 respectively. Multilingual education aims to address the educational needs of tribal children by using their mother tongue in the early years of their primary school and gradually shifting from the mother tongue (L1) to a state language, i.e. Odia and Telugu (L2), and then to a national or international language, i.e. English (L3).

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In addition to MLE programmes, a special intervention programme called 'MLE Plus' was implemented in eight of the Odisha MLE schools in two tribal languages – Saora and Kui – in the year 2007. The MLE Plus programme aimed at strengthening existing MLE practices in the classrooms, taking into consideration the philosophical underpinnings of critical pedagogy and the principles of the Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) approach of Cole and Engstrom (2007). Panda and Mohanty (2009) argued that the MLE Plus programme involves giving quality inputs for facilitating home-to-school transition through ongoing efforts for development of teaching-learning materials, classroom activities and transactional strategies based on a cultural psychological framework with emphasis on numeracy, literacy, oracy and cognitive practices in the respective language communities of the children. The MLE Plus approach started off with an exhaustive ethnographic survey of the everyday practices and knowledge of Saora and Kui communities with a view to using these cultural practices to evolve a set of classroom as well as community-based activities. The MLE Plus programme has also developed a number of activities that plan to empower not only the children but also the parents so that they can participate in their children's learning process:

> *In [the] MLE Plus program, the children's own cultural resources such as language, cultural artefacts, institutions and practices are used for teaching formal concepts and theories to them. A number of activities were planned to empower not only the children but also the parents so that they participate in children's learning processes. Activities were planned at the level of both the school and community for developing effective classroom pedagogy, based on children's everyday experiences. These interventions included motivating parents to send their children to school and closely monitoring the academic history of these children, developing the reading environment both in the community and in the school through a synergetic 'Read Together' approach. This approach provided authorship to the tribal villagers in these selected villages, for the documents/books published, on the basis of oral narratives provided by them on local history, ecology, stories, songs etc. and making these books a part of the 'Read Together' program. MLE Plus sought to develop the community's interest in children's schooling by developing community reading and learning resource centres, in which the oral tradition (storytelling and rhymes in the community) were linked to written texts.* (Panda and Mohanty 2009, 300-301)

Crucial questions that come to mind concern how the MLE and MLE Plus programmes differ from each other and whether they are based on the same or different perspectives:

> *On the surface, they seem to be based on the same perspective, both aiming at using children's everyday context and materials for classroom teaching and building community awareness for education in their mother tongues. But, MLE, being a fairly structured program, seems to be still adhering to a minimalistic agenda. What is required is intense engagement with pedagogic processes, a different quality of community participation, and establishment of regular 'give and take' between the school and the community resources and knowledge*

> *systems, with an objective of putting in place a critical pedagogy that helps the student question and challenge domination (Freire 2005). A social and educational vision of justice and equality needs to inform all the aspects of MLE. The MLE Plus program seeks to strengthen this aspect of MLE through qualitative changes in classrooms and community practices and by further reinforcing the cultural bases of school learning.* (Panda and Mohanty 2009, 309)

Nag (2014, 2017), in her study on theories and practices of multilingual education in India, found that the models of MLE used in India were largely guided by the MLE framework of the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL), where the major themes are 'transition', 'bridging' and 'mainstreaming' of minority language children. Her findings highlighted the fact that state MLE model practices were restricted in their use of tribal languages. The use of the tribal language was confined to serving as a unidirectional bridge to acquisition of the state language. There was minimal inclusion of the sociocultural context. The classrooms appeared to be largely teacher-centric with both language and other sociocultural resources failing to become useful mediating tools. On the other hand, the major theme of the CHAT-guided MLE Plus approach was a 'socioculturally rooted pedagogy' that aimed to strengthen the mother tongue and the conceptual understanding of the students. The MLE Plus classroom practices were found to be collaborative, marked by an extensive use of children's language and an elaborate use of their local knowledge systems. The symmetrical power distribution in the class, the non-restrictive use of the child's language and a pedagogy aimed at facilitating a continuous interweaving between children's everyday experiences and theoretical concepts not only enabled the sociocultural inclusion of children, but also created spaces in which to use their mediating potentials, leading to the creation of zones of proximal development in the classroom.

Pattanayak et al. (2015) argued that, even though multilingualism is a reality in India, it is institutional and educational practices that lead to dissonance. For instance, the problem of transition of tribal children from their mother tongue to the school languages is quite glaring and frequently documented (e.g. Mohanty 2000; Jhingran 2005). It is logical to contemplate why so little has been done to deal with this obvious barrier to children's home-to-school transition, which evidently is related to the high 'push-out' rate, educational failure and wide gender gap in the literacy rate, particularly for tribal children. Mohanty et al. (2009) argued that the large number of tribal and other minority languages in India, along with the complexities of discrepancy between home language and school language, have acted as effective deterrents to many proactive measures. Adding fuel to the fire is the quasi-federal nature of India's Constitution and governance, in which education is a concurrent responsibility of the central government as well as the provincial (state) governments. The states with large tribal populations, such as Odisha, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh, are generally poorer and lack the required resources to deal effectively with the problem of language barriers in the early education of tribal children (Mohanty 2009; John 2017). Mohanty et al. (2009) argued that contradictions between policy provisions and ground reality – leading to the 'forced submersion' of minority children in majority language classrooms with subtractive effects on

their mother tongues – continue to be the most pressing educational issue in the multilingual setting of India.

Numerous research studies have explained the subtractive effects of submersion models on children's language, yet in practice these models are quite popular. Many research studies have compared the academic achievement of children studying in MLE and Non-MLE schools; they have found that children in MLE schools performed significantly better than their Non-MLE counterparts in curricular areas like mathematics, environmental studies (EVS) and language (with very few exceptions). These studies have also highlighted significant differences in the metalinguistic abilities of children studying in MLE and Non-MLE schools. Various studies have confirmed the advantages of teaching in the mother tongue for school learning and achievement as well as for children's abstract and conceptual understanding (Lindholm-Leary 2001; Thomas and Collier 2002; Biswabandan 2009; Panda et al. 2011). A very common critique of such comparative studies is that this difference in performance could be due simply to differences in the teaching-learning materials employed in MLE, MLE Plus and Non-MLE schools. This chapter aims to address this criticism and show that differences in learning and achievement are not only due to differences in the medium of instruction and the teaching-learning materials employed in these schools. The chapter indicates that differences in the learning and participation of children are mostly due to the way the child's language and cultural resources are used as pedagogical tools to engage children in classroom discourse in MLE Plus[1] classrooms. The inclusion or exclusion of the child's linguistic resources and different kinds of teaching-learning practices in MLE Plus and Non-MLE classrooms turns these classrooms into 'figured worlds'[2] where minority language children are positioned differently.

Various comparative studies have highlighted the positive impact of including the mother tongue and cultural tools on the learning achievement, performance and self-esteem of tribal and other minority children. Not taking such steps reduces learning to a mere accumulation of the skills that are required to perform well on a task. Social theories of learning take learning beyond the confines of accumulating skills and doing well academically to a microgenetic and ontogenetic process of shifting participation in social practices. Panda (2007) highlighted the importance of participation and argued that children learn by participating in cultural activities and thinking through the concepts embedded in these cultural activities. It is difficult for a child to participate in classroom discourse until and unless he/she understands and relates to the concepts embedded in the discourse. Teaching the child in his/her mother tongue facilitates better comprehension and helps the child to relate to the classroom discourse. Change in ability through acquiring new skills enables children to transform who they are in practice and how they can contribute to practice through their participation.

This chapter aims to highlight the role of the child's language and cultural resources in giving children the ability and legitimacy to engage in classroom practices. It identifies the subsequent participatory trajectories that are formed when children's language and cultural experiences are included or excluded from the classroom community. Wenger's (1998) theory of Community of Practice (CoP) is employed

to examine the learning and participation of children in Odia-medium and MLE Plus classrooms. Learning is seen 'as change in ability to engage in practice, the understanding of why we engage in it and the resources we have at our disposal to do so' (Wenger 1998, 96). We draw on Wenger's idea of trajectories of participation, i.e., 'peripheral' and 'marginal', to explain the experiences of participation and learning.

Method

The data used in this chapter constitute part of the first author's PhD study (Manocha 2015). One Odia-medium school and one MLE Plus School in the Gajapati district of Odisha, where 99 per cent of the students are Saora-speaking children, were selected for the study. Students studying in Grades 3 and 4 and their teacher participated in this study. The authors have given fictitious names to the students to maintain their anonymity. Data were collected using qualitative methods, which included non-participant classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and field notes. Classroom observations emphasised the design of classrooms and pedagogic practices (for example, the sitting arrangement), the ways activities were designed, the teaching-learning material employed, the medium of instruction, how the teacher introduced a concept, the nature of participation in classroom activities, the nature of interactions in the classroom, and so on. Video recordings were made over 110 teaching hours covering the teaching and learning practices of different subjects; these video recordings were later transcribed and translated from Saora, first into Odia and then into English. The participants were asked to speak in the language that they were more comfortable with during the interviews and focus group discussion; these were audio-recorded. As the authors of this chapter are not fluent in Saora, a helper from the community who was fluent in Saora, Odia, and Hindi facilitated on-the-spot interpretation during data collection and transcribing and translation of audio and video recordings at later stages. Discourse analysis was used as a technique to analyse classroom discourse. The findings that emerged from this analysis are discussed in the following section.

Findings

The findings of the study are discussed under four headings:

- Practices in MLE Plus classrooms
- An example of pedagogic practices in an MLE Plus classroom
- Odia-medium classrooms
- Consequences of pedagogic practices in Odia-medium classrooms.

Practices in MLE Plus classrooms

Inclusive and child-centric pedagogic practices create a figured world in MLE Plus classrooms where Saora children speak from a position of authority.

The material world of the MLE Plus classroom depicted a multilingual rubric, where Saora language and cultural artefacts were foregrounded against the background of Odia and English. The language wall proudly incorporated charts and posters in Saora, Odia and English. The language corner comprised handmade alphabet cards;

language-related teaching-learning materials (TLMs) in Saora, Odia and English; colours, paints and pens; various story books in Odia; and bilingual (Saora-Odia) big books and small books. Books about village history were also kept in the language corner to ensure easy access by the children. The Mathematics and EVS corners, too, carried artefacts from both Saora and Odia cultures. All these things were kept in the open on a table, so that children could freely explore, play with, read and use these materials. MLE Plus classrooms opened multiple paths for children to reconnoitre and interact with the material resources available in and outside the classroom. Different corners and walls generated prospects for children to see connections between different disciplines and their life experiences. The local adaptations of various games painted on the classroom floor enabled teachers to create spaces in the classroom to teach children various mathematical concepts while engaging them in the games instead of using the traditional lecture mode.

The rules and norms that operated in MLE Plus classrooms invested trust in Saora children and allowed them to freely explore and use material resources in the classroom; this created a sense that the artefacts and TLMs were not only a property of the school but that they also belonged to the children. Children were observed to explore the mathematics, science and language corners enthusiastically while working on their tasks and playing. They talked about and discussed the material, created their own games with the material and innovated new meanings and uses for these artefacts. For example, they engaged with the texts in storybooks and then came up with their own stories. The local artefacts kept in various corners provided material for children to engage with in their make-believe plays. The teachers in MLE Plus Schools used TLMs to engage children in teaching-learning practices by relating abstract concepts with concrete examples; this helped to augment children's understanding. The children's own ingenuity then led them to discover new uses for the artefacts and TLMs as they worked on activities in the classroom.

The freedom to speak in their own language, the flexible sitting arrangements and the freedom to work with friends helped the MLE Plus classroom to break the traditional political alignment and created a figured world where both groups – students and teachers alike – spoke from positions of authority. The teacher encouraged children to talk freely, to experiment and to take charge of classroom activities and their learning. Children in MLE Plus classrooms could use their linguistic and cultural resources to inquire, reason, explain things, build on arguments and freely express themselves. This gave children the opportunity for meaningful participation in the classroom community; the children enjoyed similar power to that which they enjoyed in their other communities, such as the family, the neighbourhood, the playground and so on. The following example of classroom practices highlights these points.

An example of pedagogic practices in an MLE Plus classroom

Pedagogic practices in MLE Plus classrooms give Saora children the ability, legitimacy and facility to contribute in classroom discourses.

In an EVS lesson which aimed to help children to understand the difference between 'living' and 'non-living' things, the teacher started the activity by making children explore their surroundings. They looked at, touched, smelled, tasted, differentiated

and collected various things. The teacher, instead of using abstract concepts, generated curiosity in the children by using objects available in their surroundings as threads to knit the academic web of environmental sciences. Analysis of the discourse of this class revealed that activity building started with creating room for the children to collectively explore their surroundings, engage in discussion and dialogues, and collect local artefacts that were a part of their everyday life. While collecting things, the children talked to their friends in Saora, discussed the characteristics of the things that they were collecting and used their exploratory skills to their best. These discourses entered the classroom along with the children; they not only discussed who had brought what but also engaged in discussions about the shape, size, colour and classification of plants and other characteristics of the things that they had collected. Children talked about their surroundings and local artefacts in the classroom as if they were discussing these things in the playground. The exchange of knowing laughter, casual body language, running around and social language used in the classroom all resonated with what one witnesses in the playground. Thus, the world of activity built by the children in the classroom was not very different from the world that they created for themselves in the playground. From time to time, in order to reinstate discipline in the classroom, the teacher asked the children to settle down and attend to her.

The teacher, instead of taking a lead from the children's discussions, started the class by reading from the textbook and then, speaking in Saora, explained to the children the characteristics of living and non-living things, as can be seen in Data Extract 1.

Data Extract 1[3]	
57.	T: ***Things that can breathe are called living things.***
58.	T: ***See, you are living because you can breathe.***
59.	T: ***Things that cannot breathe are called non-living things. Like, pot, stones, soil. They are non-living things.***
60.	T: ***Can they breathe?***
61.	S (A) (high pitch) ***No didi***[4]***.***
62.	T: ***Can this stone breathe?***
63.	S (A) (high pitch) ***No.***
64.	T: ***Can date seeds breathe?***
65.	S (A) (high pitch) ***No.***
66.	T: ***That means they are non-living things.***
67.	T: ***Which things are called living things?***
68.	T: ***Human beings, goat, hen, ox and ...?***
69.	S (A) (high pitch) ***Buffalo, pigs, dog, lizard ...***
70.	T: ***Kartik, leave that lizard. See it moves from there.***
71.	T: ***That is called living thing. Things that have life, they can move from one place to other place.***
72.	T: ***Now we will know about non-living things***.

In this excerpt, the teacher started explaining the concepts of 'living' and 'non-living' in Saora by defining their characteristics (see turn numbers 57 and 59). Explanation and exemplification with the help of concrete examples coming from the children's everyday lives emerged as a predominant teaching-learning practice in the MLE Plus classroom (turns 58, 59, 68). Reiterating was also used in conjunction with explaining and exemplifying mathematical or scientific concepts to repeat what the example at hand required (turns 60, 62, 64, 66); at times this was done in the form of a question, as in turn number 60.

A feature worth noticing about participation in this class is that the majority of the students together tended to answer simple questions raised by the teacher. The children usually did not wait for turns and answered the teacher's questions in chorus (see turns number 61, 63, 65, 69). Wang and Murphy (2005) have highlighted the advantages of choral responses. They point out that frequent use of choral responses can reinforce students' identification with the group and create a sense of solidarity. In addition, Wang (2005) highlighted the fact that children feel less apprehensive in choral responses as each one of them gets a chance 'to be on the floor without bidding.' Here the group voice instead of the individual voice was perceived to be the answer.

The dialogic nature of the classroom discourses, use of children's language and examples from everyday life created an intersubjective space where the contributions of both children and teacher mattered and sustained discussions on the topic under consideration. In this EVS class, it was observed that the teacher was responsible for the explanations during the class discussions. Though the question and answer sequences were led by the teacher, children also played an important role in initiating the dialogues by asking questions. The teacher took initial charge of the activity, started the discussion, explained the concepts and created an academic space for children to enter the dialogue. After understanding the concept, children gradually started contributing to these discussions while working on the task in groups or individually.

There were instances when the children's questions or statements became the entry point for discussions, as in Data Extract 2.

Data Extract 2[5]	
112.	Sapoli and Elizabeth (in confused tone but high pitch): ***Do pumpkins breathe?***
113.	T: ***Yes, pumpkin grows up on a tree.***
114.	T: ***See, when you sow a seed it grows into a tree. Tree gives fruit that means it is a living thing.***
115.	Sapoli: ***Yes, didi.***
116.	Pinuel: ***Didi, does monkey breathe?***
117.	T: ***Yes.***

118.	T (To the researcher): *They get confused when I teach in Odia. They cannot answer while reading in Odia but can easily answer when we teach them in our language.*
119.	Galiyas: ***Didi, do our houses breathe?***
120.	(high pitch) ***No.***
121.	T: ***No, house does not have life. It is made from wood. We cut the tree and take the wood from it and use it to build the house.***
122.	T: ***For example, can we breathe after dying? Can we breathe when we burn the dead body? Like that when we pluck the fruit or cut down the tree, it becomes lifeless.***

In this excerpt, when Elizabeth and Sapoli raised a question (turn 112), the teacher instantly provided an answer. After hearing the teacher's response – that since fruit grows on trees, trees also breathe and are living thing (see turn number 119) – Galiyas asked, 'Do our houses breathe?' Instead of entering into a dialogue and finding out why Galiyas had asked that question, the teacher assumed that Galiyas had become confused and had concluded that houses could breathe; the teacher then provided a quick solution. In fact, the teacher could have used such confusion as an entry point for initiating a discussion that would have developed students' critical thinking skills and content knowledge; however, the teacher curtailed the discussion in order to finish the class. Teachers often blamed the bulky syllabus, the paucity of time available, having too many classes to handle and the burden of administrative work for not being able to engage children in conceptual talk and academic discourse. Academic discussions were cursory due to the pressure of handling multiple grades in the same class. The teacher was observed to avoid in-depth treatment even of potentially interesting topics. The classroom discourse remained confined to everyday matters so that the teacher could mediate 'interweaving of concepts'[6] but failed in replacement of everyday understanding with the more 'sophisticated conventionalised academic understanding.' Despite these tensions, non-restrictive use of the child's language and the inclusive pedagogic practices facilitated a continuous interweaving between children's everyday experiences and theoretical concepts that enabled children optimally to draw on their language, previous experiences and other cultural resources to build on the arguments, ideas and subject matter under consideration.

The sitting arrangement in this activity positioned the teacher as an observer and mediator, where she facilitated the participation of the children by explaining to them what to do; once the children had understood the activity, she took a back seat. The children moved from the periphery to the centre of the activity, where they began by understanding the task and then later took over control. The rules and regulations that operated in the classroom gave the children free access to the TLMs and other resources. Using the child's linguistic and cultural resources as pedagogical tools prevented dominant languages and cultural knowledge from becoming 'social goods' in the classroom community. Inclusive practices opened channels for Saora language and culture to be treated as valuable resources in the classroom. Manocha and Panda (2015) found that children in MLE Plus schools studied and understood the subject

matter taught to them. The confidence with which children participated in activities and talked about their learning spoke volumes about their conceptual understanding and abilities as learners.

Odia-medium classrooms

There is no room for the Saora language or Saora children in the figured world of Odia-medium classrooms.

The way that Odia-medium classrooms and teaching-learning practices were designed clearly undermined the role of Saora linguistic and cultural resources. The Saora language, stories, history, symbol systems, metaphors and local concepts were effectively kept out of the classroom and were not counted as knowledge in the social world of the classroom. The medium of instruction, textbooks and TLMs was Odia and all the interactions within the classroom and with the texts was confined to Odia. Even the artefacts used to decorate the classrooms – posters, soft-boards, chart and paintings – lacked any trace of Saora language or culture. The only place assigned to Saora art in the school was on the borders of outer walls of the school building; this location reflected the status assigned to Saora cultural resources and children in Odia-medium schools. Saora language and artefacts were excluded from the classroom design and practices on the grounds of being incompatible with the purpose of teaching-learning. The supremacy of Odia (and English) language, artefacts, concepts and terms in the classroom and pedagogic practices reproduced the cultural and ideological hegemony, thereby turning the Odia-medium classroom into a figured world where dominant cultural meanings were valued more than the local meanings produced in the cultural practices of the Saora community.

Strict instructions to speak only in Odia on the school premises, an emphasis on working individually, restrictions on movement in the classroom and the imposition of strict discipline in the Odia-medium classroom turned it into a figured world where Saora children had no voice. Not only were children instructed explicitly to use Odia in school, but classroom observations revealed that, if children tried to speak in Saora in the presence of the teacher, they faced dire consequences. For instance:

> *While solving problems in a math class, Rahul, oblivious of the presence of the teacher in the classroom, asked Vikhyat to pass his notebook in Saora. Within seconds, Rahul received a tight slap on his head and was scolded for using Saora in the classroom. The teacher yelled at Rahul saying, 'Why were you talking in Saora? Speak in Odia. All of you sit at a distance and do not talk while doing sums.' Rahul trembled with fear and got back to work with tears in his eyes. Seeing Rahul being scolded for talking, other children too distanced themselves from each other and quietly worked on the problems.* (Manocha and Panda 2015)

Thus, Odia was not only the medium of instruction but also the language that was mandatory even for informal interactions in the classroom.

Since the TLMs provided by the state were expensive, they were considered by the teacher to be precious and he often kept them locked in his office:

> *I abstain from keeping books and TLMs in the classroom as children steal or spoil them by mishandling them. All these materials are quite expensive, therefore, I always keep them locked in the office and give them to children under my supervision.* (Interview with Teacher, 10 November 2012)[7]

This statement highlights that the preservation of the TLMs was more valuable to the teacher than was engaging children in teaching and learning practices with the help of these artefacts. The teacher's distrust of the children with the TLMs created an environment where they could not explore, use, manipulate, play, break and remake these rich materials. The materials – that could have been valuable resources for scaffolding the development of children's language and other skills – remained unused.

Distrust and asymmetrical power relations, in which only the teacher spoke from a position of authority, resulted in the establishment of a traditional hierarchical student-teacher relationship in the classroom community. This led to an unequal distribution of resources in the classroom. The teacher in the Odia-medium school controlled all the resources and he made Odia the language that was associated with prestige and power in the classroom community. Gaining proficiency in Odia was a valued enterprise and was the goal of the teaching-learning practices. By re-establishing the linguistic hierarchy in the classroom structure, the Odia-medium school positioned Saora children in an unfavourable position as learners to begin with, then the unequal distribution of resources curtailed their possibilities of participation in the community (Manocha and Panda 2015).

Consequences of pedagogic practices in Odia-medium classrooms

Pedagogic practices curtail and hamper the facility and legitimacy of Saora children's participation in classroom discourses. The example of classroom practices shown in Data Extract 3 demonstrates how the exclusion of children's linguistic resources and traditional teaching-learning practices in the Odia-medium school resulted in experiences of non-participation and pushed Saora children to the margins of the classroom community.

While teaching the concept of 'daily habits' in an EVS class, the teacher instructed Grades 3 and 4 children to stand in two rows facing each the other and inquire of each other about their 'daily habits.'

Data Extract 3[8]	
10.	T: *One group will ask a question and other group of student will answer.*
11.	T: *Example, first question, what do we do after waking up in morning?*
12.	T: *Other group will reply, we brush our teeth after waking up in morning.*
	[Janita smiled and pointed towards her teeth.]
13.	T: *Then, other group will ask first group, what do you do after brushing?*
14.	Vikhyat (in a low pitch): *Wash our face.*
15.	T: *After washing our face what do we do?*

In this excerpt, the teacher began the class by engaging the children in an activity using Odia as the only medium of instruction. The teacher assumed that children knew the concept of 'daily habits'. The teacher aimed at explaining to the children how to do the 'task' (see turns 11 and 12) and made no attempts to bring in and relate examples from children's everyday life to the concept he purported to be teaching in that class. Here, the teacher elaborated on the procedures or characteristics, gave example on how to do the task without making the children understand what they were learning and why they were learning it. As the teacher failed to link the use of Odia and environmental science concepts with the life experiences of Saora children, the children could not understand how to use the concept of 'daily habits' to engage in a dialogue and participate in the activity.

After explaining the task to the children, the teacher asked them to carry it out. The children stood there tongue tied, avoiding eye contact with the teacher and the researcher. They had no clue how to proceed or what to do and so they could not perform the task. There was pin drop silence for ten minutes. The children, who had been asked to work in two groups, failed to initiate the activity and engage in a dialogue and discussion. They stared at each other blankly, not knowing what to do. As they were not allowed to use their language and their ways of speaking and interacting, they failed to interact with each other and take forward the activity. To break the silence, the teacher tried to explain the task again and eventually gave up. The teacher told the researcher that 'tribal children are shy, dull and not as bright as Odia children,' and so they perform poorly in academic activities. When the teacher saw that the children were unable to do the task, he immediately took command of the activity and started instructing them what to do. He told children that, if they could not speak in Odia, that was fine, he would ask questions and they could simply enact their daily habits (see Data Extract 4).

Data Extract 4	
24.	T: *Ok, let me tell you about daily habits and you all enact it.*
	[Children nodded with a smile]
25.	T: *Ok, ok how do you bathe?*
26	T: *Enact how you bathe.*
	[Students acted bathing]
27.	T: *Yes, like that. Like that!*
28.	T: *How do you drink water? Now enact that.*
	[Students pretended to drink water]
29.	T: *Yes, indicating towards your mouth.*
30.	T: *Well, how do you read?*

In Data Extracts 3 and 4, the teacher used up most of the talk time and hardly created any opportunity for the children to speak. The teacher treated Grades 3 and 4 Saora children as though they were toddlers when he tried to make them learn Odia concepts by linking Odia words with actions (see turns 24, 25, 28, 29). Analysis of

discourse in this EVS class (compared with Data Extracts 1 and 2) showed that 80 per cent of the teacher's instructions were aimed towards controlling students' actions to complete the task rather than engaging them with academic concepts and discourse. Emphasis on controlling actions towards completion of task – instead of engaging the Saora children in classroom discourse – not only prevented them from learning how to use their own language or Odia to contribute to classroom discourse but also reduced them to mindless puppets dancing to the tunes of the teacher. The teacher's emphasis on controlling activities reduced the possibilities for Saora children to enhance their existing linguistic repertoire or acquire a new linguistic repertoire in Odia which would enable them to explain, reason or enquire about academic concepts. The children could neither understand the environmental science concepts behind the activity nor could they learn to apply these concepts while working on the task or in their everyday lives.

The dominant pedagogical practice was aimed simply at 'completion' of the activity; the teacher did not pay attention to the children's acquisition of technical skills, leave alone development of their conceptual understanding. The question and answer sequences led by the teacher facilitated the completion of the activity but without substantial inputs from the children. The teacher was in charge of the activity from beginning to end; only his voice mattered and there was no space for the voices of the Saora children. The children were mute and simply followed the orders of the teacher, learning how to link actions to Odia words. The close-ended nature of the questions (turns 25, 28, 30) required children to respond either by using actions or by giving one word answers. The teacher emphasised explanations and exemplification of the task, not concepts. 'Daily habits' was not an abstract scientific concept that was incomprehensible for Saora children. The teacher's inability to elucidate what 'daily habits' mean, to explain how and why they are relevant in day-to-day life and to relate them to Saora cultural practices hampered the children's understanding. In addition to this, the emphasis of speaking only in Odia not only curbed the children's voices but also took away the ability, facility and legitimacy from Saora children to contribute to, take responsibility for and shape meaning in classroom discourse. By depriving children of the legitimacy to express themselves and their views in their own language and by preventing them from bringing in their everyday life experiences, the teacher reduced 'daily habits' to a meaningless concept that existed only in the four walls of the school.

After completion of this activity, the teacher asked children to copy a page on 'daily habits' from the textbook and went to the staff room. A few older children understood the teacher's instruction and began to do the copying, while the younger ones blankly looked here and there. The older children explained the task to the younger ones in Saora and they also started copying the chapter from the book. Dominant practices which emerged in Odia-medium classrooms were copying and rote-memorisation of texts. Older children who had reached Grade 4 had memorised multiplication tables in Odia but could not solve basic multiplication or division sums. They could repeat Odia poems after the teacher but could not answer a single question related to the poems. Thus, children were gradually learning to speak, read and write in Odia but could not apply this learning while solving problems assigned to them in the classroom.

A lot of Saora children were very talkative and actively participated in informal interactions with the researcher. They told her about their village, friends and family; they explained to her the games they played; but, whenever they were asked about classroom activities, they became very hesitant and uncomfortable. Silence and inability to talk about their learning in the classroom were common in most of the follow-up interviews after the class. None of the children could talk about the subject matter taught in the classroom. The children even refused to answer in Saora, an indicator that they could not learn much in this class. Another plausible explanation for the Saora children being unwilling or unable to participate in the interview could be that, since they were so used to following the orders of the teacher, they had no clue how to use either their own language or Odia to talk about their learning.

The sitting arrangement in the classroom positioned the teacher as an authority figure who took the central position and was in complete charge of the activity. The Saora children – already at a disadvantageous position – were further pushed to the margins of the classroom community, as they could neither understand nor express themselves in Odia nor could they understand concepts or carry activities forward. The exclusion of Saora and submersing Saora children in Odia prevented improvement in the quality of classroom talk and failed to foster the development of scientific ideas and arguments in the classroom. The children did not understand and did not learn to use the dominant language and cultural tools which would have enabled them to contribute in the classroom discourses; consequently their potential as learners was undermined. The ceaseless experience of voicelessness and alienation not only distanced Saora children from the teacher but also foreclosed spaces where Saora children might have been able to see themselves as competent members of the classroom community.

Conclusion

The pedagogic practices of both MLE Plus and Odia-medium schools were based on very different assumptions about language and learning. On the one hand, Odia-medium schools clearly undermined the role of the child's linguistic and cultural tools in their learning and followed a submersion model of language learning. There was no dearth of good teaching-learning material available in Odia-medium schools, but the teacher never used it as a pedagogical tool to engage children in academic discourses. Exclusionary teaching-learning practices and emphasis on copying and rote memorisation of texts resulted in Saora children passively adopting knowledge as passed down by their teachers. On the contrary, the MLE Plus programme, with CHAT as its founding theoretical framework and multilingualism as its goal, saw the children's language and cultural artefacts as important mediating tools in the process of learning. The MLE Plus programme assumed that children learn by participating in activities that interest and matter to them. Children in MLE Plus Schools were learning to use their linguistic and cultural tools to participate in classroom discourses and successfully complete tasks assigned to them.

However, the findings from the MLE Plus School were not black and white; there were grey areas of tension. For instance, the classroom discourse in the MLE Plus School usually remained confined to everyday interaction; the teacher could not engage children in academic discourse where children could replace concrete everyday

concepts with abstract scientific or mathematical concepts. This draws our attention to the fact that – even though MLE Plus classrooms had created spaces for student autonomy, collaborative work, dialogues and discussions – this is just a beginning. We still have a fair way to go to ensure that minority children feel as though they are central participants in their classroom communities. We need to train teachers to use children's linguistic and cultural artefacts as pedagogical resources and not reduce them to mere 'tokens'. Jhingran (2009) suggested that teacher training should include a strong component of appropriate language teaching practices in early grades, i.e. time for oral work, communicative use of language, etc. In addition, teachers also need to be trained to enhance community participation and bridge the gap between school and community. These goals will remain a distant dream until the time when policymakers and MLE practitioners are able to identify and strengthen good MLE practices.

Most of the mother-tongue-based MLE programmes are based on early exit-transitional models where the child's language (L1) is used as a medium of instruction only until Grade 3 and then there is a complete shift from mother tongue (L1) to the state language i.e. Odia (L2) by the end of Grade 4. Such early-exit transitional models run a risk of being subtractive in effect. Thus, it is very important to ensure that there is a long-term state commitment backed by policy interventions that maintains use of the child's home language until later stages (beyond primary grades) in schools. Secondly, since MTB MLE programmes are mostly implemented in tribal areas, so these programmes are thought to be 'only for tribal children'. If we want tribal children to be central participants in our education system then we will have to advocate that MLE is for All. Else, we will keep living in an unequal world where children from dominant linguistic groups will continue to be central participants and tribal children will remain at the margins of the education system.

Notes

[1] Since various researches have shown that the MLE Plus programme was more socioculturally rooted and aimed at strengthening existing MLE practices through higher 'give and take' between school and community, it made sense to select an MLE Plus school for the purpose of this research.

[2] Holland et al. (1998) argued that cultural practices are 'figured worlds' that carry with them a set of norms, expectations and ideas that constrain and enable particular kinds of participation. Many researchers see the classroom as a figured world where both teacher and students occupy different positions and roles. Usually, the norms, rules and values (shared by the dominant society) authorise the teachers to operate from the position of authority and introduce children to the normative structures in the classroom such as explaining to them certain responsibilities and duties, certain ways of acting, behaving and interacting in the classroom (Gutierrez et al. 1995; Gee 2000).

[3] Transcription conventions: Bold italics denote interactions in the Saora language, which were later translated into English. T denotes Teacher; S denotes Students; S(A) refers to many students speaking together; R denotes Researcher.

[4] Children in MLE Plus schools address their teacher as Didi, which is a colloquial term used in India for elder sister.

[5] Transcription convention: Bold italics denote interactions in Saora, later translated into English. Italics denote interactions in Odia, later translated into English.

[6] Panda and Mohanty (2009, 305) see 'interweaving of concepts' as 'maintenance of and interaction between the everyday and the scientific concepts'.

[7] A portion of this data has also been used in another paper by the same authors (Manocha and Panda 2015).

[8] Transcription convention here and in Data Extract 4: Italics denote interactions in Odia, later translated into English.

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8

Theoretical assumptions regarding the mind-culture-language relationship underlying MLE models in India and their impact on resulting practices

Shivani Nag

Introduction

There is no country in the world where speakers of only one language reside. On the contrary, there are several nations where the number of languages spoken exceeds the total number of countries recognised by the United Nations. Yet surprisingly, it is 'multilinguality' and not 'monolinguality' which, both as an educational aim as well as an approach, requires determined persuasion and a sustained movement.

In recent times, in addition to concerns for safeguarding linguistic diversity, addressing comprehension problems arising due to language mismatch in schools and the accumulating research evidence supporting the cognitive advantages of multilingual education (MLE) have ensured that MLE programmes have been initiated on a pilot or experimental basis in several countries. This is a juncture that requires that these programmes be critically reviewed so that they can be strengthened and their scope expanded.

The present chapter aims at critically reviewing MLE programmes in India by examining their underlying theoretical assumptions and emerging practices. Only those MLE programmes started with state initiatives were selected for review. The sample therefore comprised one MLE programme each in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Assam plus two MLE programmes in the state of Odisha.

MLE models in India

An attempt to critically review the MLE programmes in India requires a brief discussion of what one considers the desirable goals of an MLE programme to be, against which the programmes can be evaluated. Originally, 'MLE' has been understood to mean the use of two or more languages as media of instruction in subjects other than the languages themselves (Andersson and Boyer 1978). However, in 2009, Mohanty and colleagues expanded the definition to include 'multilingualism and, preferably, multiliteracy, as a goal at the end of formal schooling' (Mohanty et al. 2009). This broadening of the definition was crucial in order to distinguish between

H. Coleman (ed.). 2017. *Multilingualisms and Development*. London: British Council. ISBN 978-0-86355-840-5

a) bilingual/multilingual programmes that aimed at using a child's mother tongue as a bridge towards the acquisition of languages considered 'mainstream' and b) multilingual programmes that acknowledged multiplicity of languages both as an academic resource as well as a desirable goal. The difference in definition also opens up space for language to be used as more than just a tool of sensitive transition (as opposed to forced submersion) in the second language.

Additionally, the goals of multiliteracy further create a possibility where – moving beyond restricted transitional goals – a child's language also offers itself as a potential sociocultural tool that could aid the process of concept formation. Sociocultural learning theorists have investigated the role of cultural tools in the development of cognition. Bruner has argued that:

> *How the mind works is itself dependent on the tools at its disposal. 'How the hand works' for example, cannot be fully appreciated unless one also takes into account whether it is equipped with a screwdriver, a pair of scissors, or a laser-beam gun.* (Bruner 1996, 2)

Earlier, elaborating on the significance of 'language' as a key cultural tool, Cole and Engeström had written:

> *Cultural artefacts are both material and symbolic; they regulate interaction with one's environment and oneself. In this respect, they are 'tools' broadly conceived, and the master tool is language.* (Cole and Engeström 1992, 9)

In keeping with this understanding of language as an active cultural agent shaping cognitive development, the MLE programmes of Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Assam and Chhattisgarh are analysed here.

The MLE initiatives by the state in Andhra Pradesh (AP), Odisha and Chhattisgarh – together with the mother-tongue-based MLE programmes (MTB MLE) being implemented by different tribal groups in Assam under the joint guidance of SIL (formerly the Summer Institute of Linguistics) and the Linguistics Department of Gauhati University – show considerable similarities in terms of programme structure and stated goals.

For instance, the major aim outlined in the MLE guideline document prepared by the Rajiv Vidya Mission[1] in AP is, 'gradual transition from Mother Language to Regional Language within first five years of schooling' (RVM 2009; Reddy 2011). The draft MLE Policy submitted to the Government of Chhattisgarh also recommends use of the mother tongue with tribal children in Grades 1 and 2 'in order to mainstream them' in later grades. It further mentions 'bridging' as a key strategy to realise this goal (Department of School Education 2009). In Assam, a pilot programme started by a non-governmental organisation called Promotion and Advancement of Justice, Harmony and Rights of Adivasis (PAJHRA) in 2011, under the guidance of SIL and the Linguistic Department of Gauhati University, lays emphasis on 'learning literacy skills in the mother tongue, transitioning into Assamese with good reading, writing and speaking skills, and learning math concepts well in the mother tongue'(PAJHRA

n.d.).[2] Echoing similar concerns, the Odisha Primary Education Programme Authority (OPEPA) guideline document, while elaborating on the need for the MLE programme and its aims, refers both to UNESCO's General Conference of 2009 (where the term 'MLE' was adopted) and to the work of Susan Malone[3] as guiding influences. Citing Malone, the document reasons that 'strong foundation in the mother tongue provides a good bridge to learning a second language more effectively' (OPEPA n.d., 4).

A complete transition from the mother tongue or the first language of the students (L1) to the official state language or the second language (L2) – by the time the student reaches Grade 6 (in the cases of AP and Odisha) or earlier (in the cases of Assam and Chhattisgarh) – defines the programme structure of these MLE models. For instance, citing from the MLE guideline document of Odisha:

> *Gradual transition of curriculum content to the state language begins in class IV along with graduating the learner to the reading and writing in L3 as well. In class V, all subjects are to be conducted in the state language with a language subject in mother tongue. Thus the state language is introduced from class II onwards and by the time children are in class IV and V the curriculum is transacted in the state language to ensure* ***effective mainstreaming*** *in the upper primary level to ensure that there is a strong foundation laid in mother tongue to facilitate* ***effective bridging*** *to the state language.* (OPEPA n.d., 7-8, emphasis added)

Thus, 'mainstreaming' as a goal and transition or 'bridging' as effective strategies come across as common features of the aforementioned programmes. Another common thread underlying these programmes is their stated acknowledgement of the 'SIL framework' as the guiding structure.

In contrast to these MLE models is the MLE Plus programme which is also being implemented in Odisha. The MLE Plus programme[4] started by Professor A.K.Mohanty and Professor Minati Panda in the year 2008 was a special intervention programme started in eight MLE schools of Odisha in two languages, Saora and Kui. The programme aimed at strengthening existing MLE practice in the state and was guided by the principles of the 'Cultural Historical Activity Theory' (CHAT) approach. Panda and Mohanty had critiqued the existing state programmes for their early exit programmes that, instead of setting the foundation for a strong conceptual foundation in the children, appeared to be geared towards 'easing minority children's transition to majority language classrooms' (Panda and Mohanty 2009a, 297). Elaborating on the approach and theoretical basis of the MLE Plus programme, the authors wrote:

> *The MLE+ intervention in this project envisages good MLE practices to be holistic, culturally situated and historically informed of culturally embedded social, mathematical, literacy/oracy and science practices. Taking a Vygotskyan (1978) line, the MLE Plus approach takes off from exhaustive ethnographic survey of the everyday practices and knowledge of the communities with a view to using the cultural practices to evolve a set of classroom as well as community based activities.* (Panda and Mohanty 2009a, 296)

The MLE Plus programme aimed to be not just an intervention but also an action research activity that could add value to existing MLE programmes by:

> *... strengthening [children's] mother tongue by increasing the cultural inputs into language as well as mathematics, science and environmental studies curricula through the use of ethnographic analysis.* (Panda and Mohanty 2009a, 301)

Rooted in critical pedagogy and seeking to empower communities and the young learners in them, the MLE Plus approach began with exhaustive ethnographic surveys regarding the everyday practices and the knowledge systems of the communities. These surveys included documentation of the linguistic terms used for concepts and an analysis of how these terms and concepts were embedded in the activities of the community. Theoretically trained community MLE workers (CMWs) formed an important link between the culture and the school. The CMWs were also involved in the ethnographic survey (mapping concepts and also documenting their use and meanings), and were trained to:

> *... look at everyday activities/practices from the children's learning perspective and to develop these activities into culturally informed pedagogic tools.* (Panda and Mohanty 2009a, 306)

The MLE Plus programme thus created a possibility for the MLE approach to go beyond mere 'transition and mainstreaming'.

Examining underlying assumptions regarding 'mind-culture-language' relationships

In the MLE models referred to above, two frameworks were observed to have significantly influenced the shaping of the models. While the MLE Plus programme was informed by the Cultural Historical Activity Theory approach, the remaining models were significantly influenced by SIL's MLE framework. Here we examine the assumptions which these two frameworks make regarding the relationships between mind, culture and language.

The SIL framework

SIL is a faith-based organisation that:

> *... facilitates language development within minority language communities through research, translation, training and materials development.* (SIL 2015)

Their framework is founded on the following rationale:

> *Many local language communities are, in reality, multilingual. In addition, some want to communicate in the national language and possibly also in an international language. Multilingual education (MLE) programs promote first language literacy skills, providing the means to meet broader multilingual goals.* (SIL 2015, 2)

They go on to describe MLE programmes as 'strong educational programs that help students bridge to national and international languages' (SIL 2015, 2). In a paper explaining the process of developing an MTB MLE curriculum, Malone outlines the differences between 'mainstream' and 'MTB MLE' programmes in terms of the language used and the basis for developing outcomes and indicators. A mainstream programme uses a Language of Wider Communication (LWC) as the medium of instruction, while the outcomes and indicators are based on the 'mainstream students' knowledge and experience' (Malone 2011, 1). MTB MLE, on the other hand, begins with the learners' first language before 'mainstreaming' happens, while the outcomes and indicators are based on 'knowledge and experience of students of each ethnolinguistic community' (Malone 2011, 1).

Some papers developed by SIL consultants mention that children's educational foundation should be based on the sociocultural knowledge and experiences that they bring to the classroom (e.g. Malone 2003, 2011; SIL 2015), the forms for doing so vary. They range from making 'materials fit local culture'(SIL 2015, 2) to provisions for incorporating them 'into "Cultural Time" component of the school curriculum' in the case of minority language children for whom LWC has become the first language (Malone 2003, 4). The reference to including language learning in a culture component is primarily concerned with the maintenance of cultural heritage.

SIL advocates a bridge model of MLE which is explained as follows:

> *Successful multilingual education enables mother tongue speakers of non-dominant languages to build a culturally and linguistically appropriate educational foundation in their home language first. Then they can successfully cross over the bridge to one or more additional languages. MLE provides the opportunities for lifelong learning in the local as well as national and international languages.* (SIL 2015, 2)

The stages involved include building literacy, ensuring fluency, bridging and ongoing education.

An analysis of the framework above suggests a distinction drawn between knowledge and experiences belonging to 'mainstream students' and those that find their existence in 'ethnolinguistic' communities. This recognition of only 'local' languages as belonging to 'ethnolinguistic' communities suggests that the mainstream languages of wider communication are historically and socioculturally non-contextual. This suggests that, in the case of the latter, the mutually constitutive relationship between language and culture does not exist. An assumption of a dynamic and a mutually constitutive relationship between language and culture requires that both be seen as non-static. Further, the understanding that the path towards competencies is shorter, more direct and smoother for students who already speak in the LWC – as compared to the zig-zag and long winding path of students who speak in languages other than the LWC – suggests that mainstream languages are viewed as more suited to academic discourses. The acceptance of such a hierarchical relation between languages and the assigning of 'culture' only to those without power echoes the observations of the cultural anthropologist Rosaldo (1993), who said that we give

‘culture’ to those to whom we deny citizenship (power). The culture (and languages) of such half-citizens or denied citizens are then perceived as frozen in time, lacking the dynamicity which otherwise makes cultural artefacts assume a meditative potency.

If we interpret the SIL understanding of language acquisition on the basis of how it is reflected in the MTB MLE programme of Assam, we can see how – instead of enabling a communicative space for language usage – the model breaks down the language acquisition process into the learning of sounds, then syllables, then words, sentences and finally meaning. This division of language acquisition into stages where structure precedes meaning and meaning precedes communication brings out the contrast between SIL’s framework on the one hand and socioculturally more informed theories of learning on the other. The MLE models that emerge from SIL frameworks resemble most of the Second Language Acquisition (SLA) models in countries like the USA that are described by Razfar et al. (2011) as aiming at ‘English instruction’ and using the learner’s first language only as a means of acquisition; they further argue that such models are based on frameworks that:

> *… draw on nativist assumptions of linguistic processes including the* ***language acquisition device*** *whereby the mind is genetically predisposed to acquire* ***not*** *learn grammatical structures (the emphasis being on phonology, morphology, and syntax).* (Razfar et al. 2011, 197)

Therefore, given the similarities between SIL-influenced models and SLA models from the USA, it may be inferred that this framework also assumes a nativist position on language acquisition, whereby individuals are predisposed to learning languages as reflected in the material and transition-focused assistance emphasised by these models. An MLE model inspired by this framework is therefore more likely to encourage a ‘transmitive’ use of language, where the language is viewed only as a passive vehicle for content transmission. The language does not become a site of ‘social action’ in the SIL framework, nor is it seen as being interactive, shaping or being shaped by culture.

The references to culture in most of SIL’s documents and papers are in reference to either establishing an initial familiarity or maintaining heritage, allotting the culture a sense of definitiveness without an evolving dynamicity. Thus, in the MLE models inspired by this framework, the embodiment of the sociocultural is considered to be restricted only to ‘overtly’ symbolic forms of culture like stories, songs, festivals, paintings, etc. While these inclusions do play an important role in establishing an early familiarity, they are unable to be effective beyond that. The failure to see the pedagogic potential of cultural resources then gets reflected in articulations like restricting cultural references to ‘Culture Time’ (Malone 2003) or making ‘materials fit local culture’ (SIL 2015), in contrast to exploring culture and finding in it materials or symbols that can be utilised in classroom processes (as reflected in the extensive ethnographic surveys undertaken during the development of the MLE Plus programme). Language, culture and mind in the SIL framework thus remain fragmented.

The MLE Plus framework

As mentioned earlier, the MLE Plus programme was guided by the Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) of Cole and Engeström (2007). The theory evolved from the work of Vygotsky (1978) centred on the concept of 'tool mediation' and was further developed by Luria (1928, 1978), Leont'ev (1978, 1981), Engeström (1993, 1995) and Cole and Engeström (1993).

Explaining Vygotsky's and Luria's ideas on tool mediation, Panda and Mohanty argued how language was not only a cultural product but, through its mediating potential, was also seen as 'influencing thought, and therefore culture' (Panda and Mohanty 2009b, 192). The sociocultural groundings of the CHAT perspective thus reflect one of the fundamental premises of cultural psychology, that 'mind is both constituted and realised in the use of human culture' (Bruner 2009, 159). The relationship between language, culture and mind which is assumed, therefore, is mutually constitutive. Elaborating on the premise of this perspective, Cole writes:

> *The initial premise of the cultural historical school is that human psychological processes emerged simultaneously with a new form of behaviour in which humans modified the material objects as means of regulating their interactions with the world and one another.* (Cole 1996, 108)

While CHAT is not a theory of MLE per se, but – by recognising the importance of 'socioculturally situated' mediating tools, of which language is an important one – it assumes significance for any educational model that attempts to develop pedagogic understanding around language and learning. The importance of tool-mediated learning in a formal instructional set-up assumes significance as it replaces earlier pre-school learning. Vygotsky (1978) points out that the difference between pre-school learning and learning in a formal school space is more than just a matter of one being less systematic than the other. Pre-school learning is characterised by the child trying to learn by assimilating as much knowledge and as many facts as allowed by the actual developmental level of the child. There is a crucial difference in learning as assimilation of knowledge and learning as acquisition of the fundamentals of scientific knowledge. The latter requires more than just assimilation. It requires a carefully structured and mediated interaction between the everyday and the scientific, distinguishing it from a learning that is incidental or merely observational. Vygotsky (1978) conceptualises such an enabling space where the actual levels of development are transcended and further movement is made possible. He termed it the 'Zone of Proximal Development' (ZPD).[5] Such a mediated space, where either the teacher or the able peer facilitates the movement between the actual levels of development and the level of potential development, is essentially a social and a dialogic space. The role of speech and language in such a space, for the purposes of interpersonal communication and the organisation of inner thoughts, is crucial. The socially situated learning space thus created, involving language and cultural artefacts as mediating tools, according to Vygotsky (1978), results in mental development that could not have been otherwise reached.

Consequently, the MLE model inspired by this perspective is more likely to strengthen mother tongues (rather than just using them to move to another language) and also to create space for more recursive and bi-directional classrooms.

Reflection of theoretical assumptions in emerging MLE practices

The two paradigmatically different approaches to MLE identified above necessitate a review of the practices that emerge from them. For the purpose of examining the reflection of theoretical assumptions in MLE practices, one MLE Plus school based on CHAT and one MLE programme based on the SIL framework were selected. In order to ensure economic and sociocultural comparability of the samples, the Odisha state MLE model was chosen from among those based on the SIL framework. One school per model was chosen, both from the same district and both having between 90 and 100 per cent tribal students in their classrooms. In both schools, the mother tongue of the tribal students was Saora and the second language to be acquired was Odia.

One of the initial insights into the practices that emerge in the two models is provided by the way the classrooms are structured and how the teachers in the schools explain their understanding of MLE goals and methods.

Practices in MLE schools

Beginning with the MLE classroom, the walls were decorated with a few paintings and printed charts, none of which included use of Saora. The predominant language on the classroom walls was Odia (see Figure 1 for an example), followed by English and Hindi. The students were organised in neat rows facing the blackboard, with the teacher's location fixed in front of the classroom (as can be seen in Figure 2).

Figure 1: An MLE classroom with Odia charts on the walls; Odia is not the children's first language (Photo: Shivani Nag)

Figure 2: An MLE school classroom with pupils neatly arranged in rows (Photo: Shivani Nag)

The teacher in the MLE school, when asked to explain what he had learnt in MLE training programmes, shared:

> *They [the MLE trainers] said how to move from Saora language to Odia language. Like in class I, 70 percent use of ML-language – Saora; in second class 60 percent, third class 50 percent. Like this in fifth class have to teach in Odia. If we teach in Odia from the beginning, children will face lot of difficulties.* (Nag 2014a, 158)

On being asked to talk about the methods he employed in class, he said:

> *With younger children we show pictures then say the word in Saora and then in Odia. From book also, after reading one line in Odia, we then explain it in Saora. Here all are tribal children. In the beginning (they) do not understand Odia. They do not know Odia, so (I) translate, explain in Saora.* (Nag 2014a, 156)

This narrative shared by the teacher was found to echo the key concern underlying the SIL framework, i.e. to provide students with a one-way bridge to reach national and international languages. The bridge here is a unidirectional one, since students who know only those languages that are deemed as 'national' or international' are not expected to use the latter as bridges to reach the local languages. The recognition of the second language alone as the 'school language' reinforces the understanding that the child's mother tongue cannot be the language of academic discourse.

In order to understand the practices in the class, a brief description of a language period that was observed during the field research is provided here.

> *The MLE teacher picked up a picture book to introduce the Odia alphabet to grade I children. Since both Odia and Saora are written in Odia script in state MLE programmes, the letters for writing both languages remain the same. Given that the transition programme of the state requires 100 percent mother tongue in Grade I, the teacher would have been expected to teach the alphabet solely by using familiar Saora words as the base. However, in contrast to the MLE guidelines, the teacher named the object depicted in the picture book first in Saora and then without elaborating on the nature of the object, proceeded to provide the Odia synonym for the same. The new letters were then linked to the Odia word just introduced. For instance, in one of the language classes, where the teacher wanted to introduce a letter of the alphabet with the sound 'ga', the teacher did not show a picture of an object for which the Saora term began with the 'ga' sound. Instead, the teacher used a picture of an object for which the corresponding Odia term began with the 'ga' sound, as in the following example:*
>
> *The teacher held a picture of donkey – called **gaddha** in Odia and **pekud** in Saora – in front of Grade II students. Pointing to the picture he asked in Saora, 'What is this?' There was no response from the students. He then went on, '**Gaddha** … **pekud**. From 'ga' **gaddha**.' (Nag 2014a, 154)*

Hence, as can be seen, the pattern followed was:

- show a picture
- say the Odia term for it
- provide the Saora translation of the word
- link the sound of a new letter with the Odia word also newly introduced.

In an interaction with the MLE teacher following this particular lesson, the teacher admitted that, since in his understanding the aim of the MLE was to enable children to learn Odia using Saora, he did not wish to delay the transition process. Additionally, the realisation that he would have to teach the same students completely in Odia by the time they reached Grade VI, only increased his anxiety to facilitate the shift as early as possible.

Thus the use of the children's linguistic resources – as seen in the classroom and explained by the teacher – was not for scaffolding new concepts (in this case, the sounds of the letters of the alphabet) but to transit to another language in which the alphabet could be taught. This restricted (as opposed to elaborative)[6] use of the Saora language in the class was also found to reflect the limited aim of the SIL model, which stopped at developing literacy skills in the mother tongue, without acknowledging its importance in acquiring academic concepts (SIL 2015).

Another interesting insight emerging from the description of the classroom transaction above has significance for the nature of classroom space that is

enabled by such restricted transitional MLE practices. The tribal students in this MLE classroom were less likely to experience forced submersion in the second language than are tribal students studying in Non-MLE schools (Manocha 2010). Nevertheless, since the use of the Saora language was translational instead of dialogic, the classroom space enabled was far from collaborative. The immediate shift to Odia did not allow the children space to use Saora to bring in their everyday experiences and to use them as entry points to enter the academic discourse of the classroom. It is also interesting to note that, in a separate research study focusing on teachers' experiences in Non-MLE and MLE classrooms in tribal blocks[7] of Odisha, even the teachers in the Non-MLE schools reported that they used Saora for the purposes of translation and smoothing children's transition to Odia, since immediate imposition of Odia made the children fearful of school (Nag 2014b).

In keeping with the SIL model that recognised a very minimal use of the sociocultural context in pedagogy, the practices in the classroom also failed to include the children's sociocultural context as a pedagogic resource. In MLE schools, the children's cultural context was reduced to its symbolic forms like paintings, songs, rhymes and stories which, though brought inside the classroom, were rarely integrated meaningfully with academic concepts. They were either pointed at as passing references or included as abstract and insulated entities whose only role was to enable the children have a cultural experience, an experience insulated from academic engagement.

Elaborating on this non-transformative and contextually alienated approach of the SIL framework, Panda writes:

> *... [the] transition plan of SIL was introduced by a group of European SIL experts without sufficient dialogue with the state administration and the academics. This highlights the fact that MLE paradigm and practice in both the states[8] are not the products of their own social, political and academic discourse. In a top down structure, since the changes are not the product of peoples' restlessness and discomfort with the existing paradigm of general education in a dominant language, there is relatively less scope to experience transformations than when such changes evolve out of local struggles and tensions.* (Panda 2012, 247)

Considering that the SIL framework is based on an acknowledgement of some languages as 'mainstream' and also desirable for carrying out academic discourse, an asymmetry of power between teachers and students is created at the very onset as the two are viewed as located on a vertical ladder with one knowing a language of 'importance' and the other 'trying to acquire it'. Therefore, there was an absence of the 'transformation experience' as elaborated in the excerpt above. Practices in the MLE classroom remained 'transmitive and controlled by the teacher' and the power distribution in the classroom between teachers and students remained asymmetrical.

Practices in MLE Plus schools

The MLE Plus classroom appeared vibrant and reflective of children's cultural resources (including linguistic). There were several handmade materials in Saora

and the teaching learning materials were kept in open racks accessible to students (Figure 3). The children were usually found to be seated in a circle working on group activities or engaged in discussions with the teacher seated among them in the same circle. (See Figure 4.)

Figure 3: An MLE Plus classroom with colourful handmade materials in Saora, the children's first language (Photo: Shivani Nag)

A teacher from the MLE Plus school, when asked about his understanding of MLE practices, responded by saying:

> *By using their story and song, then talking about their home … Also if we are teaching EVS,*[9] *then we might ask them about what their father do? So the child will say he works in the field, so then we will ask 'how he works in the field' … when children will be able to tell … we will explain to the children how these things are made, then what kind of crops are grown, we discuss and explain.* (Nag 2014a, 198)

The teacher in the MLE Plus school appeared more interested in using the children's mother tongue to allow them to bring their everyday context into the classroom and thereby facilitate their entry into academic discourse. The shift aimed in this case was not from one language to another but from everyday concepts to more abstract and scientific concepts.

Figure 4: Pupils in an MLE Plus classroom seated in groups (Photo: Shivani Nag)

The difference in practices emerging from viewing children's language as a 'sensitive tool for transition' vis-à-vis acknowledging their language as a 'culturally situated pedagogic resource' could also be seen in classroom transactions. Firstly, teachers in MLE Plus programme appeared to be less gripped by the anxiety to effect an early transition. Secondly, instead of a 'restricted transitional' use of the children's mother tongue, they instead used this language to encourage students to bring in their everyday experiences in classrooms. A description of an EVS lesson on 'body parts' with Grade III students follows:

> *The teacher did not use the textbook at the outset. He began by first calling out body parts using the corresponding Saora terms and asking students to point towards them and thereafter facilitated a discussion among children regarding the appearance of the body parts, their use and the differences between different parts. The language of interaction remained Saora and the students used it to share their narratives and even debate with each other if they felt that their classmate was erring. The teacher did provide them with corresponding Odia terms during the interaction, however, the interventions involving introduction of Odia terms for body parts was only one component of the classroom discussion. The teacher focussed more on encouraging students to speak up and thereafter elaborating on the concepts involved. The use of everyday experiences was therefore to create entry points for children to be able to participate in the dialogue. Thereafter, the teacher*

> *mediated their movement towards an academic discourse around the body parts. This movement was enabled through carefully alternated processes like 'interweaving' and 'replacement'.* (Panda and Mohanty 2009a, 305)

The researchers define interweaving as 'maintenance of and interaction between the everyday and the scientific concepts' and 'replacement' as 'the substitution for an "everyday" understanding of a more sophisticated conventionalised academic understanding' (Panda and Mohanty 2009a, 305). They then identify implications of their observations:

> *As interweaving enables the students to start participating in an everyday discourse, a gradual process of replacement at appropriate junctures helps enter the realm of academic discourse, no longer needing to hold on to the concrete and gradually developing comfort with the abstract. In fact, in several papers and reports on the MLE Plus programme, the Project Directors have discussed in depth how various local activities like games, local artefacts like wall paintings, design patterns and local knowledge systems, such as the local number system or measuring system, can be used to help the students make a transition from the spontaneous to the theoretical.* (Panda and Mohanty 2009a, 2011)

Pedagogic practices in MLE Plus schools were also found to differ from those of MLE school in terms of a qualitatively different use of sociocultural resources of the children. In MLE Plus schools, the use of cultural resources went beyond symbolic inclusion of songs and dances, to create space for 'dialectical exchange between epistemic knowledge and practices in the community and in the classroom processes' (Panda and Mohanty 2009a, 306). A more pronounced evidence of this exchange could be witnessed during the regular fests that were organised around different academic domains. One such fest that was organised during the period of the field visit was *Ganit Panchayat*[10] (Mathematics Council), where the resource person used cultural artefacts such as locally made hats to initiate a discussion around the process of making hats and gradually shifting the discourse to more abstract geometric principles involved in the process.

This differential use of children's language and cultural resources enabled creation of a collaborative space in MLE Plus classrooms, where the power was more symmetrically distributed between active students and a mediating teacher. Students were often found to access teaching-learning materials during their free time and to work collaboratively with them. The strengthening of children's mother tongue in the MLE Plus programme also enabled them to use their mother tongue for creative and reflexive thinking as witnessed during frequent storytelling and debating sessions that would begin spontaneously whenever the teacher was busy with some administration-related work of the school. Socioculturally informed pedagogic processes like scaffolding and spiralling were more noticeable in MLE Plus classrooms.

The classroom transactions thus reflected the CHAT perspective, as evidenced in the creation of symmetrical teacher-student relationships, and more elaborate

and extensive use of children's language and sociocultural contexts as compared to the MLE classrooms. It may be noted here that since the MLE Plus programme was a special intervention in existing state MLE schools, the limitations posed by the 'early-exit' nature of the state MLE model were also experienced. However, the paradigmatically different approach towards children's language and culture enabled emergence of practices that, while facilitating acquisition of second language, did not restrict their scope to that.

Conclusion

This examination of the MLE models and their resulting practices suggest that, for MLE models to move beyond their scope as programmes for 'minority language students' or 'ethnic minorities', there is a need to revisit their underlying assumptions. A model or a teacher training programme, which is based on a framework that does not acknowledge learning as a socioculturally situated process and which continues to operate on a premise that privileges some languages and cultures over others, cannot make the inclusion pedagogically effective. A sensitive 'mainstreaming' into dominant languages cannot be a replacement for a socioculturally informed pedagogy that views all cultural and linguistic resources as pedagogically useful. The potency of language as 'social action' (a concept widely used by social theorists such as Bourdieu and Foucault) makes it a site for the negotiation and creation of meaning. Therefore, a division between 'mainstream' and 'ethnolinguistic' that aims at facilitating a shift from 'ethnolinguistic' to 'mainstream' throws away the pedagogic advantages that inclusion of 'language as a cultural tool' allows. While it is important to acknowledge that some languages have enjoyed a privileged location vis-à-vis others, the acknowledgement of the same should motivate practitioners to work towards strengthening and empowering of what till now was 'non-dominant'. Carol Benson has made a powerful argument in favour of 'empowering non-dominant languages' and it is useful to note that she also draws from a sociocultural positioning of languages to further argue that the same can be done by developing culturally sensitive multilingual curriculums (Benson 2017). The strengthening of non-dominant language, as attempted in the MLE Plus programme and as argued by Benson, would not only lead to a more equitable multilingualism but would also allow a more effective use of non-dominant languages as languages of academic discourse. The significance of this is more than pedagogic, as the opportunity to engage in academic discourse in one's own language is more likely to create a positive identity with the language than its mere use as a bridge to reach more 'in demand' languages. A socioculturally informed MLE model involving a more extensive and elaborative use of non-dominant mother tongues also has greater likelihood to alter perceptions about dominant languages from 'killer languages' to 'healer languages', as proposed by Ajit Mohanty (2017), while critically analysing the roles of and demand for English in multilingual societies like India.

The research findings have significant implications for strengthening existing MLE programmes and advocating 'MLE for All'.

Notes

[1] The *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* (SSA) (Education for All) department of the administration of Andhra Pradesh is known as *Rajiv Vidya Mission* (RVM).

[2] www.pajhra.org/promotion-of-langauge-and-education [sic, 'langauge' not 'language']

[3] Susan Malone is an education consultant with SIL.

[4] The MLE Plus programme was part of a project titled 'Education in Mother Tongue and Other Tongue', funded by a grant from the Bernard van Leer Foundation, Netherlands, under the directorship of Professors A.K.Mohanty and Minati Panda.

[5] ZPD is defined as the distance between the actual development level as determined through independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers (Vygotsky 1978, 86).

[6] Hardman (2008) used the terms 'restricted' and 'elaborative' to explain the varying nature of tool usage in classrooms, based on third generation cultural historical activity theory.

[7] Block refers to an administrative subdivision of a district in a rural area.

[8] Referring to Andhra Pradesh and Odisha.

[9] EVS = Environmental Studies

[10] The term *Panchayat* refers to a democratic village council that often gathers to discuss various issues.

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9

Teachers' 'other' language preferences: A study of the monolingual mindset in the classroom

Uma Maheshwari Chimirala

Introduction

Multilingual ambience with plurilingual appeal is a defining feature of Indian diversity. Its classrooms reflect the same diversity where sociocultural-economic-institutional interests meet learner-specific intentions and multilingual repertoires of resources. Such pedagogic contexts can evolve synergistic multilingual and multimodal assemblages of toolkits for information processing, thinking and knowing (Casterns 2015). However, institutional policies devalue this diversity and fallaciously trade it for monolingual instructional practices that favour skill in a single language, namely English. Consequently, teachers witness the co-existence of two contrasting realities in the same classroom: the presence of multilingual learner repertoires of resources and the institutional manifestations of the monolingual mindset. At the interface of the two realities teachers experience a tension between their obligation to abide by institutional norms and their inclination to sensitively cater to the learning needs of their pupils.

We believe that teachers possess the agency to choose practices where the institutional mandates are either negotiated, replayed, lived, manipulated or probably beaten. Nevertheless, making such choices is dependent on how teachers perceive learners' other languages in the classroom. In this study, 'other languages' refer to the use of any language other than the one mandated by institutional policy. For instance, teachers of Telugu/Hindi/Oriya/Marathi are instructed to teach in their respective languages. Similarly, in the English-medium school content subjects like mathematics, science and social science have to be transacted in English. However, if a language other than the designated one is employed this is an instance of the use of 'other languages'.

In a bid to understand how 'other languages' in the classroom are perceived by teachers, 276 language and non-language teachers were asked to respond to a survey questionnaire on their other language use and preferences. Following the survey, 40 of these teachers participated in an open-ended interview that probed the reasoning behind their use of other languages and their preferences. Based on a thematic analysis the study presents the teachers' implicit language ideologies that mediate their language use/preferences in the classroom.

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In the rest of this chapter, we begin by locating learner diversity in the context of the monolingual mindset, where ideological preference for 'a' language manipulates learning opportunities and resources. As an instance of the workings of the monolingual mindset, educational 'programming' in Andhra Pradesh is discussed. Next, the research study is described briefly and the findings are presented in three sections. The findings are followed by an extended discussion with conclusions.

Learner diversity in an omniscient monolingual mindset

Any description of a monolingual mindset (MM) needs to explicate who a monolingual is. Given the paucity in research descriptions of a monolingual (Ellis 2008), Richards and Schmidt (2002) define a monolingual as one who 'knows and uses one language ... though possesses a passive knowledge of others.' A mindset that reinforces 'the one language' norm for a person or community constitutes a MM (Crystal 1987, 425). According to Clyne, the MM 'sees *everything* in terms of a single language' (Clyne 2008, 348). It evolves fallacies that affect the curricular space, attention and value accorded to languages; it has an 'insurmountable difficulty' in seeing the interdependence in literacies and it propagates the self-sufficiency of English (Clyne 2008, 356). In short, the MM manipulates the educational space in favour of monolingual abilities in a single language as against multilingual capabilities, despite research evidence indicating the disadvantages of such an approach.

Research from the West recognises the presence of Multilingual Learners (MLLs) in the classroom as a 'superdiversity' (Vertovec 2007), a nexus of diverse sociocultural-cognitive-linguistic variables which possess a pedagogic potency to initiate unique learning assemblages (Casterns 2015; Orellana et al. 2011). Practitioners teaching MLLs find that monolingual instructional practices (that relegate their other languages as hurdles in learning) fail to provide positive cognitive support for learning and hence call for the need to examine ways and means of how the MLLs' linguistic repertoires can be meaningfully leveraged for academic requirements (Orellana et al. 2012; Cummins 2007; Garcia 2009). Consequently, research investigating MLLs' use of other languages in the classroom has convincingly established that MLLs possess a rich range of repertoires of resources which they use flexibly by shifting registers/styles/modes between speakers and situations (Orellana and Garcia 2014). They leverage their repertoires for several reasons such as to mitigate the complex processes while writing especially for word searches (Sathuvalli and Chimirala 2013), to make sense of their multilingual worlds (Martinez et al. 2008), to counter the dichotomies of home and school and to make sense of and access school knowledge (Orellana and Reynolds 2008) and to challenge the deficit perceptions of their experiences and capabilities in their school practices (Alim 2004).

Despite robust evidence as to how MLLs leverage their linguistic repertoires as toolkits for accessing knowledge, research clearly indicates that monolingual mindset ideologies are under the surface even when overtly extending support to learners' languages as a pedagogic resource (Hornberger 1989). Even in official bilingual educational programmes the curricular objective for MLLs is to attain monolingual capability in English vis-à-vis their stronger languages *for* 'auxiliary learning' (Madiba 2013). In any case, the 'other' language capabilities are either seen as a crutch or a scaffold that MLLs have to bypass. Thus the MM treats MLLs like several monolinguals-

in-one and imposes upon them a monolingual portal to access learning, to make sense of the world and to identify with it. This expectation is symptomatic of an MM that sets into action discourses that endorse a 'single language' while progressively activating mechanisms that will erase the presence of other languages.

The 'single language' in former colonies of Asia and parts of Africa[1] is the taken-for-granted language of academics – English (Carli and Ammon 2007) – and India is no exception. English is the cynosure of perpetual curricular planning, reinforcing it as *the* language of the 4Es: education, employment, economy and empowerment. Unquestionably, ideological propagation and a polity that would manipulate acceptance of English univocally have to be in place. The National Knowledge Commission Report (NKC 2007) is one such influential document that endorses the hegemonic position of English. The NKC, a high-level commission constituted in 2005 for transforming India into a knowledge-based society, isolates proficiency in English as the single 'most critical determinant' to access education and progress (NKC 2007, 6). The linguistic singularity reflects the MM in the report where 'English' occurs 44 times while the 'mother tongue' occurs once.

> *School-leavers who are not adequately trained in English as a language are always at a handicap … disadvantage is accentuated further in the world of work, not only in professional occupations but also in white-collar occupations overall.* (NKC 2007, 48)

The NKC (2007) mandate that a person needs to be functional in English in order to access educational advantages is *not* being questioned here. It is the endorsement of 'only English' as the legitimate language of access to opportunities – despite several models that are pedagogically sensitive to the multilinguistic realities of the learners being available – which is to be questioned (Setati et al. 2002). With ideological discourses perpetually ignoring the cognitive advantages of other languages for learning, the MM is permeated in its exclusive concern over English literacy through two powerful strategies, as noticed in the case of Andhra Pradesh[2] (AP), India.

The first strategy can be described as 'affirmation through conversion'. 'English only' Government Orders which herald English as the tool for social justice are churned either as affirmative action (Lin 1997) or in response to a 'demand for English' (Janks 2009), though no documentary evidence of this alleged demand is available[3]. For instance, Government Order (GO) 23 mandates that the mother-tongue medium *Kasturibaa Gandhi Balika Vidhyalayas*[4] (KGBVs) in the state of AP for girls from 'rural, backward and socially marginalised areas/groups; from single parent families; and from urban deprived locations' should be converted to English-medium schools from the 2015-2016 academic year (*TeachersBadi.in* 2015). The reason cited in the GO was 'Girls studying in the KGBV need to be equipped with necessary skills in English so as to enable them to be able to compete with their peers in their academic pursuits.' The proposed action plan included the creation of new textbooks in English and the conduct of in-service training was to be imparted only in English. The official game plans endorsed early, exclusive and extensive exposure to English as a universal solution to overcome disadvantage (Lin 1997), irrespective of the learning context and individual learner linguistic realities; this is a clear manifestation of the MM.

The second strategy consists of manipulating classroom practices through in-service training. Educational programmes implemented in AP since 2005 expect teachers to adopt 'learner-centred' techniques so that learners' repertoires are leveraged as they engage in problem solving and thus develop subject-specific and language competencies (Department of Elementary Education 2011, 33). In contrast with this objective, in-service training for teachers aims to regulate and modify teacher behaviour in the direction of monolingual instructional practices that manipulate learner cognitive resources for learning. For instance, in December 2011 one-day training on how to use the learners' L1 to teach English was arranged for all teachers of English. Yet in May 2012, English teachers of Classes VII-X were deputed to attend a one-day training session on Communicative Language Teaching where recourse to the learners' L1 was not encouraged. In both training sessions teachers raised questions regarding the relationship between languages (L1 and L2) and the relationship between language and access to knowledge and learning, but their questions were unanswered[5] – yet another sign of the MM where the institutional ideological predilection selects and recontextualises tenets of information that suit its ideology and regulates the modes and degree of dissemination so that alternative knowledge is neither disseminated nor highlighted (Bernstein 1990).

In sum, the MM conspires to homogenise diversity by manipulating classroom transactions. MM clearly has a detrimental effect on the cognitive and affective well-being of learners since it restricts learners from realising their full learning potential by manipulating the potential support systems their linguistic repertoires can render. Additionally for children whose language of instruction differs from the language of home, 'English' ideology is out of step with the objective of evolving and sustaining a knowledge creating society (NKC 2007) and also acts as a device to ensure that learners are deprived of education and 'pushed out' of the classroom and eventually out of school (Setati et al. 2002; Mohanty 2017). Such a scenario contradicts the multilingual reality of the society and the classroom and the constitutional promise of equality in access to opportunities in schools and work place.

The study

Here we briefly present the research questions which the study sought to answer, the participants in the study, the data collection procedures and the data analysis procedures. The findings are presented in three separate sections.

As a rule, teachers are bound to implement educational policies, but at the same time they are not mere 'cogs in the policy wheel' (Mohanty et al. 2010). Teachers possess the agency to either conform to the mandated norms or to choose alternatives that are sensitive to the MLLs' plurilingual capabilities. However, teachers' perceptions of the pedagogic efficacy of the 'other languages' in the classroom have to be negotiated. This study, a step in that direction, explores teacher perceptions of the 'other languages' by asking the following questions:

- Do teachers use other languages in their classroom transactions? Why/Why not? Is there a preference for specific languages? Why?
- Do teachers 'allow' their learners to use other language in class? Why/Why not?

We chose to analyse the responses using the theoretical frame proposed by Ruiz (1984). This framework has been used extensively to examine language policies across countries. We use the framework to understand teachers' reasoning in 'allowing' learners to use other languages because the framework captures and reflects orientations to learners' languages as a problem, as a right or as a resource.

Details of the 276 teachers who participated in the study are shown in Table 1; 132 were trained teachers of other subjects (social science, maths, science and computer studies) while the remaining 144 were trained language teachers. The respondents' mean duration of teaching experience was 10.6 years. The teachers had all participated in at least one in-service training activity and they were all employed in English-medium state schools in the state of AP.

Table 1: Distribution of language and non-language teacher respondents, by subject and phase

Teachers	Subject	Phase	
		1: survey	2: interviews
Non-language	Social science	38	4
	Maths	34	6
	Science	35	5
	Computer science	25	5
	Sub-total	*132*	*20*
Language	English	48	6
	Marathi	12	3
	Oriya	18	3
	Hindi	32	3
	Telugu	34	5
	Sub-total	*144*	*20*
Grand total		**276**	**40**

The data were collected in two phases. We followed a cascading technique of data collection where participants of the study were requested to encourage their colleagues in other government schools to participate. In Phase 1 a questionnaire was used; respondents answered questions about their 'other language' preferences and their reasons for using these other languages. In Phase 2 a total of 112 teachers were invited to participate in an open-ended interview; 73 consented but only 40 could be interviewed due to logistical or participants' personal reasons. Four of the interviews took place by telephone but the rest were carried out face-to-face. The interviews were conducted in Hindi and Telugu. Responses were transcribed in the original language and then translated into English. The translated version was checked by a translation researcher and then variations were identified and resolved.

Preliminary analysis of the teacher responses to the two questions revealed that

treating the responses as one unified set would not capture the complexity in the multi-layered belief systems of the teachers. Therefore, the interview responses were categorised into two data sets. The first set documented the reasoning behind teachers' use of and preferences for other languages. The second set documented teachers' reasons for 'allowing' or 'not allowing' their learners to use other languages. The first set was analysed using the open coding option available in ATLAS.ti.2.0 software. With the second set, we used the axial coding strategy; that is to say, our codes were derived from the theory which we had adopted (Ruiz 1984). To enhance reliability in coding, the analysis was redone after a gap of one month and randomly cross-checked by a fellow researcher. Overlaps in categories were identified and resolved.

Findings 1: Questionnaire responses

The responses to the questionnaire survey are described statistically. Table 2 shows that 95 per cent of participants used other languages in their classrooms while only five per cent claimed to use only monolingual instructional practices. The 14 respondents who said that they abstained from using other languages were all language teachers[6]. Similarly, when respondents were asked about whether they 'allowed' their learners to use other languages, 29 per cent assert that they did not while 71 per cent did so. Table 2 highlights a tension in teachers' validating of learners' linguistic repertoires. What triggers this variation in responses?

Table 2: Responses to questions about teachers' use of other languages (n=276)

Questions	Yes	No
Do you use other languages in the classroom?	262 (95%)	14 (5%)
Do you allow your learners to use other languages?	193 (71%)	83 (29%)

When asked which other languages they used in the classroom, none of the teachers said that they used English, as Table 3 reveals.

Table 3: Which languages do you use in the classroom? (n=262)

English	Regional languages (Telugu/Oriya/Marathi)	Hindi
0	183 (69%)	79 (31%)

When we probed which teachers were using which 'other' languages we noticed the pattern which is presented in Table 4: it appears that the regional languages are preferred over English and Hindi, but why? This is the core of this chapter. Recall that, according to Table 2, 14 teachers claimed to follow monolingual instructional practices.

Table 4: Which teachers used which other languages in the classroom?

Subject taught	English	Regional languages (Telugu/Oriya/Marathi)	Hindi	Non-language subjects
Classroom language	Regional languages	Hindi or regional languages	Regional languages	Regional languages

The reasons which teachers gave for their use of 'other' languages are summarised in Table 5. Facilitating comprehension by explaining concepts and difficult words was the most frequently mentioned reason while drawing learners' attention to nuanced variations in concepts was the least frequently mentioned.

Table 5: Teachers' purposes in using 'other' languages

Purpose of using 'other' languages	**Responses (%)**
1 Explain concepts and difficult words	69
2= Reprimand or bond with the students	11
2= Check comprehension	11
3 Help learners understand the expected response to the questions	5
4 Provide feedback	3
5 Draw attention to contrastive aspects of concepts	1

The qualitative interview data which probed the reasoning behind teachers' use of other languages and their allowing or not allowing their learners to use other languages are analysed next.

Findings 2: Why do teachers use or not use other languages in the classroom?

What reasoning guides the teachers' use of and preference for other languages other than that mandated by the state? Two themes with several sub-categories emerged: *pedagogic justification* and *ideological justification*. A total of 26 teachers gave answers relating to learning while 14 teachers said that their reasons for using or not using other languages were reactions to official mandates on policy and practice.

Pedagogic justification: Language should not be an obstacle to teaching and learning

A total of 19 from 26 teachers, all teachers of non-language subjects, said that they used other languages in their classrooms in order to help learners to access complex concepts.

In Data Extract 1, for example, Respondent MT11 explains how the mandated language of instruction contributes to the difficulty involved in understanding the concept. He is aware of the linguistic diversity of his classrooms and that his choice of 'auxiliary language' is mediated by several reasons: 'not grappling for words' and

being able to 'sustain' the lesson; to be able to reach out to most of the learners; to ensure access to the concept; and his linguistic capability to transact the concept and complete the syllabus.

Data Extract 1
Teaching mathematical concepts is twice complex because it involves the abstract concept and decoding the language to understand the concept. So we have to deal with two problems: the problem of language which is English and the concepts for doing the 'problem' itself. If I use English ... I will probably never reach out to most of the learners and may not finish the syllabus too. So Telugu is my natural choice ... it is my mother tongue and I cannot be grappling for language in explaining concepts nor can I let my learners struggle with language because I teach Math. (MT11[7])

Pedagogic justification: Language choice for participation

Seven of 26 teachers claimed that language choice is of paramount importance in helping students to participate actively.

Data Extract 2
I know how difficult it is to understand concepts in trigonometry or wave motion if you cannot follow English – you just cannot participate in the lesson. LEP expects participation but through English. Unless you know English well, you cannot. I speak Lambada and three other languages ... I ask which language the learners can follow and teach first in that language then repeat in English. I do have some tribal learners whose language I am now learning. Once I know Savara[8] I can teach them better and write materials for them. (ST16)

In Data Extract 2, ST16 – a science teacher in a tribal area – underscores the relationship between learner participation and the language of instruction. She contends that, by strategising her teaching first in the language chosen by the learners and then in English, she facilitates comprehension and participation. She explains that leveraging her multilingual abilities has twin benefits: it works as a strategy for capacity building and supports participation. She believes that the learners' language is the most accessible way to get learners involved and ends her reasoning emphatically by highlighting the need to cater to tribal learners.

Ideologies-in-action: Maintaining linguistic purity

Fourteen from 40 teachers give responses which pertained to mandates in policy or practice (Data Extract 3). Two of these teachers justify their choice of not using any other language in this way, citing the following: the importance of exposure to literary language, their own personal learning experiences, upholding the purity of the language and being a language model for their students. However, TT04 adds an intolerant attitude towards other languages in his response.

Data Extract 3
I speak/teach Telugu, the Italian of the East. I am a model for my learners. I speak as we heard it from our teachers in school and college – the literary language – and teach that Telugu. As per rules, I have to do so. I don't dilute it the way you people do by bringing in Hindi or English. I cannot allow that but learners are picking all that hybrid[9] *language from TV and write that even in their exams and I can do nothing.* (TT04)

In the excerpt, TT04, a teacher and also a columnist in a Telugu newspaper, underscored the language of instruction as a 'rule'. Correspondingly any code-mixing or switching, in his view, counts as a 'hybrid' language practice which 'dilutes' the purity of the language. He is intolerant of such 'diluting' as he sees himself to be a model language user. He categorically declares that he does not 'allow' learners to use other languages yet he cannot prevent this from happening too.

Ideologies-in-action: Reversing the terminological deficiency

Four teachers emphasised their non-use of other languages in teaching. They saw this choice as a way of reversing the negative impact of English – constitutionally mandated as the language of higher education – on the development of Indian languages. An example can be seen in Data Extract 4.

Data Extract 4
Indian languages have not been the voice of higher education because our Constitution chose English. Why English only? … when complex mathematical concepts and medical knowledge were written in Indian languages. We have literary concepts to discuss in the textbook and I teach them in Marathi. Our languages do not suffer from terminological deficiency. I expect my learners to know that too. (MaT83)

MaT83 argues that the constitutional preference for English removed any possibility of using Indian languages in higher education, even though complex technical concepts are written in Indian languages. The respondent questions the position of English as 'the' language of higher education and argues that learners need to know that Indian languages have similar potential. To this extent she positions herself as a languaging model.

Ideologies-in-action: The question of preservation and access

Three teachers were aware of the presence of tribal children in their classes and pointed to the tension in choosing preservation over access. An example is found in Data Extract 5.

In Data Extract 5, ET32 an English teacher, from the same tribal community as the learners, connects access to the language of school to access to the learning space to reiterate his ideology that, with English, learners can improve themselves. He

Data Extract 5
As a speaker of Savara, I know the rich oral tradition that my tribal community has and realise the need to preserve it, but Savara is not taught in school nor is it the medium of instruction for subjects like Maths ... But these children have to go to college and university from here, so English is necessary ... 45 out of hundred finish school; twelve go on to intermediate college; three go to a college and from this area none have gone to a university like yours. These children need access to development and that is through English. So I deliberately connect English lessons to Savara or maybe Oriya, not Hindi. (ET32)

projects the tension between the need to preserve tribal languages and being able to access educational opportunities through English. He asserts that English is the route to opportunities and development for his community and through statistical description underscores that not many learners manage to access higher education. Though he acknowledges that he supports learning by using other languages, his preference for Savara/Oriya and not Hindi represents an idiosyncratic language policy that views other languages as a crutch that eventually has to build English capabilities.

Ideologies-in-action: Reaction to 'English-only' ideology

As Data Extract 6 shows, five teachers indicated that their decision to use regional languages and/or Hindi is a reaction to the excessive impetus on English.

Data Extract 6
You are an English teacher and your subject is hyped. So I assume you expect me to tell that I use English in teaching Marathi, but I don't. I use Hindi or ask them to think how a tense works in their language. Too much of English and English training is stressed. Is that right? Fair? Is teaching English language the only curricular concern? Not our languages? Why? We rarely get opportunity to access the new knowledge of learning ... I wonder why other languages cannot benefit from it? (MaT09)

MaT09 asserts that her use of languages other than English is a reaction against excessive attention to English. According to her, the teaching of English is 'hyped' to the extent that the dissemination of research and 'good' practices is construed as if *only* English can benefit. This respondent raises several questions: whether teaching English is the only curricular concern; whether focusing on the English language alone is fair to learners, teachers and the Indian languages; and why teachers of other languages are unable to benefit from research.

Findings 3: Why do teachers allow or not allow their learners to use their own languages in the classroom?

All 40 teachers said that their learners are free to use their own languages outside the classroom. However, the choice of words used by teachers needs special attention as it shows that teachers seem to identify a number of narrower language

use spaces within the school space. The use of other languages in those other spaces is not their concern, but the language of the classroom definitely is. For example, one of the teachers said, 'We *do not mind* their language in the playground.' Another said, 'They are *free* to use any language outside.' Another respondent gave this rather elaborate response:

> *Though we **could instruct** our learners to use English in the ground, we **do not do so**. Our **concern** is the language of the classroom not the playground or lunch period so why instruct there when nothing academic happens? (emphasis added)*

On the other hand, when asked whether they would 'allow/not allow' learners to use their own languages *in* the classroom teachers had their justifications in place. Three strands of justification emerged, concerning language as a resource, language as a right and language as an impediment (Ruiz 1984).

'Allowing' learners' use of other languages as a resource

Of the 40 interviewed respondents, 24 viewed learner languages as a resource for facilitating understanding and participation in classroom activity. For instance, three teachers had witnessed their learners talking to themselves in their home language while doing calculations or carrying out complex parts of mathematics problems. Furthermore, eight teachers had heard their learners explain concepts in different languages to their peers. All of them agreed that learners' multilingual abilities play a positive role in problem solving, as Data Extract 7 illustrates.

Data Extract 7
I do not interfere with what learners do and how they do the problem once I assign the problem for class work. Each of us has to understand the concept and retain it in our own way. If they are able to voice whatever they understand, get others like them to listen to that and in the process check it and finally apply it, I think they are actively involved in their learning. Any interference in their talk or asking them to use one particular language is disturbing their thought process. It's stopping them from deep learning. How does it matter what language is used? Are they problem-solving? That is my concern. (CST142)

In this extract, Teacher CST142 asserted that the question of language is not her concern. Therefore, she does not 'interfere' with the language of any lesson-related discourse learners are engaged in. She asserts that 'allowing' them to use *any* language(s) they have access to is 'allowing' them to achieve deep learning, which is exactly what she wants.

Four teachers of science reasoned that if their learners had 'weak or not good' English proficiency this was a valid justification for allowing them to access concepts in physics, chemistry and biology through their other languages. An example is given by Teacher ST17 in Data Extract 8.

Data Extract 8
Science is experience first and then analysis next. If learners are plurilingual, they can access a concept through languages or a combination of other modes. Restricting or stopping them from using their languages is curtailing their sense-making and thinking – how will they abstract the concept? In a way aren't we forcing rote learning rather than understanding? (ST17)

ST17 explains that science is 'experienced first and then analysed next'. Whether it is buoyancy or metals or cell division that is the focus of attention, these phenomena are processed and understood as experiences in their home languages before they become concepts in class. Allowing learners to process such concepts in their language is therefore empowering. Not permitting this would be to 'curtail' their learning and enforce rote-learning. Teacher MT242 takes this argument further in Data Extract 9.

Data Extract 9
Being registered for a research degree in education of math for visually-challenged I am aware of how visually challenged learners process math concepts like algebra and trigonometry. They use a combination of sensory stimulus, perception and language – any language can do it – not just English. Why nobody told us that in BEd? Learners' use of their language is analogous to the sensory input for a blind person because they register events in their senses to which their languages serve as inputs. We know that now – visually challenged assign their own understanding to the shapes. Similarly my learners' use of their strong language is definitely a tool to process the concept. Letting them use that language is letting them into the classroom otherwise they will be out of the lesson and maybe school too. (MT242)

Though several teachers pointed out the reality of linguistic diversity in their classrooms and how they supported it, MT242 was the only teacher who questioned why research into and findings of multimodal ways of learning were not disseminated in pre-service and in-service teacher training programmes. He argued that if such routes were legitimised then the approach of learning only through English would no longer be sacrosanct. In that case there was a likelihood that we would begin to see learner languages widely recognised as resources. Teacher MT242 argued that allowing learners to draw on their multilingual abilities would help them to sustain their attention in class and this in turn would minimise the 'language divide' which leads to learners being 'pushed out' of classrooms (Mohanty 2010).

'Allowing' learners' use of other languages as a right

Three teachers claimed that their learners had the right to use any language in the classroom to engage in the lesson. An example is MaT73; see Data Extract 10.

In Data Extract 10, MaT73 complains about the uncritical, imitative deployment of practices from English-speaking nations and regrets that there has been no effort to evolve pedagogies sensitive to the local context. Further, she is of the opinion that

an imitative culture is thrust on teachers through their training. Not only does she underscore the violation of the primary principle of pedagogy but implicitly hints at the detrimental impact that this has on learning; she also suggests that current practice is a violation of one of the fundamental rights bestowed by the constitution.

Data Extract 10
It is their constitutional right to be taught and to learn in the language they know – the first principle of learning: start with the known. That is what they do in all the English-speaking nations – educate children in their mother-tongue and then introduce foreign languages. They do not start with an assumedly valuable commodity called English. But we don't see that logic, instead the Department encourages 'English and English-only' practices and gets our teachers trained in them instead of finding suitable ways to teach and empower. (MaT73)

Another aspect is raised by Teacher TT32 in Data Extract 11. This teacher asks whether it is even possible to restrict the language of the talk that is happening in the learners' head as they attempt to 'survive' the system. According to her, learners' use of other languages is a strategy which they adopt in order to beat systemic disadvantages. She believes that the language that they choose to use is the language of learning, of making sense, of trying to gain access to knowledge and of trying to 'pass' the system.

Data Extract 11
In my context the language of instruction is neither a language widely used in the society nor their home language then how will they make sense of the science and computer class? This is the flaw in the system where learners have to learn in an alien language. What will the learners do? Use whatever resources are available for making sense, learning and surviving the system. I wonder if we can even stop them from using Telugu in the sub-vocal talk at all. (TT32)

'Allowing' learners' use of other languages is an impediment

In stark contrast to those who see other languages as a resource and a right, 13 language teachers gave a variety of reasons to support their perception that their learners' use of other languages was an impediment to their learning of English. An example is Teacher ET67 (Data Extract 12).

According to Teacher ET67 English can make a difference across the generations. This teacher claims that, for her learners, English has a surrender value equalled by no other Indian language. Therefore she questions why she should allow learners to use their language when it is English that they need to access higher education.

Data Extract 12
Does using other languages have an economic value? These children belong to disadvantaged sections which need to be able to access education. Higher education is in English, so that is what has to be enabled. Why will I let them turn to their language when all we want is for them to learn English? For these children English becomes the factor that makes a difference not just now but across generations. (ET67)

Data Extract 13
I teach Oriya to tribal children here. Government gives free education and scholarships for higher education. If these students have to get there that will happen only with English. Why would learners want to use their own languages when they know that their progress depends on their knowing English? How will their use of other languages help in their learning of another language? Tell me where will Savara take them in their education even if we allow them to use it in class? (OT03)

An alternative perception is offered by Teacher OT03, as we can see in Data Extract 13. Unlike ET67, OT03 does not merely assert the value of English for accessing higher education and federal support which make that possible. He raises the issue of learners' motivations for learning any language when he rhetorically asks why a learner would want to use any other language other than English when he knows its socioeconomic value. Despite the fact that he teaches Oriya (a regional language) to learners who are Savara speakers, he explicitly states that every other language in the classroom will be seen as an impediment in a learner's journey towards possessing English.

Discussion

This study has explored teacher perceptions of the efficacy of learners' other languages in the classroom by asking two questions: Firstly whether and why teachers used other languages in their classroom and then whether and why teachers 'allowed' their learners to use other languages. The teachers based their beliefs about the use or non-use of other languages on two arguments: a pedagogic justification which aimed at enabling learning and an ideological justification referred to institutional policies and mandates. The study has found that the majority of teachers claim to use other languages in the classroom to accomplish several purposes (summarised in Table 5). In this aspect this study corroborates research that investigated the purposes of teachers' code-switching in the classroom (Cook 2001). However, the reasoning behind these various purposes ranged from appraisal of learners' linguistic capabilities to distinctive reactions to State educational policies and mandates.

Teachers operate in a context of overt linguistic hierarchy that places English at the top of the pyramid and every other language subservient to it. Inevitably, therefore, their attitudes and practices regarding language are influenced. Those teachers who preferred to maintain linguistic purity cited the need to promote their languages as a reaction against the official discourse that social justice and access to employment

and educational opportunities can be routed *only* by possessing skills in English. Correspondingly, traces of the monolingual mindset are evident in the preference for a specific language both in their use and in allowing their learners. This choice of language appears either to be a resistance to 'English preference' in the policy or to follow the mandates. Responses to the second question substantiate this point. While some teachers valued multilingual competence in their learners, others – despite valuing other languages – questioned the efficacy of these languages for learning. Some teachers questioned outright why other languages needed to be valued when all that their learners required was competence in English. Here is yet another manifestation of the MM which has an insurmountable difficulty in seeing the interdependence of language capabilities. Such perceptions could breed separatist practices that manoeuvre the cognitive routes and resources for learning and knowing in MLLs especially when research finds that bi/multilinguals are *not* two monolingual in one and that they manipulate their processing modes to suit their needs (Grosjean 1989).

Recall how TT04 perceived code-switching to be a 'hybrid practice' that should not be encouraged. In contrast, MT242 argued that multilingual and multimodal ways of learning are natural and that they need to be legitimised (in circumstances when they are not). Further, several teachers underscored the relationship between learner experiences and the coding of those experiences in their strongest language. While ST17 stressed the value of such experiences as leverages for engaging in classroom activity, CST142 argued that it allows for deep learning. Meanwhile, MT242 warned that the inaccessibility of educators' language of transaction coupled with the imposition of restrictions on the learners' language of thinking and meaning-making could have dire results, such as learners being pushed out of the learning space and eventually from the school space (Mohanty 2017). These teachers argue that learners' languages are the primary coders of their 'sensory stimulus and sensory experiences' (MT242). Though they do not refer to conceptual constructs such as BICS and CALP (Cummins 2008), they intuitively indicate that learners' access to academic concepts is bound to their experiences coded in other languages and that, if learners have to connect to the lesson, they should be allowed to use their multilingual repertoires.

This diversity in teachers' reasoning brings to the fore two significant concerns. The first concern is that research on the inextricably interdependent nature of the languages used by bi/multilingual learners and how learners draw on these languages in assembling their multilingual repertoires for their learning (Garcia 2009; Cummins 2008) has not been disseminated (Alim 2004). Therefore awareness of the interdependence between languages and the cognitive benefit that these languages can accord remains unexploited by teachers. The second concern is that teachers' conscious decisions and justifications reflect an idiosyncratic monolingual mindset that seems to support separatist practices; these ideologies are in part driven by pre-service and in-service programmes.

Conclusions

One cannot but note the conflicting discourses within the data insomuch as some teachers acknowledge the positive pedagogic value of other languages while other teachers question the value and legitimacy of other languages for learning and yet

other teachers – despite recognising them as cognitive assets – are apprehensive about using them for pedagogy since, according to them, English is more highly valued. The study has thus identified multilayer complex reasoning in teachers' perceptions of the efficacy of other languages in the classroom.

The study has also found that there were more teachers who said that they did not allow their learners to use other languages than there were teachers who claimed not to use any other language in the classroom. Why? Such monolingual bias in teacher perceptions could be because they are products of the monolingual mindset themselves in their own schooling and the teacher education programmes which they have experienced.

Additionally, teachers are subjected to in-service training sessions that advocate selected methodologies and techniques as sacrosanct sure-shot practices that will deliver monolingual-in-English capability. One of our teacher respondents questioned the efficacy of 'methodologies and techniques' in developing English competence and the exclusivity in developing only English. Has the efficacy of these programmes been evaluated? Why then, as he questioned, was the pedagogy of their languages and their professional development neglected? Is this study indicative of a case of institutional planning versus learners' plurilingual capabilities?

The study has shown explicitly that teachers could be key players in recognising learners' languages either as a resource or as an impediment and that they could play a significant role as agents of change in multilingual classrooms by viewing learners' linguistic repertoires as cognitive resources, provided that teachers be 'allowed' to uncover, analyse and question ideologies. To this extent, courses in teacher education have to be designed in such a way that teachers become aware of their own ideologies and contribute to their learners' empowerment and self-regulated access to educational opportunities.

Notes

[1] Despite a multilingual educational policy in elementary education and higher education in South Africa, English still continues to dominate the educational space (Madiba 2013).

[2] Andhra Pradesh, a linguistically diverse state, houses 13 Schedule VIII languages and ten tribal languages namely Savara, Lambada, Yerukula, Gondi, Khond, Koya, Kui, Parji, Kolami and Kanda (http://tribal.nic.in). With 106,174 Government schools in which 1,987,564 linguistically-diverse learners are enrolled, AP faces nothing less than a challenge in educating them. In 2015, AP was divided into AP and Telangana. The data used in this chapter pertain to five districts of AP and two districts of Telangana.

[3] A retired Education Officer reported that he had taken part in a survey in 1996 to confirm a demand for English in AP. However, no evidence of the survey was available with the State Council for Educational Research and Training AP.

[4] Translation: Kasturibaa Gandhi Girls School.

[5] During their interviews two respondents (MT11 and ST16) referred to this training session which had been attended by their colleagues.

[6] All 14 respondents participated in Phase 2.

[7] Each individual respondent was given a code consisting of three components: (First letter of

the subject/language taught) + T (Teacher) + (Identity number). The subject codes are: CS = Computer Science, E = English, H = Hindi, M = Mathematics, Ma = Marathi, O = Oriya, S = Science, SS = Social Science, T = Telugu. For example, MT11 and ST16 are teachers of Mathematics and Science respectively.

[8] Savara is a tribal language spoken in parts of AP.

[9] TT04 uses a phrase sankara jathi bhasha which means 'hybrid or mutated version of languages' or 'language of hybrids'. Consultations with a native-speaker translator revealed that the sankar jathi is a derogatory expression often used to refer to inferior races and cultures.

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10

Empowering the marginalised through language supportive pedagogy in Tanzanian secondary education[1]

Noah J. Mtana and Kalafunja M. O-saki

Introduction

This chapter addresses the issue of empowering the marginalised through language supportive pedagogy in secondary education in Tanzania. Like many African countries, Tanzania uses a local language that is familiar to students (in this case Kiswahili) during the early years of schooling; and a European language, English, in secondary and higher education. This means that the switch from the local language, Kiswahili, to English takes place at the beginning of secondary schooling. The main problem is that, because of the existing policy[2] that allows only English in secondary schools, many students who enter these schools become marginalised because they are not fluent enough to use English for communication and for learning school subjects. There has been a six week bridging baseline English course to address the issue, but research (e.g. Murasi 2013) has shown that because of its duration and poor management, this course does not facilitate smooth transition from Kiswahili to English-medium education. A project on 'Language Supportive Teaching and Textbooks' (LSTT) has been implemented since 2012 in response to the problem.

Our discussion in this chapter is about marginalisation and empowerment in this context. In the chapter, we begin by discussing the concepts of marginalisation and empowerment in education. Then we discuss how Tanzanian language policies and practice in the schooling system create a situation that marginalises the majority of students. After that, we use the LSTT project to discuss how it is possible to empower marginalised students through a language supportive pedagogy. We finally discuss some implications after outlining a few lessons drawn from the project.

Marginalisation and empowerment in education

The two concepts of 'marginalisation' and 'empowerment' are complex and can be used with different meanings in different contexts. Central to them, however, is the issue of power. In this context we choose to begin with definitions from the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* in which to 'marginalise' is 'to make somebody or a group of people become or feel less important and less powerful'. 'Empowerment' is the opposite of marginalisation and is defined as 'to give somebody the authority

H. Coleman (ed.). 2017. *Multilingualisms and Development*. London: British Council. ISBN 978-0-86355-840-5

or power to act.' In the context of schooling, which is the focus of this chapter, the two concepts relate with the power students are accorded in the learning process. The concepts relate with the question, for example, of how much the students are free and able to interact among themselves, with their teachers and with the learning materials they use. From Wenger's (1998) theorising, participation in meaningful practice is necessary for learning. In classroom situations, such participation involves interaction with others (students and teachers) and with the learning materials. Those with enough freedom and ability to interact are empowered; and those whose freedom and ability is constrained are marginalised. From Vygotsky's perspective (Philips and Soltis 1998), language is conceived as a powerful tool for facilitating this freedom and ability to interact; and, in this sense, it is a potential means for both empowering and marginalising learners. It is important therefore, that in order to avoid the marginalisation of some learners, a language that is the medium of instruction in schools is carefully chosen and well taught so that all learners are free and able to interact through it.

Tanzanian language policy and practice in schools

Tanzania is multilingual, with a complex linguistic landscape. There are many language varieties[3] that belong to different language families and rich indigenous cultures. Among them, the policy allows only Kiswahili and English to be used in schools. Kiswahili is the *lingua franca* and national language. It is the medium of instruction in public primary schools and is taught as a compulsory subject in the primary and secondary schools. The language is spoken and used for written communication all over the country. In urban areas, it is the first language (i.e. mother tongue) to a large number of children and youths. But, in most rural areas, it is the second language, used in schools, in most public activities and in communication as a *lingua franca*. English, the ex-colonial language, is also taught as a subject in primary and secondary schools. It is the medium of instruction in most private primary schools[4] and currently it is a compulsory medium in all secondary schools[5]. Its use outside classrooms is very limited. It has been estimated (for example by Campbell and Qorro 1997) that only five per cent of the Tanzanian population use English in daily life communication. Because the language policies do not match well with the linguistic landscape of the country, there is a mismatch between the existing policy and practice in schools.

The 1995 education and training policy (MOEC 1995), which is still in practice to date, emphasises monolingualism in schools. The authorised medium of instruction is the only language allowed for communication in the school compounds. In classrooms, teaching has to be done using the authorised medium of instruction only. Code-switching among languages is forbidden; and thus, in public primary schools, Kiswahili is the only language allowed. Children's home languages are not allowed at all even if students have already developed a lot of conceptions of their environment through them (Osaki 2005). In secondary schools, it is English only which is allowed for communication. The practice in schools, however, does not follow the policy in terms of language use. In rural primary schools, for example, many children use their home languages for communication at school. Teachers complain that this is the case even in classroom discussions. In secondary schools, students and teachers communicate by switching between English and Kiswahili (Rubagumya 2008; Swai 2015). In the case of secondary schools, teachers feel that the use of both English and Kiswahili

is necessary for learning (Barrett et al. 2014); but they feel guilty because they know that, by doing so, they are violating the government policy (Brock-Utne 2004).

A new education and training policy (Jamhuri ya Muungano wa Tanzania 2014) came out in 2014 and was officially inaugurated in 2015. In this new policy, there are statements concerning the use of both Kiswahili and English as media of instruction at all levels of education. However, directives on how to implement the language policy have not yet been made public. Therefore, up to the moment we are writing, it is not clear how the two media of instruction are actually to be used in the schools. This situation reflects the persistent lack of clarity and fear of commitment to a particular language of instruction beyond primary education.

Marginalisation in Tanzanian secondary schools

Policies and practice in the schooling system in Tanzania have created a situation in which the majority of students, especially during the early years of secondary schooling, are marginalised through the use of English as the medium of instruction. This is because they are not fluent enough in the language to understand subject content and to express themselves during classroom learning. This is the result of the fact that the distribution of resources for teaching English does not provide equal opportunities for all students in primary schools to access the language and become fluent enough to use it for learning school subjects when they enter secondary schools. While only a minority have relatively good access to English (e.g. those in English medium schools), the majority have very limited access (Mtana 2013), leading to an early level of marginalisation. The English language is poorly taught in public primary schools (due to a lack of adequately qualified English teachers at that level), while access outside the classroom is almost non-existent, hence, a second level of marginalisation. At entry to secondary school, the majority of the students are not fluent enough in English and, because of this, they are marginalised (a third level) in the learning of school subjects and in communication in school compounds.

It needs to be emphasised here that in addition to the extent to which learners are fluent in the language of instruction, pedagogical practices in schools can play a similar role of either marginalising or empowering students. Pedagogical practices that are learner-centred give students authority and power to participate in learning activities, to take responsibility and to become active in their learning. This means that, in such practices, students are empowered. On the other hand, pedagogical practices that are teacher-centred marginalise students by making them passive and by prioritising what the teacher does rather than what students do for their learning. In such practice, learners are not given the authority and power to act during learning. In the case of teaching and learning in Tanzanian secondary schools, partly because of the language problem and partly because of teachers' competence in pedagogy, teacher-centred approaches are dominant in classrooms (Swai 2015), making students passive in the process and therefore marginalising them.

Context and practice in secondary schools

As already explained, the policy currently in use (MOEC 1995) allows the use of Kiswahili for teaching and communication in primary schools but only English in secondary schools. While Kiswahili-medium primary schools are public[6], there are

a few English-medium schools in which parents have to pay school fees for their children. This means that the majority of Tanzanian children go to public, Kiswahili-medium primary schools but there is a relatively small group of children from economically more powerful families (particularly in urban areas) which goes to English-medium primary schools. Although English is taught as a compulsory subject in the seven years of public primary schooling, the language is badly taught and this leads to the majority of students from the Kiswahili-medium schools failing to communicate fluently in English at entry to secondary school (Mtana 2013). However, it has been common practice to restrict students in the secondary schools from communicating in Kiswahili or in any of their home languages, despite the fact that such languages are rich, especially in local environmental and indigenous knowledge. As evidence of this, we see posters stating 'ENGLISH ONLY HERE' and 'NO ENGLISH NO SERVICE' in many secondary schools. This means that only those few who are fluent in English can communicate freely in the school compounds, thus again marginalising children by ignoring their school experience and preventing them from linking home and school learning experience.

In classrooms, as already explained in the previous section, teaching has to take place through English only. But this is difficult because of the language problems experienced by many students. Research in this area (e.g. Rubagumya 2008; Swai 2015) shows that students and teachers use several strategies to cope with the situation when they are supposed to use English only during classroom interaction to discuss concepts learned at home in other languages, including Kiswahili (Osaki 2005). Strategies such as code-switching, code-mixing, translation and safe-talk[7] are common. In rural areas, the situation is more complex as students come to primary school knowing their home languages to start learning both Kiswahili and English in school. As already explained, teachers use these strategies with a consciousness of guilt and would not like to be seen doing so by outsiders to the schools, including school inspectors. In addition to the guilty consciousness of teachers, another issue is that although strategies such as code-switching and translation facilitate understanding of subject content, they are not used to develop students' knowledge and skills in English, the language of instruction. Also, these strategies are used in oral classroom work only. At the end of lessons, students are given some notes which they have to copy for their revision. Many teachers make notes that are complex and difficult for students to follow. Also some of the notes contain language errors including grammatical and spelling mistakes (Roy-Campbell and Qorro 1997). Because they do not understand the language, the students have to memorise the content to reproduce it in examinations (Swai 2015). When asked to explain simple concepts in English during examinations, the students exhibit a number of misconceptions[8], some of which they have acquired in the classroom and others at home in their vernaculars, Kiswahili and then English (Osaki and Samiroden 1990). This hinders meaningful learning and acquisition of new concepts, especially in science, maths, social studies and even literature.

In terms of reading materials, most of the locally written textbooks which are used are very difficult for the students to understand. The language in these textbooks is often challenging and – as established since the mid-1990s (Chonjo et al. 1995) and later confirmed in the baseline study of the LSTT project (Barrett et al. 2014) – the

readability of the texts makes reading for understanding too difficult for most of the students. So far there has been little support available for learners struggling to read and also to understand the concepts as taught in the classroom. As a way to support students' transition from Kiswahili medium education in primary schooling to English medium education in secondary schooling, the Language Supportive Teaching and Textbooks (LSTT) Project was established.

The LSTT project: What is language support?

As a way to address the issues of language and pedagogy in the early years of secondary schooling, we established the project 'Strengthening Secondary Education in Practice: Language Supportive Teaching and Textbooks in Tanzania (LSTT).' The LSTT project,

> *... is a collaboration between three universities and the Tanzania Institute of Education. The university departments are the Graduate School of Education, University of Bristol; the College of Humanities and Social Sciences and the College of Education, University of Dodoma; and the Institute for Educational Development, Aga Khan University East Africa Campus.* (Barrett et al. 2014)

The project aims at supporting students' transition from primary to secondary schooling, which is mainly a transition from Kiswahili to English-medium education. It is implemented in rural community secondary schools in three educationally disadvantaged[9] regions, Dodoma, Lindi and Morogoro. The subjects chosen because of their diverse language demands are English, Biology and Mathematics. While English is the vehicle for learning other school subjects, biology and mathematics have different demands in terms of language and pedagogical principles.

After a baseline survey and a pilot study to determine needs, textbook chapters for these three subjects have been written and are used in schools for evaluation. These chapters are language supportive in several ways. First of all, they are easily accessible to students in that they have relatively simple and familiar vocabulary, the sentences in them are short and not complex, they have many illustrations, and they have English-Kiswahili glossaries. This aims at helping students to easily understand their content. Secondly, they have many learning activities for supporting students' understanding of content and developing language knowledge and skills. Thirdly, they encourage the use of Kiswahili during pair and group discussions followed by the use of English during reporting back in class. Some language support cues are provided to help students on how to report in English. Equality of gender is emphasised during classroom activities. Finally, the students are encouraged to take the books home so that learning continues outside the classroom. In this way, support is provided to students in both subject content learning and language development.

Students' empowerment in LSTT

In LSTT students are empowered by being enabled to interact actively using bilingual strategies during the transition from their familiar language to the official medium of classroom discourse. In the classrooms where we are working, LSTT strategies allow students to read, talk and listen to discussions in both languages in an effort to clarify their understanding of key concepts. Then they may be able to clearly

Box 1: Extract from specimen materials for Biology (Mosi et al. 2015)

KEY IDEAS

Waste

Biodegradable

Non-biodegradable

GLOSSARY

Production = uzalisjhaji

Harvest = vuna

Consist of = zinajumuisha

Materials = vitu anuai

Substances = vitu

Utensils = vyombo jikoni

Rubbish = takataka

Waste = mabakitaka

Collect = kukusanya

Store = kuhifadhi

Treat = kutibu

Discard = kutelekeza

Recycle = rudisha kwenye mzunguko

Waste management = kuthibiti uchafu

Undesired = visivyotakiwa

Source of accidents = chanzo cha ajali

Manufacturing process = mchakato wa kutengeneza

Generated = iliyozalishwa

Unit 4.1 Waste

In everyday life at home or at school there are materials you do not need. For instance banana or potatoes peels, used papers, plastic bags, empty cans and bottles, used batteries, worn out clothes, broken utensils, dirty water, spoiled milk, etc. All these things are called **waste**. They are also called rubbish, trash, junk, or garbage. They are unwanted or **undesired materials** or **substances.** They can be a **source of accidents** or diseases in our environment.

Waste may also **consist of** the unwanted materials left over from a **manufacturing process** such as industrial, commercial, mining or agricultural operations.

Activity 4.1: Whose waste?

Different places make different types of waste.

1. In a group, record a list of all the waste you can think of.
2. Share your ideas as a class and write your ideas on the blackboard.
3. Different places make different types of rubbish. Copy this table. Write down the waste from each place.

Waste

A home :
A school :
A farm :
A factory :

Activity 4.2 Where does your family waste go?

All the waste material must go somewhere. Do you know where it goes?

Work with your partner. Look at the 5 ways of disposing waste. Talk in Kiswahili and check that you understand them.

It is burned

It is put into landfill

It is composted

It is recycled

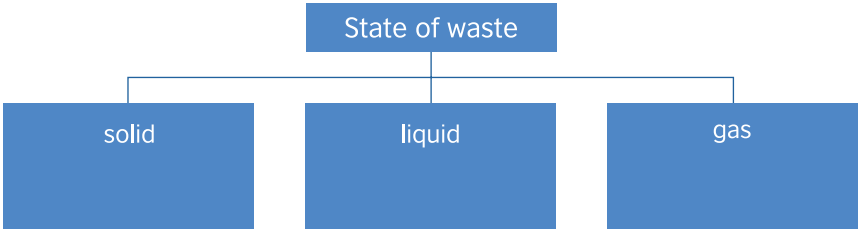
It is re-used

Look at the list of kinds of waste in the diagram below. Say what you think happens to each one. Report to the class.

Waste materials may be collected, stored, or treated before being discarded or recycled. This process of collecting, storing, discarding, and recycling wastes is known as waste management. This process is very important in our schools and at home because we need to control accidents and diseases in our communities.

Types of waste

Copy the diagrams into your exercise book. Read the text and give more examples from your environment.



There are several ways to classify **waste material**. For example, if we think of the physical state of waste, there are three kinds of waste: solid, liquid, and gaseous wastes. **Solid wastes** include plastics, containers, bottles, cans, papers, or scrap iron. **Liquid wastes** include domestic waste water, chemicals, oils, waste water from ponds, manufacturing industries and other sources. **Gaseous wastes** include smokes and **smog** from burning substances mainly from industries, cars, or in kitchens.

understand and later express the concepts in the official language, in this case English. Observations show that the students participate much more actively during lessons conducted in this manner. They learn more easily from the texts, from each other and from their teachers. The glossaries and illustrations enable them to translate the difficult concepts and improve their learning. The learning tasks provide an opportunity for them to practise language use and hence improve their language ability and concept understanding. An example, from a biology lesson, is shown in Box 1.

Some preliminary findings and their implications

The findings of the final evaluation of the LSTT study have not been published yet, but several lessons can be drawn from the baseline and pilot studies. We would like to put forward two such lessons here. The first one is that legitimising the use of Kiswahili-English bilingual strategies in the secondary school classrooms is a move which is welcomed both by teachers and by students. It helps the participants to get rid of the feeling of guilt that they experienced when this was not allowed by policy. The second lesson that can be drawn from the study is that it is possible – and is of benefit – to use Kiswahili in the classroom to develop students' understanding of subject content and to develop their English language skills. As Barrett et al. explain:

> *Well-designed activities, with explicit directions for use of language, support students to access their prior learning in Kiswahili and develop their English language skills so they can articulate and build on their subject knowledge in English.* (Barrett et al. 2014, 45-46)

On the basis of these two lessons, we can now discuss some implications for policy and practice.

The LSTT language supportive teaching and materials represent a radical change in policy and pedagogical practice. They emphasise that learners' familiar language can be used advantageously to support the learning of subject content and to improve the learners' knowledge and skills of the second language. The two languages – English and Kiswahili – do not have to be kept separate for this matter. As Cummins (2005, 5) explains, using both the more familiar and the second language provides learners with the opportunity to transfer cognitive and academic (or literacy) related proficiency from one language to another and can enhance the development of both languages. Such transfer includes five elements:

- Conceptual elements (e.g. understanding the concept of photosynthesis)
- Metacognitive and metalinguistic strategies (e.g. vocabulary acquisition strategies)
- Pragmatic aspects of language use (e.g. ability to use visuals to aid communication)
- Specific linguistic elements (e.g. knowledge of 'photo' in photosynthesis)
- Phonological awareness (e.g. awareness that words are made up of single sounds).

In addition to this transfer, the pedagogical practices encouraged in the LSTT teaching and learning materials facilitate translanguaging, which Park (2013, 50) defines as a pedagogical practice that allows 'shifting between languages in a natural manner' to assist multilingual speakers make meaning, shape experiences and gain deeper understanding and knowledge of the languages in use and of content that is being taught. During the process of translanguaging, students get opportunities to freely and flexibly incorporate the language practices of school into their own linguistic repertoires. This implies that using both English and Kiswahili in learning, as the LSTT materials suggest, has not only the potential of improving students' understanding of subject content and their competence in both languages, but also helps them to relate what they learn in school with their daily life experiences out of school and to communicate this freely and fluently. Creese and Blackledge (2010) explain that monolingual instructional practices have dominated language teaching for a long time; that is why policies are resistant to change and some teachers feel guilty when they use strategies such as code-switching and translation. However, they suggest that, because of the advantages of translanguaging, it is necessary to change practices (and policies) to allow for the use of both the familiar and the second language alongside each other.

In the LSTT Project, we are working with the government curriculum development institution (Tanzania Institute of Education, TIE) in the hope that once this study shows the way, policy will unfold in a direction that helps all learners to become more fluent in the language of instruction and access a truly high quality education. Because the new policy allows the two languages, Kiswahili and English, to be used as media of instruction at all levels of education, it is recommended that the lessons learned from the LSTT be used in translating the policy to practice in classroom teaching, in textbook writing and in teacher education. If the policy allows the languages to be used alongside each other in teaching, as it is in the LSTT project, students are likely to benefit from the transfer of literacy skills as suggested by Cummins (2005) and from the pedagogical advantages of translanguaging as outlined by Park (2013). By doing so, the currently marginalised students, who form the majority, are very likely to be empowered and to benefit more from learning.

Notes

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[2] As is explained in more detail later in the chapter, the old 1995 policy is still in use, even though a new 2014 policy exists.

[3] They are known as ethnic, community or tribal languages. More than 120 of these exist.

[4] Private means not owned by the government. These are available in urban areas and have high school fees.

[5] The 2014 policy that allows the use of Kiswahili is not yet in operation.

[6] Owned by the Government and offering free education

[7] In safe-talk, the teacher uses strategies that do not require students to speak independently, for example by asking questions which all learners respond to in chorus, usually by repeating

information which is already well known (Chick 1996). In this way the momentum of the lesson is maintained but nobody loses face by having their lack of ability exposed.

[8] These misconceptions can be understood as alternative or unscientific explanations about phenomena.

[9] Children's achievement, as reflected in national examination scores, is relatively low in these regions. This is attributed to the poor socioeconomic background of the parents and communities surrounding the schools.

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11

Unleashing potential in multilingual classrooms: The case of Bastar in Chhattisgarh State, India

Stanley V. John

Introduction

This chapter discusses how textbooks assist in generating an environment for joyful learning in multilingual classrooms in the Bastanar region of Bastar district in the Indian State of Chhattisgarh. A study was designed following preliminary observations in some classrooms. Teachers' use of textbooks with freedom and flexibility allows for unleashing potential within children in multilingual situations, encouraging children to become responsive and creative.

Background

India is the home to large numbers of indigenous people who are still untouched by the lifestyle of the modern world. These 'tribal' people, as they are usually called, are still dependent on hunting, agriculture and fishing. Each group of these tribal people has its own culture, tradition, language and lifestyle. According to the Constitution of India, two terms are used to refer to tribes; they are *Adivasi* ('original inhabitant') or *Anusuchit Janjati* ('scheduled tribe').

According to the 2011 Census of India (GoI 2011), 30.6 per cent of the population of the State of Chhattisgarh are members of scheduled tribes; this means that this state has one of the highest proportions of tribal populations in the country. Chhattisgarh is divided into 27 districts with a total of 146 blocks (sub-districts); from this number, 74 are classified as Educationally Backward Blocks (EBB)[1] and 72 are non-EBB. The northern and southern belts in the state comprise major tribal populated districts. With 20,126 villages spread over an area of 135,191 km^2, the state has many attractions, including its exotic wildlife, grand medieval palaces, waterfalls, rock paintings and thick green cover. It is abundantly endowed with a rich cultural heritage and splendid natural diversity.

Bastar district (area 4,030 km^2) is situated in the southern part of Chhattisgarh with a tribal population of more than 70 per cent; it is affected by left wing extremism. Prominent tribes in this district include the Gond, Maria, Muria, Dhurva, Batra and Halba. The average literacy rate in the district of Bastar in 2011, according to the

[1] H. Coleman (ed.). 2017. *Multilingualisms and Development*. London: British Council. ISBN 978-0-86355-840-5

Census (GoI 2011), was 54.94 per cent (compared to the state average of 71.04 per cent). In Bastar district the literacy rate for men was 65.70 per cent and 44.49 per cent for women; these figures compared to 81.45 per cent for men and 44.49 per cent for women at the state level. The district of Bastar is sub-divided into seven blocks: Jagdalpur, Bakawand, Bastanar, Bastar, Darbha, Lohandiguda and Tokapal.

The study reported here was conducted in Bastanar block, which is situated in the south-western part of the district where it borders with Dantewara district. Among the seven blocks of Bastar district, literacy is the lowest in Bastanar, where only 9.1 per cent of men and 3.08 per cent of women are literate. Over the years, several initiatives have been taken by the state to ensure that children have access to school, to keep children in the education system and to deliver education of a satisfactory standard. The block has a difficult geographical terrain which itself poses problems for accessing schooling and making ancillary facilities available. This is coupled with the reality that the majority of parents are themselves mostly illiterate or only first or second generation learners (as indicated by the literacy rates); consequently, parents can barely provide educational support at home to their children. These factors have a distressing impact on achieving Universal Elementary Education[2]; the situation is exacerbated by the activities of left wing extremists, as already mentioned.

Elementary schooling in Bastanar

All villages in Bastanar block have access to primary schooling within a range of one kilometre or less. A large proportion of the children enrolled in elementary schools here belong to the Gond tribal families of Bastanar, known for their rich traditional heritage. However, there are also children from other tribal groups in this area who came from other places originally, for reasons such as family occupations and marriage. Consequently, most classrooms are multilingual.

Most of the teachers placed in schools in Bastanar come from other parts of the state. These teachers are mostly monolingual in Hindi, with little or no knowledge about the diverse cultural backgrounds of the children. Children enter school with experience only of their home community and therefore struggle to understand the language of the teacher and the textbooks.

Parental support for children's education is problematic. Each school has a School Management Committee (SMC), as mandated by the Right to Education Act of 2009 (Gazette of India 2009). Parents constitute the majority of members, but teachers and elected representatives of local bodies also sit on the committee and a teacher acts as chair or coordinator. Meetings take place every month to discuss issues raised by the members. However, even if parents attend they scarcely ever express their views. They often say that they will just put their signatures or thumb prints wherever the coordinator wants them to. On many occasions they are unwilling to listen to what is being said; they just put their signature or thumb print where needed and then leave. On the other hand, when issues such as supplies of rations or land are being discussed, the same parents become very vocal and active.

Irregular attendance and long absenteeism of children is a major challenge here. Teachers have to look for children in their houses, farms or nearby markets to

bring them to school. They struggle to convince parents and guardians of the value of education because the two parties do not understand each other, due to the mismatch between the mainstream language spoken by the teachers and the local tribal language. There are other issues such as the cultural background, about which the teachers know nothing, and so they just make guesses about their students' background. The schools where these teachers are placed have limited resources for teaching and learning. Children are seated on the floor and two or three classes may be combined in one room. The children have limited exposure and access to resources other than textbooks.

Innovation in textbooks

Textbooks are uniform throughout the state. They are written in Hindi, which is foreign to these children. Students in Classes 1 and 2 are prescribed an integrated textbook covering the three subjects of Hindi language, English language and Mathematics. As a step to empower the learning situation and make it more flexible and approachable for teachers, in 2015 the state introduced books for Classes 1 and 2 in a new format (SCERT 2015a, 2015b). The books consist of 19 lessons, all in Hindi, but the first seven chapters – covering birds, domestic animals, wild animals, vegetables, means of transport and human relationships – are designed in such a way that each language lesson is tabulated with equivalent words in six prominent local languages (Chhattisgarhi, Surgujia, Kudukh, Halbi, Gondi of Kanker district and Gondi of Dantewara district), five of which are tribal. Two lessons from the Class 1 textbook, one on birds and the other on vegetables, are shown in Figures 1 and 2.

Figure 1: Lesson on birds from Class 1 textbook (SCERT 2015a)

Figure 2: Lesson on vegetables from Class 1 textbook (SCERT 2015a)

Table 1 is a transcription in Roman script of the table of birds' names which appears in Figure 1, showing how the Hindi names appear in the left hand column. The equivalent names in six other languages are given in the other columns. The English equivalents are also provided in the right hand column, although these do not appear in the textbooks.

Table 1: Transcription of the table of birds' names from Figure 1

Hindi	Chhattisgarhi	Surgujia	Kudukh	Halbi	Gondi (Kanker)	Gondi (Dantewara)	English
kauwa	kaunwa	kaumwa	khakha	kawra	karrval	kakad	crow
thotha	suwa, mittu	suga	suga	rupu	hidd	kiryad	parrot
kabuthar	pareva	parenva	perva	parevan, pareyaan	paareva	bode	dove
ullu	dhudhuwa, ghar khusra	khusar	pechcha	kurvan	kurval	kunj	owl
koyal	koyalee	koyalee	kuhu	koyalee	koval	koval	cuckoo
gaurayya	bamhan chirai	gorela	choro	chateya	kodka	vijja pitte	sparrow
murga	kukra	kukra	kokro	kukda	korai	gogod	cock

Regular academic support is provided to teachers by 'block coordinators' (members of the faculty of the District Institute of Education and Training or DIET). The support includes mentoring teachers on academic and non-academic issues, including the introduction of new books. Through the regular academic support which they receive, teachers are helped to become more aware of how to use teaching materials, the alternatives available to them and the consequences of the choices that they make in their instructional activities, with a particular focus on the words taught. I am the block coordinator for Bastanar and so I was in a position to observe directly how teachers and pupils responded to the new book when it was introduced. (At the time of writing the book is still in use.)

Methodology

The survey reported here employed a mixed qualitative and quantitative approach in collecting data. Fifty Class 1 and Class 2 teachers from 50 schools were randomly selected from the 153 government primary schools in Bastanar block. A total of 907 children were enrolled in Classes 1 and 2 in these schools. First of all, I observed a number of teachers using the new books in their classrooms. Next, teachers in the sample were asked to complete a questionnaire which I prepared. The questionnaire asked respondents whether they preferred the previous (2014) version of the book or the newer (2015) version and asked them to give reasons for their preference. Respondents were also asked whether they pointed out to the children that their own languages were given importance in the new books. The questionnaire also asked teachers whether they employed traditional games, activities and stories in their classrooms.

A couple of discussion sessions with the teachers took place, after which they returned the completed questionnaire. The discussion was followed by a brief

orientation on how to utilise cultural knowledge in delivering textbook content.

Findings

The tabular format provided in the Class 1 and 2 textbooks with words in different tribal languages was found to be a boon for the teachers. This has not only increased their knowledge of the lexis of the children's home languages but has also helped them in associating the tribal languages with various cultural events and practices in Bastanar. Though not specially trained to use this textbook, the teachers developed their own approaches as they found fit for their classrooms. I observed that teachers were encouraging their students to use their home language as a resource and were also engaged in collecting traditional stories, games and tribal knowledge systems in order to make learning more culturally responsive. Teachers, who were earlier struggling and in despair, were found to be motivated and energetic thanks to the new pattern in the textbooks.

While teachers made connections between the words in the textbook and the outer world and so made the classroom a platform for quality improvement, I saw that students also associated these words with their domestic settings and so developed their own stories. During routine meetings and in informal conversations during tea breaks, block and cluster coordinators often mentioned in passing that they had seen teachers trying to associate new knowledge with cultural traditions to make their classrooms more interactive. (I avoided formal interviews with the coordinators for fear of being given artificial answers.)

Children were also observed drawing pictures inspired by the words that they encountered in the books. For example, in Lesson 7 of the Class 2 book the word table contains the word *makaan*, the Hindi name for house. When Gondi tribal children in Bastanar found the word for house in their own language – *lona* – they were eager to draw pictures of houses. Again, in Lesson 10 of the Class 2 book the Hindi word *pahari* (mountainous area) appears, accompanied by the Gondi equivalent *meta*. The Gondi children wanted to draw pictures of mountains after encountering this word that they recognised.

Children who previously had been totally unresponsive in school became active after hearing 'their words' in the classroom. Teachers reported that children responded positively when the teacher pronounced a word in more than one language and they enjoyed discovering the meaning. For example 'grandfather' is *dadi* in Gondi, whereas *dadi* is the word used for 'grandmother' in Hindi. There are many other such connections that ignited a feeling of fun and play in the classroom. These textbooks have inspired a passion that boosts teachers and students to use words in different languages and cultural situations during teaching-learning processes.

Some more observations emerging from the study are as follows:

1. Teachers reported that they had noticed children discussing other animals in addition to those included in the lessons on animals.
2. Children in Classes 4 and 5, familiar only with monolingual Hindi textbooks, were

also interested in reading the multilingual Class 1 and 2 textbooks.

3. More than half of the teachers made comments similar to this one: *Bachon me ek tarah kaa utsah ... Bachche muskura rahe hain* ('There is a type of enthusiasm in the children ... The children are smiling').
4. Teachers realised that children were learning Hindi faster than previously.
5. The children were not only learning Hindi but were also learning words in the other languages which appeared in the lessons.
6. Teachers said that the children were happy when their home language was used in the classroom and they appeared to be taking an interest in their textbooks.
7. The children developed an interest in reading.
8. Teachers reported that children were interested in identifying relationships among different words in the various languages while a lesson progressed, allowing them to relate with other languages; this created an environment of interaction and collaborative learning.
9. One teacher commented: *Bachon se hamari najdeekiyaan badh rahi hai* ('We are coming closer to the children').
10. I myself observed that the teachers and the children were learning from and interacting with each other.

Suggestions

Participating teachers expressed the view that the tabular format with words in six languages in each lesson should include one more column for the equivalent words in English. They believed that this approach would enable the children to learn some English vocabulary at the same time that they learnt Hindi words.

Another idea was to review the words to suit the local setting, so as to make the classroom processes more culturally appropriate.

There has also been a suggestion to develop a manual for teachers on using the Gondi language in the classroom and in interaction with parents.

Participants in the 11th Language & Development Conference in Delhi also suggested adding one blank column to the right of the existing table of words, so as to provide space for the children to write or draw.

Discussion and conclusion

Though there are research studies that identify a positive link between student performance and the role of textbooks (e.g. Fuller and Clark 1994), teachers' use of a textbook as the only resource in the classroom has been strongly criticised in teacher training programmes because of the limited outcomes achieved. India's National Curriculum Framework (NCERT 2005) also advocates connecting knowledge taught in the classroom to life outside the school; it recommends enriching the curriculum

to go beyond the textbooks. However, the importance of textbooks cannot be overlooked. The study reported here observed that although teachers are using cultural knowledge in their individual styles to transact the curriculum, the impetus for their approach has its genesis in the textbook. The addition of children's home languages in printed form in textbooks created the big difference. Teachers used that as an assistance for them to interact with and communicate to children; the children then connected with the teacher, the textbook and the school with much force. The interest displayed by children played the role of catalyst in activating the teachers to go beyond the textbooks to provide an enriched learning environment, resulting in making learning processes more contextual.

Our comparison of the earlier and the newer versions of the Class 1 and 2 textbooks confirmed Moulton's findings:

> *... textbooks do not necessarily play the dominating role that is often assumed. Teachers saw themselves as teaching knowledge and skills to a group of children, not teaching a book or a specific set of materials.* (Moulton 1994, 26)

The manner in which teachers dealt with textbook material depended on the particular cultural situation; variation in their approaches is supported by the findings reported in studies by Sosniak and Stodolsky (1993) and Moulton (1994).

It is therefore important to use different approaches and additional resources for curriculum enrichment. Teachers can be encouraged to go 'beyond the textbook' and think of alternative ways to improve their teaching and learning practices. In this respect, the National Curriculum Framework (NCERT 2005) observes that teachers should receive more freedom to use their own creative and professional skills in creative teaching, which is essential to promote creative learning.

Several issues that require further research have also emerged from this study. First, more research is needed to analyse the performance of children in these schools. Second, further work is needed to understand how teachers communicate and interact with children when the home language is different from the language in school. A third area includes investigations that can showcase the manner in which teaching practices can be culturally contextualised.

While many educationists and experts are developing models for classroom delivery mechanisms in multilingual situations, this approach of introducing children's home language in textbooks is seen to generate a motivation among teachers struggling with a school language-home language mismatch. When teachers use children's home language *from the textbooks* by reading and writing on the blackboard, and children find that their language is *printed in their textbooks*, their receptiveness increases, leading them to be in active and interactive mode in classrooms where previously they had been passive. This breakthrough in the classroom behaviour of tribal children has developed a process of introducing a variety of innovative activities by the teacher that are culturally responsive, eventually contributing to enhancement of children's self-esteem and allowing them to learn joyfully.

Notes

[1] According to the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Educationally Backward Blocks are determined according to the following criteria: a) female literacy rate below the national average of 46.13 per cent and b) gender gap in literacy above the national average of 21.59 per cent or c) female literacy rate in rural areas of less than 45 per cent irrespective of the gender gap. http://mhrd.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/Educationally%20Backward%20Blocks.pdf

[2] The Ministry of Human Resource Development's policy of Universal Elementary Education is described at http://mhrd.gov.in/overview-ee.

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12

Reviewing multilingual education in Nepal

Pushker Kadel

Introduction

This chapter reviews the background to education policies addressing minority language use in basic education in Nepal. The 2015 Constitution of the country states that every Nepali community living in Nepal has the right to receive education up to secondary level in their own mother tongue and to set up and operate schools and other educational institutions as provided in the Law. Furthermore, every Nepali community residing in Nepal has the right to preserve and promote its language, script, cultural civilisation and heritage (Legislature Parliament of Nepal 2015). Statistics show that over half of all Nepalese do not speak Nepali as their first language.

Nepal's commitment to international agreements and national policies that provide the framework for implementing multilingual education (MLE) in the country is evaluated. The impact on the community, students and teachers of pilot MLE programmes (initiated through the Department of Education in eight languages) and MLE projects (initiated by international and local non-governmental organisations, I/NGOs) will also be examined.

The chapter identifies the benefits of MLE, based on the reported outcomes of existing MLE projects. These include the author's own experience working with two local NGOs that support MLE projects in primary schools in the Dangaura Tharu community in the district of Dang and in the Limbu community in the district of Panchthar. In the latter case the chapter considers attitudes towards the use of the Sirijonga and Devanagari scripts for writing the Limbu language.

The discussion continues with a survey of ten concerns about and challenges to multilingual education in the context of Nepal. This is followed by a list of 15 opportunities and recommendations. The chapter ends with a warning about the threat to MLE posed by the English language.

Background

Nepal is struggling to implement its educational policies and plans. The nation's investment and support have been insufficient to achieve the anticipated outcomes of its education policies. Parents are deeply dissatisfied with the education received

[*]H. Coleman (ed.). 2017. *Multilingualisms and Development*. London: British Council. ISBN 978-0-86355-840-5

by their children in community (government) schools. As a result, enrolment in community schools is decreasing. Those of us who are active and committed to public education are aware of this situation but we are not able to address the problem of decreasing enrolment because we are powerless to bring about change.

The future of nations depends on their education systems and how well children are educated. The languages used in learning and instruction contribute to the quality of education. The development of information science and technology, linked to globalisation and languages of wider communication such as English, plays a key role in education. Increasingly, people seek opportunities to improve their quality of life through migration and, as a result, linguistic and cultural diversity increase. These changes and developments influence educational settings. Sustainable development can only be achieved through the appropriate use of language in education. If children have a strong educational foundation they will be able to continue to higher grades, analyse situations, become more creative and lifelong learners, and engage in productive activities. Therefore, we have to choose bi- and multilingualism as a minimal requirement to teach children in the beginning grades of basic education for the creation of this strong foundation to take place.

Education always relates to the development of societies, encouraging people to be positive thinkers and to explore cooperation and collaboration. Everyone likes to play an active role in societal development and gain respect in the process. But we need to realise that 'Development is not a question of how much one has or accumulates, but how much and how one enjoys life' (Gonzalez 2011, 29).

If the education system is not working properly it will be difficult for the nation to resolve conflicts and sustain development activities; people will be unable to enjoy the benefits of development; and democracy will become weaker. This is the situation in Nepal as we are waiting for a meaningful peace and democratic process to develop through the new Constitution.

I believe that the new 2015 Constitution of Nepal (Legislature Parliament of Nepal 2015) was promulgated through the most democratic process ever established anywhere. The Constitution was made and promulgated by an overwhelming vote of 90 per cent of the exemplarily inclusive Constituent Assembly (CA), which was formed through an internationally applauded election in 2013. It is open for all to see that the CA went through all the due processes of constitution making established by most of the democratic countries in the world. Tove Skutnabb-Kangas has given her enthusiastic approval for the new Constitution:

> *I finally read the whole Constitution of Nepal 2015 on the airplane back from Shanghai. As far as I can see, there is no constitution in the world that would be better! Congratulations!* (personal communication, November 2015)

The new 2015 Constitution will end the political transition (April 2006–September 2015) and establish the April Revolution (2006) agenda in the country. As this chapter is being written, the new Constitution is already functioning, even though there is

some dissatisfaction and agitation about it in the Terai Madhesh region, located in the southern plains, which comprise eight of the country's 75 districts in Nepal.

We are heading towards decentralisation of power through federalism, but the political forces are not able to achieve a consensus as to how the nation should be restructured and power decentralised. So, this is the right time for us to start a debate and establish a good education system which will be helpful for the country's political activities to move forward, to develop a peaceful economic system and to unite the nation through education. Nepal's aim should be to build a language- and community-based developmental movement so that everyone can access relevant, quality education and have equal learning opportunities. Our focus should be to create a good learning environment for all learners to provide a strong foundation in basic education. So basic education must begin with the mother tongue of the learner and gradually shift to language(s) of wider communication.

Language situation in Nepal

Nepal has 126 ethnic groups and 123 mother tongues. In 2011, the total population of the country was 26,494,504 (Central Bureau of Statistics 2012). As Table 1 shows, just under 45 per cent of Nepalese speak Nepali as their first language, meaning that just over 55 per cent of Nepalese do not speak Nepali as their mother tongue.

Table 1: Mother tongues by numbers of speakers (Central Bureau of Statistics 2012)

No.	Language	Population	%*
1	Nepali as mother tongue	11,826,953	44.63
Other mother tongues			
2	Maithili	3,092,530	11.67
3	Bhojpuri	1,584,958	5.98
4	Tharu	1,529,875	5.77
5	Tamang	1,353,311	5.10
6	Newar	846,557	3.19
7	Bajjika	793,416	2.99
8	Magar	788,530	2.97
9	Doteli	787,827	2.97
10	Urdu	691,546	2.61
11	Avadhi	501,752	1.89
12	Limbu	343,603	1.29
13	Gurung	325,622	1.22
14	Baitadeli	272,524	1.02
15	Rai	159,114	0.60
16	Achhami	142,787	0.53

17	Bantawa	132,583	0.50
18	Rajbansi	122,214	0.46
19	Sherpa	114,830	0.43
20	Hindi	77,569	0.29
21	Chamling	76,800	0.28
22	Bajhangi	67,581	0.25
23	Santhali	49,858	0.18
24	Chepang	48,476	0.18
25	Danuwar	45,821	0.17
26	Kham	27,113	0.10
27	Bajureli	10,704	0.04
28	Darchuleli	5,928	0.02
29	Dailekhi	3,102	0.01
	94 other languages	623,302	2.35
Sub-total: Mother-tongue speakers of 122 languages other than Nepali		**14,619,833**	**55.18**
	Not reported	47,718	0.18
Total population		**26,494,504**	**100.00**

***** Percentages calculated by the author, not from the Census

Regulatory framework, international and national

The Government of Nepal has ratified a number of international agreements relating to MLE and has therefore committed itself to implementing them, in addition to its own policies which we discuss below. Probably the most significant of these international agreements are the Education for All goals and the Dakar Framework for Action. The Dakar Framework for Action states that parties to the accord will '... ensure that by 2015 all children, particularly girls and children from ethnic minorities, have access to complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality' (World Education Forum 2000). Specifically, the agreement is a global commitment to achieve the following six major Education for All (EFA) goals by 2015:

1. Expanding early childhood development

2. Ensuring access for all children

3. Meeting learning needs of all children

4. Reducing adult illiteracy

5. Eliminating gender disparity and

6. Improving all aspects of quality education.

Priority is given to ensuring that all children – particularly girls, the disabled, and children from ethnic minorities and difficult circumstances – are able to receive quality education and complete the primary cycle. The five-year strategic EFA plan within the EFA 2015 framework aims at 1) ensuring access to and equity in primary education, 2) enhancing quality and relevance of primary education and 3) improving efficiency and institutional capacity.

Other important and relevant international agreements include the Millennium Development Goals, which state that nations aim to achieve universal primary education by the year 2015 (www.un.org/millenniumgoals); Convention 169 of the International Labour Organisation on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples (ILO 1989) relating to the rights of indigenous communities in Nepal; and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (United Nations 2008) concerning the rights of indigenous peoples with regard to their culture, identity, language, employment, health, education and other issues.

Meanwhile, on the domestic front, seven important regulations provide a framework for Nepal's education and language policies:

1. The National Curriculum Framework for School Education states that local languages (mother tongues) can be taught as subjects (MOE 2007a, 44).

2. As already noted, the Constitution grants all Nepalese people the right to be educated up to secondary level in their mother tongue. Every community also has the right to preserve and promote its language and other aspects of its culture (Legislature Parliament of Nepal 2015).

3. The Education Act of 1971, revised in 2007, states that primary education should be in the mother tongue (Nepal Constitution Foundation n.d.).

4. Guidelines from the Ministry of Education (MOE 2007b) indicate that the mother tongue will in general be the medium of instruction in Grades 1-3.

5. The National Planning Commission has confirmed that multilingual education will be promoted (NPC 2007).

6. The Curriculum for Basic Education in Grades 6 to 8 indicates that the mother tongue will continue to be taught as a subject (MOE 2012).

7. Further guidelines from the Ministry of Education state that multilingual education will be implemented in 7500 schools by 2015. The guidelines confirm that the medium of instruction for all subjects, except the Nepali and English languages, in basic education up to Grade 3, shall be the local mother tongue (MOE 2010). Table 2 summarises the detailed arrangements for basic and non-formal education.

Table 2: Medium of instruction in basic and non-formal education (MOE 2010, 3)

Level		Medium of Instruction	Remarks
Basic education	Pre-primary	Local mother tongue	For teaching of all subjects
	Grades 1-3	Local mother tongue	For all subjects except Nepali and English
	Grades 4-5	Bilingual L1 and L2*	For all subjects except Nepali and English
	Grades 6-8	Bilingual L1 and L2*	For all subjects except Nepali and English (optional for the school)
Non-formal education	Literacy and post-literacy	Local mother tongue or local language of wider communication or both	-

* L1 = first/home language, L2 = second language

Pilot programmes

We have seen that the regulatory framework in Nepal strongly supports the use of first languages in education. We look next at a series of pilot projects and other activities which have taken place over the last decade and which are in line with and support the most recent language-in-education regulations.

Significantly, seven different pilot MLE programmes have been introduced in different parts of the country since 2007. Some of these programmes lasted for just a couple of years while others are still functioning at the time of writing. Some of the pilot schemes have been established by the Ministry of Education, but in other cases local NGOs have been responsible for the initiative and, in one case, an international NGO has been the initiator.

1. Between early 2007 and the end of 2009 seven schools in six districts experimented with using mother tongues as the medium of instruction in Grades 1 to 3. Eight languages were involved: Athpariya Rai, Eastern Tharu, Palpa Magar, Rajbansi, Rana-Tharu, Santhali, Tamang and Uraw. This programme was operated by the Inclusive Section in the Ministry of Education.

2. From 2008 to 2011 the Language Development Centre-Nepal, working with Help Society Nepal and the Limbu Language Development Association, established two schemes to use Dangaura Tharu (Dang District, mid-western Nepal, population 500,000) and Limbu (Panchthar District, eastern Nepal, population 344,000) respectively. Dangaura Tharu and Limbu were used as 'major languages' in the first three years of primary education in four different schools. In the case of Dangaura Tharu the language was also used in a one year pre-school programme. Although these two schemes ended in 2011, in 2013 the

Language Development Centre-Nepal and the Limbu Language Development Association set up a new programme to deliver monolingual education in the Limbu language. At the time of writing, this more recent scheme is continuing to run in two schools in Panchthar District, but only in Grade 1. The author has had the opportunity to observe the implementation of these Tharu and Limbu language programmes; some comments on their impact are made below.

3. The Nepali National Languages Preservation Institute has been supporting a Rajbansi-medium programme in three schools in Jhapa District since 2008. The programme is applied for one year in pre-school and for all five grades in primary school.

4. The Janakalyan Higher Secondary School, in collaboration with MIK Nepal, has delivered mother-tongue education in the Tharu, Avadhi and Nepali languages in six schools in Kapilvastu District since 2011. The programme covers a year of pre-school and the first three grades of primary school. At the time of writing it is continuing to function. The same partners have also been offering a Magar Kham-medium programme in a number of community schools in Rukum District since 2014.

5. Starting in 2012 the international NGO Save the Children Nepal has provided an Avadhi-medium programme in ten schools in Kapilvastu District.

But by far the most ambitious MLE programme so far is that established by the Ministry of Education in 2014. Unpublished data from the Ministry indicate that the programme involves 732,962 children in 6,598 schools in 70 districts. More than 11,000 teachers have been trained. The mother tongue is employed as an 'additional language' in Grades 1 to 5, but assessment of learners takes place in Nepali, the national language. Detailed information regarding the languages used is not yet available.

To support these MLE programmes several activities have taken place. They include:

- A three day Nepal Multilingual Education Symposium was held in October 2007. This event was jointly sponsored by the Ministry of Education and Sports, the Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies (part of the Central Department of Linguistics at Tribhuvan University), UNESCO and SIL International.
- The Government has developed a curriculum for teaching local languages as subjects in the early grades of school. It has also prepared textbooks for teaching 20 languages as subjects, as shown in Table 3. Textbooks are available for the teaching of fifteen of these languages from Grades 1 to 5, while the textbooks for five other languages have been prepared only for lower grades.
- The Curriculum Development Centre has also prepared reference materials - including stories, bibliographies and cultural information – in the following 15 of Nepal's languages: Avadhi, Bantawa Rai, Bhojpuri, Chamling Rai, Doteli, Gurung, Limbu, Magar, Maithili, Newar (Nepal Bhasa), Sanskrit, Sherpa, Thakali, Tharu and Urdu.

Table 3: Textbooks teaching mother tongues as subjects (MOE 2007b)

Languages	Grade(s)
Avadhi, Bantawa Rai, Bhojpuri, Chamling Rai, Gurung, Limbu, Magar, Maithili, Newar, Rajbansi, Sherpa, Sunuwar, Tamang, Tharu, Yakkha	1-5
Mugali	1-4
Dimal, Magar (Athar Magarat), Tamang (Sambota script)	1-3
Tharu (mid-region)	1

- An advocacy kit for promoting multilingual education has been translated into the Avadhi language, printed and distributed with the help of Tribhuvan University and UNESCO.
- The Ministry of Education has formed an MLE Advisory Committee, with 15 members, in consultation with Tribhuvan University, UNESCO and other related academic organisations.
- The Multilingual Education Resource Centre has been established by the Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development (CERID) in Tribhuvan University, supported by the Ministry of Education, UNESCO and other academics and institutions from within Nepal and abroad.
- At the time of writing, a mother tongue education teacher training module is being drafted by the National Centre for Educational Development, in the Ministry of Education, to train trainers and teachers.

Benefits of MLE for Nepal

It was noted earlier that the author has been involved in the Dangaura Tharu and Limbu MLE programmes in the Districts of Dang and Panchthar. Some specific changes have been observed in the participating schools since the introduction of MLE. For example, the dropout rate has fallen as students are more interested to remain in school when their own language is used. Learning achievement has increased as students are able to openly share their ideas with their teachers and their class mates. There has also been a positive change in the attitudes of parents and teachers; both groups are now more interested in the idea of using the mother tongue as a medium of instruction, at least at the beginning of basic education. Parents and teachers also support the development of teaching and learning materials in the mother tongue. Parents have come to accept that MLE will help them to develop and preserve their identity, because using their language and culture creates a good foundation for their children's primary education. More broadly still, minority language communities are now more aware of how important it is to collect literary texts in their mother tongue for use in school and they are happy to help with this.

Beyond these positive developments, which have been observed at a very local level, experience elsewhere (e.g. Baker 2006; Garcia et al. 2009; Wisbey 2013) shows that mother-tongue-based multilingual education is likely to bring considerable benefits to Nepal. For example, it can be predicted that children will have effective

lifelong learning skills, because Nepali and English will also function as languages of instruction at later stages. The cognitive, language and literacy skills that will be acquired and fully developed in the mother tongue will enable children to effectively learn additional languages.

The development of a mother-tongue-based curriculum will also give students easier access to contextual learning materials. They will be able to maintain links with the values, cultural background and identity of their families and communities. At the same time, they will be able to share a wide range of cultural experiences in literature, entertainment, religion (belief systems) and their interests with other linguistic and cultural groups. As Baker says:

The ability to speak the mother tongue as well as the national language and international language creates a much wider range of life choices for individuals but can also achieve national unity. (Baker 2006)

MLE also helps to create positive relationships between individuals and society. It generates good and productive citizens who can promote and establish a democratic system for the progressive development of Nepal. A harmonious environment between communities will be achieved and peace building will be facilitated as ethnic and community languages gain equal respect and status alongside other languages.

Another likely benefit is that employment opportunities for the modern world will be created and so Nepal can become competitive with other countries.

Concerns and challenges

As we have seen, there are strong arguments for believing that MLE in the early years of basic education will contribute to the creation of quality education in a learner-friendly environment. However, there are still many misconceptions about MLE among stakeholders and many challenges to the implementation of a comprehensive MLE programme. Ten prominent problems are discussed here.

1. *Coordination*. Firstly, there are gaps in official plans, policies and implementation. There is a huge challenge for Nepal as plans and policies are often not implemented effectively. Since the April 2006 revolution, the country has been unable to prepare a long-term plan; meanwhile the three year plans which we do have cannot improve educational policies. For example, the Ministry of Education is still not clear about its own priorities. On the one hand, it has said that mother-tongue-based multilingual education is an integral part of the Nepalese education system. On the other hand, however, it has not responded to the increasing shift within state schools away from Nepali to English as the medium of instruction (see below for further discussion of this issue). As the Ministry stays silent in this regard, parents, teachers and school management committees are in a dilemma as to whether they should continue with their the MTB-MLE policy or switch to English (Phyak 2012, 41).

2. *Political uncertainty*. The situation has been made more difficult by ongoing political instability and insecurity. Nepal has been in a state of political transition since the April 2006 revolution. The first Constitution Assembly was unable

to draft a democratic constitution and was dissolved in 2012. Fortunately, the second Constitution Assembly issued a new constitution in 2015 and this has started to function according to democratic norms and conditions. We believe that the new constitution will end the existing political instability and insecurity.

3. *Doubts about quality of community schools*. At the school level, many parents are losing faith in government (community) schools. Because of the weak basic education provided by these schools, the result of the School Leaving Certificate (SLC) in 2014 was very poor: only 28 per cent of students from government schools passed the SLC examination whereas 93 per cent of students in private schools succeeded. Overall, the pass rate in 2014 was 44 per cent (Table 4).

Table 4: School Leaving Certificate pass rates, 2007-2014*

Year	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Pass rate (%)	58.64	63.73	68.47	64.95	55.95	47.16	41.57	43.92

*based on analysis of School Leaving Certificate results

Not only that but, as Table 4 makes plain, the average SLC rate has declined steadily since 2009. These results reflect the gaps in a society where quality education is increasingly beyond the reach of economically, socially and linguistically marginalised communities. (The situation is not helped when schools which use the mother tongue as a medium of instruction are not able to use the same language for evaluating students' performance in exams, so in these cases the final scores may not represent children's true ability.) It is not surprising, therefore, if parents feel frustrated by the disappointing achievements of government schools.

4. *Attractiveness of English medium education*. Increasingly, teachers and parents are coming to believe that English medium education is necessary to achieve high levels of learning achievement. In their opinion, English is a powerful language and a good command over it will give their children better employment and business opportunities. Nepalis who seek employment outside the country find that the opportunities open to them are very limited unless they speak English well; therefore they prefer to send their children to English medium schools and encourage their neighbours and relatives to do the same. English medium education has become a matter of social prestige.

5. *Uncertainty about the value of using the mother tongue*. Most teachers do not believe that MLE will help children to access quality education. Parents also have many questions regarding implementation of MLE. Can MLE provide quality education for our children? Will our children start to learn and use international languages such as English? Will our children be able to compete with those who study in private schools? How can children's academic progress be measured? Does the education system support the use of mother tongues? When and

for how long will the mother tongue be used before switching to Nepali and/ or English as the medium? How can curriculum requirements be met within the given timeframe if MLE competences have to be added to the existing curriculum? Part of the problem is caused because 'multilingual education' is sometimes used as a slogan:

MLE is accelerated as a political slogan rather than an academic and pedagogical term and there is often a lack of political commitments. (CERI 2010, 15)

6. *Linguistic diversity and absence of writing systems*. There is widespread confusion about how MLE can be implemented in a multiple language situation in one classroom. The reality is that most classrooms have children who speak different languages. Moreover, most minority languages in Nepal are spoken and not written, but even some of the languages which do have writing systems have inconsistencies in their spelling. For example, a headteacher in a Limbu School commented:

   In our context, if we use a different script rather than the Devanagari script, children will have to learn three scripts – [for the] mother tongue [they need] Sirijonga script for Limbu; Devanagari script for Nepali; and Roman script for English – at the same time and they feel [that they are in a] stressful situation to learn read and write.

   On the other hand, Limbu language activists are opposed to using the Devanagari script to write Limbu. Activists working on other languages also resist the use of Devanagari and would prefer to develop their own scripts. Fortunately, however, recent discussions with some Limbu language activists indicate that they are beginning to understand that if Limbu uses the Devanagari script then the transition to Nepali will be quicker and easier for Limbu students. Cultural identity need not be linked to a specific script.

7. *Curriculum and materials for teaching and learning*. There is still no curriculum for MLE and there are no textbooks for learners. Nepali is the medium of instruction in all classes while English and the 'minority languages' (i.e. the mother tongues) are taught as subjects. (In private schools, however, English is the medium of instruction and Nepali is a subject.) The textbooks that have been translated from Nepali into the local languages by the Curriculum Development Centre are not contextual. Furthermore, these materials are used only to teach the languages as subjects and not as media of instruction. The number of books available in the local languages is still very limited and there are no graded readers which are needed to help children to learn to read in their mother tongues.

8. *Teachers*. We received feedback from teachers that they felt unable to teach students in their mother tongue due to their own lack of training and the difficulty of switching from local languages to Nepali and English. Even if the teachers are from the same language community as the students many of them are illiterate in their own mother tongue. Some teachers are not qualified to teach, while others, despite holding teaching qualifications, lack teaching skills. Furthermore, there is

no effective system for supporting, monitoring and evaluating the performance of teachers.

9. *Parents' literacy*. There is a low literacy rate among parents. According to NPCS (2011, 235), the average literacy rate in Nepal is only 65.9 per cent (75.1 per cent among men and 57.4 per cent among women). Education is a key factor for economic development of the country. However, the data show that literacy rates are increasing yet economic growth is not increasing. This raises the questions of how far official literacy data can be trusted and whether our education system is working at all. A journalist writing in the *Kantipur National Daily* has commented:

   > काठमाडौंको सिंहदरबार अगाडि बग्गीखाना मार्गकी "लक्ष्मी शाक्यको मृत्यु भएको असोज (२०७१)मा तीन वर्ष पूरा भयो। तर सरकारले गत वर्ष पढाएर साक्षर बनाएको सूचीमा उनी परेकी छन्। (मकर श्रेष्ठ, कान्तिपुर राष्ट्रिय दैनिक, झूठो साक्षरता, कार्तिक १, २०७१)
   >
   > *The literacy campaign organised by the Government of Nepal is getting more criticism because the data is perceived as fake. One recorded participant, Laxmi Shakya, who died three years ago, had her name listed in last year's literacy class.* (Shrestha 2014; my translation)

   Whatever the true literacy rates are, it is clear that parents who are illiterate are unable to support their children's education.

10. *Language, culture and religion*. It is unclear how MLE programmes should address the linkages between language, culture and religion as they represent personal and community identity. There are also questions about whether and how minority language speakers preserve their culture if they change their religion.

Opportunities and recommendations

Despite these challenges and concerns, the government and civil society organisations ought to be able to create opportunities to develop MLE programmes in Nepal by taking these 15 steps:

1. The national goals of education can be revised; this in turn will require that the Education Act be revised and that long-term education plans be prepared for the next 25 to 50 years. These plans need strong strategic and implementation guidelines backed up by an inclusive national language policy which fits with the national goals of education.

2. We can aim to ensure that our children become literate in L1 (MT), L2 (Nepali) and an international language (English) through our school system. This will help graduates of the education system to compete in their own community, at the national level and at the international level, so that they can access good employment and business opportunities.

3. The National Curriculum framework of 2006 can be revised to include MLE competencies through contextual teaching and learning. The framework should

mandate the use of the mother tongue as a medium of instruction in the pre-primary and primary grades of basic education. The Curriculum must allow students to understand and develop their thinking about current socio-cultural-political changes and movements in the country. This will help to improve the political situation.

4. Civil society organisations can demonstrate good MLE models to assist the government in designing education programmes. A range of MLE models – 'flexible MLE' – is required because one uniform model will not be appropriate in all contexts. INGOs and NGOs can assist local organisations to support and implement MLE in their respective communities in coordination with government agencies.

5. Pilot MLE schools can become a resource for those who want to introduce MLE in other primary schools.

6. MLE can play a key role in maintaining and strengthening local languages and culture. If MLE for all languages is the norm, then there will be increased respect and unity between the different language communities in the country. Because literate parents are better able to support their children's education, the government should provide transitional literacy opportunities (mother tongue at first, then later in Nepali) to parents who request them. Encourage parents to use their home language with their children at home.

7. Experience of MLE can be shared among the various stakeholders: parents, language communities, INGOs, NGOs and the Department of Education.

8. A language progression plan can help students who do not speak Nepali as their first language to learn Nepali. Students can be helped, through the use of 'bridging' procedures, to transition from learning through their mother tongue to learning through Nepali. The MT should continue to be taught as a subject even after the transition has been completed. The language progression plan will also help all students to learn English as an international language. The plan can be supplemented with a school-based supplementary curriculum and textbooks.

9. Where necessary, writing systems for languages that need them can be developed. Ideally, the Devanagari script should be adopted. The teachers – most of whom do not have Nepali as their mother tongue – say that they would be happy to use the Devanagari script to write languages other than Nepali. They also say that it would be easier for children to learn to read and write their mother tongue and Nepali at the same time if the same script is used. However, the Devanagari script requires some modifications by education experts and linguists if it is to be used for writing Tibeto-Burman languages. Good examples will help to convince language activists and minority language communities to accept the benefits of using Devanagari scripts in the beginning grades of basic education; examples include Lhopa (Lowa/Loke) and Newari, both of which are Tibeto-Burman languages and both of which are already written in the Devanagari script.

10. Standard textbooks for each subject – including Science, Social Science, Health Education, Mathematics and Moral Education – can be prepared and published in each of the languages which is being used as a medium of instruction. Each book should be 'contextualised' by being adapted to and made relevant for the context in which it is going to be used.

11. A teacher recruitment and training system can be developed which will produce qualified, capable, competent and committed teachers with multilingual capacities. To this end, the universities must start to review their curricula. Teachers need not only initial teacher education but also refresher training, including regular coaching and effective supervision in school. They must be prepared to use local, national and international languages as media of instruction. Teachers should be rewarded for their performance: good teachers should be promoted while poor teachers can be either re-trained or withdrawn from school.

12. Training and empowerment programmes for school administrators and school management committees can be established. These will give the local community greater control over their own schools, as envisaged by the Ministry of Education's community school policy.

13. The Continuous Assessment System (CAS) can be introduced for students from the moment when they first enrol in school. This should include a student profile and a record of achievement. At the moment, the CAS is not used effectively because teachers have not been trained to use it and the Department of Education does not provide effective follow-up and support systems for teachers.

14. An advocacy and awareness raising programme can be put in place. Local, regional and national networks can be used to advocate effective and sustainable MLE. The focus should be on improving school facilities and developing the capacity of the local community, school management committees and teachers to ensure that students succeed in school. Government officials must develop positive attitudes towards MLE in order to ensure that all children receive a quality education free of discrimination and inequality. It is therefore important to develop good relations with government and funding agencies.

15. A unified education system can be created. All government and private schools should operate under the same policies and systems with supportive and effective regulation and monitoring. MLE as part of a unified education system will promote and support the diversity of languages and cultures in Nepal. At first, private schools should be required to teach the mother tongues as subjects, then they can gradually be prepared to use the same curriculum as government schools. If government schools can demonstrate excellent learning outcomes by students using their mother tongue as a medium of instruction this will stimulate private schools to do the same.

Conclusion

This chapter does not claim to provide a complete history of the education system in Nepal. It has focused only on language and language policies as key elements in the country's education system following the 2006 revolution.

We know how important the mother tongue is in education. Experts agree on the value of MLE in providing quality education for all; multilingual education must be the first priority in the early grades of basic education. But the use of the mother tongue as a medium of instruction is still an issue of debate among stakeholders. Our language communities must be persuaded that, in order to learn national and international languages well, they must become literate in their own language first.

This also means that a balance must be achieved between mother tongues, national languages and international languages. Low proficiency in English will prevent our graduates from competing for well-paid employment globally. At the same time, we must continue our efforts to involve stakeholders in the introduction and implementation of MLE. More broadly, multilingual issues arise not only in education but also in official documentation, legal processes and other sociocultural spaces.

Finally, linguistic diversity is a resource to unite the nation. But, despite the successful results which have been achieved in various multilingual education pilot studies in Nepal, we face a serious threat. Due to a lack of knowledge and understanding, we are shifting away from our own mother tongues towards English, the most powerful killer language in the world (Mohanty 2017). In Nepal, Nepali is in danger of losing its existence in our daily conversations and in education because the new generation prefers to use English. Parents also want their children to be educated in English rather than Nepali and their mother tongue.

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MULTILINGUALISM AND THE METROPOLIS

13

Translanguaging in the contact zone: Language use in superdiverse urban areas

James Simpson

Introduction

People and languages have always been on the move, and diversity in the world's urban areas has been well-documented since antiquity. By the same token diverse languages and cultures have always been in contact. However, the mass movement of people associated with globalisation, coupled with the mobility of the linguistic and semiotic message in online communication, now indicate social and linguistic diversity of a type and scale not previously experienced. With the emergence of new sociolinguistic configurations that such mobility entails, so new theoretical understandings are developed and deployed. In this chapter I discuss two concepts that are current in contemporary sociolinguistics – *superdiversity* and *translanguaging* – and explore their relevance for research into contemporary language use.

I argue for the utility of both concepts principally because in some quarters the multilingualism associated with globalisation is regarded not as a resource, or even a fact of life, but as an obstacle. There is no doubt that the circumstances that lead to great sociolinguistic diversity differ from place to place and across time. Patterns of migration which entail social and linguistic heterogeneity in urban Delhi or Dhaka are different from those that bring about multiplicity in Madrid or Manchester. Ancient Athens is not twenty-first century London. But the same arguments which see diversity denied in the global South certainly resonate with those used in the global North. A university professor in India assures me that her institution is doing everything it can to combat the 'problem of multilingualism'. A British Prime Minister appears on the radio to suggest that the threat of terrorism in the UK can be addressed if only Muslim mothers would learn English. Both the professor and the politician are troubled by the way that the multilingualism of contemporary urban life disturbs notions of linguistic fixity and boundedness, and hence of social homogeneity and even national cohesion. I maintain that a counterpoint is needed: policy – and my main interest is educational policy – needs to be informed by sociolinguistic descriptions of contemporary language use which in turn need to take into account the nature of linguistic and cultural diversity in the world's urban areas.

I begin by providing a definition and discussion of the sociological concept of superdiversity, as it has been used by sociolinguists, as they attempt to elaborate

H. Coleman (ed.). 2017. *Multilingualisms and Development*. London: British Council. ISBN 978-0-86355-840-5

relevant explanatory frameworks within which to consider language practices and policies in urban areas of the world. I suggest that superdiversity can refer relevantly not only to spatial concepts (for example superdiverse cities) but also to dynamic processes, which can be understood as superdiverse practices. I then turn to the concept of translanguaging, which I refer to as superdiverse practice, as an alternative paradigm for describing much contemporary multilingual interaction. I finish with a short discussion of how policy discourses about language use relate to language in education. I suggest that policies and practices relating to language in education should, but currently do not, reflect the sociolinguistic reality on the ground. I maintain that both superdiversity (as a sociological heuristic) and the superdiverse practices associated with translanguaging (as a descriptive lens) enable such a revised view.

My data derive from the Leeds-based part of a project studying contemporary multilingualism in the UK funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council of Great Britain, *Translation and Translanguaging: Investigating Linguistic and Cultural Transformations in Superdiverse Wards in Four UK Cities*, known for brevity as TLang. The overall aim of the four year project (2014-2018) is to investigate how people communicate when they bring different histories, biographies and trajectories to interaction in contexts of superdiversity (Creese et al. 2016). In my discussion towards the end of the chapter I move beyond TLang to open up a space to consider a disconnect between policy and practice in multilingual contexts in both the developed and the developing worlds.

Superdiversity

The reality of contemporary multilingualism will be familiar to anyone who lives or works in an urban area. In the TLang project we look at language practices over time in public and private settings in four cities in the UK, to understand how people communicate multilingually across diverse languages and cultures. The overarching research question is: How does communication occur (or fail) when people bring different histories and languages into contact? One of the cities is Leeds, in the North of England. The Leeds TLang team are carrying out most of their research fieldwork in Harehills, an inner-city area a mile to the north-east of the centre of Leeds.

We characterise Harehills as *superdiverse*, like many of the world's urban areas. The term superdiversity was coined by the sociologist Stephen Vertovec: his 2006 paper is usually cited as the original source. Superdiversity for Vertovec refers to a diversity which exists not just in terms of where people come from, but also in other variables including 'a differentiation in immigration statuses and their concomitant entitlements and restriction of rights, labour market experiences, gender and age profiles, spatial factors, and local area responses by service providers and residents' (Vertovec 2006, 1; see also Cooke 2010). The notion has been taken up and developed by sociolinguists interested in mobility, for instance Blommaert and Rampton:

> *There is a growing awareness that over the past two decades, globalisation has altered the face of social, cultural and linguistic diversity in societies all over the world … the multiculturalism of an earlier era (captured, mostly, in an 'ethnic minorities' paradigm) has gradually been replaced by what Vertovec (2007) calls*

> *'super-diversity … characterised by a tremendous increase in the categories of migrants, not only in terms of nationality, ethnicity, language, and religion, but also in terms of motives, patterns and itineraries of migration, processes of insertion into the labour and housing markets of the host societies, and so on (Vertovec 2010).* ***The predictability of the category 'migrant' and of his/her sociocultural features has disappeared.****'* (Blommaert and Rampton 2011, 2; my emphasis)

Some commentators suggest that *super*diversity is something of a fad: that the notion does not actually add any more to our understanding of linguistic heterogeneity than *diversity*, and, moreover, that the way superdiversity is currently theorised betrays a Eurocentric and an ahistorical worldview. Piller (2015) identifies an Anglocentric bias in sociolinguistic research into superdiversity, which derives, she suggests, from a misunderstanding of patterns of movement as universally novel and a failure to recognise that migration has not in fact led to more diversity everywhere. As she says (2015, 5): '"Super-diversity" and heightened linguistic heterogeneity may thus well be part of the contemporary British experience but that does not mean we should theorize multilingualism on this basis.' And quoting John Edwards (2012; in Piller 2015, 5), she maintains that 'superdiversity is an obviously unnecessary term coined to suggest a non-existent development.' It is of course a truism to say that diversity is everywhere, and indeed it is possible that global cities in the past (e.g. Istanbul, Baghdad) were at least as diverse as they are now. But engaging with the growing field of urban superdiversity in the sociolinguistic study of migration has its benefits. Not least it extends sociolinguistic attention beyond the linguistic and the social, to encompass the spatial and the economic. It enables, and perhaps obliges, a consideration of phenomena that have previously remained unexamined in sociolinguistics: it makes us look at things that we had not noticed before.

Following Blommaert and Rampton (2011, above; cf. Arnaut et al. 2015), there are at least three ways in which considering an area as superdiverse might take our thinking forward. Firstly, the world's cities currently witness greater range, variety and dynamism in patterns of migration and mobility than ever before. The way populations move (including translocal and transnational movement back-and-forth) and the way they communicate locally, globally and transnationally online (Androutsopoulos and Juffermans 2014) entail a reconfiguration of the city. Second, the unpredictability of migration consequently throws out a corresponding unpredictability in the alliances between new arrivals that emerge. A contribution of ethnography is to enable the examination of such alliances, associated with the practices of being superdiverse. And thirdly, although superdiversity is a common characteristic globally, it is manifested differently from place to place, pointing to the value of comparative fine-grained studies of superdiverse processes and practices.

I shall consider each of these in turn, with reference to emergent findings from the TLang project, as it is being carried out in superdiverse Harehills, Leeds.

Migration: Range and variety across dimensions

Harehills saw 'waves' of migration in the past: from Ireland in the mid-nineteenth century; Jewish settlement from Central Europe in the late nineteenth century; from

German-occupied Belgium in WW1; from across Europe after WW2; from the Indian sub-continent and the Caribbean in the mid-twentieth century. In more recent years people have arrived from places such as Ethiopia and Eritrea, Somalia, Congo, Iraq, Afghanistan, and latterly Libya and Syria, where political and economic situations have forced people to uproot and leave their homes. At the same time, citizens of the 28 countries which now make up the European Union are exercising their right to live in the UK. Britain's urban centres, including Leeds, now host multilingual and multicultural populations from potentially anywhere in the world. Contemporary mobility brings broader diversification too: variation is not just in terms of where people are from but also their socioeconomic status, their educational background, their age, their motives for moving and so on.

But what does a superdiverse area look like? A census-informed snapshot of linguistic superdiversity can be found in the map of Leeds in Figure 1 (with data from the 2011 census). The darker the shading, the higher the percentage of respondents claiming a language other than English as their main language.

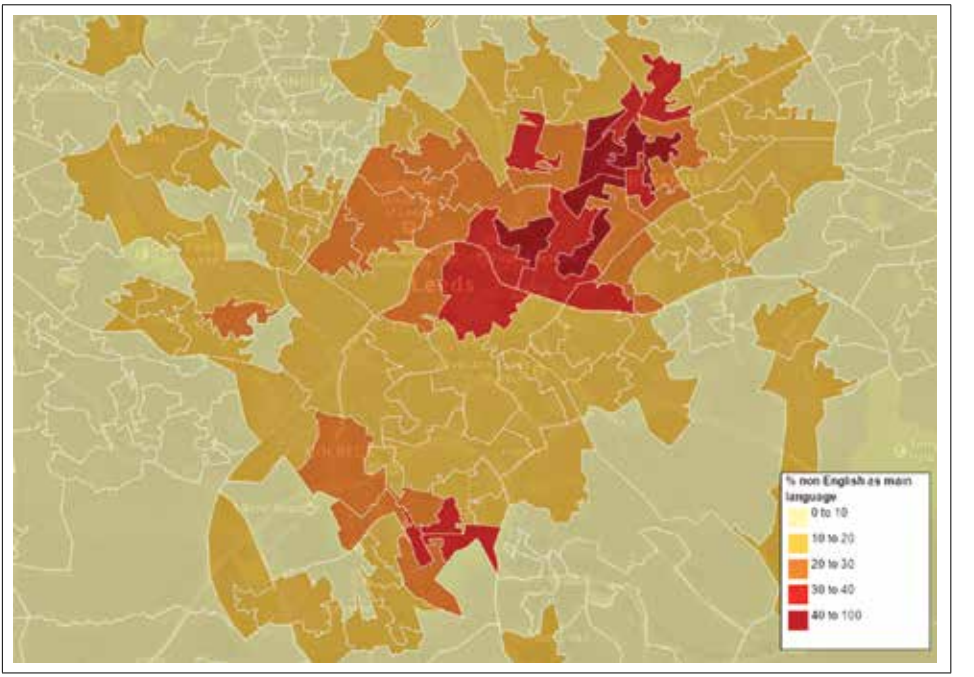

Figure 1: Multilingualism in Leeds (Map data © 2015 Google)

Parts of Harehills, to the north-east of the city centre, are shaded dark red, indicating over 40 per cent of respondents use a language other than English as their main language. Census 2011 data also reveal that between them these respondents claim over 65 minority languages as their main languages.

Census data can only provide a limited account of multilingualism: it is restricted by the question asked on the census ('What is your main language?') and by the

response rate amongst multilingual potential census participants. It is certainly incumbent on sociolinguists, as Busch (2016, 1) asserts, to 'call into question the sometimes careless way in which statements are made about the numbers of people who speak certain languages.' In the TLang project we use ethnographically-informed linguistic landscape methods (Blommaert 2013) to explore the neighbourhoods in Harehills (see in particular Callaghan 2015). In this strand of work we document the visual evidence of multilingualism and written translanguaging and its emergence in time using photographs of shop fronts and signage, we note the uneven distribution of multilingual texts across a neighbourhood's streetscapes and we exploit the potential of ethnographic observation of small businesses and services, and of their owners, users and customers, in order to discover the details of everyday life 'behind' the linguistic landscape. In so doing we consider how migration is not something that simply happens *to* people but itself is a process of city-making and re-making: with superdiversity comes the reconfiguration of the city (Hall 2015).

An early stage of the TLang research in Leeds involved documenting the linguistic landscape of three neighbourhoods in Harehills.

Neighbourhood 1: Roundhay Road Roundhay Road is a globalised corridor, a major arterial road whose shopping opportunities attract visitors from across the city and beyond, where English seems to act as a lingua franca. Here there is evidence of the affluence and aspiration of longer-standing residents, displayed in the availability of luxury goods and services (Figure 2).

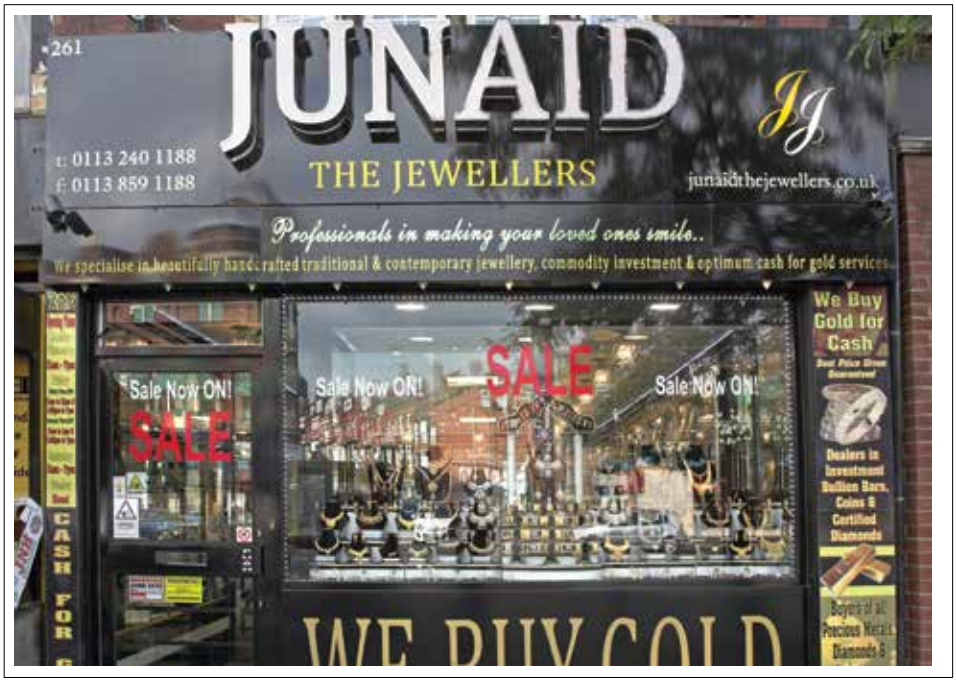

Figure 2: Junaid, Roundhay Road (Photo: John Callaghan)

Historically, the linguistic landscape of Roundhay Road seems to represent quite an advanced stage in the evolution of a migrant ecology, with two communities (Pakistani, Bangladeshi) having settled in the neighbourhood and becoming home and property owners. Others from these and other communities who arrived at the same time have migrated to more affluent areas of the city. These groups, however, are still represented in the neighbourhood by businessmen and women, members of the professions (health, law, education, charities, advocacy and advice), who have moved out of Harehills but still do business there.

Figure 3: Optician sign on Roundhay Road (Photo: John Callaghan)

The optician's business in Figure 3 is owned and run by someone from a South Asian background who does not live in Harehills but works there. The signage is in English: the *lingua franca* is used to appeal to a linguistically-diverse potential clientele, who also might have travelled across the city to Roundhay Road to visit their optician.

Neighbourhood 2: Harehills Lane Harehills Lane is a main road which takes us towards the periphery of Harehills. This is a migrant area at a much earlier stage of development, a high street along which shops spring up to cater to more recent arrivals, among them EU migrants and refugees seeking asylum. As we know from the current humanitarian crisis in Europe, refugees often arrive with little or nothing and are hence struggling to equip themselves with the basics for survival. These newer groups are much smaller, more numerous and therefore less cohesive than those which arrived in the last century, though, like the first Asian migrants, newcomers are in many cases single and male. On Harehills Lane too we observe the trend towards monolingual English signage in shops, as the range of expert languages used in a neighbourhood grows and the need for English as a *lingua franca* correspondingly increases (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Monolingual signage; multilingual customers (Photo: John Callaghan)

Neighbourhood 3: Cherry Row Cherry Row is a smaller backstreet niche environment inhabited almost exclusively by Kurds, Somalis and Eritreans. Here the linguistic landscapes are more visibly multilingual (Figure 5), perhaps reproducing conditions which existed along the Roundhay Road (Neighbourhood 1) in the 1960s.

Figure 5: Multilingual travel services (Photo: John Callaghan)

Multilingualism here is more visible because the smaller number of expert languages used means that writers of the signs can use languages other than English: the need for English as a *lingua franca* is not so pressing. Cherry Row is also home to very recent arrivals who lack the competence in English literacy of more established migrants.

Superdiversity and unpredictability

As Blommaert and Rampton (2011) suggest, a defining characteristic of a superdiverse urban area is its unpredictability. But although the linguistic landscapes of Harehills suggest great complexity, this complexity does appear to be patterned in some ways, and is not as unpredictable as it might seem at first sight. This patterning cannot easily be identified through census or counting, even at a very local scale, and only reveals itself on close examination, pointing to the relevance of linguistic ethnography (Copland and Creese 2015) as an appropriate research approach for the study of linguistic diversity in superdiverse urban spaces. We know precisely that Neighbourhood 1, Roundhay Road, is where we are most likely to find shops, businesses and services catering for the more well-heeled and more established migrants, for example. We are also aware that Neighbourhoods 2 and 3 are where we will find ones responding to the demands of those who arrived more recently or whose lives are more precarious.

The unpredictability perhaps lies in how the individuals in Harehills align, or potentially align. Who teams up with whom? And for what purpose? The contribution of ethnography is to shed light on the practices associated with *being* superdiverse (and not simply of living in a superdiverse area). Through ethnographic work we elicit the stories behind the signs which tell us how new ethnic alignments are made. An Afro-Caribbean barber employs young Ghanaian and Tanzanian assistants. A Kurdish man and his Polish wife run an 'East European' food store. A Slovak Roma woman and her Afghani refugee husband form partnerships with Pakistani entrepreneurs to run a pet shop, then a clothes outlet, then an internet café. The complexity of the relationships is seemingly unpredictable. But still an account can be found. The business partnerships, for example, are based on shared language (e.g. the Afro-Caribbeans and Africans speak English; the Afghan and Pakistani speak Urdu). The reasons for the marital pairings (Afghan/Slovak Roma, Kurdish/Polish) are less clear, but relate to the fact that there are many more Afghan men than women in Harehills, and hence Afghan men look beyond their place of origin for partnerships.

It is not only sociolinguists of mobility who have taken up Vertovec's notion of superdiversity. The study of the reconfiguration of the city, the process of superdiverse city-making, is the focus of a series of projects in critical urban geography led by Suzanne Hall, examining the multi-ethnic streets of Britain's cities (Hall et al. 2012-2014; Hall et al. 2015-2017). Hall describes interaction amongst the shopkeepers of Rye Lane in London, from over 20 countries of origin, maintaining that:

> *Interactions on the street are more than simply lingual, and one in four of the independent shops have been subdivided and sublet into smaller shops, where*

> *proprietors from across the globe, each arriving on the street in different migratory rhythms, share space, risk and prospect.* (Hall 2015, 22)

This, as Hall points out, requires a coexistence of a different nature than that expected and promoted by central government, one based not on community cohesion but on exchange of economies and ideas and on a necessity to converse across lines of difference and across affiliations of ethnicity and origins. For Hall and her colleagues, a concern is with a mismatch between 'lived realities within diverse, comparatively deprived, yet economically active inner-city locations and authorised processes of displacement or regeneration' (2015, 23). Their example is the different valuing of the street's shops by the local residents and shopkeepers (on the one hand) and the local council and its redevelopment plan (on the other). In Harehills too, alliances based on exchange appear to be prevalent. Here too is the potential for coming up against state-sanctioned dominant discourses of integration and assimilation. Our own concern with this, as UK-based sociolinguists, might be with the mismatch between the monolingualist and monolingualising policy-informing discourses of integration and social cohesion on the one hand and the lived multilingual reality on the other (Simpson 2015). That is, there is a shrill insistence by politicians of all stripes that newcomers speak English; English dominates in certain spheres of public life (including most education); and a (lack of) proficiency in English is appropriated in language-related ideological debates about otherness and difference, as I discuss further towards the end of this chapter. Conversely, as we see with the new alliances that are emerging in a superdiverse inner-city, multiple language use and fluid multilingualism or *translanguaging* (see below) is the norm, rather than the exception, and English is used as just part of a heavily multilingual repertoire.

The relative nature of superdiversity

A multilingual linguistic landscape can be documented in any superdiverse urban space: visible language use can be classified and categorised and it is possible to make claims about the language regimes which operate in such spaces. However, without corresponding ethnographic work, any such claims would be weak at best. It is also an error to assume that if there is some equivalence in the surface nature of visible linguistic forms in an area, that the sociolinguistic conditions under which they operate – in the very varied contexts that they do – are also universal. On this point, Blommaert (2016) takes Pavlenko and Mullen (2015) to task for their 'assumption that linguistic similarity equals sociolinguistic similarity' (Blommaert 2016, 5).

Interactions increasingly take place in what Mary Louise Pratt refers to as 'contact zones', often virtual ones, between speakers of different origins. The contact zone is a challenge to the established sociolinguistic notion of a speech community:

> *[the notion of the* contact zone*] is intended in part to contrast with the ideas of community that underlie much of the thinking about language, communication and culture that gets done in the academy … Languages were seen as living in 'speech communities', and these tended to be theorised as discrete, self-defined, coherent entities, held together by a homogenous competence or grammar shared identically and equally among all the members.* (Pratt 1991, 37)

Today, language has been deterritorialised, as diasporic communities interact with one another in contact zones. Contact zones are different in different places and of course change over time. Although most of my work takes place in the UK, the first draft of this chapter was prepared for a conference which took place in Delhi. In India, migration patterns are different from those in Europe: the concern in India is not principally with international migration, but with internal and particularly poverty-induced rural to urban migration. Motives for mobility in India are typically the jobs that cities can offer, public services that are not available in rural areas, refuge from climate shocks (Young 2013) and the forced sedentarisation of pastoral nomads (Dyer 2014). The consequences of migration-related population growth are felt keenly in India and across the developing world, as 'developing-country cities lack the resources and institutions to provide all the new arrivals with access to jobs, housing and basic services' (Brueckner and Lall 2015, 1399).

Most of the languages that are audible and visible in India's cities are therefore likely to be Indian languages (and the dominant global *lingua franca*, English), rather than (as is the case in the developed west) languages from around the globe. Nonetheless there are commonalities, principally a sociolinguistic reality that needs to be recognised: that meaningful communication can take place – and in some cases can only take place – when the languages are used together, not kept apart.

Translanguaging

Theories of language description need to reflect superdiverse urban life in a world where communication is frequently transnational and online. In this section I consider the construct of translanguaging, a paradigm for describing the use of linguistic and semiotic resources in superdiverse and transnational places. Many sociolinguists of mobility align with a view that theories of translanguaging are appropriate for describing fluid or dynamic bilingualism and multilingualism in the contact zones between languages and cultures. Translanguaging shares the same drivers as superdiversity, to the extent that it can be considered superdiverse practice.

A traditional view of bilingualism rests on the idea of two languages with two separate linguistic systems (an L1 and an L2). A puzzle for cognitive linguists is that while the two (or three, or more) separate languages can be accommodated within a single mind, in some situations they remain separate and distinct and in others they interact. It is as yet unclear what the processes are that enable this (Sharwood Smith and Truscott 2014). Nascent sociolinguistically-informed theories of translanguaging, however, take a different starting point: the proposition that separate, named, autonomous and bounded languages are societally constructed. That is to say, while *language* is a biological endowment, individual (discrete, autonomous) *languages* are social conventions (García and Wei 2014; Makoni and Pennycook 2007). Translanguaging takes an internal view of speakers whose mental grammar has developed in social interaction with others (García 2016). It supposes just one linguistic system with features of two or more societally defined languages that are integrated throughout (García and Wei 2014, 13-15). When people translanguage they sometimes use these features – which are simply their own – in ways which align with societal constructions of 'a language'. Often though they use them differently, to produce new practices, in ways which emphasise the artificiality of boundaries

between languages. This is most evident when languages and cultures come into contact.

In the TLang project we have identified a range of translingual practices that encompass not just the (obvious and expected) *interlingual* translanguaging, i.e. movement (and mediating and interpreting) between one societally recognised language and another. Following Jakobson's classification of translation (2012, first published 1959), we describe *intralingual*, *intersemiotic* and *interdiscursive* translanguaging (Baynham et al. 2015). Intralingual translanguaging entails shifts from specialised registers into everyday English, in an endeavour to explain technical terms. Intersemiotic translanguaging involves shifts and switches between spoken and written, visual and verbal (Baynham et al. 2015, 19) and – online – between written language and non-linguistic signs (e.g. smileys and *emojis*). Interdiscursive translanguaging is the translanguaging across discourses which occurs when there is an unfamiliar discourse that needs to be negotiated. Returning to the examples above of street-level communication based on exchange, the discourse of the city planning process (for instance) might be unfamiliar to shopkeepers and other citizens trying to make a living in a new environment. The transaction economies of the street favour those with competence in a range of languages, registers and discourses, including bureaucratic discourses around city planning, knowledge of which is crucial for those who need to navigate the regulatory regimes which are in play. Just as interlingual translanguaging involves moving between one language and another, so interdiscursive translanguaging can be understood as mediating or interpreting a discourse to someone who is outside it.

For the remainder of this section I present two examples of interlingual translanguaging from the first phase of the TLang project in Leeds. In the first, we follow Klára, a Czech community interpreter, into her home and, in the second, we observe her at work.

Interlingual translanguaging at home

Klára lives in Leeds with her husband, two teenage daughters and six year old son, having migrated to the UK fifteen years ago in her early 20s. The talk in Klára's home is mainly about day-to-day family concerns. Klára typically selects features from her multilingual repertoire associated with Czech, but in situations of urgency when she needs to get a quick answer, or when speaking about institutions like school (in the UK of course), she will select features associated with the language that is dominant in society and that with which her children have greater proficiency, English. A good deal of the general conversation that is part of family life is on the topic of language and on multilingualism itself. In an episode full of humour, Klára prompts one of her daughters to say how good her carbonara was in a number of European languages. Klára herself speaks almost entirely in Czech throughout. At the level of family interaction though, the talk between Klára and her daughters is translanguaged: fluid interlingual practices are released, in family intimacy, from the social external conventions that tie them to one or another language. In the transcript (Data Extract 1), where the talk is in Czech, the original is on the left and a translation on the right.

Data Extract 1	
K: ale ted'ka vážnë reknëte mi jak vám chutnala tadyta omácka protože to sem poprvý dëlala to se jmenuje Carbonara (.) jak vám to chutnalo	K: but now seriously tell me how you liked this sauce because I did it for the first time it's called Carbonara (.) how did you like it
R: I can't taste anything	
T: das ist sehr gut ja (.) this is German ja German household [with mock German accent]	
R: that's not German you're just making it up	
K: tak ted' to rekni francouzsky [loudly] c'est bon	K: and now say that in French [loudly] c'est bon
R: [makes a grunting noise]	
K: to vás ucili ve škole jo (.) to si pudu stëžovat	K: is that what they taught you at school (.) I'll go there to complain
R: [...] baguette	
K: les spaghettis est bon	
R: bon [loudly]	
K: a španëlsky	K: and in Spanish
T: me gusta	
K: gusta	
T: me gusta	
K: a špagety sou dobrý (.) jak se to rekne	K: the spaghetti is good (.) how do you say it
T: me gusta un spagetti	
R: marshmallows s'il vous plaît	

Klára responds to her daughter R's claim in German that *das ist sehr gut ja*, prompting her to repeat this in French; her other daughter T contributes in Spanish. Even as the family are talking about – and playing with – a range of features from different societally-recognised languages, there is fluid movement between them.

Interlingual translanguaging at work

Translingual practices are clearly commonplace in all domains of life in contemporary urban spaces. Translanguaging is clearly a bread and butter activity in Klára's workplaces, where she is a community interpreter. In the second example (Data Extract 2), we see a familiar pattern of shift between languages in a triadic interpreting event (Li 2011): the patterns of movement between languages are predictable, associated as they are with the purpose of the interaction and the respective aims that each of the participants have. Here, M is the advocate, K the interpreter and N the client. The basic structure of this mediated interaction is: M, who doesn't share a language with N, communicates with N by means of K, who shares both M's and N's languages:

Data Extract 2	
M:	do you intend to claim reduction of your council tax?
K:	zažádala ste si o snížení council tax?
N:	ne
K:	ne nežádala ste si když ste si žádala o housing?
K:	she says no...

M asks a question, which Klára interprets in Czech (but with the key bureaucratic lexis, *council tax* and *housing* in English), N replies and Klára relays her answer in English. An account of the event drawing on a paradigm that assumes multiple and separate bilingualism might interpret Klára's use of these terms as constituting a lexical gap, a lack of knowledge about the correct term in Czech, which is being filled by the English word. This would not be a helpful account here because it does not take into account the sociolinguistic reality. It is not simply the case that there is no term for *council tax* or for *housing* in Czech, or that Klára cannot retrieve the Czech term from her bilingual lexicon. Rather, the terms *council tax* and *housing* only have relevance for Klára and N in the new environment and the terms only exist in English in their repertoires. Indeed, why would Klára attempt to find a Czech word for constructs that are relevant for her and the client only in the UK and only in (societally-recognised) English?

As these everyday examples show, translanguaging as superdiverse language and literacy practice is routine and unremarkable in daily life, in interaction at home and at work. Critical questions emerge that take us beyond description, when we juxtapose the practices that I have exemplified above with what is said about multilingualism in policy circles and in education. In the final section I discuss this disjuncture, with reference to language policy and political discourse in the UK.

Discussion: A fundamental disjuncture

National policy responses to the dynamic diversity associated with movement and mobility in our globalising world are uneven and contradictory. There is an inability in policy to recognise a multilingual and translingual reality as the norm in many urban areas. Such a blinkered view is accompanied with an over-privileging of the standard variety of one particular language (or a small number of languages) in public life, disadvantaging those language users without competence in that variety. Most of my own research experience is of the field of migrant language education in the UK. Here there are frequent calls in public and political rhetoric for migrants to 'speak our language', often in the name of national unity and social cohesion. Such discourse is informed by deeply-entrenched language ideologies, i.e. 'beliefs, feelings and conceptions about language structure and use which often index the political interests of individual speakers, ethnic and other interest groups, and nation states' (Kroskrity 2003, 1). The ideology of a standard language or small number of standard languages that should be used in the public or even private sphere across a country appears to be particularly well-established, and not just in the UK. A 'one-nation-one-language' ideology is interlaced with other beliefs about national identity, for example the notion that the nation state should be as homogeneous as possible. A dimension

of that homogeneity is monolingualism. (In some parts of the world there is a state-sanctioned bi-, tri- or even quadrilingualism: *viz* the regional bilingualism allowed in Wales or the autonomous regions of Spain and the official quadrilingualism of Switzerland or Singapore.) So while multilingualism and translanguaging are the norm on the ground, monolingualism or a certain degree of bi-, tri- or quadrilingualism is hegemonic, that is it appeals to a common-sense notion that one language – or a small number of (hierarchically-arranged) 'official' languages – stands above all others as having a particular status as the standard language of the country or state.

In educational contexts too, language policies tend to insist on the use of the standard variety of one language or a small number of languages as the language of instruction (e.g. the three-language formula for education in India's schools). As a result, say García and Hesson (2015, 221), 'many language-minoritised students, speakers of different varieties of the languages used in schools, have high rates of academic failure.' The dominance of a particular language – English, in the case of the UK – points to the imperative that language minority people have to learn it. The standard varieties and privileged genres of the dominant language have legitimacy in the public domain. As Bourdieu would put it, they are mis-recognised as the only ones which are legitimate. But we do not need to consider linguistic diversity to be a problem, any more than it should be uncritically celebrated. Rather, it is a resource to be drawn upon critically in educational contexts, just as in out of class life.

To quote Hillary Janks, writing about English in South Africa:

> *Bourdieu (1991) draws our attention to the fact that while the education system generally fails to provide students from subordinated groups in society with knowledge of and access to the legitimate language, it succeeds in teaching them recognition of (mis-recognition of) its legitimacy (1991, 62). What is needed is language education that reverses this – that gives mastery of English, together with a critical view of its status as a global language … In addition, as English teachers we need to produce students who understand why linguistic diversity is a resource for creativity and cognition, who value all the languages that they speak, and who recognise the paucity of 'English only'.* (Janks 2009, 11-12)

The reality of contemporary communication, however, is deemed irrelevant in much national, local and institutional language policy and practice, which is overwhelmingly monolingualist and monocultural, and narrow in both scope and content. In the UK and in many other places, moreover, English is erroneously assumed by many to be the key both to individual advancement and to social equality. Pedagogical responses are required that reflect and value the translingual reality of contemporary urban life. Translanguaging was conceived in educational contexts: bilingual educator Cen Williams and colleagues coined the term to describe (and stress the pedagogical usefulness of) patterns of language use in Welsh secondary schools where children read a text in one language and discuss it in another (Williams 1996; cf. Blackledge and Creese 2010 and Creese and Blackledge 2010 in complementary schools). Today's populations increasingly need translingual awareness (Canagarajah 2013), as they develop a complex mosaic of multilingual and multicultural communicative competences, repertoires and language resources. In schools too, bilingual and

multilingual students need to be allowed to draw upon these resources, rather than being restricted to the use of the one or two languages authorised in the school setting. As Ofelia García says, only by doing so will they 'be able to demonstrate what they know, and especially what they can do with language' (García 2016).

Conclusion

I began by outlining what sociolinguists understand by the term 'superdiversity', moving on to a definition and illustration of translanguaging as superdiverse practice. I finished by briefly considering inadequate policy and educational responses to contemporary multilingualism. Questions arise in all these areas. There is a need to explore understandings of superdiversity in contexts outside the developed north and west. Likewise, descriptions of translingual practice need to extend beyond migration contexts in Europe and North America. Moreover, with regard to translanguaging, more needs to be done to link cognitive with sociolinguistic understandings of multiple language use. For example, what are the cognitive as well as the social triggers for fluid movement across languages without functional separation? In educational contexts there is a lack of recognition of the realities of urban multilingualism and a consequential lack of understanding of how multilingualism can be harnessed as an educational resource. (But what might effective pedagogies that draw upon translanguaging look like?) Finally, there is clearly a great deal to do, academically and in terms of advocacy, to ensure multilingual speakers of non-standard, non-privileged languages are enabled a voice, regardless of the extent and range of their individual communicative repertoires.

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14

The linguistic landscape of New Delhi: A precursor and a successor of language policy

Ramanujam Meganathan

Introduction

India's linguistic diversity is marked not only by the number of languages spoken, but also by the way that these languages are exhibited in speaking and writing and by the ways that they are used as cultural symbols and as social, political and ethnic markers. Languages with and without written scripts coexist, although minor, tribal and minority languages are under threat. Urban India, particularly the big cities, accommodates increasing numbers of different ethnic and linguistic groups from across the country and abroad. New Delhi, the capital of India, is one of the most multilingual cities in the world for it is said to harbour more than one hundred languages in its landscape (GOI 2001) and in its 'official' and 'carnival' lives[1] (Blackledge and Creese 2010).

The national capital region Delhi has two official language policies: one comes from the central (national) government, the other from the state government (in this case, the National Capital Territory of Delhi). The national government's policy has Hindi as the official language and English as associate official language. Meanwhile, apart from Hindi and English, the state has also recognised Urdu and Punjabi as 'second official languages' since 2001. Besides these four, many other languages may be encountered in day-to-day engagements and in the landscape. Just one example can be found in the Pashto signs in the Afghan restaurants and grocery shops at Saket and Malviya Nagar. The signs of Delhi reflect both the multilingual character of the population of the city and the two layers of governance, state and national.

This chapter presents one aspect of the linguistic landscape (LL) of Delhi by focussing on the written texts found in public spaces (Lefebvre 1991). Research in LL can be instrumental in encouraging language revival and in questioning the exercise of power and language hegemony (Shohamy 2015). The closer study of signs and other public documents in the LL of Delhi reveals how the LL acts as a mechanism of 'engaged language policy' and how it can become an instrument for the development of broader theory and multilingual language policy.

The data used here consist of photographs of signs and 'semi-ethnographic' observations of LL in places where different linguistic communities are located.

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The data are presented and interpreted to enable an understanding of how the LL serves both as a successor of existing official language policy (which has created a language hierarchy and power equations in the socio-political and linguistic ecology) and a precursor for a language policy which can accommodate the languages of different communities. The discussion begins with a brief consideration of the value of studying linguistic landscapes. It then looks at the frequency with which individual languages are encountered in the LL of Delhi. The following section focuses on place names, their origins and how they change over time. Next, the chapter analyses language use in six domains (other than place names) which make up the city's LL. This leads into a discussion of findings and, finally, to the conclusion.

Why study linguistic landscapes?

The very idea of the nation state assigns political dimension to its actions. The naming of the country itself, its cities, streets and institutions and the government's schemes and projects is driven by political ideology. Names change as political ideology changes, following an election, a revolution or a coup. The study of linguistic landscapes explores how the languages employed in public spaces represent socio-political ideologies. One may not fully agree with Gunther Kress when he says, 'All signs are equally subject to critical reading, for no sign is innocent' (1993, 174). But all signs – through the language and the script in which they are written – communicate more than that which they state superficially. Thus, the study of linguistic landscapes has the potential to reveal how the language and text used in the sign serve as a symbol or an instrument for promoting an ideology. According to Landry and Bourhis (1997, 25):

> *The language of public road signs, advertising billboards, street names, place names, commercial shop signs and public signs on government buildings combines to form the linguistic landscape of a given territory, region, or urban agglomeration.*

Shohamy and Waksman (2009a, 314; 2009b) move a step further:

> *Linguistic landscape provides a prism of languages embedded in societies and situated in the humanistic, social and political ecology of those who share, form, influence and are influenced by it.*

Linguistic landscapes reflect not only the official language policy of the state but also the day-to-day engagements of languages in the 'carnival' lives of people being practised in the social and cultural spheres. Big cities accommodate numbers of languages but the visibility of individual languages depends on their vitality:

> *Cities are increasingly becoming 'showcases' where language displays different choices not only at an individual level, but also in terms of language policy/management/marketing/education, etc.* (Barni and Bagna 2015, 9)

Researching LL is a relatively new and emerging area. Since the first flagship study by Landry and Bourhis in 1997, LL has steadily surged ahead, adopting various dimensions and methods to look at language in public spheres. Mixed method

approaches – involving quantitative, qualitative and ethnographic processes – enrich the findings of LL studies. This has led to the possibility of multiple theorisations (Barni and Bagna 2015), such as rational choice, representation, private and collective identities, power (Boudon 2003; Bourdieu 1993) as well as rights, globalisation and multilingualism. Ben-Rafael et al. (2006) and Ben-Rafael (2009) attempt to theorise LL as a 'symbolic construction of the public space'. As pointed out earlier, language in the sign is not innocent, for the sign attempts to construct a symbol representing the linguistic community for social, cultural and/or ethnic causes and motives.

Distribution of languages

This chapter explores the LL of Delhi, looking at how the multilingual city displays languages in its public spaces for official as well as day-to-day engagements. To this end, 480 signs from various locations and institutions were photographed.

Table 1: Signs collected for the study

Languages and language combinations	Frequency
English	185
Hindi + English	130
Hindi + Urdu + English	37
Hindi + Urdu + Punjabi + English	33
Hindi	25
Tamil + English	17
Urdu + English	15
Telugu + English	8
Malayalam + English	8
Tamil + Hindi + English	6
Tamil + Malayalam + Telugu + Kannada	4
Pashto	2
Pashto + English	2
Tibetan	2
Tibetan + English	2
Odia + English	2
Bengali + English	2
Total	**480**

Table 1 shows the numbers of signs collected and the languages used in them. Twelve different languages and 17 different language combinations were found. The most common language combination is Hindi with English, with 130 cases (27 per cent from the total of 480). Several combinations are complex, with three or even four languages appearing in the same sign.

Overwhelmingly, the most widely used individual language is English (either alone or in combination with other languages), with 447 cases (93 per cent of the total of 480). By itself, English is also the most commonly occurring language, with 185 examples (38 per cent). The next most widely used language is Hindi, with 130 cases (27 per cent) by itself and 231 cases (48 per cent) alone or in combination with other languages. Urdu and Punjabi, the two 'second official languages' in the state of Delhi, occur only 85 times (18 per cent) and 33 times (seven per cent) respectively. Both Urdu and Punjabi only ever occur in combination with other languages, never by themselves.

औरंगजेब रोड
AURANGZEB ROAD
ਔਰੰਗਜੇਬ ਰਾਹ
روڈ اورنگزیب

Figure 1: Language hierarchy in road signs (Hindi, English, Punjabi and Urdu) as per the language policy of the state

Figure 1 illustrates a common way in which all four of Delhi's official languages may co-occur in a street sign, with Hindi preceding English, followed by Punjabi (in Gurmukhi script) and Urdu (in Persian script).

Going back to Table 1, besides Delhi's official languages, six languages from the south and east of India were also found, although always in combination with English, Hindi and/or other Indian languages. An example can be seen in Figure 2. The most frequently noted of these Indian languages was Tamil, with 27 cases (6 per cent of the total).[2] Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada, Odia and Bengali also make infrequent appearances.

Figure 2: Malayalam and English used in a shop sign
(Photo: Edward Bastin)

Apart from English, two other languages originating from outside India were observed. There were four cases each of Pashto and Tibetan. Pashto and Tibetan are found because people from the countries where they are spoken visit Delhi to access medical treatment or because they reside in the city as refugees. The exclusive Afghan shops at Malviya Nagar serve people who are visiting hospitals in that area since medical treatment is considered to be cheaper in India than in Afghanistan.

Meanwhile, Tibetans came to India in 1956, with their spiritual leader the Dalai Lama, to escape Chinese persecution; they have been in India as refugees for the last six decades.

Place names and their origins

In India, the naming of children, places and buildings has always been influenced by socio-political developments within the country and elsewhere.[3] The influences of Marxism, the Indian national freedom movement, regional political movements and linguistic identity can be seen (Meganathan 2011). We can find personal names such as Stalin, Lenin, Kennedy, Yasser Arafat, Ingersoll, Gandhi, Nehru, Indira and so on. In other cases, the names of gods and words signifying beauty, goodness and the natural world are used as personal names (Meganathan 2009).

With regard to place names, the south Indian state of Tamil Nadu – until 1968 known as Madras Rajdhani – was renamed to assert Tamil ethnic and linguistic identity. Then the name of the state capital was changed from Madras to Chennai in 1996, again with the intention of strengthening Tamil identity. Similarly, the city of Bombay became Mumbai in 1995 to emphasise its Marathi identity, while the eastern city of Calcutta metamorphosed into Kolkata in 2001 to reflect its Bengali character and to remove colonial associations. These examples demonstrate that changing place names can occur in order to fulfil emotional or sentimental feelings related to ethnic or linguistic identity.

Delhi is a historic city which has witnessed political turmoil, wars, earthquakes and other events that have shaped India's destiny. All of these events and changes are reflected in the names of the city's streets and in the ways that these names are displayed in public.

The construction of New Delhi, designed by the British architect Edwin Lutyens, began in 1912 and continued until 1929. Not surprisingly, streets, buildings and institutions were given British names. Later, following India's independence in 1947, many of these names were changed, as a mark of decolonisation. In particular, many locations were given the names of political leaders of the country's freedom movement.

Name changing continues to the present day – often for political reasons – and may continue to do so in the future. Table 2 lists the changes that have been made to some major roads.

The recent change of Aurangzeb Road to Dr.A.P.J.Abdul Kalam Road is particularly interesting, because of its political and ideological connotations. The Mughal king Aurangzeb (1618-1707, ruled from 1658) is considered by some to be one of the greatest Mughal emperors, who consolidated power over much of India; however, many see him as an aggressive ruler who persecuted non-Muslims. The government which came to power in India in 2014 – led by a political party known for its Hindutva (Hindu nationalist) ideology – was unsympathetic to Aurangzeb and his achievements and wished to have his name removed from the public space. Dr A.P.J.Abdul Kalam (1931-2015) was a nuclear scientist who was instrumental in India's second nuclear

Table 2: How Delhi's street names have changed over time*

Previous name	Current name
Albukerd Marg	Tees January Marg
Aurangzeb Road	Dr.A.P.J.Abdul Kalam Road (changed 2015)
Canning Road	Madhavrao Scindia Marg (changed 2001)
Connaught Place	Rajiv Chowk (changed 1996)
G.B. Road	Swami Shradhananda Road
Kingsway	Rajpath
Old Mill Road	Rafi Marg
Roberts Road	Teen Murti Marg
York Road	Motilal Nehru Marg

* Changes shown here were made in 1947, unless indicated otherwise.

test, carried out in 1998; he was also President of India from 2002 to 2007. The renaming of the road was carried out after Dr Abdul Kalam passed away in 2015 (Figure 3).

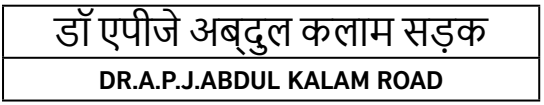

Figure 3: Revised street sign for the former Aurangzeb Road, September 2015

Although there was severe criticism of and opposition to this name change from some political parties and progressive academics, the authorities pointed out that, like 'Aurangzeb', 'Abdul Kalam' is also a Muslim name. Comparing the original street sign (Figure 1) with the revised sign (Figure 3), we cannot fail to notice that only Hindi and English are employed in the more recent sign; Urdu and Punjabi are conspicuous by their absence. The use of just two languages – Hindi and English – is usually found only in the names of smaller roads and lanes, it is unusual in the names of major roads.

The process of indigenisation of street names from colonial times, which began soon after independence, is not yet over. There are still many streets in Delhi which bear old British names, such as Chelmsford Road, Hailey Road and Minto Road.

Other domains

After street names, we move now to consider how languages are used in six other domains:

1. Historic monuments
2. Traffic and transport signs
3. Government and educational institutions

4. Shops and advertisements
5. Restaurants and menus
6. Protest and political parties.

Historic monuments

Generally speaking, signs at historic monuments follow the national language policy of using only Hindi and English, with Hindi appearing first. This policy applies even on monuments dating from the Mughal period in India's history (1526-1857), despite the fact that Persian and later Urdu were the languages of the Mughal court; furthermore, Persian calligraphy can still be seen on many monuments of this period.

An interesting exception to the pattern of using only Hindi and English can be found at the *haveli* (mansion) of Mirza Ghalib (1797-1869), the eminent writer who wrote poetry in Persian and prose in Urdu. As Figure 4 shows, the sign at the entrance to the mansion is written in three languages, with Urdu preceding Hindi and English.

Figure 4: Sign in Urdu, Hindi and English at *haveli* of Mirza Ghalib
(Photo: R. Meganathan)

Traffic and transport signs

Even though the State of Delhi's official policy makes it mandatory to use four languages, traffic signs normally use just Hindi and English (see Figure 5).

Indeed some traffic signs, particularly temporary ones, use only one language, either Hindi or English, as can be seen in Figure 6.

Figure 5: Traffic sign in Hindi and English
(Photo: Edward Bastin)

The names on Delhi Police vehicles and the Delhi Transport Corporation's sightseeing buses – known as *Delhi darshan* – are only in English. On the other hand, the names of Delhi Metro stations and all signs in metro trains and elsewhere in the system follow the national policy of using both Hindi and English.

Government and educational institutions

Signs in central government and educational institutions generally adhere to the official policy of using both Hindi and English, with Hindi appearing first (thus indicating its precedence). See Figure 7.

Figure 6: Traffic sign in English (Photo: Edward Bastin)

During the formative period immediately after independence, the Constitution (Article 343 (2), Constitution of India 1949) made it clear that the use of English was to be a temporary measure lasting only for 15 years (i.e. until 26 January 1965), after which Hindi would be the sole official language. This has not happened. The Indian Parliament enacted the Official Languages Act 1963 which made a provision for the continued use of English

Figure 7: Sign in Hindi and English at the entrance to a central government institution (Photo: Edward Bastin)

for official purposes, along with Hindi, even after 1965. English is not listed as one of the 'recognised languages' but it is given the status of 'associate official language'. This Act remains in force and its provisions apply indefinitely. For this reason it is possible to see English appearing before Hindi, even in signs in central government institutions.

An interesting exception to the general rule is that the logos of central government and state government institutions, and their affiliated bodies, are written not only in

Hindi and English but also include slogans taken from Vedic and other ancient texts in the Sanskrit language. This draws attention to India's very long history and knowledge traditions.

Shops and advertisements

Delhi's shopkeepers know that, to sell their goods and services, they must choose a language or languages which will attract potential customers. English leads the list of languages appearing on shop signs, followed by Hindi and a few other languages, such as Tamil, Malayalam and Telugu. Most signboards are bilingual in English and Hindi while a few are trilingual, with the addition of Urdu. Shops which specialise in foods, groceries and clothes usually have their signs in the languages with which their products are culturally, religiously and ethnically associated. However, the languages of the eight north eastern states of India[4] are notably absent, even in those areas of the city where people from these states are concentrated. For example, *momos*, a popular item of food from the north-east, is sold almost everywhere in Delhi, but signs advertising this food are found only in English. Not even transliterations into the Roman alphabet of words and phrases of the languages of the north-east – or any other tribal language or the less widely spoken minority languages – are seen. A major reason for these languages not finding a place in the LL is that most tribal languages do not yet have their own scripts whilst several of those which have recently acquired scripts have adapted the Roman alphabet for that purpose.

Most commercial advertisements are in English, while some are in Hindi. Interestingly, some advertisements use Hindi transliterated into Roman script. An example, from a tile company, can be seen in Figure 8. The advertisement reads *Desh ki mitti se bani tile se. Desh ko banate hain*. (These tiles are made from our country's soil. This builds our country). Transliteration may be used in this way for several different reasons. Firstly, when pagers and mobile phones first arrived in India, the only language available for them was English. People then spontaneously adapted the Roman script when they wanted to send messages in their own languages. Secondly, in Delhi there are many recently arrived migrants who know oral Hindi but are not able to read it; transliteration is helpful for them if they are already literate in a language which uses the Roman alphabet. And thirdly, since writing in English is perceived to be 'modern', transliterated Hindi is a sort of half-way stage to English.

Figure 8: Transliteration of Hindi into Roman script in an advertisement for a tile company (Photo: Edward Bastin)

Restaurants and menus

As with shops, restaurant signs tend to be in English, with or without Hindi. But an additional language associated with the specialist cuisine served by the restaurant may also be used. An example is provided by the chain of restaurants known as Karim Hotels Private Limited, which specialises in Mughlai food of the Mughal period. This chain is operated by descendants of the official chefs of the Mughal rulers. The signs on the restaurant fronts are in English, Urdu and Hindi, while the company's website (www.karimhoteldelhi.com) is exclusively in English.

Figure 9: Almost all restaurant menus are in English (Photo: Edward Bastin)

It is interesting to note that almost all restaurant menus are in English, except for a few in Urdu which specialise in the cuisine of Karachi, Pakistan. When asked about why menus are mostly in English, even though the majority of customers speak Hindi, a restaurant owner said, 'We did not think of it when we started printing the menu card. Almost all over the city and the country it is in English. Most of our customers understand English. We never felt the need to print it in any other language.'

Figure 9 shows a typical menu on the wall of a restaurant, written in English but with a high proportion of loan words from Indian languages.

Protest and political parties

Delhi has an officially allocated place for *dharnas* or protests at the Jantar Mantar ground. Large scale demonstrations, protests, *dharnas* and hunger strikes are organised by political parties and other social and non-governmental organisations at this location, for this is one way to attract the attention of central government and the national media. Demonstrators from across the country take part in these events. The placards, banners and posters are mostly in English and Hindi. However, when the demonstration happens to involve people for whom Hindi is not their first language, it is noticeable that English and the relevant regional language are used.

Delhi, being the capital city, is where national political parties have their headquarters. The state allots office space for parties which have met a minimum threshold level of votes in the most recent election. The languages used in the political party offices are Hindi and English. (Different arrangements exist for regional parties and different patterns of language use are found in the regions.)

Discussion

This survey of the linguistic landscape of Delhi has revealed, firstly, that English is the *de facto* predominant language in the city. Next comes Hindi, as the language of the majority of the city's population. Whereas English plays a largely symbolic role – the

language of modernity – Hindi can be seen as a more truly 'communicative' language. A third finding is that the linguistic landscape allows some democratic space (albeit somewhat inconsistently) for the minority languages of Urdu and Punjabi and for other languages, both Indian and foreign, ancient and contemporary. These findings lead us to consider three phenomena: the inversion of hierarchies, the creation of multicultural spaces and the spread of English from official to carnival spaces.

Inversion of hierarchies

The LL is clearly influenced by official language policy, although, as we have seen, there are two official policies which do not always coincide with each other. At the same time, it is clear that the day to day reality of Delhi's LL impacts upon and modifies official language policy.

Punjabi provides an illustration of how the LL is influenced by official language policy. One of the second official languages of the state, Punjabi finds its place in the official road signs only. It is not encountered in any other context. On the other hand, the role that English plays in the LL demonstrates that official policy sometimes has to succumb to the vitality of particular languages. As noted earlier, English was originally intended to be an associate official language only until Hindi had become sufficiently established to take over all official functions. But that did not happen and, as we have found, English appears more and more widely in the linguistic landscape.

Furthermore, the official language policy of the central government gives priority to Hindi over English. But this language hierarchy is transgressed in both official and informal signs. English has an edge over Hindi for it often appears first (above Hindi) or it is the only language employed. In the same way, the state government's policy places Urdu and Punjabi as second official languages of the state next to Hindi and English as an associate official language, yet Urdu (which is a pan-Indian language) occurs only intermittently, in some road signs, in some restaurant menus and in certain educational institutions.

Creation of multicultural spaces

Certain other Indian languages – Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada, Bengali, Odia and so on – are found in places where people speaking these languages congregate and where their educational institutions are located. Languages of Afghanistan and Tibet also appear in Delhi's LL, although often in association with English. However, not all languages find their niches in the LL; as we have seen, the languages of the north eastern states are invisible. The multilingual spaces which are created, therefore, are dynamic but incomplete.

English spreads from official to carnival spaces

English is seen not only in official and academic spheres; it has also moved to 'carnival' spaces in the LL. It is used in signs associated with social, cultural and day-to-day engagements in Delhi, as our study has revealed. Many signs give preference to English over other languages, even Hindi. The font size used for English is often larger than that used for other languages; moreover, English frequently appears before and more prominently than other languages. This finding supports the

growing body of evidence that English is rapidly spreading through the streets of cities around the world (Backhaus 2006; Griffin 2004; Huebner 2006; all quoted by Torkington 2009). Studies such as these have concluded that one reason for this is the proliferation of English as a *lingua franca* in tourist areas. A further reason has to do with the symbolic value of English for the local population, as a language of international prestige, or status marker (Backhaus 2006 and Huebner 2006, both quoted by Torkington 2009; Shohamy 2006) or the language of global youth and fashion, an identity marker (Griffin 2004; Meganathan 2009). In the case of India, the dominance of English cannot be attributed simply to tourism; it is much more than that. Today, English is considered to be an instrument for upward mobility and progress (Graddol 2006; NCERT 2006). The state of Delhi has introduced English as a language from Class I, while the use of English as medium of instruction in schools is on the rise (Meganathan 2011). The use of English in signs and the preference for English over other languages confirms the trend of perceiving English to be a language of progress and upward mobility.

Conclusion

The LL of the capital region of Delhi, reflecting the multicultural ethos of the whole country, reveals that not all languages are vibrant in contexts where they have to coexist with other languages; they also need to wrestle for space and dominance. This struggle is driven by neo-liberal market forces. As discussed in the introduction to this chapter, the LL of Delhi is not 'innocent'. The preference for English in shop signs, public notices and restaurant menus indicates the impact of globalisation as well as 'modernisation'. The transliteration of Hindi words into the Roman alphabet and constant code switching into English can be understood in this perspective. Sometimes a visitor asks, 'Why are all the restaurant menus in English? Does that mean that all those who dine in these restaurants know English well?' The answer, of course, is that the demand for English is driven by social factors, because it is seen as an instrument for achieving upward mobility and as a sign of modernity (Graddol 2006).

It can also be concluded that the 'social and political ecology' – identified by Shohamy and Waksman (2009a) in other contexts – is also a phenomenon in the LL of Delhi (Gorter 2006). Individual languages in the LL share, form, influence and are influenced by the LL. This can promote linguistic harmony and multiculturalism, but it can also lead to linguistic imperialism, with languages such as English devouring weaker languages in the LL (Rapatahana and Bunce 2012; Bunce et al. 2016). In all the signs of Delhi, English finds a central and supposedly neutral place as the language which is accepted by all. This needs to be seen with some apprehension, however, because it is also the language which the market finds most convenient for promoting its business. Almost all the multinational companies operating in Delhi function only in English. This is in contrast with countries which have completely opened up their economies, such as Thailand, South Korea and Japan, where companies are obliged to function in the language of the host country. Delhi's dual language policies, therefore, are more permissive.

Notes

[1] 'As class and state developed so the comic/festive elements of culture were excluded from the official culture and became the alternative folk culture of carnival' (Bakhtin 1984, 4). See also Bakhtin (1994).

[2] There is a substantial Tamil population in the R.K.Puram neighbourhood in south west Delhi and there is a Tamil *Sangam* (community and cultural organisation) in the same area. The Delhi Tamil Education Association also runs eight schools as aided institutions of the Delhi government.

[3] India is not alone in this, of course. For personal naming practices in Pakistan, for example, see Rahman 2015.

[4] The north eastern states are Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura.

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15

Mind the gap: 'Communicative vulnerability' and the mediation of linguistic/cultural diversity in healthcare settings

Srikant Sarangi

Introduction: Multilingualism and multiplicity of meanings

Multilingualism as a phenomenon is multi-faceted and multi-layered. The meaning of 'multilingualism' in the everyday, experiential sense is never fixed; it is fluid, historically (in the temporal sense) and contemporaneously (in the spatial sense). Multilingualism and its sibling 'multiculturalism' are manifest and are perceived differently within and across demographic boundaries, defying homogenisation. Equally, both these concepts have become characteristic of many institutional settings, beyond language education policy and practice, to include healthcare delivery, legal processing of asylum seekers and refugees, internal and external communication in the multinational corporate sector and so on. Multilingualism and multiculturalism as lived realities are not only about diversity and difference; inevitably at the levels of policy and practice they border on deficit, dominance, disadvantage and discrimination. A development agenda needs to remain responsive to multilingualism and multiculturalism with their multiplicity/complexity of meanings.

A key distinction to be made in the present context is between multilingualism premised upon a shared cultural baseline, as in the case of India, versus multilingualism underpinned by multiple cultural systems, as would be characteristic of Europe. The latter is a facet of global migration flows, mainly the impact of labour migration and the aftermath of civil wars leading to forced displacement of individuals, as is currently being witnessed in Europe. In such circumstances the conditions and consequences of localised, limited language abilities of immigrants become evident when they settle into their new lives in a target country. In terms of everyday communication, they find themselves in a situational paradox:

> *... almost everything that a foreign worker learns is learned in communication, basically in everyday contacts. This leads the foreign worker into a seemingly paradoxical situation: in order to communicate, s/he has to learn the language, and in order to learn the language, s/he has to communicate.* (Perdue 1984, 7)

Displaced healthcare professionals fall into this cohort of immigrants who, in addition to acquiring everyday 'communicative competence' (Hymes 1972), have to undergo

H. Coleman (ed.). 2017. *Multilingualisms and Development*. London: British Council. ISBN 978-0-86355-840-5

formal language tests (IELTS, the International English Language Testing System) and other assessments (e.g. PLAB, Professional and Linguistic Assessments Board) as a way of proving their eligibility to be engaged in clinical practice (Sarangi 2015).

This scenario can be juxtaposed to the home-grown multilingualism which is more or less embedded, even integrated, within a shared cultural framework as in India, albeit at a surface level and when judged from an outsider perspective. Viewed from within, India may be as multicultural as Europe, although the scale of cultural variation is likely to be different. 'Integration' and 'difference' are nuanced concepts and can take different forms and meanings. Talking about caste demarcations in rural Indian societies in the past, Bailey (1996, 5) remarks:

> *This was not the integration of equal opportunity that the word suggests at the present day, but* ***an integration that is constructed out of difference,*** *out of specialisation, out of limits set by convention on the work that a person can do and the power that he or she can exercise.* [emphasis added]

'Integration constructed out of difference' does imply segregation rather than integration *per se*, which is perhaps characteristic of many contemporary multilingual, multicultural societies. Both the terms – integration and difference – are subject to constant reinterpretations, with contested meanings.

Like multilingualism, multiculturalism is also multi-faceted. Vertovec's characterisation of Britain in terms of super-diversity can be extended to many developed countries:

> *a condition [which] is distinguished by a dynamic interplay of variables among an increased number of new, small and scattered, multiple-origin, transnationally connected, socio-economically differentiated and legally stratified immigrants who have arrived over the last decade.* (Vertovec 2007, 1024)

In a later publication, Vertovec advances the concept of 'post-multiculturalism' which seeks 'to foster both the recognition of diversity and the maintenance of collective national identity' (Vertovec 2010, 83). By a similar token, 'post-multilingualism' in a country like India has to balance the interplay of diverse mother tongues, the national language and English as a lingua franca to maintain co-existent coherence without domination – manifestly or implicitly – of one language over another, resulting in exclusionary and discriminating practices, but still passing as integration. 'Integration constructed out of difference', to use Bailey's (1996) phrase, can thus be read positively as an imperative.

In India, linguistic diversity is taken as 'a fact of life' and, by extension, is considered not only unproblematic but as integral to the rich texture of living. This is epitomised in the following remark:

> *In the developed world … two languages are considered a nuisance, three languages uneconomic and many languages absurd. In multilingual countries, many languages are facts of life; any restriction in the choice of language is a nuisance; and one language is not only uneconomic, it is absurd.* (Pattanayak 1984)

Embedded in this proclamation is the strong assumption that a dominant language should not be imposed upon the people who naturally and ecologically think and live in different languages in family as well as public spheres. In stronghold multilingual countries like India, there are mechanisms to deal with linguistic diversity at a practical level, for example choosing a school environment that is conducive to the maintenance of the home language, finding a healthcare professional matching one's language and ethnic background or routinely using family members to mediate institutional encounters in one's preferred language. Even when an adjustment is made in choosing a common language for communicative purposes, the situation may still retain the character of a mediated multilingual encounter at a deeper level. Any individual will have access to a multilingual repertoire to choose from, including occasioned 'code-switching' within a given encounter or for an entire encounter. In a country like India with 31 states and more than 1,500 living languages, government-backed language policies, especially in the public sector, must remain sensitive to such linguistic diversities and patterned as well as emergent cross-linguistic adaptations, even if there are rising economic costs to meet.

If monolingualism can be myopic, so would be multilingualism when the latter is not embedded within the broader socio-cultural reality. In a provocative vein, Deleuze and Guattari write:

> *There is no language in itself, nor any universality of language, but a concourse of dialects, patois, slangs, special languages. There exists no ideal 'competent' speaker-hearer of language, any more than there exists a homogenous linguistic community ... There is no mother tongue, but a seizure of power by a dominant tongue within a political multiplicity.* (Deleuze and Guattari 1981, 53)

From such a radical perspective, every individual possesses a unique linguistic and cultural habitus. By extension, at the societal level, multilingualism is riddled with political and ideological overtones, which can only be appreciated by going beyond language, i.e. practices which mediate language use in a given socio-cultural climate. Traditionally, cultural anthropological and socialisation studies have underscored the non-separability of language and culture, which is realised at the level of discourse:

> *Discourse is the nexus, the actual and concrete expression of the language-culture-society relationship. It is discourse which creates, recreates, focuses, modifies, and transmits both culture and language and their intersection.* (Sherzer 1987, 296)

This discourse view of culture should not be conflated with the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis concerning linguistic determinism/relativism.

Along the spectrum of diversity/difference, any encounter between two individuals can be characterised as one between two languages and two cultures, not necessarily in oppositional terms, leading to misunderstandings and tensions. From a cultural theoretic perspective (Cantle 2012, 173), interculturality is a more dialogic and dynamic concept when compared with multiculturalism:

> *The perspective of interculturalism is, then, one that needs to be clearly separated from the past [multiculturalism which has failed in establishing a positive aspect to diversity], and very much future-oriented, based upon a vision of what societal relationships we aspire to, but one that also recognises the concerns and fears that people have.* [my parenthesis]

Cantle (2012, 143) continues:

> *In a new language of 'interculturalism', a number of words will become readily associated – 'interdependency', 'interaction', 'interconnectedness', 'internationalism', 'integration' – to form part of the policy and practice discourse.*

There are clear overlaps between 'interculturalism' as conceptualised above and 'post-multiculturalism' as proposed by Vertovec (2010); both the concepts are placed at a distance from the canonical valence of multiculturalism. In a nutshell, integration and difference have to co-exist in the globalised world in which we live.

'Communicative vulnerability' in multilingual, multicultural healthcare delivery

In multilingual, multicultural societies, the notion of 'communicative vulnerability' is particularly useful. By 'vulnerability', I mean a deficit or lack of equipoise in linguistic, communicative, institutional and socio-cultural terms. In a sense, vulnerability is the other end of the competence spectrum, linguistically and communicatively. The notion of vulnerability also extends to include differences and deficits, especially with regard to unequal levels of health literacy with or without linguistic competencies in class-ridden societies.[1] The communicative vulnerability at the linguistic, interactional level is not something that is only brought along by the participants to a given encounter. It is also the case that the interactional trajectory itself can potentially contribute to the emergence of such vulnerability in an intercultural healthcare setting (Moss and Roberts 2005; Roberts, Sarangi and Moss 2004; Roberts et al. 2005; Sarangi 2012).

In the specific context of healthcare delivery, 'communicative vulnerability' has consequences for the consultation process and outcome. A good example is the use of hyper-questioning by the doctor when a prior question has already proved difficult for the patient to process and respond to. Consider the history taking phase of a clinical consultation in which the doctor is likely to ask a series of questions – one after the other in a chain-like fashion – without offering the patient adequate interactional space to respond. The sequencing of these questions, especially when embedded in a single turn, poses particular difficulty for any patient as the processing of all the questions at once and responding to them in the next turn requires a higher degree of cognitive processing on the patient's part. In such cases, the tendency is to respond to the very last question posed in the chained sequence. Such 'hyper-questioning' behaviour may be indicative of the doctor's clinical agenda, independent of the patient's subjective illness experience.

Metacommunication (signalling of how what is said is to be interpreted) by healthcare professionals is another such example when a patient is already having difficulty in

processing the language of the clinic in its bare form. Consider the diagnosis delivery phase of a clinic consultation where the doctor provides explanations of causes underpinning the disease by defining technical words or the treatment phase where the clinician explicitly outlines alternative choices using overly complex syntactic structures (for example 'There are two alternative ways of explaining your symptoms that led me to the diagnosis that I have given you' and 'I know from my experience other families favour option one, but if that doesn't make sense to you, let me think again a bit more and suggest yet another alternative which may not be that different in terms of outcomes we want to achieve'). A patient with limited linguistic abilities, and possibly with lower levels of health literacy, is bound to struggle with these options for making an informed decision about his/her future course of action. An awareness of the potential communicative vulnerability of patients would mean that, in addition to a clinical diagnosis, the doctor has also to diagnose the level of health literacy of the patient and deliver explanations in a measured way. At its extreme, this may lead to absence of explanation, even indifference, as in the case of the class-ridden Indonesian clinic that Coleman recounts (see Note 1). Equally, for a vulnerable patient, producing a coherent narrative about symptoms may also constitute a challenge. In the primary care setting, as Moss and Roberts observe: 'when talk itself is the problem, patients' explanations can lead to misunderstandings, which GPs [General Practitioners] have to repair if they cannot prevent' (Moss and Roberts 2005, 412). Communicative vulnerability applies to primary care as much as tertiary care settings, and also to interpreter-mediated healthcare consultations.

In this chapter I examine communicative vulnerability in the institutional gatekeeping context of healthcare. Even when linguistic competence is observable, an appropriate level of discursive competence – the same as communicative competence (Hymes 1972) – may be lacking. By a similar token, linguistic incompetence does not directly equate with discursive incompetence. Although there is an important link between linguistic competence and discursive competence, the latter is not to be regarded as a direct, natural extension of linguistic competence and vice versa. Discursive competence – here, playing an institutional game in an appropriate manner – is particularly important in gatekeeping encounters because of potential consequences that may follow, including denial of eligibility, access and opportunity. Generally speaking, every multilingual, multicultural society presents a gatekeeping scenario in the name of super-diversity. The healthcare sector in Europe is a particularly unique site, with its emergent trends of first- and second-generation migrants, in which to explore the notion of communicative vulnerability. In what follows, I briefly capture the conditions and consequences of multilingualism in Europe with particular reference to the healthcare sector. This is followed by an empirical case study originating from the UK context to explore the complexity surrounding the interface of linguistic (in)competence and discursive (in)competence.

The European landscape of emergent multilingualism and the healthcare sector

Multilingualism in Europe has a chequered history. The European Economic Community (EEC) was founded in 1957 with four official working languages (Dutch, French, German and Italian). There are now 24 official languages, synonymous with

the number of member states constituting the European Union (EU). Some regional languages such as Catalan and Welsh are accorded a status of co-official language. The situation is analogous to India in terms of stratified languages mapped onto individual states. The Treaty of Lisbon in 2009 stands as a critical marker that endorses the choice of individuals to address EU institutions and expect a response in the same language – often mediated through translation and interpreting services – encompassing institutional/official as well as individual multilingualism. The status of English as an international lingua franca risks curtailing this linguistic diversity. The 1+2 languages formula (mother tongue plus another language of the European Union plus an additional foreign language) is promoted as a means to mobility and growth in the future Europe. However:

> *What is commonly ignored in this 'formula' is the fact that in many European countries today's multilingualism is largely the product of the influx of migrant languages.* (Moliner et al. 2013, 412)

In the developed world, where monolingualism reigned for a long period, the landscape is changing in response to global migration flows. Europe is a good example of what is referred to as super-diversity, characterised by the interplay of many variables (Vertovec 2007). Workplaces are being transformed into multilingual, multicultural interactional spaces where a single lingua franca is difficult to establish (Auer and Wei 2007; Meyer and Apfelbaum 2010). I draw attention to the recently concluded European project 'against the backdrop of sustained scientific debates on various aspects of multilingualism in the context of globalisation' (Berthoud et al. 2013, xiv). One of the three key questions tackled in this project concerns 'in what way, and under what conditions, are "multilingual solutions" not just a response to a problem, but a genuine advantage for companies, European institutions and bodies, and higher education?' (Berthoud et al. 2013, x). Unfortunately, this European project does not include healthcare delivery as an empirical site, so its claim about the beneficial aspects of multilingualism as a resource remains to be explored further.

Healthcare delivery not only differs across the developing and the developed worlds, but also between countries belonging to the developed world. The privatised healthcare system of the USA is a direct contrast to the nationalised healthcare system in the UK. Both healthcare delivery systems are, however, subject to global migration flows and linguistic/cultural diversity in terms of movements of healthcare professionals and families as patients and carers. This begs the question: do such diversities in the professional and patient populations necessarily impede routine healthcare practice? More specifically, does the dominant language of the clinic/hospital lead to exclusion in participation and, consequently, increased morbidity and even mortality?

In the UK, overseas doctors, especially from the Indian sub-continent, have been very visible in healthcare delivery in the primary care sector for decades. The big migration wave of the 1960s led to many Asian doctors practising in the UK and this trend continued in a sustained manner until the last decade. In 2007, around 3,000 General Practitioners (GPs) with an Asian background retired (40 per cent of whom were based in Manchester and a further 27 per cent in East London), thus leaving a

shortfall in qualified healthcare professionals. In recent years, almost 38 per cent of the doctors in the NHS (National Health Service) originated from overseas (28 per cent from beyond the European Economic Area). First generation patients of Asian origin often preferred a GP who shared their linguistic and ethnic background as their first port of call with a view to minimising communicative vulnerability and optimising access to healthcare provisions.

Routinely more than 300 languages are spoken in London. The PLEDGE (Patients with Limited English and Doctors in General Practice) research project, between 2001 and 2003, identified more than 30 languages other than English being patients' first or dominant language in just one South London primary care surgery (Roberts et al. 2004, 2005). The patients in this study represented a continuum of communicative styles with different levels of vulnerability, from local London/standard English to 'new' speakers whose English ability ranged from very limited to having a fluent but culturally specific style of communicating. Let us consider here an example from the PLEDGE project where the patient (P) is of Indian origin and so is the GP.

Data Extract 1[2]

01	GP:	come in come in please come in (...) good morning
02	P:	good morning
03	GP:	have a seat
04	P:	thank you
05	GP:	how are you today
06	P:	oh {[dc] [creaky voice] not very good}
07	GP:	not very good (.) what's happening
08	P:	I *pain here (.) *too much (.) I can't cope you know
09	GP:	right
10	P:	*yesterday (.) *whole day
11	GP:	right
12	P:	and I eat (.) *three times (.) paracetamol
13	GP:	right
14	P:	two three hours it will be *all *right and then (.) *come *pain again (.) I *can't cope (.) pain like
15	GP:	you can't cope with this pain
16	P:	yeah very very bad (.) I don't know what's the wrong with me
17	GP:	sure how *long you have this

We can see from Data Extract 1 that the patient is able to act out her trouble despite her linguistic deficit as she adopts, as a compensatory strategy, a strong affective stance (06, 08, 10, 12, 14, 16). Her self-report is delivered in short sharply contoured

units with little distinction made prosodically between symptoms (not very good; too much pain), stance (I can't cope) and self-treatment (three times paracetamol). The GP effectively uses repetition (07, 15) and minimal responses in order to elicit a more affective stance (08, 16). The GP's question about symptoms is prosodically in tune with the patient's self-report and affective stance. In turn 17, we even see the GP producing a syntactically irregular construction ('how long you have this'), but this utterance is entirely appropriate in this occasion. This is an instance which echoes Hymes' (1972: 277) observation: 'For that matter, a person who chooses occasions and sentences suitably, but is master only of fully grammatical sentences, is at best a bit odd. Some occasions call for being appropriately ungrammatical'. On the one hand, the apparent communicative vulnerability of the patient, rooted in a deficit linguistic repertoire, is overcome through both her mobilisation of available micro-discourse routines, including paralinguistic resources, and the GP's manifest gesture of accommodation. This patient in such circumstances could have brought along a family member as an ad hoc interpreter; in the PLEDGE project 54 out of 232 patients (around 23.2 per cent) were accompanied to the clinic by a family member who spoke 'better' English. These mediated consultations had their own communicative complexity, including vulnerability, which I will not go into here (see Roberts and Sarangi forthcoming).

RCGP oral examination as gatekeeping encounter: The interface of interculturality and institutionality

Another face of multiculturalism in the British healthcare system concerns the second generation of Asian doctors, born and educated in Britain, who still face an uphill challenge to establish their professional credibility. Perceptions of racism and discrimination are rife among overseas and second generation ethnic minority healthcare professionals. Notions such as 'cultural favouritism' and 'disproportionality' in the National Health Service are proffered as compelling evidence. Cultural favouritism seems to be another name for institutional discrimination which results in disproportionality, i.e., under-representation of ethnic minority doctors at the senior management level.

A key point of departure for this chapter is that research in multilingualism has to go beyond the phenomenon of language(s) and attend to communicative practices that are constituted in language-in-interaction in activity-specific settings, for instance the institution of healthcare, with attendant socio-cultural variables. Language proficiency alone offers no guarantee for communicative success. By a similar token, linguistic deficiency does not automatically result in miscommunication, as seen in the PLEDGE extract above. Of course, in real-life situations where communicative resources might not be optimally shared, the vulnerability may come to the fore as in intercultural gatekeeping encounters where the stakes are high. One such specific context in the UK is the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP), where doctors have to undergo formal assessment of their professional abilities, mostly constituted in language. In what follows, the Professional Membership examination conducted by The RCGP is our focal interest.

In the mid-1990s I was invited (along with Celia Roberts) to study the oral examination process at the RCGP. The investigation was centred on what actually happened during the oral examination encounter from a sociolinguistic-cum-discourse-analytic perspective (Roberts and Sarangi 1996, 1999; Roberts et al. 2000). Our starting point was to treat the exam encounter as a gatekeeping situation, in itself a particularly rich site to investigate the institutionally embedded conditions and consequences of multilingualism/multiculturalism.

Gatekeeping encounters, according to Schiffrin (1994, 146), are 'asymmetric speech situations during which a person who represents a social institution seeks to gain information about the lives, beliefs, and practices or people outside of that institution in order to warrant the granting of an institutional privilege.' Likewise, according to Erickson and Shultz, gatekeeping encounters are 'brief encounters in which two persons meet, usually as strangers, with one of them having authority to make decisions that affect the other's future' (Erickson and Shultz 1982, xi). They continue:

> *[G]atekeeping encounters are not a neutral and 'objective' meritocratic sorting process. On the contrary, our analysis suggests that the game is rigged, albeit not deliberately, in favour of those individuals whose communication style and social background are most similar to those of the interviewer with whom they talk. One result is that in gatekeeping encounters the 'gates' of encouragement and special help are opened wider for some individuals than for others.* (Erickson and Shultz 1982, 193)

The interface of interculturality and institutionality (Sarangi 1994, 1996) is very much marked as tensions between 'institutional', 'professional' and 'personal experience' modes (Roberts and Sarangi 1999) are manifest in such intercultural gatekeeping encounters even when native-like linguistic competence is displayed. The overlay of these various modes can be analysed by shifting attention beyond language to frames of interpretation.[3] As we will see in the oral exam data, prevalence of metacommunication – which is a frame of interpretation – is indicative of 'communicative vulnerability'.

The oral exam encounter is a complex and hybrid activity type (Sarangi 2000, 2016); in our chosen example it is an appraisal interview which slides into being a clinic consultation, framed as simulated role-play. This has implications for the activity-specific role-sets and shifts between 'institutional' and 'professional' modes of talk. In the data analysis that follows, I pay specific attention to the following discoursal features: stance (epistemic and affective); interactive frames and footing;[4] contextualisation cues;[5] facework; rhetorical and narrative devices (including metacommunication); and activity-specific role-sets.

Data Extract 2a marks the opening of the oral examination, with the examiner (E) of British origin going through various scenarios with the candidate (C) from a different cultural/ethnic/linguistic background (see also Roberts and Sarangi 1999; Roberts 2000).

Data Extract 2a		
01	E:	ok now we we give you a few problems that have come our way (.) and the first one is that mother bringing up five year old child and she is obviously very uptight erm and anxious (.) the reason being they were in B and they've just come back the day before seeing you (.) and when the son was on the beach er in B he got a needle stick injury which was hidden in the sand (.) er two days ago
02	C:	two days ago
03	E:	hmm so erm she is really wanting you to tell her how everything drastic can be prevented (.) on this injury (.) she's got ideas obviously about erm AIDS because it is hm er presumably from (...) who is injecting
04	C:	ok well if I know the patient well it will be easy for me to establish rapport first and then the child (...)
05	E:	hm mhm
06	C:	if it is not then I'll start from the beginning (.) so establish rapport first
07	E:	hm mhm
08	C:	and get to the problem and ask more about the details of the history (.) what was the needle like (.) was it
09	E:	looked like
10	C:	was there blood (.) what did she immediately do (.) did she squeeze it did she ehm em
11	E:	right it was washed and cleaned
12	C:	are you sure that the baby was
13	E:	five year old
14	C:	whether the child has pricked himself or was it just he was playing with that (.) did you see any blood
15	E:	(...) he didn't pick it up or anything (..)
16	C:	and especially if the area is known for drug addicts does she know any (.) is she concerned about HIV (.) why is she concerned about it (.) maybe she will tell me HIV in this area is ten per cent and so on (.) so it is really to get the history and to know more about her concerns as part of (..)
17	E:	yes (...) what's on her mind
18	C:	it's ok (..) sorry you want me to see how I go through the [consultation
19	E:	[communicating with her now about this (.) what are you going to say to her now (.) in the context of this [alarm
20	C:	[ok well (.) well my aim will be just to reassure her and then active steps (.) to reassure I must establish rapport er with her [and
21	E:	[you're (...)
22	C:	ok (.) again to get to the her concerns (.) is it anything else she is concerned about (.) anything going around that (.)

Let us attend to the framing and footing aspects first. E frames the oral exam (turn 03) as if it were a consultation with the mother of the at-risk child. This requires a footing shift, i.e., the candidate is no longer an examinee but a consulting doctor, which also amounts to an activity-specific frame shift. The frame shift is indexed through the use of contextualisation cues rather than being explicitly stated metacommunicatively. C, however, fails in accomplishing this frame/footing shift, as he continues to address the examiner directly, using third person references as far as the mother is concerned. The mother of course is not physically co-present in this activity-type, but is meant to be virtually present because of the simulated role-play frame. E seems to collude in this communicative failure as can be seen through the minimal responses offered, which are mainly ambivalent from the perspective of either occupying the role of the parent or that of the examiner. E's decision not to disambiguate the frame may be seen as doing face-work. There is a tension here between the institutional mode and the professional mode. The examiner wants the candidate to operate in the professional mode (i.e. the clinic consultation frame) and embody an affective stance towards the mother directly. But the candidate misses the cue and continues in the institutional mode where his prospective actions are framed in an abstract manner, a display of epistemic stance. The cue for the frame shift has been missed, despite the candidate's near-native linguistic competence and professional knowledge-based expertise.

A frame repair (from exam activity to consultation activity) is initiated by C in turn 18, in response to E's remark 'what's on her mind'. The frame switch would inevitably mean a switch in the positioning of who is being spoken to: the mother as addressee and the examiner as audience, to use a distinction from Goffman (1981). Despite this repair initiation and its reinforcement by E in turn 19, C still continues in the 'institutional' oral exam frame, in his role as a candidate rather than as a doctor in the 'professional' consultation frame.

Data Extract 2b

23	E:	what what you are going to do because
24	C:	what I am going to do
25	E:	yes
26	C:	ok first of all explain to her that erm it's just a needle stick injury and I say it's a needle and no blood attached to it and the chance of this happening is extremely extremely rare
27	E:	in terms of what happening? [the
28	C:	[er catching [HIV
29	E:	[causing the disease mhm hm
30	C:	but what are the concerns like hepatitis B and A and C (...)
31	E:	hm mhm
32	C:	and this (...) in that case this is more trans transmissible than HIV

33	E:	hm mhm
34	C:	so I just look at if she has hepatitis immunization (.) just reassuring
35	E:	I mean what do you mean by more transmissible diseases (.) more likely to get hepatitis than
36	C:	more likely to get hepatitis than getting HIV I'm sorry
37	E:	I mean how much more likely you would say
38	C:	it's (...) one needle I think chance will be one in forty thousand to one in four hundred thousand
39	E:	hm mhm
40	C:	while hepatitis B will be around er erm one in two hundred up to one in er erm fifty
41	E:	right [ok
42	C:	[ok so there is a big difference
43	E:	translate that into lay terms for her benefit (.) what does [that mean (...) hundred times more or what
44	C:	[that's why (.) I'll say to her maybe sort of twenty thirty times more
45	E:	yes
46	C:	it doesn't make any depends on which one you are
47	E:	right
48	C:	that's why I'll explain to you because just in case I quote a figure
49	E:	she can't understand this (.) she says why is it that (.) you are more likely to get the hepatitis than the HIV (.) why why (.) you you have indicated those higher interactivity (.) but is there any erm why why is [it (...)
50	C:	[ok it is really to do with the nature of the virus itself
51	E:	hm mhm [right
52	C:	ok [so HIV virus [laughs] is a very weak virus unless it has reached the skin [and (...) membrane
53	E:	sure that's [right
54	C:	[and unless it hasn't been there for a while

The interaction continues in Data Extract 2b. Here, the frame ambivalence continues, similar to Data Extract 2a. Until turn 33, both E and C jointly maintain the oral exam frame, although E's turn 23 could be seen as offering a further cue for C to orient to the mother as the addressee, not the audience, of his talk. When this shift in addressee, and thereby activity, does not happen E's subsequent responses and questions legitimise the exam frame, also partly to maintain face-work. In turn 34, C points to his orientation to the mother as a way of 'just reassuring'. However, this reassurance stance is not followed through as E demands the statistics of risk

occurrence concerning Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C (turn 37). What follows counts as C's institutional display of knowledge in an exam frame. In turns 43 and 49, E explicitly signals a frame shift. As we can see, in turn 43, E asks: 'translate that into lay terms for her benefit'; and, in turn 49, E says 'she can't understand this' and nearly ventriloquises the mother to signal the latter's disbelief about differential risk statements.

Data Extract 2c, taken from the same exam encounter, concerns 'low income and mortality'; in this instance it has been mainly framed on the institutional dimension, with little room for frame ambivalence.

Data Extract 2c

01	E:	low income and mortality (.) what can you tell me about this subject (...)
02	C:	and again to give you a specific example (.) breast cancer study shows that educated not working class women have higher incidences of breast cancer but mortality is much much much less (.) ok while women of lower social class have lower incidences of breast cancer despite this having higher mortality (.) and I think it should be around ten per cent in the mortality has been (.) I can't remember
03	E:	right
04	C:	this is just a specific example following a general [(...)
05	E:	[ok carry on with your example then
06	C:	again there has been so many studies about er erm why this happened (.) is it because if you low income group the low income group you are more likely to erm smoke more (.) not (.) ignore your diet ok
07	E:	hm
08	C:	erm just to elaborate more about [this
09	E:	[any any examples of that from a country where there is an indication that mortality is high for that very reason [several turns omitted]
27	E:	right anything else you read about this recently
28	C:	yes actually [laughs] very recently erm eh yes there has been debate (.) is it really ethnic minorities having higher mortality because of the lower social income
29	E:	right
30	C:	and this debate is mainly higher incidences of diabetes (.) smoke and other things and again they looked at in London about erm people who are not booked with the GP and are not attending for their general health check-up and they are the low socioeconomic groups (.) not part of it but (.) Africans (.) immigrants mainly Africans (.) heavy smokers (.) and what's the third one (..) erm but anyway the (...) heavy smokers are the people
31	E:	hm mhm

32	C:	not the low social economic (...) and there has been recent thing about (..) it's called from surgeon from surgery to surgeons and I think it was in the BMJ a while ago (.) good while ago (.) that (.) lower socioeconomic groups have higher consultation rate but that's why they call it from the surgery to the surgeon while less operations (...) its the (...) so its not [clear
33	E:	[right so is there any other country would corroborate what has been done in this country (...) low income and mortality
34	C:	[long pause] sorry I understand the question but in the very broad spectrum so can you [(...)
35	E:	[yes I mean have you read any article recently from any other country which confirms – reinforces the view that there is a substantial association between these two things (.) draw in common (.) any other country you mentioned west of Scotland quite
36	C:	yeah any other country that yes (long pause)
37	E:	doesn't matter
38	C:	I am not sure whether talk from experience erm (..) Oregon about Medicaid (..) they [erm
39	E:	[that's US

As can be seen, most of E's questions and interjections are targeted at pursuing the topic of low income and mortality, with specific triggers for elaboration (05), evidence from recent studies (27), and more corroborating evidence (33, 35). Unlike Data Extracts 2a and 2b, no frame shifts across institutional and professional modes are intended and the candidate performs competently in the institutional mode except for the little fumbling at the end. The candidate seems to handle the exam frame and the associated footing more smoothly than the shift of frames, as noticed earlier, between the exam frame and the consultation frame and the shift of footing between being a candidate and being a clinician. As far as repertoire is concerned, the candidate displays competence on the levels of medical knowledge and discursive knowledge, the latter being subject to cultural and institutional embedding of activity types.

Almost 20 years later, the issue surrounding potential discrimination of ethnic minority doctors in the MRCGP oral exam remains topical. In a more recent study, Roberts, Atkins and Hawthorne (2014) report different patterns of communicative styles in a systematic comparison of International Medical Graduates (IMG) and UK Medical Graduates (UMG). In the new OSCE (Objective Structured Clinical Examination) format of the examination which involves role-players, the differences in performance are noticeable at a micro level, especially in terms of sociolinguistic and discursive competence. For instance, the findings show that unsuccessful (usually IMG) candidates were late in gathering patient details and were more readily interrupted by the role-playing patients.

As the authors suggest, 'Underpinning this research is a central paradox in institutional life: how to be fair and maintain standardised and universal criteria in an increasingly diverse society' (Roberts, Atkins and Hawthorne 2014, 7). This means not only that performance features will vary across successful and unsuccessful candidates but that the very assessment criteria might be slanted against a minority group. Added to this is the differential interpretation of performance by the gatekeeper-examiners, with the possible consequences of such differential interpretations leading to marked gaps in success rates between IMG and other candidates.

The following six extracts are taken from an article, 'Ethnic minority doctors seek judicial review', which appeared in a daily online information service for medical doctors in the UK (Robinson 2013):

1. Legal action has been launched against the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) and the GMC by the British Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (BAPIO) which alleges that the MRCGP examination is flawed and discriminates against international GP trainees.

2. 'These doctors have had extensive interaction over a period of many years with their trainers and patients without significant concerns. For them to be judged to be so grossly incompetent in a short exit exam either reflects poorly on years of training, which is unlikely, or it is because the exit exam is flawed' (Dr Ramesh Mehta, President of BAPIO).

3. BAPIO is seeking a Judicial Review of the way the RCGP conducts the exam.

4. Its lawyers claim there is a significant difference in pass rates which cannot be explained by a lack of any knowledge, skill or competency on the part of the International Medical Graduates, which include those of Indian origin.

5. RCGP figures show that 65.3 per cent of IMGs failed their first attempt at the Clinical Skills Assessment (CSA) component of the MRCGP exam in 2011/12, compared with 9.9 per cent of UK graduates. In 2010-2011, 59.2 per cent of IMGs failed at the first attempt, compared with 8.2 per cent of UK graduates. In 2008 43 per cent of IMGs failed the CSA compared with 8.3 per cent of UK graduates.

6. The opportunity for bias arises in the face-to-face assessment trainees undergo during the mock consultation with actors. They say that during the assessment it appears that a physician's intellectual ability is judged on the basis of how well he/she speaks native English.

The source of the tensions alluded to above happens to be the divide between the majority and the minority groups. Language – in particular, communicating in a non-native style – is presented as a synecdoche (part standing for the whole and vice versa); poor language performance indexes professional incompetence. While paragraph 6 underscores the negative bias resulting in institutionalised discrimination, paragraph 5 provides hard evidence in support of incremental

gaps in achievements as far as IMG and UKG candidates are concerned. The BAPIO president's remark (paragraph 2) clearly blames the MRCGP exam as being flawed through the rhetorical strategies of contrast and appeal to common sense: the years of training could not be poor. Against this backdrop, a failure outcome may not be regarded as a process of unsuccessful communication or linguistic misunderstanding but as an act of institutional discrimination. There is a very thin line between different styles of communication and potential discrimination.

Conclusion

Cultural and linguistic diversity in many institutional and professional settings, including healthcare, defies any simple characterisation, ideologically and communicatively. In consequence, it raises questions not only about nuanced everyday practices but also about training and assessment provisions aimed at raising multicultural/multilingual awareness, which can potentially reinforce stereotypes. Not all participants from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds can be put into either 'competence' or 'incompetence' categories in a unified sense, whether it concerns service provisions or educational and appraisal environments. It follows then that 'communicative vulnerability', as an inevitable part of differential communicative styles, is a gradient phenomenon with a fluid texture.

What my discussion of empirical examples points to is that there is a need to keep linguistic abilities separate from management of micro-discourse routines vis-à-vis levels of institutional literacy. It is useful to think of a continuum of differential abilities with regard to the language of the clinic or the language of the oral exam, not only along the criterion of grammatical correctness but also in terms of (dis) fluency, marked and unmarked accent, situational appropriacy and so on. Moreover, the surface-level linguistic deficits or equipoise may not reveal the other hidden dimensions of difference, for example interactional machinery, knowledge asymmetry, institutional norm and cultural ideology. The illustrative data examples attest the fact that discursive competence can override linguistic competence in institutional and professional settings. However, a display of competence at the discursive level does not guarantee 'entering the gate' as other minor aspects of performance such as a different accent may surface and impede the process of gate-crossing. The gates in many multilingual, multicultural societies can still be maintained through what may be labelled 'an architecture of difference in a hierarchical arrangement', which is then interpreted in terms of deficit, leading to forms of discrimination.

In multilingual, multicultural societies, gatekeeping encounters remain a site for studying both marginalisation processes and attempts at overcoming communicative deficits. 'Communicative vulnerability' is a form of discursive poverty and can be consequential. When multilingualism relates to the use of a dominant language or lingua franca, either one or all participants are subject to different degrees of 'communicative vulnerability' (which goes beyond being competent in the very language of interaction). So-called 'super-diversity' brings with it the inherent challenges about adhering to established assessment criteria, on the one hand, and being just and fair at the levels of performance and outcome, on the other. The multicultural/multilingual imperative can mean context sensitivity and tolerance of variability (i.e. inter-individuality) instead of marginalisation of vulnerable groups.

One position would be that the gatekeepers, like doctors and examiners, show a willingness to adapt to and tolerate differences as a way of minimising discriminatory outcomes. However, tolerance of differences in an exam setting may be a difficult proposition as such adjustments can give rise to other forms of discrimination, especially positive discrimination.

The debates surrounding multilingualism and development have to incorporate different facets of multicultural healthcare delivery, including different kinds of healthcare encounters and health literacy more generally. Health inequality as a phenomenon is common to both the developed and the developing worlds and such inequalities become more pronounced with ever-increasing migration flows, globally and locally. In super-diverse societies, the overall goal must be to maximise access/adherence and minimise the occurrence of adverse events in spite of linguistic and cultural diversity (with or without the mediating role of formal or informal interpreters).

In terms of future research trajectories in the domain of multilingualism, the first part of my title 'mind the gap' refers to non-visibility and non-transferability of research findings on two counts: across academic disciplines as well as within the academic discipline of education (that is to say language education and medical education). There is a need for building synergies amongst different domains of multilingualism research interdisciplinarily (education, healthcare, social welfare, legal institutions etc.) and for developing translational research agendas. Translational research is usually conceptualised as knowledge exchange between biomedical research and clinical practice, but this can be extended to include translation across domains of research-cum-practice, here from language education to medical education. It is important to stress that insights from research on multilingual education (e.g. participation in the classroom) have the potential to be translated into other social domains, including healthcare delivery (e.g. participation in the clinic). The wealth of research findings from genre-based and classroom-oriented studies in language education and literacy can provide points of contact for medical education, for example writing case notes, oral case presentations, use of information-seeking questions in clinical history taking, offer of explanations during diagnostic and treatment phases of a consultation etc. More specifically, the field of intercultural communication holds the possibility of informing healthcare delivery and education/training in multilingual, multicultural societies.

What role can researchers and educators prioritise in developing an interventionist agenda? What specific measures can be taken to reverse vulnerability in general, and communicative vulnerability in particular, individually and societally? A remedial focus, which requires that those who are vulnerable in institutional (and educational) settings should do something about their betterment, amounts to underscoring a deficit paradigm, almost bordering on indifference. Unlike the deficit paradigm, in embracing a difference paradigm, we can show our readiness to accept 'differences on an equal footing' as an integral part of diversity and thus assume social responsibility for existing asymmetries and inequalities in search for accommodation and understanding.

More concretely, in acknowledging the current knowledge gap, it is imperative to set out a research agenda on the focal theme of healthcare delivery in multilingual, multicultural societies. As part of this agenda-setting exercise, one has to draw particular attention to the interplay of linguistic (dis)advantages and communicative vulnerabilities in differentially mediated healthcare delivery in multilingual, multicultural societies. In the developing world there is very little applied linguistic and communication/discourse-oriented research addressing 'the everyday facts of life and death', especially in the context of mediated healthcare encounters. By contrast, in the developed world, there already exists a robust body of research in healthcare communication, particularly dealing with linguistically and culturally diverse settings, which can offer a platform to consolidate translational research. In cross-cutting the developed and the developing worlds, applied linguists and communication/discourse researchers can reassess the nature of the contribution they can make to reduce the identified gaps in knowledge-cum-practice in the domain of global and just healthcare.

Notes

[1] The following anecdotal narrative (Hywel Coleman, personal communication) in the Indonesian context underscores vulnerability at the level of health literacy: 'Over the last decade or so I have taken to occasionally accompanying "vulnerable" members of the community where I live to seek health care in state and private hospitals in Jakarta. By "vulnerable" I mean that they are poor and poorly educated or completely uneducated. Language choice per se is not much of an issue because they are mostly speakers of Betawi, a Malay dialect closely related to Bahasa Indonesia, the national language. But the biggest gap, it seems to me, is one of social class between the patients and the hospital staff, especially the doctors. The social class divide seems to have a powerful influence on the attitude of some doctors to their patients; they tend to be patronising and also uninformative: patients are not told what is wrong with them or what medication they are being given and they are not involved in decision making. In return, the patients tolerate being treated in this way because they are always treated like this by the upper middle classes. My presence tends to disrupt this 'smooth' condescending style because doctors seem to feel that they can't deal with me in the same way that they deal with their patients. So sometimes they exclude me from the consultation room and in other cases they try to talk to me in English about the case as though the patient was not present. The patients tell me that they are dealt with in a much more attentive way when I am seen to be accompanying them even if I am not allowed into the consultation room.'

[2] Transcription conventions: (.) (..) = micro-pause; (...) = nontranscribable; dc = slowing down; * = stressed syllable]; [] = overlap.

[3] Following Bateson (1972), Goffman (1974, 10-11) defines frame as 'definitions of a situation [that] are built up in accordance with principles of organisation which govern events – at least social ones – and our subjective involvement in them.'

[4] Footing is 'the alignment we take up to ourselves and the others present as expressed in the way we manage the production or reception of an utterance' Goffman (1981, 128).

[5] Contextualisation cue refers to 'any feature of linguistic form that contributes to the signalling of contextual presuppositions' (Gumperz 1982, 131).

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ENGLISH IN A MULTICULTURAL WORLD

16

Multilingualism, education, English and development: Whose development?

Ajit Mohanty

Introduction

This chapter seeks to interrogate the role of English in multilingual societies, including India, and to show that the much talked about relationship between English and development may be true for some but is questionable for many. We will begin with an analysis of the notion of development as a broad framework to examine the relationship and then look critically at the commonly held views about the divergent roles of English as a global language in different parts of the world. Based on our work on English in Indian society and education, we will analyse the processes through which English in India advantages some but disadvantages most.

The human face of development

While reduction of poverty and inequality remains a core aspect of development, in recent years, economists (e.g., Amartya Sen, Angus Deaton) have sought to project a human face of development, emphasising the need to move away from simple economic indicators of income and consumption. Development is viewed as related to human freedom, dignity, choice and participation and, more importantly, to reduction of inequality and discrimination. Welfare economist and Nobel laureate Amartya Sen views poverty as 'capability deprivation' (Sen 1985, 2001; Dreze and Sen 2002). An individual's capability is related to effective opportunities to be who he or she wants to be or to engage in chosen activities. Poverty is characterised as relative absence of capability for functioning or for engaging in pursuit of some desired outcomes (e.g., working, having some leisure, leading a life of health or being literate) and capability as 'the ultimate combinations of functioning from which a person can choose' (Dreze and Sen 2002, 35). Thus, the essence of capability is freedom to choose. Freedom is 'the range of options a person has in deciding what kind of life to lead' (Dreze and Sen 2002, 35-36). Poverty is not just absence of income, but 'unfreedom' (Sen 1985) or curtailment of capabilities. Dreze and Sen point out that any form of social discrimination leads to lack of social opportunities 'to expand the realm of human agency and freedom, both as an end in itself and as a means of further expansion of freedom' (Dreze and Sen 2002, 6). The capability approach is a powerful interdisciplinary tool to deal with issues related to poverty and well-being of marginalised communities for whom poverty is lack of agency or control over the

H. Coleman (ed.). 2017. *Multilingualisms and Development*. London: British Council. ISBN 978-0-86355-840-5

factors that determine their life chances (Robeyns 2010). Robeyns emphasises the need for analysis of the capability inputs and obstacles to realisation of capability in order to understand the problems of discrimination and marginalisation of communities. It is necessary, therefore, to ask: 'What is the most critical (and cost-effective) input to change the conditions of poverty, or rather to expand human capabilities?' (Mohanty and Mishra 2000, 265). According to Sen (1985; Dreze and Sen 2002) education and health are significant capability inputs for development. Education is an enabling factor for economic development and illiteracy is 'unfreedom' – an obstacle to realisation of capability for economic development. In the modern world, formal education[1] provides access to employment, income and economic opportunities and empowers the individual adding to social and cultural freedom and capacity for democratic participation. More recently, the works of economist and Nobel Laureate Angus Deaton (2013; Deaton and Dreze 2002) have also drawn our attention to the role of social discrimination and inequalities in economic development. Societal hierarchy, discrimination and subordination on the basis of caste, class, culture, religion and language lead to disadvantages and 'voicelessness' (Dreze and Sen 2002), which are associated with illiteracy[2] and educational failure. Dreze and Sen (2002) speak of a host of 'discouragement effects' responsible for educational backwardness of the disadvantaged communities. Such discouragement factors are associated with devaluation of languages and cultures of the indigenous, tribal, minority (ITM) communities and include alienating curricula, classroom inactivity, social discrimination in the classroom, poor teacher quality and other conditions of linguistic and cultural discrimination. Neglect of ITM children's home language in education is one of the major discouragements triggering educational failure and illiteracy, contributing to loss of freedom, capability deprivation and poverty. 'While formal education is the enabling factor for economic development, language is the enabling factor for access to quality education, and often to any school education' (Mohanty and Skutnabb-Kangas 2013, 162).

Language as a cultural capital is a critical link to education and access to social resources. In multilingual societies, languages are associated with power and hierarchy; some languages enable greater access to privileges and social opportunities and others lead to deprivation and discrimination. Under such conditions, use of languages becomes the basis for freedom, opportunities and capability development or for discrimination, denial of opportunities and constraints in realisation of capability. Examining the relationship between language, capability deprivation and poverty among the tribal language communities in India, Mohanty concludes:

> *When language becomes the basis of power, control and discrimination, socioeconomic inequality is perpetuated; the language(s) that people speak or do not speak determines their access to resources. Education is a critical factor in this relationship between language and power. The exclusion and nonaccommodation of languages in education denies equality of opportunity to learn, violates linguistic human rights, leads to the loss of linguistic diversity and triggers a vicious cycle of disadvantage perpetuating inequality, capacity deprivation and poverty.* (Mohanty 2009, 121)

The role of English in development can be analysed within this broad framework of development in terms of the relationship between languages in multilingual societies, inequality, discrimination and capability deprivation. This chapter seeks to critically engage with the most talked about relationship between English and development from this perspective.

The rhetoric of English and development

The growing craze for English all over the world is associated with the rhetoric of English and development permeating into popular perception of its significance (e.g. Focho 2011), often without any critical scrutiny. Broadly, English is projected as a global language (Graddol 2000) or a language needed for maintaining a competitive edge in a globalised world. Yet, as Coleman notes:

> *Globalisation and competitiveness are associated with a need for English and then with a need to use English as a medium of instruction, although the logical relationships between these concepts remain unclear.* (Coleman 2011, 104)

More specifically, English has been held as a tool for global economy, commerce, science and technology (Graddol 2000; Seidlhofer 2003), media, entertainment, tourism, diplomacy (Negash 2011) and international migration (Capstick 2011), particularly to UK, USA and other English-speaking countries. In the context of post-colonial multilingual societies, English (as well as other colonial languages) has been seen as a unifying language, a language of reconciliation, a link language or *lingua franca.* Kennett, team leader of a special internationally funded Performance Improvement Project in Sri Lanka with a programme of fostering 'English as a link language and a tool for conflict transformation and development' (Kennett 2011, 320), underscores the peace-keeping role of English 'for conflict-prone societies where national languages have traditionally become social and ethnic dividers' (Kennett 2011, 321). Williams (2011, 45) quotes John Mwanakatwe, Minister of Education in post-independence Zambia, on the 'inevitable' role of English:

> *Even the most ardent nationalists of our time have accepted the inevitable fact that English – ironically a foreign language and also the language of our former colonial master – has definitely a unifying role in Zambia.*

Such views are quite typical of the linguistically diverse post-colonial societies in Asia (Mohanty and Panda 2015; Panda and Mohanty 2015) and Africa (Arkorful and Adger 2015; Kamwangamalu 2015) where linguistic diversity and post-colonial tension over relative dominance of languages has led to a wide acceptance of English (and other colonial languages) as a 'neutral' language of unity amid the apparent chaos of the multilingual world.

Without going into the multiple bases of claims regarding the relationship between English and development (which seem to have moved from assertions of English as a 'global' language facilitating cross-border communication to one that actually causes or triggers development out of poverty), one can broadly discern three patterns in the academic and popular discourse in this area of study:

1. A set of beliefs and values about the potentials of English for economic transformation and development;

2. Ideological and evidence-based propositions about the nature and factors of dominance of English and its role in development; and

3. Study and analysis of any relationship between English and economic, political, educational and social development.

The repeated rhetoric of links between English and developmental opportunities gets reified in popular images, beliefs and values regarding the emancipatory power of English and facilitates transformation of the ideology of English into linguistic hegemony. There are many examples of such reification from the non-English speaking multilingual world. I will cite only two examples from India. First is the *Goddess English* in Banka village in Uttar Pradesh, sought to be worshipped for better English for emancipation of the *dalit* or downtrodden people. A bronze idol of the goddess, vaguely modelled after the Statue of Liberty, holding a pen high in her right hand and a book in the left and donning an English hat and a gown, was unveiled and worshipped in Banka village on April 30, 2010, and, following some controversies over the proposed temple site, the 'goddess' now waits for a temple to come up. Then, there are temples in India which are popular as shrines for *Visa Gods (or Visa Bhagwans,* as they are popularly called), worshipped for grant of entry permits for international migration mostly to USA, UK, Australia and other developed countries. There are, in fact, destination-specific specialised temples for visa to different countries. One such temple is Balaji Temple in Chilkur, Andhra Pradesh. The requirement of demonstrated proficiency in English as a criterion to obtain an entry permit to the UK and other countries reinforces the belief that English is a gatekeeper to a better world.

The belief in the emancipatory power of global English is a part of the popular myth rarely subjected to critical scrutiny. That the values associated with English are prejudicial and, often, lead to violation of human rights, does not seem to inform the growing craze for the language. For example, use of proficiency in English as an entry requirement prevents non-English knowing family members of immigrants from joining them in the host country and, thus, disunites families and violates human rights. But, the popular beliefs about the value of English seem to remain undeterred by such issues and unaffected by negative evidences; that in most societies there are examples of some who benefit from the privileged positioning of English weighs heavily in perpetuating the pro-English bias. The complex dynamics of the socio-political processes in multilingual societies transform these beliefs and values about the developmental role of English into 'a political imperative' (Williams 2011, 52), propelling political processes to promote English and, often, effectively subverting pro-nationalistic forces. English-for-unity is one such contrived 'political imperative' growing out of a multiplicity of linguistic identities. As social identity theorists (Reicher and Hopkins 2001) show, entrepreneurs of identity manipulate social identities to create social categories and conflicts. In multilingual contexts, identity entrepreneurship analysis suggests that entrepreneurs of linguistic identities divide a multilingual society and then promote English for unity as a political imperative. That

social cohesion is promoted by recognition of linguistic human rights and emphasis on indigenous mother tongues and not by discriminatory language policies and imposed dominance of English or any other 'global' language is often ignored. (See Coleman 2015 for several chapters subscribing to and elaborating on this view.)

The second strand in the English-and-development discourse is in respect of the dynamics of the beliefs and values regarding English, its role in development and the agency in the spread of English. Phillipson's (1992, 2009) influential work *Linguistic Imperialism* provides an exhaustive theoretical framework for analysis of the dynamics of the imperialistic spread of English and Anglo-American complicity in the same. While the linguistic imperialism theory has had a wide following, there are others who accept the spread of English as a hegemony involving 'free choice' of World Englishes without any active agent promoting the language (to serve Anglo-American interests). In what seems to be a parochial reading of colonial history, Brutt-Griffler goes to the extent of suggesting that English was not imposed on the colonies but was '*wrested from* an unwilling imperial authority as part of the struggle by them [the colonial subjects] against colonialism' (Brutt-Griffler 2002, 31). Reflecting the debate on agency in the global spread of English, Spolsky (2004) asked 'Was or did English spread?', raising a dichotomy between what he labelled as a theory of 'conspiracy' to actively impose English (through the processes of linguistic imperialism) and a mere hegemonic spread. It is revealing to note that in elaborating the theoretical foundations of linguistic imperialism, Phillipson seems to have favoured a position of hegemony seeking to examine its dynamics through analysis of British and American promotion of English while concluding that English (ELT) has '*not been promoted globally* as a result of a *master-minded plan*' (Phillipson 1992, 307; emphasis added). He perhaps anticipated this dichotomy to offer pre-emptive clarification, stating that 'hegemony does not imply a conspiracy theory, but a competing and complementary set of values and practices, with those in power better able to legitimate themselves and to convert their ideas into material power' (Phillipson 1992, 74). I will return to this question of agency in the growing influence of English in the multilingual world. But, two points need to be underscored in respect of the dichotomy between active agency and natural spread of dominant languages including English. First, the hegemony of a language like English implies that dominant ideas are usually taken for granted and, hence, search for an active agent is not needed. For example, all over the non-English speaking world, it is taken for granted that education in English is good education and wide uncritical acceptance of this proposition influences a set of practices in society and education. Further, while the dominance of English over the national and local languages in multilingual contexts is undeniable, it is also true that active imposition of English through external forces, such as the British and American promotion of English, which Phillipson (1992) documented in support of linguistic imperialism, has become more implicit and subtle, making the growing influence of English appear to be internally driven. Hegemonic ideas tend to be internalised by the dominated even if objective analysis often shows that these may not be in their best interest.

Finally, it needs to be acknowledged that the findings of studies of the relationship between English and development are not unequivocal. Demonstrations of a relationship between English and development are correlational not causal and are

context specific. In fact, at another level, as has been shown in different post-colonial societies, English can be linked to social stratification, elite formation and exclusion of masses (e.g. Kayambazinthu 1999; Heugh 1999), all of which divide more than they unite. As Williams suggests, 'Far from being a source of unity, the use of English in education in Africa has become a factor in national division, while the distribution of English proficiency in society is an indicator of the extent of this division' (2011, 44). Referring to the role of 'the superimposed international languages' in the African context, Kathleen Heugh also points out that 'these languages serve only the interests of the elites' (1999, 306). Thus, any claim of a positive role of English in development cannot be taken to be a universal phenomenon. English is not a culturally neutral medium that puts everyone on the same footing; it empowers some and disempowers many. The role of English as a lingua franca varies across class, caste, gender, geographical location, language communities, identities and other sociolinguistic contexts in multilingual societies. In India, multiple varieties are used as lingua francas by people belonging to rural-urban localities, different socio-economic and caste groups; these include regional languages, Hindi, *Hinglish* and English with underlying continuities between them. Thus, there is a need to examine the role of English in different societies, cultures and sub-cultures and qualify the observations in respect of its role in development.

In the following sections, drawing on our work in respect of English in Indian society and education, I will discuss the processes through which English in India gets situated in a position of dominance, disadvantaging the other language communities, and analyse the role of English in Indian education in perpetuating social discrimination. It will be shown that while some groups benefit from English, most do not.

English and the dynamics of hierarchy and discrimination

The hierarchy of power relations in respect of languages in multilingual societies effectively leads to deprivation of many languages in favour of the dominant ones. Two aspects of the dynamics of dominance of English are of significance in multilingual contexts and will be briefly discussed here. One is the process through which social and educational exclusion of languages leads to their cumulative impoverishment and the other relates to the emergence of social class differences in respect of the role of English as a cultural capital through early multilingual socialisation.

Prolonged socio-economic and educational neglect pushes languages out of significant domains of use, leading to their progressive impoverishment and weakness, which is used to justify further neglect. Dominant languages like English perpetuate a vicious cycle of disadvantage for the dominated languages in multilingual societies (Mohanty 2010, 2013a; Mohanty, Mishra, Reddy and Ramesh 2009), as shown in Figure 1.

The dominance of English in multilingual contexts leads to gross socio-economic and educational neglect of the indigenous or national languages which, in turn, triggers loss of their instrumental vitality and cumulative weakness. When instrumental vitality of a language is critically affected, there is a dissociation between perceived

Figure 1: The vicious circle of language disadvantage

instrumental and integrative functions of the language. In hierarchical multilingualism, English tends to take over the instrumental functions, whereas the dominated local language may continue to be viewed as necessary for integrative functions only. The indigenous tribal minority (ITM) languages, in particular, are subjected to large scale social neglect and are systematically impoverished. Continued exclusion of these languages from education and other domains is often justified by policy makers and the State on grounds of such weakness. This perpetuates the disadvantage of dominated languages in a vicious circle which, in effect, widens the gap between the dominant and the dominated languages in the power hierarchy.

Attitudes towards languages, perceptions of their vitality and relative social status and dominance are transmitted through early multilingual socialisation. Our studies in India show that children in a variety of multilingual contexts, regardless of their own multilingual proficiency, develop an awareness of multiple languages in their milieu and the social functions of these languages by about age nine, progressing through a sequence of stages (Mohanty, Panda and Mishra 1999). Children acquire a progressive awareness of the hierarchy of languages and, between seven and nine years of age, most children in India show an understanding that English is more prestigious than other languages. Processes of multilingual socialisation vary across different socio-economic classes, particularly in respect of the role of English in early socialisation (Bujorbarua 2006). Without going into the details of these studies, it can be pointed out that English is almost absent in the family level language socialisation of children from the lower socio-economic strata. The upper and middle class parents, on the other hand, employ specific socialisation strategies to orient their children to use English, mostly for scholastic achievement and individualistic self-development and tend to devalue mother tongues as languages limited only to family and limited interpersonal domains of use. To sum up, the following are some salient features of multilingual socialisation in India relevant to the present discussion:

1. Hybrid linguistic practices by upper and middle class parents (and adults) to scaffold learning of English;

2. Use of different languages for priming different orientations and identities;

3. Socialisation practices, mostly among the English-knowing upper and middle class parents, for use of English for scholastic achievement, disciplining functions and use of mother tongue (MT) for expression of nurturance, caring and personal support;

4. Use of languages for priming different orientations in self-construal (greater use of English for construction of autonomous/individualistic self and mother tongue for relational, interpersonal or collective self).

The dynamics of the vicious circle of language disadvantage and multilingual socialisation show how English is differentiated in the social macro-structure as well as in the micro-level emergence of understanding of the role and status of languages in a hierarchical sociolinguistic structure. At both the levels, English is socially placed in a manner that triggers a hierarchical order of languages. English occupies a higher status in the hierarchy compared to other dominant regional/national languages and the ITM languages. The gap between the languages located in higher and lower levels widens over time, due to cumulative disadvantage to languages with lesser power and vitality. The complex dynamics of hierarchical relations between English and other languages in multilingual societies is reflected in a double divide between English, the major national/regional languages and the ITM languages.

English and the double divide

The hierarchy of power and privileges associated with languages affects the dominated language users, their chances of upward social mobility and development of capabilities. Analysis of the language policy and practices in India and the post-colonial countries including South Asia (Mohanty 2010; Mohanty and Panda 2015; Panda and Mohanty 2015) shows two major power cleavages: one, between the dominant colonial language, English, at the top of the hierarchy and the major national/regional languages (the English-Vernacular Divide), and the second, between these national/regional languages and the ITM languages (the Vernacular-Other Divide). The double divide in hierarchical multilingualism is shown in Figure 2.

With such a double divide, the languages in the middle rung are under pressure from the language at the top of the hierarchy and are gradually pushed out of significant domains of use such as education. At the same time, these dominant national/regional languages of the middle level also exert shift pressure on the ITM languages, displacing them from the public domains of use and marginalising them in a vicious circle of disadvantage. Given the low vitality of ITM languages and the disadvantaged conditions of their speakers, the rate of domain shrinkage, marginalisation and language shift/loss is much higher for these languages compared to the languages higher up in the hierarchy. The economic value of languages, their access to privileges and instrumental benefits in multilingual societies are linked to the power of these languages which are hierarchically distributed. Ironically, in multilingual

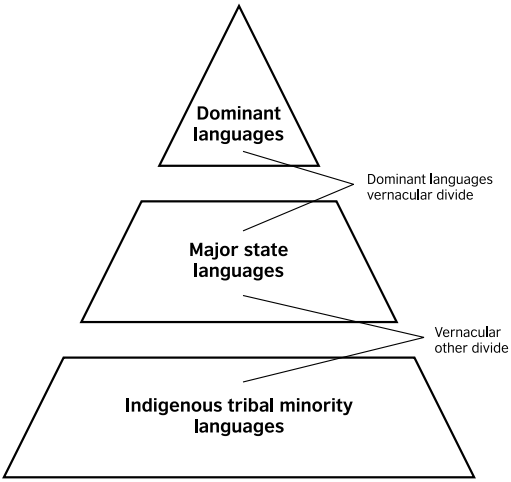

Figure 2: The double divide in multilingual societies

societies, the most powerful language usually has a relatively smaller number of users. In India, less than 0.02 per cent have English as their first language or MT and only about ten per cent know English through formal education.[3] All major regional languages of India or the languages mentioned as official languages in the VIIIth Schedule of the Constitution of India have a larger share of the population but they are less powerful than English. Over 40 per cent of school children in India are in English medium schools and the number of children in such schools is growing by over ten per cent every year.[4] One would expect the children learning in English medium schools to have an advantage over those in the vernacular medium schools, but Indian studies do not show such advantage, as we will see below. Further, there is a wide range of English medium schools varying in quality and cost. This has resulted in clear social-class differences among children in English medium schools and across all schools in India. Learning outcomes in English and vernacular medium schools are quite divergent (see 'The myth of English medium superiority' below).

From *Doon* schools to *Doom* schools: English medium schooling and the new caste system

After independence, the Indian constitution could not enforce a common system of schooling. Private, mostly English medium (EM), schools continued along with government or public schools. As a result, there is a range of private schools catering to different socio-economic levels. These schools vary in their cost and quality. Some schools, like the famous Doon School and some International Schools, are very prestigious high cost EM schools for children from super-rich elitist families. There are also good quality costly EM schools in urban centres for the upper classes. These high cost EM schools employ qualified, high salaried and competent teachers and provide a quality teaching-learning environment for the pupils. However, the lower and working class parents cannot afford the cost of these private schools. With the growing demand among the aspirational lower class parents for EM schools, there is now a large number of low cost and low quality EM schools in semi-urban, urban slum and rural areas. The quality of teaching-learning practices in these schools

is extremely poor; teachers are low-paid, lack required qualifications and teaching competence and have very low proficiency in English. Unlike the parents of the pupils in the high cost EM schools, the parents of the low cost EM schools do not have any proficiency in English and cannot afford private tuition or other support for their children's academic development; generally, in the low cost EM schools children neither learn English nor the subject matters and are doomed to failure. The EM schools in India have been labelled as ranging from '*Doon* schools to *Doom* schools' (Mohanty 2012).

The lower class families who cannot afford the fee-paying EM schools send their children to free public schools. These schools are in very large numbers and are generally poorly managed with minimal facilities and quality. The level of classroom achievement is quite low. These schools are vernacular or major state language medium schools which, in effect, offer mother tongue (vernacular) medium education to majority language children but impose submersion education in a non-MT language on ITM children (who are further disadvantaged due to the discrepancy between their home and school languages). These schools teach English as a school subject from early primary grades (mostly from Grade 1). The range of private and public schools in India, grossly categorised on the basis of the estimated quality and cost (Mohanty 2010 and subsequent analyses), is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Range of private and public schools in India: From Doon schools to Doom schools

Type of school	Approximate cost
1. Exclusive elitist EM residential schools (e.g. Doon School)	US$ 20,000 per annum
2. High-cost EM schools for the privileged class	US$ 2,000–6,000 per annum
3. Low-cost EM schools for the less privileged class	US$ 100–400 per annum
4. No-cost VM government schools for the poor 4.a) MT medium for regional majority language groups 4.b) Non-MT for ITM language groups	Free (with midday meal in primary grades)

Key: EM = English medium; MT = mother-tongue; ITM = indigenous tribal majority; VM = vernacular medium

It should be pointed out that these broad categories of schools are neither exhaustive nor mutually exclusive; within each category there are variations and there are also schools which fall in between the major categories.

English medium schools and the role of English in public and private schools have led to a new *caste* system in India. Examples of the working of this new 'caste' system can be found in the matrimonial columns in newspapers. There are solicitations of caste-

based marriage proposals and also many which solicit a bride educated in 'English medium' schools. Further, with English medium schools of various kinds, we have school divides corresponding to social divides as shown in Figure 3.

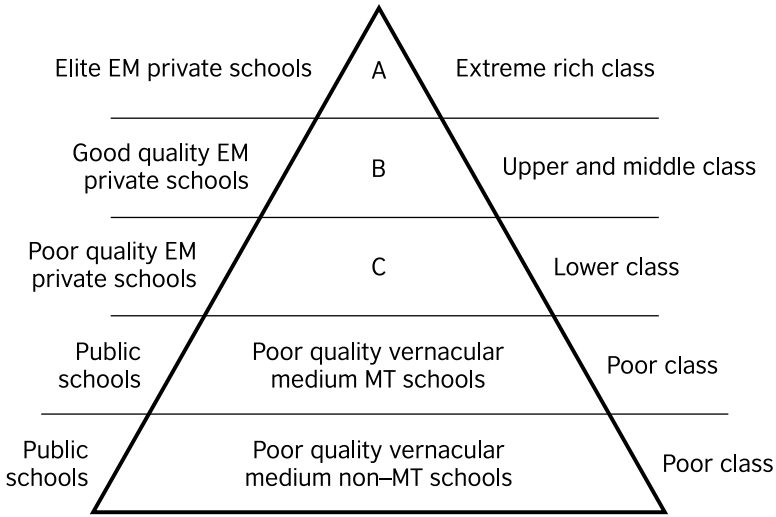

Figure 3: English, schooling and social class in India

As noted earlier, the private schools are fee paying schools varying in their quality and cost and catering to different social strata. In Figure 3, the three broad types of private schools are labelled A, B and C corresponding to different socio-economic levels. The poor who cannot afford even the cheapest of the English medium schools send their children to public or government schools which are major regional mother tongue language schools for most children and non-mother tongue schools for ITM children.

It should be pointed out that English is a school language and not a home language for school children in India (except for a negligible minority from English MT homes). However, the parents who send their children to good quality EM schools belong to upper and middle classes and, as pointed out, language socialisation practices in their homes usually provide a considerable degree of early attitudinal and proficiency development support to children both before and after they join school. The children who join low-cost EM schools and public schools are from lower and poor classes. Their parents have little proficiency in English; socialisation practices in their homes do not provide any support for English literacy. Thus, the nature and implications of the language barrier for development of English literacy is quite divergent across the social classes. All children have the task of negotiating the home language and school English barrier. But the upper class children with their home-based support have an early advantage in respect of English, whereas the poor and lower class ones do not have any such support. Teachers and children in private EM and public vernacular medium (VM) schools need to negotiate the language divides in the teaching-learning

of English in schools (as a medium of teaching-learning in EM schools and as a school subject in VM schools) with or without home-based support for English. While the majority language children and their teachers need to negotiate the English-Vernacular divide in the classrooms, for ITM children both English-Vernacular and Vernacular-Other divides have to be negotiated. The contexts of English literacy development are quite complex and the nature of school practices divergent.

Negotiating the language barrier: School practices in teaching English

As indicated, almost all the private schools in India are English medium schools whereas the Government schools teach English only as a language subject. We have undertaken studies (Mohanty, Panda and Pal 2010; Pal Kapoor and Panda 2016 and ongoing studies) of school and classroom practices in respect of English and negotiation of the language barriers that children face in the schools. High cost EM schools have distinct westernised/Anglicised culture (material and non-material), values and school practices. All classroom transactions are in English and children are not allowed to use their mother tongues in schools and are encouraged to use English even outside the school. Parental support for teaching of English as well as school subjects in English is expected and obtained. Parents support teaching of and in English through their own efforts, private tuition, coaching and other devices, including the availability of additional books and reading materials. In contrast, poor quality English medium schools only appear to be English medium in a formal/declared sense; most of the classroom transactions and children's mutual conversations are in their MT. There are deliberate attempts by the schools to introduce cosmetic Anglicisation: English prayers in chorus, a welcoming 'Good Morning' routine in chorus (often even when one visits late in the afternoon) and western school uniforms (usually including a tie and shoes) modelled after more prestigious EM schools. The text books are in English, which the teachers read in the class, usually one sentence at a time, and translate into the children's MT. The key English words in the text are spoken aloud and drilled in question-answer format. Classroom transactions are nativised and hybridised and there is unrestricted use of non-English languages or MTs even in teaching English (see Mohanty, Panda and Pal 2010 for details of classroom practices). Class examinations avoid questions which would require pupils to write sentences or long answers; usually a multiple choice format is preferred. Parents do not know English and cannot afford private tuition. Teachers are also poor in English.

Teaching English is very different in schools with large proportions of tribal children. Our observations (reported in Mohanty, Panda and Pal 2010) in public/government vernacular (Odia) medium primary schools with Kond (Kui MT) and Saora (Saora MT) tribal children in Odisha (India) revealed a considerable dilution of emphasis in teaching English as a school subject (from Grade 3 onwards) and also very poor English proficiency among the teachers. In these classrooms, teachers read from the English textbook a single word or a sentence at a time and immediately translate or elaborate the same in simple Odia. The teachers occasionally use Kui or Saora, the home language of the tribal children, if they happen to know the language (but, not many teachers know tribal languages). The classroom transactions are characterised

by choral practices and drilling to have children memorise the English letters of the alphabet and numbers in sequence, some textbook words and conversational routines ('What is your name?', 'What is your father's name?' etc) in English[5]. Learning to write English mostly involves copying letters of the alphabet, with each child tracing each letter repeatedly on his or her writing board while the names of the letters are spoken aloud; later, the children copy some words from those written on the blackboard. Evidently, the teachers in these schools make symbolic efforts to meet the curricular requirement for English without any serious attempt at teaching and learning of a foreign language. Lack of substantive learning targets is reflected in their casual assessment of pupils' learning of English. One of the teachers for Kui-speaking Kond children told us (in Odia, translated here):

> *Sir, these children do not even understand Odia. What English will they understand? We somehow manage by using sometimes Kui and sometimes Odia. Luckily they are not failed if they fail in English.*

It seems that the teachers prioritise negotiating the Vernacular-Other divide, deferring negotiation of English.

The processes of teaching-learning of English are quite divergent across the different types of private EM schools and public VM schools which differ in respect of how English is placed in the school programme, the quality and competence in teaching, the nature of classroom practices and pupils' readiness for learning English with different patterns of socialisation and support for English in their homes. As expected, the outcomes of school learning of English are also very different. The poor parents who send their children to government VM schools (mostly because they cannot afford the cost of EM schools) seem to be reconciled to the prospects of poor English achievement by their children in these schools. Besides, most of the children in these schools show some basic classroom learning achievement particularly in different subject areas taught in a language with which they are familiar. The fee-paying pupils in the poor quality EM schools are subjected to poor quality teaching in a language for which they get minimal school support and almost no home based support. Thus, EM schools teach some and fail others.

Consideration of the quality of EM schooling and the educational cost to the parents raises a pertinent question: 'Whom do English medium schools teach and whom do they cheat?'. The above analysis of how English is transacted in different types of schools – the Doon schools and the Doom Schools (the majority language schools for tribal children) – suggests the obvious. The poor quality, low cost English medium schools do not and cannot teach English, or, for that matter, other subject matters. Parents in India spend approximately five to ten per cent of their income[6] to meet the cost of private English medium schools. The expenditure of parents from lower strata in terms of percentage of income is indeed higher than their high strata counterparts who also spend a lot more on home based support. But, the burden of expenditure is huge for the lower strata parents sending their children to EM schools where they do not get the returns they expect and are cheated. It is not uncommon for children from lower income families to struggle through ten years of EM schooling with internal assessment in the school showing adequate achievement and, then,

fail the common high school examination; their parents feel cheated but it is too late for them and their children. The poor parents sending their children to low cost EM schools do spend a substantial portion of their family income for education in English. However, their children do not get the expected quality of education. The upper class parents pay high school costs for the good quality EM education which their children seem to receive from the schools (with a lot of home-based support from the parents). The commercial private EM schools, which cater to the upper class offering high cost and quality education, teach the upper class children, whereas those offering low cost education cheat the poor with low quality ineffective education. The interaction between parental socio-economic status, quality of EM schooling and children's academic achievement brings the popular perception of the superiority of EM schooling into question.

The myth of English medium superiority

English medium schools are in great demand because of the popular belief that they are better schools. However, studies comparing children from EM schools with those from MT medium schools in different parts of India (Mohanty 1990, 2003; Nayak 2007; Sema 2008; Srivastava 1990; etc) show that, when the quality of schooling and the socio-economic status of the parents are controlled, mother tongue medium children perform better than their EM counterparts in measures of academic achievement, understanding of the science and maths concepts and skills in language use. Studies among the Bodo children in Assam (Panda and Mohanty 2011; Saikia and Mohanty 2004) also show that Bodo children in Bodo medium schools perform better than their Bodo counterparts in Assamese or English medium schools. In a study by Patra (2000), Grade 6 and 8 Odia medium children with late (Grade 4) entry into learning English as a school subject were compared with the corresponding grade EM children who had studied in English from Grade 1. MT medium children showed poorer English reading, writing and comprehension skills compared to their English medium counterparts at Grade 6 level. But, in Grade 8, the two groups did not differ in the measures of proficiency in English (except verbal fluency). The MT medium children who learnt English only from Grade 4 took four years to catch up with their English medium counterparts who learnt English from Grade 1. It seems, then, that when children learn through their MT and then learn English later, they learn English at a faster rate and, in about four years, achieve the same level of competence in English as the English medium children. Early development of mother tongue proficiency in schools comes at no cost to effective learning of English and other languages at a later point in schools, as Cummins (1984, 2009, etc) has suggested in his Linguistic Interdependence Theory. Indian studies as well as many from Africa (including the major Ethiopian study) and other parts of the world (see Heugh and Skutnabb-Kangas 2010) show that education in the MT is more effective than education in English or other unfamiliar languages. The belief in the superiority of English medium education is a myth perpetuated due to the confounding effects of quality of schooling and socio-economic status differences in how education in English is supported in the home environment of the pupils; while children from upper classes get the advantage in EM schools, those from the lower classes are clearly disadvantaged. The belief in the significance of English in education and development is socially constructed (Ryan 2009).

Whose development does English promote?

We return to the main concern of this discussion: 'Whom does English education benefit?'. The upper and middle class parents and their children, who already have a lot of material, attitudinal and socialisation support for English, get more and the poorer ones, who do not have such support, get less of the benefits. In his analysis of the Matthew effect in English language education in Indonesia, Lamb (2011) discusses some processes through which learners' socio-economic background influences learning of English. According to Lamb, socio-economic conditions and cultural capital nurtured through early education and home environment ensure that some learners benefit more from English language education than others with the gap between the advantaged and the disadvantaged increasing over time spent on education for English. The social class and rural-urban differences in school learning are also found to increase over the number of years of schooling, showing what some Indian researchers call the 'broom-stick' phenomenon (see Mohanty and Misra 2000), i.e. the widening gap between the poor and the rich, rural and urban children in terms of English competence. The evidence presented in this analysis as well as the Matthew effect studies elsewhere show that English benefits the already English-rich (through early socialisation practices and home support) more than the English-poor and the gap between them increases progressively.

A large number of disadvantaged children, whose parents aspire for a better future for their children through the emancipatory effects of education in English, end up with poor English and low academic competence. They do not get the promised benefits and continue to have limited opportunities despite their education in 'English medium' schools. Soon after independence, India's first Prime Minister Nehru was concerned about discrimination between the 'English knowing caste' in India and the masses. Now there are English knowing sub-castes in India, differentiated on the basis of the level of competence in English: those with excellent English, average English and poor English distributed over different English knowing sub-castes. Whose development does English promote?

English has been called a 'killer language', a tag which it earns on two counts: first, learning of English early in schools has subtractive effects on children's MT and, second, expansion of English has adversely affected linguistic diversity. But it does not have to be so. English can contribute to being a part of the multilingual mosaic of the postcolonial societies. English has been accepted as a part of the multilingual world view and openness in many societies; it must grow along with societal multilingualism and not at its cost. Multilingual societies need an egalitarian language policy perspective which can effectively prevent assignment of greater priorities to some languages over others. It needs to be recognised that, in multilingual societies like India, the learning of English must necessarily be based on a strong foundation of well-developed mother tongue for additive multilingual proficiency. In other words, English language teaching-learning needs to be relocated in the framework of mother-tongue-based multilingual education (Mohanty 2013b). Elaborate discussion on this framework is beyond the scope of the present discussion, but, it needs to be pointed out that experimental programmes of MT based multilingual education (MLE) in two states (Odisha and Andhra Pradesh) in India and our 'MLE Plus' programme

(Mohanty and Panda 2007; Panda and Mohanty 2009) have shown some initial success in fostering better classroom participation and achievement and learning of English (see Mohanty 2010; Mohanty and Panda 2015; and Panda and Mohanty 2014, for details; see also Manocha and Panda 2017 and Nag 2017 in this volume).

Conclusion

Questions about the choice of English and its role in development in multilingual societies are complex. On the basis of our work on English, education and multilingualism in India, I have sought to highlight the divergent practices, outcomes and concerns in respect of the choice of English and its role in education for capability development in different social groups. Analysis of the underlying processes in the spread of English raises several issues regarding external imposition of English on post-colonial and multilingual societies and internal choice from within these societies. Attributing external agency in the growing role and significance of English in multilingual societies and education in these societies has been seen as undermining the freedom of language users to choose. Progressively the process of expansion of English seems to have become implicit, appearing to be almost autonomous or agent-less. The movement from explicit forces of linguistic imperialism and English ideology to implicit and autonomous choice of English in post-colonial multilingual societies reinforces the hegemony of English. It seems the hegemonic and dominant positioning of English in these societies is a result of progressive internalisation of the role and significance of English by the dominated people and their languages even if most do not benefit from English in education and society. The Goddess of English is a symbol of such internalisation and uncritical acceptance of the dominance of English.

Whatsoever may be the nature of agency, the choice of English as a dominant language of development is perhaps an imposed but internalised imperative that benefits some and disadvantages many. There is a need to look critically at the role of English in different societies, cultures and sub-cultures, particularly since the effects of English are quite divergent across different layers of the society. The common users of languages do have freedom to choose between the indigenous mother tongues, dominant regional/national languages and English; but for a free choice to exist and to be exercised there have to be viable alternatives and full information, knowledge and understanding of the implications of such a choice. Otherwise, the choice of English is like that of a visually handicapped person who 'chooses' to walk right through a red light. Is such a choice informed? Is it free and is it desirable? That is the question which each one of us in multilingual societies must ask and answer for our own and for the common good.

Notes

[1] Often only formal education is seen as 'education' whereas most of our effective life skills are developed through informal education, mostly in the family and the community. Any assumption that formal education is a superior process and has greater legitimacy is uncalled for and biased (see Mohanty and Skutnabb-Kangas 2013).

[2] Depiction of people in oral cultures without formal education as 'illiterate' is biased; it raises an undue comparison between what some people have (e.g. literacy of the 'literates') and

some others do not have ('illiteracy' as absence of literacy among people from oral cultures). In our view (see Mohanty and Skutnabb-Kangas 2013), it is more appropriate to speak of people as *orate* and *literate* in terms of their dominant patterns of proficiency in language and communication.

[3] The 2011 Census of India (www.censusindia.gov.in) shows that out of the total population of 1,210,569,573, the number of persons declaring English as their mother tongue is 226,449. The most common estimate of English knowing people in India (including those who can speak it as their first language) is ten per cent of the population. However, there is a wide variation in the level of proficiency among these people; the number of people who use English to communicate is much lower.

[4] The figure of 40 per cent is a projected figure for 2016-2017. In 2013-2014, 34.30 per cent of elementary level children and 37.01 per cent of high school students were in private schools (almost all of which are English medium), as reported in Ministry of Human Resource Development figures placed in Parliament (*Indian Express*, Delhi, 21 December 2015). The estimate of ten per cent annual growth in the number of students in English medium schools is based on the fact that numbers nearly doubled from 15 million in 2008-2009 to over 29 million in 2013-2014 (*Times of India*, Delhi, 28 September 2015). The growth rate of students in English medium schools during this period was particularly high in Hindi-speaking states; for example, in Uttar Pradesh it increased by 1,000 per cent and in Bihar by 4,700 per cent.

[5] In one of the classrooms that I visited all the children responded to the question 'What is your father's name?' saying in chorus, 'My father's name is Dhani.' Apparently the teacher had given them a model answer (with *Dhani* as a name) which all the children memorised through repeated drilling without any understanding.

[6] In 2012 the author conducted an informal survey of 40 parents from Delhi and Odisha belonging to different social strata and sending their children to different types of EM schools to find out the proportion of income spent as school costs for each child. The actual amount that is paid as acknowledged school *fees* is relatively low, but parents have to pay much more for a variety of other funds related to 'developmental activities' in the school.

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17

English in multilingual India: Promise and illusion[1]

A. Giridhar Rao

Introduction

In 1938, Gandhi had the following to say about English-medium education:

> *Up to the age of 12 all the knowledge I gained was through Gujarati, my mother tongue. I knew then something of Arithmetic, History and Geography. Then I entered a High school. For the first three years the mother tongue was still the medium. But the school-master's business was to drive English into the pupil's head. Therefore more than half of our time was given to learning English and mastering its arbitrary spelling and pronunciation. It was a painful discovery to have to learn a language that was not pronounced as it was written. It was a strange experience to have to learn the spelling by heart ... However, for the first three years, it was comparatively plain sailing.*
>
> *The pillory began with the fourth year. Everything had to be learnt through English – Geometry, Algebra, Chemistry, Astronomy, History and Geography. The tyranny of English was so great that even Sanskrit or Persian had to be learnt through English, not through the mother tongue. If any boy spoke in the class in Gujarati which he understood, he was punished. It did not matter to the teacher if a boy spoke bad English which he could neither pronounce correctly nor understand fully. Why should the teacher worry? His own English was by no means without blemish. It could not be otherwise. English was as much a foreign language to him as to his pupils. The result was chaos. We the boys had to learn many things by heart, though we could not understand them fully and often not at all ... I know now that what I took four years to learn of Arithmetic, Geometry, Algebra, Chemistry and Astronomy, I should have learnt easily in one year, if I had not to learn them through English but Gujarati. My grasp of the subjects would have been easier and clearer. My Gujarati vocabulary would have been richer. I would have made use of such knowledge in my own home. This English medium created an impassable barrier between me and the members of my family, who had not gone through English schools ... I was fast becoming a stranger in my own home. I certainly became a superior person. Even my dress began to undergo imperceptible changes. What happened to me was not*

H. Coleman (ed.). 2017. *Multilingualisms and Development*. London: British Council. ISBN 978-0-86355-840-5

> *an uncommon experience. It was common to the majority ... High schools were schools for cultural conquest by the English. The knowledge gained by the three hundred boys of my high school became a circumscribed possession. It was not for transmission to the masses.* (Gandhi 1938 (1999), 279-80)

In a brief two paragraphs, Gandhi presents a diagnosis that is as valid today as it was in 1938. A mother-tongue medium education facilitates learning; English-medium teaching makes learning difficult for most Indian students; and English-medium schooling creates a separate class of citizens. Nevertheless, English is widely perceived today as the great enabler for social mobility.

However, in thinking about language and exclusion in the Indian education system, we need to broaden Gandhi's definition of a 'foreign medium'. For children of Indigenous Peoples, linguistic minorities, and speakers of dialects not considered the 'standard language', the language of the textbook and the school might well be the 'foreign medium'. So, before we look at issues of language and exclusion in relation to English-medium education in India, let us see four other contexts: some narratives about the language hierarchies in this deeply unequal society; the education situation of the Indigenous Peoples; of children in rural India going to government schools; and of those going to low-fee private schools.

Language, caste and exclusion

In India (and in the South Asian region, generally), livelihood and social mobility arguments for English are one part of the story. Another part of the story in these societies emerges from caste-based discrimination, still a daily reality for many. See Kumar (2016) for a recent account of the everyday-ness of caste-based discrimination in higher education in India.

Unsurprisingly, languages too are deployed to maintain and reproduce caste inequalities. Institutionally (through the education and legal systems, for example) and culturally (through mass media and the film industries, for example), some dialects are valorised as 'standard languages' while others are deprecated as mere – even 'impure' – dialects. Evidence for those rigid hierarchies and discrimination abounds in writings in various genres by Dalits, religious and linguistic minorities, and women in many Indian languages over the last several decades. Here are two examples to get a sense of how language hierarchies function within caste and gender-based discrimination.

In a poem called 'From Those Stubs, Steel Nibs are Sprouting ...', the Telugu poet Sikhamani (2013) recalls becoming aware about caste discrimination:

> *When in literary discussions*
> *my two brahmin friends found*
> *my language inept –*
> *my suspicion came home to stay.*

And later in the poem, someone asks,

> *'Is Sikhamani SC?*
> *I mistook him for OC*[2] *–*
> *judging by his poetic sensibility.'*

And the poet observes,

> *This distinguished person's*
> *thoughtless compliment*
> *hardens my suspicion.*
> *I cringe at his confidence that only*
> *a certain caste can write poetry.*

Speaking of his 'steel nib' as a sword, Sikhamani menacingly concludes in Telugu, 'It has just changed hands / and no longer recognizes you. / No Manu[3] to save you now!'

Marathi is another literary tradition with a vibrant body of 'writing from the margins'. In 'The story of my 'Sanskrit'', Kumud Pawde describes her even greater 'transgression': 'That a woman from a caste that is the lowest of the low should learn Sanskrit, and not only that, also teach it – is a dreadful anomaly to a traditional mind' (Pawde 1992, 110). As she reports:

> *All sorts of indirect efforts were systematically made to prevent me from learning Sanskrit. 'You won't be able to manage. There will be no one at home to help you. Sanskrit is very difficult,' etc., etc. But I was firm as a rock.* (Pawde 1992, 116)

At university, she encounters the head of the department,

> *a scholar of all-India repute. He didn't like my learning Sanskrit, and would make it clear that he didn't. And he took a malicious delight in doing so. The sharp claws of his taunts left my mind wounded and bleeding. In a way, I had developed a terror of this great pundit. His manner of speaking was honeyed and reasonable, but filled with venom.* (Pawde 1992, 119)

Even as she appears for job interviews, the taunts do not stop:

> *In other places, the moment I had been interviewed and stepped out of the room, there would be a burst of derisive laughter. I would hear words like sharp needles: 'So now even these people are to teach Sanskrit! Government Brahmins, aren't they?' And the ones who said this weren't even Brahmins, but so-called reformers from the lower castes, who considered themselves anti-Brahmin, and talked of the heritage of Jyotiba Phule, and flogged the mass of the lower castes for their narrow caste-consciousness. And yet they found it distasteful that a girl from the Mahar caste, which was one of the lower castes, should teach Sanskrit.* (Pawde 1992, 120-121)

This then is the other part of the story of English in India: English holds the promise for Dalits and other socially excluded groups to bypass the rigid linguistic hierarchies in the other Indian languages. The emancipatory potential of English must be seen in the context of this anti-Dalit discrimination and the cultural politics of Dalit writing in various Indian languages. African-American writing (in English) was an inspiration for Dalit writing. In a discussion on Dalit literature at one of the colleges set up by Dr Ambedkar, the leader of the Dalits, 'a couple of scholars said that it should be revolutionary literature, a literature that takes us forward, a literature like that of America's Black people' (Mukherjee 2009). The dramatic declaration of English as 'the Dalit Goddess' represents an attempt to create an 'alternative hegemony' that can challenge both traditional linguistic hierarchies as well as the elite appropriation of English (see Mukherjee 2009 for other deluded hopes of English functioning as a language for the masses).

Indigenous Peoples

Literacy among the Indigenous Peoples (called 'Adivasis' or 'tribals' or 'Scheduled Tribes' [ST] in India) has risen from 8.5 per cent in 1961 to 59 per cent in 2011. This is a significant increase, but still far from the country's overall literacy rate of 73 per cent. Female literacy among the Adivasis in 2011 was 49.4 per cent. The reasons are not far to seek. These are people subjected to multiple deprivations: habitat loss, forced displacement, discrimination and cultural devaluation. They are equally poorly served by the education system. There is an acute shortage of teachers. Contractual (and poorly qualified) teachers are often seen as a solution. Given that many teachers in Adivasi schools are not local residents, teacher absenteeism is high. Many teachers are also not Adivasis themselves and often bring various prejudices against the students to the classroom. Further, even when teachers and students share the same language, the language of the textbook may be different. One result is that hardly any Adivasi community receives education in the mother tongue. Confronted with such systemic, cultural and linguistic barriers, it is not surprising that the drop-out rate is high: by Class V, 35.6 per cent of Adivasi children drop out; by Class X, 70.9 per cent drop out (Ministry of Tribal Affairs 2013, 179). Indeed, activists say this should not be called drop-out; it should be called push-out. As if this language barrier between mother tongue and the regional language was not enough, the education system expects Adivasi children to learn English as well. The children thus must overcome a 'double divide'. (For more on this phenomenon, see Mohanty 2017.)

The mainstream poor

How do the rest of rural India's children fare in education? Not so well, it turns out. India's crisis in learning has been meticulously documented since 2005 by the Annual Status of Education Reports, a citizen-led survey of about 600,000 children. (See Banerji 2017 and, for an example, ASER 2015.) These surveys test reading and arithmetic skills in every district of rural India. As their website explains, 'Children in the age group 5-16 are tested in basic reading and basic arithmetic. The same test is administered to all children. The highest level of reading tested corresponds to what is expected in [Standard] 2; in 2012 this test was administered in 16 regional languages' (www.asercentre.org/Survey).

The survey finds that in 2014, in rural India, only 48 per cent of enrolled students in the fifth grade are able to read a grade two text. That is, 52 per cent are not able to do even that. Over half of the children are at least three grade levels behind where they should be. Further, this is a declining trend: 59 per cent of students were able to do this task in 2007. Even in India's best-performing state, Himachal Pradesh (75 per cent), nearly a quarter of the children are three years behind (ASER 2015).

In fact, Himachal Pradesh and Tamil Nadu were the only states from India that participated in an international comparison, the 2009 PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) test. The test compared 15-year-old boys and girls from 74 countries and territories in mathematics, science and reading; India was 73rd. The report concluded that 'the 15-year-old student populations in Tamil Nadu-India and Himachal Pradesh-India were estimated to have among the lowest reading literacy levels of the PISA 2009 and PISA 2009+ participants with more than 80 per cent of students below the baseline of proficiency. Around one-fifth of students in these economies are very poor readers' (Walker 2011, 22; also see Pritchett 2012).[4]

Low-fee private schools: Are they the answer?

Whether in rural or urban environments, there are many household factors that contribute to a child's learning: parents' educational levels (especially the mother's); parental involvement in education; family income; and paid, private tuition. As the ASER 2009 report notes, once those factors are controlled for, the contribution of private schools to the child's learning seems negligible in many states: 'the learning differential between government and private schools falls drastically … from 20 per cent to a measly 5 per cent' (ASER 2010).

A report from the Azim Premji Foundation (APF) goes even further. The report, *Private Schools Are No Panacea*, suggests that 'contrary to popular perceptions, private schools are not adding value as compared to government schools to the children in the main subjects' (APF 2013, 15; see also the entry in my blog (Rao 2016) for 4 July 2014). Previous analyses like ASER (2009) ask the rhetorical question: 'Are private schools really performing better than government schools?' and their answer is 'no'.

APF's School Choice study follows a different methodology (Karopady 2014). Government school children in 180 villages in Andhra Pradesh were offered a scholarship in the form of a voucher to study in a Telugu-medium or an English-medium private (fee-paying) school if they wished to. Then the three groups – the scholarship children in private schools, the non-scholarship children in private schools and children in government schools – were all evaluated over the five year period 2008-2013.

Analysis of five years of test data shows that the scholarship children in private schools (who voluntarily shifted to private schools) perform no better than their counterparts in government schools in Telugu, English, mathematics and environmental science. This observation over five years implies that private schools have not added any significant value to the learning achievement of these children. Indeed, the data suggest that those who shifted to English-medium private schools performed significantly worse in both mathematics and Telugu compared to those

who shifted to Telugu-medium private schools (Muralidharan 2013). That is, the persistent illusion of English as the path to a 'better education' once again turns out to be false. But parents of the scholarship children in private schools indicate that they are happy with the private schools. The APF report concludes that 'parents are possibly evaluating school outcomes on softer factors like uniforms, discipline, attendance in school (both of children and teachers) and social standing in the community' (and this is no doubt that much truer of those who sent their children to English-medium private schools).

What about our elite schools?

In 2011, Educational Initiatives and the IT company Wipro together published *Quality Education Study* (QES), a study of 89 'top schools' (as the report called them) – all urban-Indian, and English-medium. It concluded that the performance of class 4 students was 'below international average.' However, Indian students catch up in the eighth grade, 'mainly due to their higher achievement in procedural questions (i.e. questions that require straightforward use of techniques or learnt procedures to arrive at the answers)' (EI-Wipro 2011, 8).

This study also compared students in these schools to an earlier study (conducted by the same organizations). As in the ASER reports (noted above), 'learning levels were found to be significantly lower than what was observed in 2006 in the same schools tested and on the same questions.' The fall was highest in mathematics and English. The study comments: 'our top schools don't promote conceptual learning in students. QES results show that there has been a further drop from the already unsatisfactory levels of 2006' (EI-Wipro 2011, 8).

However, the ASER reports as well as the QES and APF studies indicate that it is not easy to convince communities that English-medium education and private schools do not automatically mean better learning. A panel at the 2015 Language & Development Conference debated the proposition 'English medium instruction does not bring the benefits that people expect' (LDC 2015). A follow-up challenge is to find ways of communicating research results to communities and policy-makers.

Just one in five of the Indian students who finish ten years of schooling enters college. But given the quality of education that this student has had, it is not surprising that he or she struggles – not least with English, the medium of higher education in India. But, as one researcher notes, 'It is a familiar fact of Indian higher education that while the mandated medium of instruction is English, the default language of the classroom is the local one' (Niranjana 2013, 14).

In sum, English has certainly benefitted the already privileged, i.e. those economically well off and those with a tradition of formal education in the family (as indeed elsewhere in the world: see Brock-Utne 2017). However, for the vast majority of Indian students, English promises much but delivers little. In a country with increasing inequalities, English has become a source of social division and exclusion, thereby undermining the social justice agenda of education in a democracy. Besides, India is heavily invested in integrating into the global corporate economy. Aspirations, especially among the young, are soaring.

Thus, for both the health of India's democracy and in order to realistically prepare a workforce for a modern world, India needs urgent measures to resist and relativise the hegemony of English. English needs to be learnt well but learnt additively (not subtractively at expense of the other languages of the learner). Further, English must remain a part (but only a part) of the country's multilingual ecology. Indeed, as we have seen, for the vast majority of students in India, it is the education in the mother-tongue that needs to be strengthened. And for those whose school and home languages are different, the education system must respond at multiple levels: from making available multilingual learning materials, to training teachers in multilingual pedagogy, to making classrooms multilingual. And these responses will have to be tailored for particular local contexts. As Lachman Khubchandani wisely reminds us, 'when dealing with plural societies, we shall do well to realise the risks involved in *uniform* solutions' (Khubchandani 2001, 43).

Notes

[1] An earlier version of this presentation appears in Rao 2016.

[2] SC is 'scheduled caste', the official designation for 'Dalit'. As part of affirmative action, SC candidates have seats and jobs reserved in government and government-funded institutions. Upper castes belong to the 'Other Castes' or 'Open Category' (OC).

[3] The mythical author of the classical text *Laws of Manu* that legitimises caste discrimination.

[4] There are, of course, difficulties in drawing general conclusions from standardised achievement tests (see Popham 1999, for instance). However, in India's case, several sources identify the problems with the education system.

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18

Learning English in a low-cost semi-urban English-medium school in India: Challenges, interaction patterns and domains of use

Padmini Boruah

The background: English as a medium of instruction on the rise

In India, meeting Education for All (EFA) goals has been a national enterprise, with the central government creating specific policies and specialised agencies such as the *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* (SSA, Programme for Universalisation of Elementary Education) and the *Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan* (RMSA, Programme for Universalisation of Secondary Education), and scaling up teacher education efforts to meet the needs of the newly enrolled student population. The thrust in policy development, curricular innovations, assessment systems and implementation, however, has been towards enrolling and retaining students in government schools; the vast numbers of English-medium schools that have seen a parallel increase in enrolment have largely been ignored.

Many parents in India – in both rural and urban contexts – are trying to provide their children with what they perceive as a more privileged head start in life: an 'English-medium' education. In Assam, as in the rest of India, there has been a rush to educate children in English-medium schools with the hope that this will make them proficient users of English and prepare them adequately for higher education and career building. Till recently an unaffordable dream, English-medium education (EME) through schools with English as the medium of instruction (EMI) is now considered both a privilege and a necessity, and a way out of poverty and social exclusion, especially by the lower middle class and working class population. A 2012 District Information System for Education (DISE) report showed that the number of children enrolled in 2010-2011 in EMI schools at primary level had risen to more than 2 crores (20 million), which is a 274 per cent rise since 2003-2004 (Mehta 2012). A random glance at state figures also confirms this: the number of EMI schools in the southern state of Karnataka, for example, increased from 6,033 in 2006-2007 to 10,647 in 2012-2013(Mehta 2013). In Assam, where my study is based, there are over seventy English medium schools in the capital city Guwahati itself.

In this chapter I discuss the attitudes to English and EMI in India and how these inform the learning of English in low cost English medium schools. A brief description of the

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context of my study follows, where I draw a profile of the school in which I conducted my modest study together with its teachers and students. I then discuss in detail the nature of my investigation and the observations I made on language behaviour both inside and outside the classroom. I end the chapter by listing a few (preliminary) conclusions that I have been able to draw from my interaction with the subject group (primary students from Classes I through to IV).

Attitudes to English in India

Even a cursory look at the Indian education context reveals that the growing preference for beginning literacy in EMI schools is an outcome of the perceived significance of English in people's lives. EME has always been an unquestioned choice of upper and upwardly mobile households; an increasing number of lower middle class and working class families are now beginning to see it as a platform for success in life. Interest in EME is intrinsically related to perceptions about the role of English in the lives of Indians. Among other things, English is seen to play an important role in 'increasing employability, facilitating international mobility (migration, tourism, studying abroad), unlocking development opportunities and accessing crucial information, and acting as an impartial language' (Coleman 2011, 20).

Traversing a long journey since India's independence in 1947, English is no longer viewed as the language of dominion, but as a tool with 'transformative power' (Graddol 2010,124). Neither is it considered a foreign language; rather, it has entrenched itself into the very fabric of social engagement. From being considered a hegemonic instrument perpetuating the exclusion of 'natives' from the corridors of power, English has become a means of inclusion (Graddol 2010), encouraging a discourse where marginalised sections of society are able to express their hope for more participation in nation and wealth building.English has also become a symbol of people's aspirations for quality in education (NCERT 2006). In addition, in the multilingual and multicultural social milieu, English has become the lingua franca for people from different states (especially the southern states and North East India), as an alternative to Hindi, the much debated 'national' language. Unlike Hindi, however, English enjoys a prestige as the language of higher education, and as a 'neutral' language, carrying no burden of regional, ethnic, cultural and linguistic bias.

Attitudes to English as medium of instruction and how it is implemented

In the context of the ways in which English has entrenched itself into the Indian milieu, acceptance of English as a language of opportunity and upward mobility has manifested itself in quite conflicting ways in people's attitudes towards EMI. While there exist strong feelings about the benefits of an English medium education, there remains an equally strong opinion about the detrimental effect on home languages and cultures arising from EMI. The sections below discuss these two strands and the way these attitudes and perceptions play out in the state of Assam, which is the locale of the study.

The popularity of English as medium of instruction

With the growing perception of English as the route to a better way of life, EMI

schools have become a popular choice for middle class and lower middle class parents (Singh and Bangay 2014). Nambissan observes:

> *What has been particularly significant ... is the advocacy for private schools (for children from poor families) ...These are schools referred to as 'budget' or Low-Fee-Private (LFP) schools that are projected as responding to the growing demand of poor families for 'good-quality' English-medium education.* (Nambissan 2013, 84)

The argument for an EMI education has been fuelled by an increasing disappointment with the way English is taught in government primary schools. As Shah and Veetil (2006, 3) note, 'the continuing decline of the quality of state education has led, by default, to one of the highest levels of privatisation of education in the developing world.' The findings of the PROBE Team, based on research in four Indian states, attest to the same situation; their report notes:

> *... even among poor families and disadvantaged communities, one finds parents who make great sacrifices to send some or all of their children to private schools, so disillusioned they are with government schools.* (PROBE Team 1999,103)

In most cases, these private schools are EMI schools (Tooley et al. 2007). The 2003 Human Development Report echoes this sentiment: 'poor households cited teacher absenteeism in public schools as their main reason for choosing private ones' (UNDP 2003, 112). The 'Young Lives' longitudinal study of childhood poverty notes, on the same lines, that:

> *... (w)ithin low- and middle-income countries, rapid economic growth, increased opportunities for social mobility and high aspirations for education combined with disillusionment with the quality and effectiveness of government schools have fuelled the demand for low-fee private schooling, even among poor families.* (James and Woodhead 2014)

The eagerness to admit their wards into the so called 'English-medium' schools can also be traced to parents' sense of being 'deprived' of a more prosperous and prestigious life, owing to their own lack of education or because of their poor English skills. The Annual State of Education (ASER) report shows that many households in India still have no access to printed materials at home (over 75 per cent of the population surveyed) and many households have children who are first generation learners, with 48 per cent of mothers uneducated and 25 per cent of fathers (ASER 2014; Banerji 2017).

An English-medium education at school is also considered a logical precursor to undergraduate and postgraduate studies. English is a compulsory subject at the undergraduate level, although students may choose to write their exams in other courses in another Indian language.There are more textbooks in English than in local languages at the undergraduate level, especially for professional courses such as engineering or medicine, which makes proficiency in English a precondition for

access to higher education. The wave of interest in EMI education is compounded by the perception that there are not many 'good' regional-medium schools that provide a good English language education.

Reservations about English as medium of instruction

A positive attitude towards English does not always correlate with EMI education; there are reservations among a section of the population about beginning literacy in English-medium schools. For example, in Assam, a private Assamese-medium school based in Guwahati – the *Assam Jatiya Bidyalay* (loosely translated: the Assam National School) – and a number of other private schools in the state following the same curriculum are becoming popular with families who want their children to begin literacy in Assamese and yet have a good training in English. Many families worry that beginning literacy in English might make their children lose the mother tongue and even turn them into snobs. In addition, not everyone is able to afford EMI, which entails recurrent expenditure, some of which is not reflected in the fee structure. Apart from high admission and monthly fees, there is the transport fee, the cost of uniforms, forced donations from parents for extra-curricular events, the cost of 'projects' (a requirement under the national Comprehensive and Continuous Evaluation scheme), student trips and so on. There is the also the realisation that not all teachers in EMI schools are themselves proficient in English and that teachers frequently leave for better paying jobs. Since EMI schools do not fall under the purview of the government inspectorate until the Secondary level, there is no control over the syllabi or textbooks used; parents frequently attest to being unhappy with privately published textbooks used by EMI schools that do not reflect local culture, history or geography. Another cause for unhappiness is that most parents from working class backgrounds are unable to help their children with school work because they themselves have poor English skills and are forced to arrange private tutors to teach their children.

Several studies have reported the above problems associated with EMI education in India and elsewhere. Hamid et al. (2013, 11) note that EMI implementation is 'fraught with difficulties and challenges'. Among other things, it might lead to social division (Meganathan 2011), creating a wider gap between those with access to a 'better' model of education than those who do not have the same privilege. As Professor Ajit Mohanty pointed out in the 11th Language & Development conference, English has been called a 'killer language' because of its subtractive effects on mother tongues and its negative impact on linguistic diversity (Mohanty 2017).

Reservations about English medium education are also founded on other social realities. EMI in India, being left out of the ambit of government education regulatory measures, is run by private individuals and organisations in proprietary mode and there is nothing to hold English-medium schools accountable to educational stakeholders, especially to parents with low English proficiency. There is no control over fees or teachers' salaries; teachers' salaries are neither commensurate with other private sector organisations nor do teachers enjoy a government approved scale of payment. There is a shortage of competent teachers, both trained and proficient; most teachers of these schools look upon such a job as a temporary

arrangement until a more fruitful and better paid opportunity opens up. Teachers of English-medium schools also do not have access to government supported training and development opportunities. EMI in India has remained an unplanned activity, unaccounted for by state education agencies and not adequately addressed or adopted by national policies.

In Assam, the EMI situation is not very different. EMI in Assam may be termed a Low-TP/Low-EE (TP: teacher proficiency; EE: English language environment) context. Most schools that provide EMI employ teachers on very low salaries, graduates who have themselves learnt English in impoverished language contexts offered by state schools or low-cost local English-medium schools. With little or no access to training in language teaching methodology, most EMI schools use a 'content subject' pedagogy to teach all subjects, including English, making rote learning a preferred learning and performance strategy. There is also the private tuition menace; parents prefer to send their children to private tutors after school hours (mostly the same teachers at school) believing that this would give their wards an extra edge in terms of marks. There is state intervention only at the Examination Boards level, so there is hardly any control over what is taught and how. In addition to all these academic concerns, there is political pressure from Assam's most powerful students' organisation – the All Assam Students' Union (AASU) – that sees EMI as a threat to the Assamese language and culture.

The study

In this study I have tried to identify the language skills that children in a low-cost semi-urban EMI school might develop. The study in particular seeks to examine:

- the challenges of learning English as a language of communication in school, in situations where English is neither the students' mother tongue nor the language of communication in the larger community;
- the degree of competence achieved by primary students to communicate effectively in the domains of use of English (both conversational and academic);
- interaction patterns (hierarchies of interaction and use of English).

I begin by presenting a brief profile of the school, the teachers and the students to illustrate the context of the study, followed by a discussion of the methodology and data collection tools used inside the classroom. I also present my observations on the use of English by the students outside class.

School and teacher profile

My study was carried out in the English Section of the Gauhati University Model School in the city of Guwahati, Assam. The school was established by Gauhati University to serve the children of its employees and it is located in the university campus. It has pre-primary and lower-primary classes; the pre-primary level includes Baby KG (age three years), Lower KG (four years) and Upper KG (five years) while the Lower Primary level includes Classes I to IV. There are nine teachers with qualifications ranging from BEd degrees to Montessori Diplomas. The school charges a nominal monthly fee of Rs 25, with no additional admission fees. The teachers speak Assamese, Hindi or Bengali as their mother tongues.

Student profile

The students of the school comprise the children of Gauhati University teachers, officers and workers, as well as children of the residents of the 'fringe village' areas (Jalukbari, Sundarbari and Garigaon) adjacent to the university. The students come from a variety of linguistic and economic backgrounds, with the educational background of the parents and guardians ranging from illiteracy to PhD. Assamese, Bangla, Bodo, Hindi, Bhojpuri and a few other languages are spoken as mother tongues by the students, but the lingua franca is Assamese. English is the language of the school, but it is not a language of communication at home or in social settings. Teachers speak to students in English but they use the local languages – mainly Assamese – to communicate with parents and guardians.

Nature of investigation

I explored the use of English of 130 students (34 students in Class I, 30 students in Class II, 32 students in Class III and 34 students in Class IV) in the classroom and outside.

The following methodology was used:

- classroom observations to understand pedagogy, patterns of interaction and learner responses;
- interaction with students in the classroom to administer activities and discover patterns of academic interaction;
- interaction with students outside the classroom to elicit language and understand patterns of non-academic use
- 'eavesdropping' on students' conversations with teachers, peers and other adults to note patterns of language use.

Data collection tools

Inside the classroom, I administered oral and written activities that:

- were organised in a hierarchy of difficulty, from simpler language elicitation activities in Class I to progressively more complex language operations from Classes II through IV;
- were loosely based on Krashen and Terrell's (1983) five predictable stages Preproduction, Early Production, Speech Emergence, Intermediate Fluency and Advanced Fluency;
- mapped students' cognitive and linguistic development through performance indicators such as 'choose', 'list', 'follow instructions', 'define', 'recall', 'compare' and'create';
- involved kinesthetic responses, including changing seats, writing on the blackboard and depositing chits on the teacher's table;
- lent themselves to collaborative peer interaction strategies such as pair and group work.

The types of activity used included:

- Sorting words into categories (animals, birds, colours) – Class I
- Following oral instructions – Class I
- Two sentence composition about oneself and school – Class II
- Following oral and written instructions – Class II
- Group story building – Class III
- Blackboard quiz: compare and contrast – Class III
- Free composition – Class IV
- Reconstruction exercise – Class IV.

Student responses

The students showed a lot of enthusiasm for the activities; they were fascinated by a stranger coming into their classroom and playing games with them. Also, with a history of obedience and discipline so typical of English-medium schools, no one questioned my presence or objected to the activities. So eager were the students to respond that the ones who could not complete the activities looked extremely disappointed, as if it was a spot on their worth as a student. One girl student of Class II actually cried profusely when I stopped her from responding, in an attempt to elicit responses from other children. Based on the students' performance on the activities, here are some tentative observations on their comprehension and use of English:

Class I

The responses of the students indicated that they:

- were able to identify and sort common words into classes;
- were somewhat able to follow oral instructions when spoken slowly and accompanied by gestures;
- could respond in one or two words when asked routinised questions;
- were quiet and obedient, following instructions without protest;
- did not initiate conversations and did not speak unless asked a question;
- were more familiar with English names for objects in the world than Assamese.

Two activities were given to the students of Class I: a Pick-and-Drop sorting game (picking a chit of paper with the name of an animal, a bird or a colour and putting it in the appropriate pile on the teacher's table) and a game where they had to perform an action by listening to oral instructions in English. Their performance in the tasks showed that they:

- were familiar with word classes in English and with English words for animals, birds, colours and other objects in the world;
- had some difficulty in understanding oral instructions in English when an unfamiliar task was presented to them; in such a situation they resorted to asking clarification questions in Assamese;

- were comfortable with tasks that allowed them to settle into their familiar classroom routines of sitting and writing in their notebooks, reciting rhymes or drawing simple figures and landscapes;
- understood instructions and responded in English when made to perform everyday functions, such as greeting ('Good morning, Miss!'; 'Thank you, Miss!') or asking for permission ('Miss, may I go out?'; 'Miss, may I drink water?') – tasks for which they could use routinised and formulaic structures such as the examples above.

Class II

The students of this class were not very different from Class I students in terms of their comprehension and use of English. Their task behaviour showed that they:

- were somewhat able to follow oral instructions such as 'Hold your ears' or 'Touch your nose' when accompanied by gestures;
- could respond in one or two words when asked routinised questions such as 'What is the time?' 'Who wants to come to the board?' that are part of their everyday classroom repertoire;
- followed the teacher's instructions quietly and obediently without negotiating meaning or asking for clarification;
- did not initiate conversations or speak unless asked a question;
- had some difficulty in formulating responses and with constructing appropriate utterances without prompting;
- were able to write routinised responses such as 'My name is ...' or 'My school has ...'

Two tasks were administered to this class. The first one was to perform an action after reading one-line written instructions. The second was a composition task that required the students to write two sentences about themselves and their school.

For the first task, as mentioned above, the students were able to read and understand simple instructions in English, but mostly instructions that were part of their classroom routines, such as 'Take out your book' or 'Go and write on the blackboard.' They had problems understanding unfamiliar expressions such as 'Turn around' and were able to understand some others such as 'Hold your ears' only when accompanied by gestures.

The responses of the students to the second task showed their familiarity with formulaic expressions ('The name of my school is ...' and 'My school has ...'). Although their spoken English was not completely grammatical or idiomatic, they showed some control over sentence grammar. What was also interesting was an emerging ability to express personal feelings or describe something, evidenced during the pre-task warm up to the composition task. During the warm up discussion, they were asked whether they liked coming to school, what things they liked about school, what they did in their free time, and so on. Several students displayed an eagerness to respond, even when they were unsure of what to say or were unable to formulate their utterances in correct grammar.

Class III

There was a marked difference in the language behaviour of the two lower classes on the one hand and the Class III students on the other, although the latter followed the same classroom culture seen in their juniors, speaking only when spoken to rather than volunteering information, and carefully following the teacher's instructions. Their task responses showed that they:

- were mostly able to follow oral and written instructions
- could respond in one or two sentences to oral personal questions
- were eager to participate in classroom activities
- were very conscious of noise and class discipline
- did not initiate conversations or speak unless spoken to
- were unable to sustain conversations in English or give longer written responses
- insisted on responding in English even to questions in Assamese.

Two activities – a blackboard quiz and group story building – were administered to the students of Class III. For the first task, which was oral, the class was divided into two groups, Summer and Winter. Each group was asked to come up with reasons why they preferred summer or winter; the group that could provide more arguments would be the winner. For the second task, the students were divided into groups of four and asked to compose a story of five to six lines based on a picture.

The performance of the students on the tasks showed the emergence of ideas and imagination and the development of contextual vocabulary (e.g. summer, juices, thirsty, cold drinks, mangoes, winter, jackets, fire, jogging, thief, kidnap, kidnapper, river, village). However, they had problems in articulating appropriate sentences to express their ideas. There was wide use of repetitive structures; for the blackboard quiz most students participated by completing the sentence prompt I had given them ('When summer/winter comes ...'). For the group story building task the preferred structure was 'The man is running/kidnap (sic) ...' The students showed more familiarity with the language of description rather than narrative, using repetitive structures (descriptive sentences) and writing their story in a numbered list. Their preference for descriptive sentences may be an outcome of their familiarity with this particular style of sentence and their classroom experience with reading lessons; in the classes I observed, the teacher would read aloud a paragraph from the lesson, paraphrase it and ask comprehension check questions by providing spatial prompts that were predominantly descriptive in structure ('Where is the queen sitting? The queen is ... Say it ... The queen is ...'/'How many maids were there in the room ... three? five?').

Class IV

This was the seniormost class in the school. The students of this class were fairly confident users of English, preferring to speak in English inside the class. The nature of their involvement with the tasks showed that they:

- were able to follow oral and written English instructions;
- could respond in one or two sentences when asked routine questions;
- were eager, proactive, competitive and very enthusiastic about completing the tasks successfully;
- were able to initiate conversations and could speak without prompting;
- used memorised, formulaic and repetitive structures in both oral and written activities requiring free composition;
- used English for discussion during group tasks, not wanting to be penalised, but used Assamese when the teacher was out of earshot;
- used a formal variety of Assamese/Hindi in the classroom;
- used formulaic and repetitive structures in Assamese/Hindi tasks.

This class was given one oral and two written tasks. The first was a general knowledge quiz to test their contextual vocabulary and ability to use different English structures through an elicitation strategy. The written tasks involved free composition; they were asked to write a paragraph on their use of mobile phones, first in English and then in their home language to find out their development of English as well as the influence of English on the development of their home language.

The responses of the students on the quiz showed their familiarity with the Wh-question format ('Who was the first ...? When did India ...? Where was Mahatma Gandhi born?') and with the question-answer interaction pattern common in their classrooms. When asked to say something about themselves and their hobbies there was hesitation; children offered one or two word answers and they struggled to formulate their responses in complete sentences.

The English composition task showed that the students had some experience of descriptive writing but had not yet acquired the skill of discourse organisation, such as composing a paragraph, using discourse markers or sequencing ideas into a connected text. Each one wrote a numbered list of at least five sentences on their use of the mobile phone, each sentence beginning with the same structure ('In mobile we can ...' or 'Mobile can do ...' or 'We can play ...') and written in impeccable handwriting. This was a common thread that ran through all the compositions and may be an outcome of classroom instruction and practice. The compositions hinted at the development of descriptive skills in English and the ability to formulate ideas in context, but narrative skills did not seem to have developed. The students' use of an academic and formal variety of English while speaking and writing suggested their lack of familiarity with idiomatic English. Conversations with the students revealed that they had not read much in English besides their textbooks while their spoken English was limited to classroom interactions, mostly with teachers. Verbal exchanges and written work showed some development of contextual vocabulary (for example, they knew several words relating to mobile phones, technology and the internet) but they had still not developed control over sentence structure.

In the final task given to Class IV, students were asked to rewrite the same composition (on their use of mobile phones) in their home language. Three students

completed the task in Hindi and the rest wrote in Assamese. Hindi or Assamese was not the home language of some students, but since they had no literacy in their own languages, they opted to write in the language more familiar to them (Assamese or Hindi). Their choice was also based on their degree of familiarity with the scripts of these two languages, which are both compulsory subjects at school. The purpose of asking students to rewrite the paragraph in Hindi or Assamese was to see how far their learning of English influenced their use and knowledge of other languages, and vice versa. A comparison of the compositions in English and Assamese/Hindi was expected to show, firstly, whether students transferred composition skills across languages and, secondly, to what extent their knowledge of the two languages influenced their organisation of ideas. The interest in students' mental operations in linguistic activity stems from the frequently heard cry that an EMI education robs children of the ability to think in their own languages; they are trained so strictly to operate only in English that by middle school EMI students use their home languages only for BICS (basic interpersonal communication skills) and lose their CALP (cognitive academic language proficiency) (Cummins 1979).

The performance of the students on this task showed that most simply translated their English compositions into Assamese/Hindi; some even wrote transliterations. The Assamese/Hindi compositions mirrored the English composition organisation (lists of numbered sentences) and structures (repetition of the same structure for all the sentences). It was also found that most of the contextual vocabulary included transliterated English words (mobile phone, internet, facebook, message and so on), either because these words have no corresponding word in Assamese or Hindi, or because the students were not familiar with the words for these in their home languages. Another interesting characteristic of the compositions was the use of informal sentences, reflecting conversational Assamese/Hindi rather than a formal style more suitable for academic compositions.

Preliminary observations

From my somewhat limited interaction with the students – both inside and outside the classroom – I make the following preliminary observations.

Students are encouraged to behave like monolingual speakers. Classroom interaction is only in English, as it is firmly believed that one can only learn a language by using it at all times.

Classroom language interaction predominantly follows the IRF (Interaction-Response-Feedback) model (Sinclair and Coulthard 1975). The teacher initiates the interaction, either to explain a point or activate previous knowledge; students have to respond appropriately, after which the teacher gives her feedback. Sometimes the teacher interrupts the student to correct grammar or to rephrase his/her response.

Choral repetition (during the feedback stage in IRF sequences) seems to be the most popular strategy for content teaching, pronunciation practice, attention focus and response management.

Success in learning or in development of English is equated with the ability to repeat the language of the textbook or teacher's notes, to answer prompt questions, or to copy from the blackboard, and to repeat memorised chunks.

The language of the classroom, at least in the lessons which I observed, is routinised, formulaic and ritualistic. The pedagogy limits the use of English to question-answer routines through Wh- and Yes/No questions, teacher-talk, stylised formulaic expressions ('Thank you.' 'Very good.' 'Repeat after me.' 'Look at your book.' 'Keep quiet.' 'As I mentioned yesterday ...' 'Wrong answer.' 'After that ...' 'For homework, do ...' and so on) and class beginning/concluding rituals (e.g. 'Today we will learn ...' and 'That's all for today').

Classrooms are not conducive to learner-generated language; the culture of the classroom is mainly focussed on students listening attentively to the teacher and responding only when asked to. Peer activities that incorporate information/opinion gap tasks encouraging natural conversation among students were not seen. There were oral comprehension checks, while written tasks consisted of completing exercises in the textbook or workbook.

Compulsory interaction in English (mostly inside the classroom and, to some extent, outside) develops some degree of oral communicative competence and gives practice in performing language functions (greeting, thanking, asking for permission, and so on). But it does not guarantee grammatical competence (as evidenced in students' spoken and written English).

Students' cognitive development does not seem to be supported by the amount and kind of English they are exposed to at school. In most of the activities, students showed they had ideas that they wanted to express, but lacked both the vocabulary and control over syntax necessary to articulate their thoughts adequately. Most of what they said or wrote reflected their familiarity with academic English rather than a conversational idiom, suggesting that their exposure to English in real time is restricted to classroom interactions. Their use of English also suggested they did not have much reading experience outside school textbooks.

Classroom observation of children of all four grades revealed that they were encouraged to use English in interactions with the teacher and with each other. Even if a child spoke to the teacher in Assamese or another local language, the teacher's response was inevitably in English, to reflect the policy of the school to encourage use of English. Outside the classroom, however, there was an interesting phenomenon of language switch. Students were found to use a local language (mostly Assamese) among themselves in the playground or corridors, while playing games, sharing lunchboxes or conversations. Every time a teacher passed, however, they would all stand up and greet the teacher ('Good morning/afternoon, Miss!') and, if the teacher stopped or lingered, they would use English for peer interaction. There seemed to be an enforced and conscious effort to speak in English, but this did not necessarily produce the desired outcome, for, even inside the classroom, students were not fluent users of English, at least while speaking. Students and teachers alike used local languages to speak to the support staff (cleaners, watchmen, office assistants)

and to parents and guardians. At home, students said that they spoke in their home languages but watched television programmes (cartoon shows were favourites) in either English or Hindi. English was also the preferred language of the mobile phone. In school, for visitors other than parents/guardians (like me, for example), both students and teachers used English. Some students became self conscious and reluctant to respond when I spoke to them in Assamese and Hindi, fidgeting uncomfortably lest their teachers overhear our conversation. The English teacher also looked unhappy at my use of the local language; she saw it as a failure on her part to develop her students' English, and chastised them in my presence for not responding in English.

Tentative conclusions

A few days of interactions with students of primary classes in a low-cost, semi-urban English-medium school in Assam cannot claim to reflect all aspects of learning English in an EMI context, but they do point to some features that may be echoed in other similar contexts where English is used as a medium of instruction from kindergarten.

It can be seen that an EMI context provides increased confidence in speaking and writing in English, even among students who come from disadvantaged backgrounds. The teacher-fronted pedagogy provides large amounts of comprehensible input, provides language scaffolding through routines and ensures exposure to both oral and written English.

However, this classroom pedagogy also reflects a pseudo-immersion exercise that does not ensure grammatical competence and does not ensure development of originality and creative use of English. The pedagogy has a backlash effect on mother tongue development.

Parents who send their children to English-medium schools reason that an English-only environment can provide their children with enough English to make them interact confidently with others in the language, especially when they are looking for 'good' (well-paid, well-placed) jobs as adults. In the absence of an alternate environment that could provide children with the much desired exposure to English, the EMI school is considered a repository of success stories and achievement. Also, research suggests that 'learner attitudes toward the target language and its speakers play a central role in determining levels of success for the acquisition of the language' (McKenzie 2008, 63). Since English still occupies a position of prestige in the Indian context, and its native speakers are held in high esteem by people for whom English is a prestige language, learning English is seen as a natural route to achieving a certain status in life.

What parents do not realise is that the age at which children begin literacy is also the stage in which children's conceptual knowledge of the world develops. When literacy begins in English children's sight recognition vocabulary for most objects, concepts and feelings are likely to develop in that language. In an EMI environment, children learn to identify objects of the world, describe concepts and feelings, perform mathematical operations, learn historical events and geographical concepts – all in English. An outcome of this is that they begin using English words for objects and

concepts rather than their home language equivalents, even outside school. Since these children do not begin literacy in the home language, their linguistic repertoire in the home language does not match their cognitive development, resulting in suppression of their home language experience and what is commonly referred to as subtractive bilingualism (Lambert 1975; Cummins, 1991, 1994; Skutnabb-Kangas 2000; and others).

Another gap that persists between what parents expect of an EMI school and what their children experience relates to effective learner-focused pedagogy. In the school where I based my study, and in similar English medium schools that I have had the experience of observing, one of the outcomes of teacher-fronted pedagogy is the emphasis on rote learning. In the Gauhati University Model School, for example, teachers believe it is necessary to give students ready answers to comprehension questions in the textbook because most children come from English-poor home environments and cannot avail their parents' help in writing answers. The teachers explained to me that if they did not provide the answers themselves, students would not be able to learn their lesson contents or pass their exams. In trying to provide as much exposure to English as possible, teachers (unwittingly) encourage rote learning, which in turn is likely to stifle creativity and limit students' ability to express themselves in English adequately (as attested by their responses to composition questions).

The strict use of English in an English medium school also has consequences outside the classroom. Observation of children in the playground, corridors and outside the school gate showed that English was equated with courteous behaviour; children greeted, wished, apologised or even asked for permission in English politely, but when using the home language or another language with their peers and parents, even inside the classroom, they were far less polite. The status of English as the language of a higher social class thus gets perpetuated through the fallacy that English is the language of formal and correct behaviour, while one can be less inhibited by politeness norms while using other (home) languages.

Another factor that affected the development of English was the use of content-teaching pedagogy. English lessons were taught with the same methodology as subjects such as Mathematics or Social Studies, with emphasis on developing conceptual knowledge, through definitions, descriptions and cause-and-effect relations. An outcome of this was that students developed some degree of academic and formal English, but their interpersonal skills in English did not develop beyond using formulaic or routine expressions (such as greeting, asking for permission, following instructions or reciting the school prayer) that are strictly bound in the school culture and norms.

One interesting outcome of students' classroom experience of English was that they transferred their text organisation skills to compositions in their home language. As the short compositions on the use of mobile phones and the story building task showed, students of Classes III and IV exhibited some degree of control over expository and descriptive writing, and some emerging idea of narrative (such as arranging sentences to reflect a sequence of events: 'The man is kidnap a child.

The man is kidnap a child but the child is crying ...'), using complex and compound sentences ('When winter comes ...' 'The man is running and the moon is shining'), relative clauses ('The man is kidnap one child because the time is night') and discourse markers ('because' and 'but'). When writing their compositions in Assamese or Hindi, the students either transliterated the sentences from English or followed the same descriptive structures and sequence of ideas. While the compositions in the home languages did not display students' development of contextual vocabulary or control over formal sentence structures, they did show students' ability to compose longer texts on a topic.

Lessons learnt and directions for further research

While preferring an EMI education for children is an outcome of a legitimate dream for parents who wish their children to succeed in life, one cannot equate EMI with either career development or English language proficiency enhancement. As this chapter shows, a significant and obvious gap exists between policy and practice and between principles and pedagogy. Bridging the gap between parents' expectations and children's proficiency is by no means a simple task. Schools have to put a premium on native language development and allow for gradual transition to an English language learning environment. Conceptual and linguistic development in one's home language has been attested to lead to better acquisition of another language (Skutnabb-Kangas 2000; Ball 2010; Fakeye 2011; Pflepsen 2011; Hassanzadeh et al. 2011; and others).

A necessary strategy to encourage development of English as a second or additional language is to provide learners with a language-rich environment. Apart from the textbook, which often seems to be the only resource, schools need to scaffold language use by making sufficient reading material in English available for learners in the form of story books, children's magazines, newspapers, posters, children's poetry and even songs. Teachers with sufficient proficiency in English and empathy towards low proficiency learners can also provide oral input to supplement reading materials. In the absence of an English-rich environment at home or in the community, the school is often the only source of language input for most learners from rural and semi-rural backgrounds.

A study of students' English language development in an EMI context alone, carried out over a period of two or three months through classroom observation, may not reveal the deeper aspects of language proficiency development; the issue needs to be approached from the students' perspective by following their English language learning experiences longitudinally. This will enable researchers to study how learners negotiate their experiences of multiple languages, how they operationalise their language choices in terms of social functions, in what ways they accommodate different linguistic systems in their verbal repertoires, and what strategies they use (e.g. translanguaging, after Garcia 2009; Creese and Blackledge 2010; Freeman et al. 2014; and others) as a means to express themselves. Following a longitudinal route to the English language development of students in an EMI context will also provide insights into the effect on learning English of the domains of use of the home language.

This chapter has raised more questions than provided answers regarding the effect of an English-only classroom environment in a low-cost semi-rural school environment. Although several studies (referred to above) have looked at the issues of low-cost private schooling and others have investigated the impact of aspirations for English, there is still very little research into low-cost English-medium schools and the nature of language acquisition in such schools, especially in Assam. It is hoped that this chapter has opened up possibilities for research in these directions which can inform education policy decisions at the government level. The number of studies and projects on mother-tongue-based multilingual education (MTB MLE), and the emerging interest in translanguaging, has still not had any significant effect on rethinking the implementation of EMI in Indian schools. As the 11th Language & Development Conference showed, language education can no longer be practised using a one-language-for-literacy only policy; this is likely to have serious (and detrimental) consequences on economic, linguistic and identity development. In India, which has traditionally practised multilingualism, allowing for smoother transition from one language to another through mother tongue literacy development, translanguaging and other bridging strategies, is the only way towards fulfilling the millennium development goals of a sustainable future.

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19

Using the first language as a resource in English classrooms: What research from India tells us

Geetha Durairajan

Introduction

The purposes of most language education courses are to enable proficiency in the language concerned and to help students to fulfil their conversational or academic communicative needs as the case may be. When these courses are intended for students for whom the language concerned is either a second or foreign language, they ought to draw on the students' first language capabilities to enable better proficiency. But in Indian mainstream English language education, although the country is multilingual at the grassroots level, this does not happen. All language classes in general, and English language classes in particular, exist in domestic watertight compartments. The attempts made to use capability in the first or more enabled language as a resource in the second language English classroom are restricted to individual forays by teachers or deliberate experiments carried out by researchers. The first half of this chapter is an attempt to delineate the sociocultural and educational background and theoretical framework that informed research in this area. The second part examines the evidence from such research done in the Indian context.

Languages in Indian education

India is a linguistically diverse country where many languages are a fact of life; the use of only one language as a communicative tool would be not just uneconomic but absurd (Pattanayak 2014). Most Indians are socialised from the beginning in many languages and no one language is usually sufficient to meet the communicative requirements across different situations and social activities. One outcome of such multilingualism is that Indians, particularly those who have had formal instruction, have a distinctive edge over their monolingual counterparts. They possess the ability to communicate in two or more linguistic codes and this fosters metacognitive development and metalinguistic awareness. From very early in life, they know that the same thing has at least two different names or signifiers in different languages (Mohanty 1994).

The problem-ridden three language formula

India's multilingualism is not only individual but also societal. There are distinctive linguistic regions in the country with 22 languages, as of now, given official status.

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To cope with this societal grassroots multilingualism and the diverse educational needs of the country a three language formula was introduced in 1957 and modified in 1964. The formula provided the space for education through either the regional language or English, with the proviso that other than the medium of instruction two other languages would be studied in middle and high school. If English was the medium of instruction, Hindi and the regional state language would be studied; if the regional language was the medium of instruction, then English and Hindi would be studied. However, even after four decades, the formula is 'yet to be implemented in true spirit' (NCERT 2005, 50). The reasons are many. Language is on the concurrent list in India: decisions about the languages that will be used as mediums of instruction or studied as subjects can be taken by both Central and State governments. For example, one state, Tamil Nadu, follows a two language formula (regional language, Tamil, plus English, but without Hindi). In contrast, in the Hindi-speaking states the 'regional' language means Hindi (India's official language). In these states, a south Indian language, or Sanskrit, or a European language ought to be studied as the third language. In practice most schools, parents and students opt for Sanskrit, where examination answers can be written either in Hindi or in English.

In other non-Hindi speaking states, linguistic prescriptivism and intra- and inter-state politics have resulted in varied combinations of the regional language, Hindi and English being taught as subjects and also used as mediums of instruction. At another level, extra value is accorded by teachers and students alike to both Hindi and English because of geographical spread and colonisation respectively (Durairajan 2013).

The role of English

Grassroots multilingualism – coupled with the existence of 1,652 mother tongues, (Mohanty 2009), at least 22 of which are used as mediums of instruction – has meant that in India one common language had to be designated as the medium of instruction at the tertiary level. When the three language formula was put into place more than half a century ago, it was hoped that by 1965 Hindi would fulfil this requirement and would replace English at all levels of education. That dream never materialised. As stated by Mohanty, 'The Indian constitution initially granted this status to English for a period of 15 years only. But this privileged status to English has been extended for an indefinite period' (Mohanty 2009, 282). In a few universities it is possible to write a doctoral thesis in Hindi, particularly in the Humanities, but that reality is not pan-Indian. The preferred language for higher education in India, for all practical purposes, is English. At the same time, in a country where multilingualism is a positive force and organic pluralism a way of life, neither assimilationism nor an English-only monolingualism can be considered an alternative. Indians need to be empowered through proficiency in English but this cannot be at the cost of other languages, primarily because, while English empowers some, it will disempower most others (Mohanty 2017).

English is the second associate official language, given the status of a second and not a foreign language. Indian English is beginning to be recognised as a separate variety. It is also perceived by one and all as the language of economic and social mobility. One sad outcome, however, of this perception, is that in an attempt to keep up with

the rest of the world many states are converting all their regional-medium and Hindi-medium schools to English-medium (or, rather, pseudo-English-medium) ones.

Concept formation in English

The prioritisation and valuing of English does not necessarily make it the language of thinking or academic conceptualisation for all students. Large numbers of students, who hitherto may not have had the opportunity to get an education, have entered or will enter the portals of a school as a result of the passing of the legislation popularly referred to as the 'Right to Education Act' (Gazette of India 2009). Furthermore, inclusive education, coupled with seats being reserved in educational institutions for students from the economically weaker strata of society, has resulted in many first generation learners staying within the education system and not dropping out. These students, who have studied in vernacular or pseudo-English-medium schools, are very often disempowered and lack the voice to speak, read and write in English (Ramanathan 2005). But they have to cope with the demands of English-medium study, at least at the tertiary level. The skill development required for this has to be provided in English as a Second Language (ESL) classrooms. This demand becomes more important today in the twenty-first century, when education is no longer perceived as the transmission of knowledge where information is 'banked' into an empty *tabula rasa* mind (Freire 1970). Empowerment can happen only through awareness raising and education; the language classroom, where focused skill development takes place, is a much more plausible site for this within the educational space than other subject classrooms, where a body of knowledge also has to be taught, transacted, learnt and eventually mastered. If the skills are enabled in the language classroom, they will be transferred to other domains as well.

Educational demands and language capabilities

Many first generation learners may be able to understand abstract concepts in English but often struggle with the higher order connections that they have to make. Applying what they have read and comprehended to new contexts, evaluating different perspectives or creating an argument of their own is difficult – and much more so when it has to be done in a language that is not used to fulfil everyday communicative needs. This does not perforce imply that they lack the capabilities per se. For most students their first language (and, in some cases, the second or third) is the more enabled language; knowledge of the word and the world is best accessed through it. This resource is an intrinsic capability that needs to be used for the wellbeing of the child (Sen 1993). Education today is no longer transmissive but co-constructive: the teacher is expected to value what the child/student brings into the classroom. Proficiency in the more enabled language must also be valued as a capability that needs to be tapped. This, however, is not a prevalent practice in mainstream Indian education. The first language, (L1) may not be negated, but it is at best recognised or tolerated in our English language classrooms. Proficiency and capabilities in the more enabled language are rarely perceived as valuable resources by administrative authorities and other decision makers, probably because of the way they have been viewed and treated historically in English language teaching (ELT) in India.

Use of L1 in Indian ELT contexts

The first or more enabled language, in the structuralist and behaviourist paradigm, rightly enough, has been perceived as a separate entity, and therefore negated, informed as it was by the notion of Separate Underlying Proficiency (Cummins 1980). English classrooms in India, then – and even now – are therefore monolingual in their orientation. In the cognitivist and classical humanist perspectives, the L1 has been recognised, but – in line with notions of interlanguage (Selinker 1974) – it is perceived as an interference. To ensure that fossilisation does not occur, the L1 is at best tolerated but never used as a positive resource. The result is that the first or more enabled language is treated like a crutch that one should stop using at some point, or perceived like the use of white lies, which can be neither avoided nor advocated. Monolingual and monolithic classrooms are the problematic outcome (Mohanty 2009). Students are able to memorise and reproduce answers and also move on to higher levels of education, but their non-ability to engage with complex texts and concepts, to internalise them and to critique and use concepts wherever required has been identified as a lacuna by educationists.

Within the paradigm of social constructivism, with knowledge co-construction being valued, the learning and teaching curve needs to be in advance of development and, therefore, within the zone of proximal development (Vygotsky 1978). With first generation learners and others whose cognitive and language capabilities are better in their first or more enabled language, English language teaching needs to use such capabilities as a scaffold (Bruner 1985).

Nature of languages in the mind of the user

For thirty years or more, a Common Underlying Proficiency (CUP) (Cummins 1980), with both academic and conversational language proficiency (ALP and CLP) being transferable across languages, has been accepted as the norm for bilinguals (Cummins 2000). These two aspects of proficiency were earlier known as Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) (Cummins 1979). However, very often, within the Indian educational system, students are still viewed as monolinguals with second and third languages being added on, and knowledge of the language learnt earlier existing in a separate space. Teaching a second or third language is not just about teaching the student how to add a few rooms to a house by building an extension or an out-house at the back; it is like the rebuilding of internal walls. The languages in a student's repertoire are not incommensurable. In some ways, the construction of the house, or of language capability itself, will change. The different rooms are interconnected in many ways; they cannot be walled in separately (Cook 2001). For some students, their abilities may be like the two wheels of a bicycle, equally balanced and inflated (Cummins 1996); for some others one might have a lot more air and that one will therefore take the greater load. These are the students for whom the 'load bearing language' needs to be deliberately used as a scaffold to trigger, transfer and enable capabilities in the other language.

Research carried out using the L1 as a deliberate resource

In mainstream English language education in India, the first language is still perceived

as a crutch that must be got rid of as soon as possible. It is used in classrooms, but such use can be described as incidental, used mainly for translation, explanation, or classroom management (Atkinson 1987; Cook 2001; Ramanujam 2003). In some cases, the L1 (or capability in the L1) is used deliberately as a scaffold by the teacher to enable language growth in English. Because of the resistance to using the L1 in ESL classrooms, which are perceived as 'language-watertight', all the research studies referred to in this chapter have been carried out within the interventionist paradigm. Action research, where the teacher in the classroom is also the researcher, has not been possible, because of administrative constraints. In some contexts, the individual researchers (if they had a good personal equation with the authorities in question where the 'experiments' were to be carried out), were given a few classes to teach during the school day. Many of these researchers, in personal communication with me, confessed that they just told their respective school principals that they were going to teach reading, or writing, but did not show them the actual tasks that they were planning to use. This subterfuge, if it can be called that, seems to have worked in some cases. But, in contexts where the 'intervention' or 'experiment' did not look like a plausible teaching method to the school principals, permission was denied and the 'experiment' had to be carried out on the fringes of school space and time. As Pathak (2013) succinctly stated: 'The "intervention classes" could not be embedded within the normal teaching sessions.' They were held in his house because the school's teachers and administrators did not see the relevance of such teaching. They felt that the time would be better spent dictating answers that their students could take down, memorise and reproduce in examinations. The researcher went on to affirm: 'In the real school context, I would never have been allowed to take Assamese tasks into the English classroom' but because of the freedom of space and time he had, untrammelled by administrative constraints, his tasks 'could be genuinely bilingual' (Pathak 2013, 138-139). This research was conducted with Class VI children in a regional (Assamese) medium school.

It is not only the school authorities who felt that the first language should not enter the portals of the English classroom. A researcher who used L1 literary capability to transfer that capability to English (Ghosh 2010) (tertiary level of education, second year undergraduates) also had to teach outside class hours. His students were disinclined to stay back in school or participate in his 'experiment' unless the classes would help them directly with their preparation for the examination. With a system of prefabricated answers that could be memorised and reproduced well in place, many children (from an agrarian background who also had to help their parents in the fields) signed up to participate in the experiment but dropped out later. Ghosh began his study with twenty students but in the end had to be satisfied with an in-depth case study of just seven individuals.

Nature of studies

These restrictions and problems notwithstanding, nearly twenty studies have been carried out over the past thirty years. The first study with documented evidence harks back to the early eighties (Felix 1981). The bulk of the studies, however, have been carried out in the 21st century, probably because of the prevailing educational teaching-learning paradigm. Also, for sheer pragmatic reasons, most of the studies

have been carried out with students in the secondary level of education, with only a few focusing on primary level students. Some researchers have attempted to develop capability at the tertiary level.

Focus of studies

Three studies carried out in the 1980s and 1990s (Felix 1981; Rajagopal 1992; Rao 1996) attempted to adapt the Dodsonian bilingual method (Dodson 1967) to Indian contexts. The first used Tamil and English to provide self-instructional bilingual reading materials for non-formal learners of English. The second aimed to develop a bilingual method to promote reading skills; the languages were Kannada and English. The third shifted its focus from reading to writing, with Hindi and English being the two languages involved. The methods used in these three studies, however, were identical: L1 texts were selected with care. Content words in two of the cases and linkers in the third were gradually replaced with English words. Students, would, it was assumed, acquire the use of these English words and eventually master their use.

The other 16 studies, all carried out in the 21st century, have used the first language (Assamese, Bengali, Hindi, Oriya and Telugu) as a mediating tool or scaffold. In seven of these studies, I have had to infer this from their work as the theoretical articulations do not place the studies within the social constructivist paradigm. Two of them (Bhengre 2005; Kedala 2013) used the first language to develop writing skills. Two other researchers (Pavani 2010; John 2017) used the first language to enrich vocabulary, while two others (Gupta 2009; Meher 2011) used the L1 just to teach English. One researcher (Victor 2007) used the L1 to tap the procedural knowledge of students within the vocational stream of education.

Some of the remaining nine studies actually used the terms 'scaffold' or 'mediating tool' in their titles, whilst others clearly stated, in their theoretical articulations, that their research had been carried out within the Vygotskian paradigm (Bhattacharya 2001; Chimirala 2013; Ghosh 2010; Kumar 2011; Mahanand 2010; Mukhopadhyay 2003; Nirmala 2008; Pathak 2005, 2013).

Purposes for which the L1 was used

The first language was used, either overtly or covertly, as a scaffold, for a range of purposes in the 21st century studies. The L1 was used to tap world and word knowledge by Pathak (2005) and to tap procedural knowledge ('reading' and describing of engineering drawings) by Victor (2007). Chimirala (2013) and Bhattacharya (2001) used the first language to enable whole class or dyad discussion. Four researchers, (Gupta 2009; Pavani 2010; Meher 2011 and John 2017) used the first language as a resource to provide meanings of difficult words or to provide bi-/multilingual glossaries for some words. Mukhopadhyay (2003) and Kumar (2011) used the first language to help students plan, prepare and organise their writing and to provide feedback. Reading comprehension strategies already available in the first language were tapped through parallel tasks by Pathak (2013). Bhengre (2005) used the first language to enable consciousness raising of capabilities through getting students to translate texts, a very different use of translation in the language classroom.

Ghosh (2010) is a study that stands by itself because the knowledge of the first language was used in the literature and not the language classroom. The subjects were English literature students habituated to reading 'guidebooks' which are just summaries of prescribed works of literature to relieve students of the burden of reading the original works. These guidebooks also provide prefabricated answers that students can memorise and reproduce in their examinations. The students' literary capability in their first language, Bengali, was just a little better than their literary capability in English, but their Bengali language capability was of course far superior. The researcher tapped this capability, taught them the notion of irony in Bengali first and then helped them to transfer and apply that knowledge to English literary texts.

Nature of growth

Across the 16 studies from the 21st century, students have exhibited varied growth patterns; though not explicitly stated in some cases, they have moved from being 'silenced and dumbed' to feeling either empowered or at least confident. The two studies (Kedala 2013; Mahanand 2010) that used folk tales as a scaffold stated that students were able to retell the stories better and that the students felt that they made better use of language for writing. In other studies, where students were asked to modify texts (Bhengre 2005; Rao 1996), the researchers stated that the students could reflect on their own language use and perceive differences. Similarly, in the studies that used the first language to tap word and world knowledge (Pathak 2005; Nirmala 2008), the researchers stated that students showed increased self-confidence; they were able to speak and did not feel 'silenced' in class. The studies that focused on vocabulary input through the L1 (Gupta 2009; Meher 2011) showed that there was better recall and, in some cases, improvement in vocabulary use. When students were encouraged to brainstorm, plan and organise their writing responses in their first language, all of them showed remarkable improvement in their writing (Mukhopadhyay 2003; Chimirala 2013). Students who could hardly write three sentences were able to actually write a couple of paragraphs, in a personal opinion essay, and that too with something close to an introduction, body and conclusion (Kumar 2011). Consciousness raising of strategies leads to better reading and, although the students who had been introduced to the notion of irony could not write about it in English, they were able to mark places in the text where they felt the author was being ironic.

These varied growths, mostly 'small gains' (Tharu 1981), may not be statistically significant but – in terms of pedagogic implications and student growth and feeling of confidence – nearly exponential.

Educational implications of using the L1 as a scaffold

The nineteen studies that have been examined in this chapter may not be voluminous, but when put together they can be used to suggest a range of paths that teachers, materials producers, curriculum designers and policy makers can tread on.

The way forward for the teacher in the classroom

Teachers can be encouraged to use the first language to tap existing capability. It should be possible, in homogeneous L1 classes, to use the existing higher levels of

proficiency in English in the receptive skills to get students to engage with cognitively complex texts. The responses, if needed, can be in the first language. The first language can also be used as the language of thinking and reflection for planning and organising what needs to be said or written in English.

The way forward for the materials producer

In India, some textbooks are written for a homogeneous L1 classroom while others are written for heterogeneous classes. In the former context, texts themselves can be bilingual. If required, instructions and task prompts can also be in the first language so that confusion about what is demanded does not exist. Misunderstanding of prompts, resulting in low marks due to 'construct irrelevant difficulty' (Messick 1989, 35) can be avoided. This is the practice that is currently followed in large scale standardised testing, where accommodations for students with special needs include English language learners who can be tested through another language (Abedi 2014; Taylor and Khalifa 2014).

The way forward for curriculum designers and teacher educators

Many language courses are beginning to use 'can do' descriptors as a means of assessment, particularly in the domain of formative 'for learning' assessment. These descriptors can be used to design common report cards that capture capabilities across languages. It should also be possible to visualise a language classroom where language teachers come together to use the strengths of students in a holistic manner to enable growth across languages.

For all this to happen, teachers in classrooms and other stakeholders in education need to perceive the various languages that are a part of a student's repertoire as just hand- and toe-holds in the tree of communication and not as separate systems and entities. To enable this acceptance, a course in multilingual education practices ought to be mandated in all teacher education programmes. One of the focuses of the course could be on how skills can be transferred from the first or more enabled language to the second language (in this case English) and how new learning in L2 can be scaffolded onto existing learning in L1 (Simpson 2015).

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20

Language policy in rural classrooms: A critical exploration of the potential of Action Research to transform teachers' perspectives and practices

Sandra Steiger

Introduction

At a time when many governments are beginning to respond to calls for mother-tongue-based education, there are still many misconceptions about what this means for multilingual communities and how it could translate into a relevant, effective and actionable Language in Education (LIE) policy. There is a danger that governments broadly and blindly apply mother-tongue-based multilingual education (MTB MLE) research that is deeply rooted in Western experiences of bi- and multilingualism – in which languages are often learnt sequentially and not concurrently – instead of better understanding and valuing their own experiences of multilingualism.

Teachers are central to achieving quality education, yet there is a lack of research focused on their perspectives on multilingualism as well as their assessment of LIE policy: how much they understand it, how far they agree with it and what obstacles may exist that inhibit them from facilitating learning within its framework. The reality is that teachers often remain isolated in their classrooms doing the best they can with the knowledge, resources and beliefs they currently have. Their voices are too infrequently heard or documented in the raging debates on how best to approach the complex linguistic situation in many developing contexts with regards to education.

LIE policy not firmly grounded in the particular linguistic context of a multilingual country can be a source of marginalisation, for rural teachers in particular. This is especially the case when an ex-colonial language is the primary medium of instruction (MOI), as these languages tend to be spoken more in urban centres and are historically strongly associated with socio-economic success. In countries such as Kenya, where my research took place, English has been touted as a tool for unity in the battle against tribalism, yet in reality it is a source of division between urban and rural communities, as well as between the rich and the poor. A 'monolingual mindset' focused on English continues to undermine the value of the mother tongue in education and beyond. Much reflection is needed from policy makers as well as teachers and the wider community to shift perspectives and practices that can transform English from a 'killer' language to a 'healer' language (Mohanty 2017): a

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language that, while important, need not be learnt at the cost of local languages and culture.

So to what degree can teachers effectively explore and engage with issues of language in education? How much do/can they break 'the rules' and how can they be sure that the experience and knowledge they are basing these decisions on will lead to effective learning? Action research can be used as a data-collection method to gain insight into such questions, while simultaneously providing teachers with a safe environment for experimentation and reflection in order for them to come to a better idea of their own beliefs about language in education and how these inform their practice.

This chapter is a product of on-going reflection on an action research project that was conducted in two rural Kenyan non-government schools in an attempt to gain insight into teachers' perspectives and practices regarding official Kenyan LIE policy. The original concept for the research was inspired by Cohen, Manion and Morrison's (2011) challenge regarding *critical* action research: 'Where is the evidence that critical action research either empowers groups or alters the macro-structures of society?' An attempt to find evidence of critical action research empowering groups or shifting macro-structures of society would require much larger scale research than that which can be provided by my modest study. However, it was hoped that this study could be a stepping stone towards imagining the potential of action research to catalyse the critical consciousness necessary for teachers to respond to LIE policy from a more informed, authoritative and empowered position. After summarising the original action research study, this chapter highlights some lessons learnt and suggests points for consideration for a wider critical action research project.

Action research models

Action research, in its simplest definition, is a process of isolating a problem and undertaking a reflective cyclical process of finding solutions to it. There is a variety of beliefs as to the aims of action research, ranging from simple problem-solving to improved self-reflection with a higher aim of achieving social justice. It is argued by Cohen et al. (2011) – referring to Whitehead (1985) and Stenhouse (1975) – that the value of action research to the individual teacher lies in encouraging him or her to observe, reflect on and solve individual problems in the classroom. Certainly, in contexts where individual teachers may not have the opportunity or feel secure enough to open themselves to external critique, then individually it remains a valuable and necessary approach to improving practice. However, this 'technical' action research approach, according to Cohen et al. (2011), quoting Grundy (1987), neglects to consider that even teachers in isolation are not isolated from the political, cultural and social structures within which they have been educated and their ideas moulded. Furthermore, without the added momentum and capacity for critique that a group offers, individual action research is limited in the impact that it can have on greater social change of attitudes and behaviours as well as on educational theory development. Apart from the very basic 'technical' action research approach, there are two main branches: 1) 'practical' action research (the notion of reflective practitioners or 'teacher-as-researcher') and 2) 'critical' action research (including participatory (PAR) and emancipatory (EAR) action research).

The distinction here is between practical action research (whether the purpose of action research remains on a classroom level in guiding the teacher towards how to be a more effective practitioner) and critical action research (whether it has a role in wider social transformation). Of the 'critical' models, PAR involves a process of the researcher interacting with participants rather than simply observing, while EAR has a far deeper agenda of overcoming social injustice.

Critical action research brings critical theory into contact with the real world. While supporting action, critical theory does not itself initiate or manage change (McNiff 2013). It merely critiques, often remaining abstract, and as such is limited as a theory for social transformation, where there is a need for concrete action plans. Moreover, Freire (2000) posits that social transformation requires consciousness of and action upon a situation. He distinguishes the need to go beyond problem-solving to *problematising*, a more democratic process of generating critical consciousness within the population to enable them to enter into dialogue with decision-makers (Freire 2013). Herein lies the potential of action research rooted in critical theory. The AR process can generate critical consciousness through reflection on beliefs and practices and, when well-documented, the findings can place teachers in a more authoritative and empowered position to make their challenges and ideas known to administrators and policy-makers.

Unable to respond to Cohen et al.'s challenge regarding EAR with such a small study, I adopted an action research design which merged elements of 'practical' and 'critical' action research. For the teachers, the action research process remained largely on a 'practical' level with an emphasis on the notion of the reflective practitioner while still aiming for a certain level of conscientisation. No attempt in the study was made to engage teachers in a critical exploration of their practice as time and adequate trust relationships were not judged sufficient to allow this. However, rather than be a mere observer, I was at least partially involved in the process (true to PAR) to introduce the action research model and to facilitate, guide and summarise the knowledge gained (Cohen et al. 2011) using a critical approach. Unable to genuinely problematise the teachers' situation – because I am not rooted in their culture and history (Freire 2000) – I was determined to listen to and report *their* problematising as much as possible.

Context: English and language policy in Kenya

Compared to many other African nations, early years education in the mother tongue was introduced into Kenyan policy decades ago. In 1976, the Gachathi Report (Republic of Kenya 1976) recommended that the language of the 'catchment area'[1] be used as the MOI from Class 1 to Class 3 with English taught alongside other individual subjects in preparation for the switch to English MOI in Class 4. This remains the policy to this day. However, only 30 minutes per day are timetabled for English lessons in lower primary (Republic of Kenya 2002) and examinations for all subjects, except Kiswahili, are printed only in English, leaving teachers feeling pressured to use English more than policy suggests in order to better prepare students for exams, as well as for the abrupt switch to English MOI in Class 4. In rural areas, the pressure to use English MOI at all levels of schooling is compounded by a sense of competition with urban areas where students have more opportunities to

practise English outside the classroom. As a result schools often choose to enforce a strict use of English in an effort to increase exposure to the language.

Instructions from syllabus documents (Republic of Kenya 2002) reinforce strict English-only use after the switch to English MOI in Class 4, including statements such as, 'Teachers who have been in the habit of teaching Upper Primary lessons in a mixture of English and the mother tongue will cease to do so immediately. It is never necessary, its only effect is to reduce success potential in the CPE [Certificate of Primary Education]'. Multilingual approaches to teaching the subject of English at all levels are also clearly not encouraged, another statement being 'During English lessons, only English should be used.'

English in Kenya remains synonymous with prestige and quality education (Trudell 2007; Wright 2004). The historical foundations of a desire for English are strong, as are the global forces that clearly demonstrate its usefulness. There is a persistent belief that knowledge of English is the only means to upward economic mobility: a belief which fails to recognise the potential role of African languages in education (Ouane and Glanz 2010). It is thus no surprise that MTB learning in Lower Primary is reported to be largely ignored. My study sought to see if these beliefs and constraints were evident in the case study schools. I also aimed to uncover any additional underlying reasons why MTB MLE is resisted.

Action research comparative case study

My study took place in two non-government schools, henceforth called School A and School B. They were both located in the same rural area, specifically Central Province, Kiambu County, Gatundu North District, where the language of the 'catchment area' is Kikuyu. School A was on the main road while School B a 40-minute walk from the main road into the hills behind it. School A had recently been achieving results among the top in the district. School B had no such reputation for success but was recommended to me by Headmaster A as a school expressing an interest in professional development opportunities. The management of the schools was structured quite differently. In school A, the Headmaster was a trained English teacher, who taught at the school, but appeared to often be busy with administrative matters as well as pedagogical matters and so had appointed another (female) teacher as Head Teacher. It was the Head Teacher who managed staff meetings and relayed information from the Headmaster to the staff in his absence. The Headmaster did not participate in the research, stating he wanted his teachers to be free to participate openly without his presence. School B had a Director who was responsible for funding and starting the school. He was often away on business and pedagogical matters were addressed by the Headmaster. However, Headmaster B appeared to have a role more like that of the Head Teacher at School A, one of a coordinator. Had I not known he was the Headmaster, I would have thought he were simply a teacher. Headmaster B took part in the action research process together with the other teachers and took great interest in it.

The teachers completed an entry questionnaire and were introduced to action research in a three-hour workshop, which included initial guidance to isolate the 'problem', the 'solution' as well as the criteria with which they would assess

the effectiveness of their solution. After three months of action research cycles, throughout which the teachers kept detailed journals of their observations and reflections, the teachers were asked to fill in an exit questionnaire and were debriefed. A debrief was essential to bring the process to a close. This was an opportunity for the teachers to freely add any more personal anecdotes about their experience and share these with their colleagues. It was also intended as a celebration of their participation and discoveries and a gesture of respect and recognition of their involvement. Furthermore, it allowed me to clarify certain expressions and comments from my initial readings of their journals so that my interpretations would be as accurate as possible.

Initial insights into LIE beliefs and practices

From the entry questionnaires, comments during the initial workshop, and interviews with the Headmasters, it was observed that resistance to official policy in both schools was grounded in a desire to form solid foundations for the students in the English language and that this was best achieved by exposing them to English as early as possible. This desire was compounded by necessity, since lower primary exams are mostly in English. However, the form this resistance took differed in the two schools, School B taking a punitive English-only approach and School A developing a smooth transition from mother tongue to Kiswahili to English.

Headmaster B explained:

> *We are very much concerned with the foundation of [our pupils'] education, that is ECD [Early Childhood Development] Class and Classes 1, 2 and 3 … we keep on telling them that we want to have a foundation and, as I had told you, Nursery to Class 3, those are very, very important classes we should be very careful with.*

Teachers in School B were therefore instructed to apply a strict and punitive English-only approach, grounded in the belief that early exposure to English was the best way to learn the language:

> *Only English should be used to ensure that learners have enough vocabulary and also become fluent in the language. As well as prepare them for the secondary level where English is mostly used as the medium of instruction.* (Headmaster B)

Students, with the exception of lower primary, are expected to speak English outside the classroom whenever they are in school uniform. This was also justified as being a good way to advertise the school, as parents want their children to speak English well, indicating the importance of prestige and image. The *muntu*[2] system was used to punish students who spoke in a language other than English. However, this English-only approach was undermined by the teachers who nonetheless often used local languages to interact with students and to enable students to access learning.

In contrast, teachers in School A liberally drew upon the mother tongue (Kikuyu) and Kiswahili (the national language alongside English) to gradually transition to using English as MOI. While admitting that English certainly had the highest status in terms of languages, Headmaster A also explained the value of Kikuyu and Kiswahili and also

directly related their importance to specific National Goals of Education: national unity (Kiswahili) and pride of cultural origins (Kikuyu):

> *We don't discard the mother tongue completely because the students are supposed to be proud of where they came from, they are proud of that particular language and it has its place in their life. Kiswahili also has a place in their lives as a national language because it's our national language and we also teach it as our national language even though English is the official language.*

With regards to English learning, it was important that it should be enjoyable and taught in an informal way resembling the way students learn their mother tongue, 'so the language they acquire it freely so they just get it from their heart, they just like it' (Headmaster A).

Headmaster A was influential in designing plans to achieve learning outcomes and language played an explicit role in this:

> *I told [the teachers] let us have a two year plan. That is, ... I told them the students who are Class 6 this year when I took over, let us start preparing them for examination from that point and we focus on their weaknesses ... The two-year plan was to be top in the district by 2007 and so we looked at the class, we analysed the weaknesses in the class.*

The data also revealed particularly interesting insights into attitudes towards and use of code-switching. Teachers' responses in the questionnaires indicated that they consciously choose certain languages for certain tasks and purposes. Many teachers reported switching to Kiswahili or Kikuyu after the failure of a student to understand, which I term a 'reactive' use. There were also many situations where teachers were 'proactive' in their deliberate and strategic choice of a certain language: a phenomenon that can also be called 'translanguaging'.

However, there was a clear contrast in the way teachers in the two schools used different languages strategically, the teachers in School A appearing to exercise much more awareness and skill. School A's use of Kikuyu tended to be quite strategic and intentional. It was used in ways that fostered the relationship between student and teacher, such as expressing emotion, emphasis, adding humour and breaking monotony as well as ensuring understanding of the subject-matter critical to further learning. By contrast, only one teacher in school B indicated using Kikuyu proactively – to introduce a new concept – while the majority reported using it as a last resort when the students had not understood. Instead these teachers tended to use Kiswahili for many of the purposes that the School A teachers used Kikuyu, implying that Kikuyu was undervalued for education purposes in School B. Overall, the findings indicated that the teachers tended to be aware of their use of different languages for different purposes but varied in how strategic their use of these was. The teachers in School A, under the leadership of a more progressive headmaster, demonstrated a wider repertoire of multilingual strategies.

Changes due to the Action Research process

After comparing responses in the entry and exit questionnaires and analysing reflections in the teachers' journals, it was clear that the action research process

had prompted the beginnings of deeper reflection regarding language, including changed attitudes towards use of the mother tongue. In response to the policy statements, 'Teachers who have been in the habit of teaching Upper Primary lessons in a mixture of English and the mother tongue will cease to do so immediately. It is never necessary, its only effect is to reduce success potential in the CPE' and 'During English lessons, only English should be used,' there was a marked change in both schools by the end of the action research process. Levels of uncertainty increased and strength of conviction of agreement decreased. Some teachers in School B even disagreed outright with the latter statement, despite their school's English-only approach. It should be mentioned here, though, that from the open responses to this question it was clear that many teachers were referring to English MOI in general and not English MOI *during English lessons* as the statement demands. This highlights that confusion can exist between approaches to learning English as a subject and learning *through* English, as well as a general lack of awareness of a variety of multilingual learning approaches.

Furthermore, data from the journals actually gave more insight into the teaching strategies that teachers found effective in *negotiating* language challenges rather than simply reflections on language itself. It was an unexpected consequence of the action research that the teachers enthusiastically experimented with a variety of progressive, exploratory teaching methods, such as using visual aids, student inquiry and group work, that they reported to have stopped using for various reasons or had never fully explored. This is interesting as it implies that reflecting on language prompted teachers not only to experiment with new approaches, but also to revisit teaching practices that they had let slide. It appeared that it was not that teachers did not understand progressive pedagogies or were unwilling to accept them, but more that they had perhaps been taught them in a vacuum. Action research on language issues provided a context for them to use these pedagogies meaningfully**.** This indicates a positive role for action research as a tool for professional development.

The teachers measured the success of their experimentation largely through observing increased enjoyment and active participation of learners when they used the mother tongue strategically, especially in School B where this had not been common practice previously. Teacher M explained in her journal that:

> *I never expected such changes in the weak learners in my class … actually it was amazing to see that most of the learners got all questions correctly compared to what they usually did in the past.*

Teacher I stated:

> *The way they participate in the lesson, we find that it is quite different from the way we used, so you find that they are really interested in the lesson and they really want to answer questions and take part in the lesson.*

Summary of findings

To summarise, the insights from my research show that the reasons teachers resist MTB MLE policy centre around beliefs about early exposure to English being the

best way to learn the language and the constraint of the lower primary exams being in English. Two very different approaches to resistance were apparent: one school adopted an English-only approach while the other took a more fluid transitional approach from MT to Kiswahili to English. The existence of a progressive school leadership which has reflected on and put into practice alternate models of MTB MLE with clear learning outcomes correlated with teachers who were more aware of and strategic in their use of multilingual strategies.

The AR process was effective in prompting reflection on existing beliefs about language use and provided an opportunity to experiment with different multilingual practices as well as progressive teaching methodologies that teachers were aware of but had not implemented. This indicated a powerful role that action research can play in professional development, not only to reflect deeply and critically on beliefs and practices, but also to consolidate and anchor effective teaching and learning approaches into teachers' daily practice.

In terms of Kenya's LIE policy, the study suggests that it is ineffective not because teachers are unwilling to explore MTB MLE but because they are not supported with the necessary resources to make MTB learning happen. Furthermore, policy still appears to promote *learning English* as of prime importance rather than promoting *learning*.

Imagining wider scale emancipatory action research

It is important that teachers' voices are heard and taken into account in the development of LIE policies that are relevant to their specific multilingual contexts. I believe there is a need for deeper inquiry into the elements of policy that:

1. are coherent within the context and function well;
2. teachers agree with but find difficult to act on;
3. are fundamentally at odds with the context or are contradictory;
4. are based on sound research and are coherent, but are nonetheless resisted or rejected by teachers and the wider community, perhaps indicating a need for training and advocacy.

My research left me pondering what it would look like to conduct action research on LIE in a selection of schools nationwide with the aim of developing widespread critical consciousness of multilingual language practices within the country and documenting findings that could inform a) better language policy decisions and b) more appropriate approaches to teacher training. Could such a study serve to highlight with greater clarity the importance of examinations and reading materials, among other resources, in the mother tongue? Would the impact of strong and visionary school leadership in other schools show the same correlations with teacher confidence in translanguaging? How many teachers in how many schools would need to come to the same conclusions and document and share these for the government to print exams in the mother tongue or consider an alternative model to transitioning to English MOI in Class 4? Could such wide-scale research even empower teachers to collectively demand a change in official policy from the bottom up?

A very important factor to take into account for future research, which was discovered to be a weakness in my own study, is to ensure that the action research is pitched to the teachers' zone of proximal development (Vygotsky 1978) and to the school developmental stage (Beeby 1966)[3] to ensure that the research is relevant and stimulating. For example, due to the existence of a clear and strategic multilingual approach shaped by Headmaster A and the higher confidence of his teachers, the theme of this action research project did not offer enough cognitive dissonance to engage the teachers and motivate their full participation. The teachers in School A appeared to have already identified and acted upon all the language-related challenges that they could within their own school, the remaining constraints being 'beyond' teachers' control, such as exams in English and lack of resources in the mother tongue. By contrast, at School B, where policy was rigid, the action research offered teachers an opportunity to explore and experiment in a way that was highly motivating and eye-opening. Critical action research, therefore, needs sensitivity on behalf of the researcher to the stage of development that the teachers and schools participating in it are at.

Conclusion

The action research reported here revealed that teachers resist policy for different reasons and display varying levels of consciousness in using language strategically. When pitched at the right developmental level for the school (Beeby 1966), the action research process is an empowering process that provides an opportunity for experimentation and reflection that leads to shifts in perspective and practice and can therefore even act as a tool for ongoing professional development. It is also an effective method for collecting data on the main challenges teachers face in acting on policy as they reflect on and journal the contradictions that they encounter.

It is clear that the action research in my study served to create more reflective practitioners in both schools and that it led to a shift in perspectives and practices regarding the teachers' use of language. In School B, there was even an element of liberation from a rigid school language policy. The research also indicated that reflecting on language prompted teachers to remember and use progressive teaching methods that they had learnt about but had not employed. However, it is not known for how long that change persisted. Furthermore, it is evident from School A's experience that even a more student-centred, democratic, innovative school environment is still constrained by a system which demands that exams be done in English, even in lower primary where the MOI should be the mother tongue. Even their progressive school leadership could not impact on this. Without removing this constraint, the results suggest that the learning of English will continue to take precedence over the critical and imaginative learning that Kenya nonetheless aspires to (Republic of Kenya 2002). Teachers' time and energy will be spent for many years of a child's education simply attaining understanding.

Gathering the critical insights of teachers from all over the country, with regard to *their* multilingual teaching practices in *their* context and *their* constraints, could assist in better formulating LIE policies and teacher training that reflect the nature of multilingualism in a given country. In this way action research could be used to simultaneously document these insights while preparing and anchoring new

mindsets, and perhaps paving the way for the emancipatory shift that Cohen et al. (2011) are still seeking evidence of.

Notes

[1] In rural areas, the language of the 'catchment area' means the local language; in urban areas it is either Kiswahili or English.

[2] A ring of some sort is placed around a child's neck if caught speaking in a language other than English. This ring is transferred from student to student as they catch each other out not speaking English and all students who have worn the *muntu* during the day are punished.

[3] Beeby (1966) outlines an 'Hypothesis of Educational Stages' through which every educational institution must pass before it achieves education quality. The stages are largely dependent on the level of education and training of teachers but there are also elements such as access to resources, approaches to discipline, child-centredness, differentiation, creativity, assessment methods, *inter alia*. Dated, but transferable to our times, his work provides a critical examination of the relationship between these stages and why certain educational innovations fail to take root.

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21

Empowering teachers in multilingual communities: Reflections on a mentoring project in Malaysian Borneo

Thomas Kral and Shannon Smith

Introduction

The 11th Language and Development Conference in New Delhi examined the role of English and other dominant languages in multilingual developing countries and how those countries position languages in their education systems. Perhaps the most critical aspect related to these issues is the growing belief that in English lie the remedies to the ills of education systems and development agendas in multilingual societies, symbolised in India by the Goddess of English, as cited by Ajit Mohanty (2017).

This chapter examines the positioning and repositioning of English and other languages in the multilingual and ethnically diverse state of Sarawak in Malaysian Borneo, where many would worship the Goddess of English with reverence. The lens through which the role of English is examined is the English Language Teacher Development Project (ELTDP), a large scale teacher mentoring initiative run by the British Council in the Malaysian states of Sarawak and Sabah from 2011 to 2015. The project employed 120 expatriate mentors, many in rural multilingual communities, to support the professional development of early primary English teachers and to increase their level of English proficiency. Despite a high level of engagement by many project stakeholders the ELTDP faced several structural and institutional barriers in positioning English as a tool for empowerment.

The first part of the chapter outlines the ELTDP's context, the Malaysian state of Sarawak and its complex ethnolinguistic make-up and unique political landscape. This is followed by a summary of the ELTDP's initiatives and an assessment of the project's impacts. The chapter finishes with a discussion about the challenges faced by development projects such as ELTDP which aim to empower teachers in multilingual communities.

Sarawak's ethnolinguistic make-up and political context

Sarawak is distinct from the rest of Malaysia in a number of ways. It is far more ethnically and linguistically diverse than Malaysia as a whole, where the Malays form a majority and provide the national language, Bahasa Malaysia (BM). Sarawak's

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population of just over 2.5 million is made up of a large number of distinct indigenous ethnic groups, as well as large Malay and Chinese minority communities, as Table 1 shows.

Table 1: Ethnic groups in Sarawak (population and first languages in 2014) (State Planning Unit 2014, 16-17)

Ethnic group	Population (%)	First language(s)
Iban	30.3	Iban
Malay	24.4	Bahasa Sarawak (Sarawak Malay) and others
Chinese	24.1	Hakka, Hokkien, Foochow, Teochew and others
Others	21.2	Bidayuh, Melanau, Kelabit, Penan, Kenyalang and many others

The Iban, the largest ethnic group, and the other indigenous groups speak a large number of languages and dialects, many of which are mutually unintelligible. The Malays of Sarawak primarily speak Bahasa Sarawak (BS), with significant regional but mutually intelligible dialect variations (Ting 2012). BS, however, may not be well understood by speakers of BM, the national (and official) language of Malaysia which is based on the Malay variety used in Johor, West Malaysia (Ting and Mahadhir 2009). Despite having a high level of proficiency in the language, many Sarawak Malays perceive BM as a Peninsular Malay language, in contrast to BS (Ting 2012, 385). Sarawak's Chinese communities fall into several mutually unintelligible linguistic sub-groups, the largest of which are Hakka, Hokkien and Foochow. Mandarin increasingly serves as the principle lingua franca for these communities (Ting and Mahadhir 2009).

Education and language policy for Sarawak is centrally directed from Kuala Lumpur, the national capital, as it is for the rest of Malaysia. Since the mid-1980s BM has been the medium of instruction in all Sarawak state secondary schools and in 1,030 of the state's 1,242 primary schools, with the rest using Mandarin medium (Sarawak Education Department 2015). Iban is the only indigenous Sarawakian language which can be formally studied, though solely as an elective subject at the discretion of local school officials (Ting and Ling 2013). English is a compulsory subject from year one primary and Arabic is an elective commonly studied at BM-medium schools.

As education is not available in any indigenous language, BS or Chinese vernacular medium, the vast majority of children in Sarawak, regardless of ethnic group, receive their education in a language different from the one they primarily speak at home.

Empirical studies of language use in Sarawak suggest frequent code-switching, the choice of languages dependent on the interlocutors' ethnic, linguistic and socio-economic backgrounds (Ting 2001, 56; 2012, 204). Casual observation of professional and personal interactions reveals frequent and effortless translanguaging among Sarawakians, underlying the linguistic plurality of the state and the multilingualism of the people. However, the search for a single lingua franca in Sarawak has proven illusive.

The implementation of BM-medium education in Sarawak in the mid-1980s has resulted in a widespread understanding of the language, yet Sarawak's diverse ethnic groups have not universally embraced BM as the language of intra-ethnic communication (Ting 2012, 387). There are several reasons for this reluctance. BM's origins in peninsular Malaysia make it an outside language even to the Sarawak Malay community while its predominance in government offices links it to West Malaysia's political rule. Also, Sarawak's large Chinese community, feeling disadvantaged by decades of affirmative action policies favouring Malays and indigenous groups, has been especially resistant to BM, associating the language with the disproportionate political power held by ethnic Malays (Le Haa, Kho and Chng 2013, 62). Policies such as giving priority to Malays in state university admissions lead many Chinese to favour English over BM, as they seek higher education outside Malaysia or in private – mostly English-medium – universities (Le Haa, Kho and Chng 2013, 63).

Despite being less widely-understood than BM, English serves as Sarawak's alternative and arguably more neutral lingua franca, benefitting from being disconnected from Malaysia's ethnic divisions (Ting 2001). Its status is heightened by its increasing value in a world of globalised education and commerce, as well as its local status as a language of the urban elite. The choice to use English instead of BM is made frequently in Sarawak. English newspapers have more than double the circulation of those in BM, whereas in Malaysia as a whole BM newspapers are far more prevalent (Table 2).

Table 2: Newspaper circulation by language in Sarawak and Malaysia (%) (Audit Bureau of Circulations Malaysia 2015)

Language	Sarawak	Malaysia as a whole
Chinese	51	22
English	35	23
Bahasa Malaysia	14	53
Tamil	-	2
Total	**100**	**100**

Research conducted for the ELTDP confirms the preference for English over BM in Sarawak. In a project impact survey of nearly 2,500 teachers, pupils and parents in Sabah and Sarawak, respondents had the option of completing the questionnaire in English or BM. More than half the respondents in Sarawak elected to complete the questionnaire in English while, in Sabah, just over one-quarter did so, as can be seen in Table 3.

Sarawak's resistance to BM is one of several factors driving a growing sovereignty movement called Sarawak for Sarawakians (S4S). One of the movement's demands is to secure greater autonomy in setting policy on language and education (Borneo Post Online 2015). However, Malaysia's centralised power structure and top-down political culture do not enable the autonomy that the sovereignty campaigners seek, resulting in political tension around policies relating to language and education.

Table 3: Percentage of respondents choosing BM and English when completing ELTDP impact survey in Sarawak and Sabah (National Foundation for Education Research 2015)

Language	Sarawak	Sabah
Bahasa Malaysia	44	74
English	56	26
Total	**100**	**100**

Many people in Sarawak, including members of the S4S movement, have been demanding a more visible and official role for English. Thus, in November 2015, the Chief Minister of Sarawak declared English to be an official state language in addition to BM (Tawie 2015). The decision was immediately condemned as unpatriotic by many politicians in West Malaysia, who consider BM to be the language of Malaysian national unity and social cohesion.

As part of their demands for greater autonomy in formulating education policy, Sarawak sovereignty campaigners are calling for a return to using English as the medium of instruction (EMI), which was the norm in Sarawak's urban primary and secondary schools up to the mid-1980s (Ting 2003). Field reports from ELTDP mentors and other observers reveal a severe shortage of teachers and education managers with sufficient linguistic and pedagogical capacity to switch to EMI. The idea of implementing EMI in Sarawak is based on the popular but misguided perception that English is a fix-all solution to every educational problem, a faith in the Goddess of English.

There have been unsuccessful experiments with EMI in recent years in Malaysia including Sarawak. In an effort to reverse the decline of English proficiency among Malaysians nationwide, the Ministry of Education (MoE) implemented EMI in maths and science for primary year one, secondary form one and lower sixth form in 2003 (Ting and Mahadhir 2009). The experiment proved to be a failure, as neither teachers nor students had adequate English to cope with the material, and it was abandoned in less than a decade. The government's mismanagement of this policy caused resentment among pro-Malay groups, who had always been opposed to EMI, and among EMI supporters, who were angered at the policy's poor implementation and subsequent abandonment (Le Haa, Kho and Chng 2013; Ting 2012).

Nevertheless, from 2016 the Ministry is again implementing a much smaller and voluntary scheme which is reinstating EMI for maths and science in a select number of schools. It appears that the popular allure of EMI is difficult to dispel, even by a government perceived by many to be promoting a pro-Malay national agenda.

The ELTDP's approach, impacts and challenges

The ELTDP emerged from the aftermath of the Malaysian government's decision to abandon EMI in maths and science. The following three sub-sections outline the way the project approached its MoE mandate and examine the impacts and challenges of initiatives which aimed to empower teachers and local language communities.

The project's background and model of implementation

The failure and ultimate abandonment of EMI in maths and sciences led the Malaysian government to adopt the policy of 'upholding BM while strengthening English', which aims to reaffirm a Malay dominant national identity and simultaneously increase Malaysia's economic competitiveness in an ever globalising world (Le Haa, Kho and Chng 2013). In order to 'strengthen' English, various programmes to support English teachers were launched, the largest of which was the 'Native Speaker Programme.' The programme's mandate was to bring in international ELT experts to both improve English teachers' pedagogical outputs and increase their level of English proficiency.

Appointed to run the programme in Sarawak and Sabah, the British Council re-branded it the English Language Teacher Development Project (ELTDP) in order to promote its vision of implementing the Ministry's mandate, specifically basing interventions on the principles of (local) participation, relationship building and sustainability. The name change also signalled the project's refusal to embrace the native speaker fallacy (Phillipson 1992) and to symbolically empower teachers by giving them a greater ownership of the project, at least in name.

The project's initial field reports revealed a hierarchical education system in which information and policy on all aspects of curriculum, pedagogy and professional development flow down from the federal Ministry of Education to the states, the districts, the schools and finally to the teachers. The project management likened the system to Steven Sterling's (2002) description of a transmissive model of education policy and practice. The project recognised early on that many years of top-down teacher training interventions had repeatedly failed to improve teachers' pedagogical standards and fulfil the government's objective of improving pupils' English.

The transmissive model and the centralised control of Sarawak's education system by the MoE from West Malaysia provided a Malay-dominant education culture with BM as its medium of instruction and lingua franca in schools. Mandarin medium schools appeared to deliberately take a contrarian view, implementing a Mandarin-only language approach. Sarawak's linguistic diversity was found to be unrepresented in project schools.

The ELTDP opted to contrast the transmissive model and implement one based on a transformative view of education (Sterling 2002), with individual mentoring at its core. Rather than imposing a top-down professional development agenda the project hoped to empower teachers by enabling them to reflect on their practice, take ownership of their professional development, build peer networks and value the importance of local knowledge, including local languages.

Empowering teachers through expertise and online networks

A narrative which ran through much of ELTDP's work was to reposition the role of formal expertise and empower teachers to themselves become experts. This was done by encouraging teachers to conduct mini action research projects in their contexts and report on their experience to other project participants. Mentees were also given the opportunity to make formal presentations and conduct workshops at

district- and project-wide symposiums in English. In addition, the project published and distributed a resource book to which teachers contributed their classroom activities. The ELTDP thereby enabled teachers to receive professional development and pedagogical strategies from someone other than a central authority for the first time. The ability to give presentations and publish work in English gave teachers confidence and a greater ownership of the language, an empowering impact in a context where such endeavours hold significant prestige but are not common among teachers.

A significant amount of the ELTDP's work also went into building local networks of teachers and encouraging an exchange of pedagogical ideas, activities and resources. As teachers from different schools and regions participated in project events, sharing networks developed on social media platforms such as Facebook and WhatsApp. Using social media in this way gave teachers an alternative to the MoE's directives, which come in official letters, circulars and faxed memos.

The language of most of the social media correspondence was English, though teachers also used the platforms to communicate in Iban, Bidayuh and other local languages. Unlike official MoE communiques, which are issued in BM only, these networks were multilingual and enabled the teachers to choose which language to use. Thus, English, as well as local languages, began to occupy a new space for the teachers who participated in professional discussions on social media. They became empowered by both the social media and their ability to communicate professionally outside the confines of MoE channels.

The main challenge, post-ELTDP, is to sustain the peer networks created during the time of the project. Without the mentors to promote the sharing networks and social media outlets, it is unclear whether teachers will continue to exchange ideas in this way. Although early reports suggest continued use of some of these platforms, it may be tempting for many teachers to fall back on the familiar and join the majority of colleagues in awaiting the MoE's top-down directives for their professional development input.

In addition, the project's designation of the mentors as facilitators and the teachers as experts proved to be a significant challenge. Suggesting to stakeholders that the project's approach was to downplay the role of the mentor as expert was perceived by many to be against the aim of the project. In a hierarchical context in which their opinions had rarely been sought, teachers struggled with the notion of themselves as experts and many were reluctant to accept the role. It also remains to be seen if the ideas sharing events continue after the end of the project and if teachers around Sarawak and Sabah use the resources their colleagues have produced.

A further challenge posed by the Ministry's transmissive culture of working was the lack of power teachers possessed in taking greater ownership of English and finding a relevant space for the language among the students. Assigned by the MoE to support teachers in 'Communicative Language Teaching', mentors hoped to encourage teachers, students and school officials to take a greater ownership of English in order to use the language in authentic communicative contexts. Although some successful

initiatives such as 'English days' were established, the top-down nature of the Ministry structures often undermined school communities' efforts to integrate English into the schools' linguistic mix. Sarawak's societal preference to communicate in English, as part of a multilingual mix, is not reflected in the state's schools.

This can be attributed to several factors related to the Ministry's transmissive approach. High-stakes national exams are embedded in the Malaysian education system and English is considered to be especially difficult to pass, with questions often stumping even the teachers. This has a disempowering impact on teachers, who turned to their native speaker mentors for the 'correct' answers with the effect of empowering 'native' English professionals and keeping control of the language in the Anglo centre. In addition, the MoE, a major part of the Malay-dominant civil service, has a monolingual BM culture and, as part of the federal system, schools are considered to be BM-only domains. (The exceptions are the semi-autonomous Chinese primary schools, which counter BM dominance with a Mandarin Chinese linguistic identity.) Therefore, despite the project mentors' best efforts, the position of English in Sarawak's schools remains that of a subject to be tested, rather than a tool for communication and empowerment.

Focus on local communities

The project encouraged mentors to exploit local knowledge and promote school and community ownership of project initiatives. One strategy was to increase teachers' engagement with parents, hoping to strengthen parental support for their children's education and language learning. Initially, many mentors observed social, cultural and linguistic barriers between parents and teachers, who often came from different ethnic communities. Mentors also reported that teachers who were placed in indigenous communities often perceived village parents to be illiterate and therefore uninterested in their children's education and especially in English. Over the course of the project, with mentor encouragement, a number of teachers conducted multilingual workshops with parents from local communities and began to break down some of the initial negative perceptions. The project's final evaluation revealed that increased parental engagement was a positive project impact, with teachers frequently surprised by the high level of attendance at parent events (National Foundation for Education Research 2015, 20-21).

Recognising an opportunity in Sarawak's and Sabah's linguistic diversity, the project piloted two local language storybook initiatives. A team of mentors and project teachers arranged the publication of local folktales from the Rungus and Iban indigenous communities in the form of bilingual illustrated storybooks to support children's learning of English. The stories chosen were well known by all children in the communities and were written in their indigenous languages and in English. The storybooks initiative aimed to bring the two indigenous languages and cultures into a formal educational context and to promote their inclusion in community schools.

However, the initiative was not a central part of the British Council's mandate with the MoE and there was no attempt to advocate the inclusion of these types of resources in the curriculum. Additionally, no formal plan was put forward to extend this type

of support to other indigenous, Chinese or Malay communities in Sarawak or Sabah. Funding for the storybooks was scarce and implementation depended on the good intentions of a few mentors and teachers rather than a project-wide initiative to bring local languages into the education system.

There are a number of further challenges in using such multilingual resources to their full potential. Teachers may be hesitant to use languages in the classroom which do not appear in the national curriculum by which they feel bound. In addition, care must be taken not to exclude other indigenous language users when producing these resources, nearly impossible in contexts such as Sarawak with a large number of languages, most of which lack a written form. This is especially important for international actors such as the British Council, who cannot be perceived to be favouring one ethnic and linguistic minority over another. The project management team hope that the existing storybooks in Rungus and Iban will lead other communities to take similar initiatives, but without the British Council's support this is far from guaranteed.

Furthermore, great care must be taken by outsiders promoting the use of indigenous cultural resources. Any initiative must have as much local ownership as possible, as outsiders risk commodifying folklore unfamiliar to them and essentialising perceptions about archaic cultural practices of communities which may prefer to project a more contemporary identity (Holliday 2005).

Discussion

The ELTDP's principal success at empowering teachers was to enable them to bypass the MoE's transmissive systems and take greater ownership of their professional development. This was done largely through building teachers' confidence at using English for their own professional development rather than just as a tool to teach their pupils. Mentors universally reported a significant increase in the confidence that teachers gained in their capacity to communicate professionally in English. The project thus gave them agency to work outside the MoE's established BM monolingual structures to improve their pedagogical skills. This represented a genuine transformative paradigm shift for the teachers who embraced the project's participatory approach and bottom-up initiatives.

However, the mentors on the project were put into a challenging position. They were hired according to the MoE as experts, but were instructed by the British Council to downplay their expertise and work bottom-up to empower project teachers. Although the teachers were best positioned to understand local English needs and teaching methods suitable to their context, the structures in place undermined their potential expertise (McKay and Bokhorst-Heng 2008, 50). In a high stakes exam culture and an education system with a pervasive binary code of 'right' and 'wrong' answers, the 'native speaker' mentors were automatically elevated to the status of language and pedagogical authorities by the same teachers they were meant to empower. In addition, the Malaysian variety of English was never accepted as legitimate by education stakeholders, further undermining local English teachers and empowering the foreign mentors. Employing foreign experts to mentor local English teachers thereby ran the risk of marginalising rather than empowering them.

A further challenge was the capacity of some of the mentors themselves to help teachers optimally position English in the classrooms and schools. Many mentors were not fully aware of Sarawak's linguistic diversity or with issues related to multilingualism in education; consequently they often discouraged teachers from using other languages in English classes and they praised English only lessons. This position was echoed by MoE inspectors who admonished teachers for using languages other than English. The project could have done more to raise mentor awareness on language issues and thus place a greater emphasis on promoting multilingualism in schools.

Ultimately, the project's ability to empower teachers was constrained by an education system in which languages, both as medium of instruction and as subjects, function as instruments of power to fulfil a variety of interests, but to the detriment of learners. BM is the established national language, connected to a Malay dominant state. Mandarin Chinese is the established language of the supranational Chinese identity. English and Arabic, taught as subjects, are aligned to the government's economic development and religious agendas. Some in the Sarawak sovereignty movement are using the lure of EMI to gain support for their cause. Missing from this linguistic landscape are Sarawak's local languages – indigenous, Malay and Chinese – which are marginalised in the competing interests of more powerful political forces. Increasing the use of local languages in schools could help Sarawak's students reverse their underachievement, caused, according to many, by their inability to understand BM and Mandarin medium lessons in early primary grades. Unfortunately there appears to be little political will to promote local languages in education.

Conclusion

The ELTDP was able to achieve its transformative agenda on a small scale by enabling project teachers to form their own local professional development structures outside MoE parameters, and by positioning English as a language for their professional development. However, the project was not able to influence the power structures within the education system and was therefore unable to effectively advocate institutional reform. As a service provider to the MoE, the British Council did not have a mandate to enact institutional change so any policy reform would have to be initiated by those who hold power in the Ministry. For this to happen, a much stronger advocacy effort at the highest possible levels would need to go forward.

Therefore on the policy level, international organisations which carry out language education projects in developing countries need to better understand the power structures, agendas and struggles which lie behind policymakers' decisions. Only then can a transformative agenda promoting multilingualism in education systems have any chance of success.

On the ground, external actors must continually assess local needs and perceptions, ensuring that outside support is locally driven and initiatives are sustainable. Research needs to be done on how communities perceive external interventions, especially those that use indigenous cultural resources as educational tools and the extent to which they risk cultural commodification and the essentialising of indigenous populations.

Finally, education development projects which work with English can help dispel the myth of the Goddess of English if there is greater awareness among all project stakeholders that empowerment through English can only be achieved if there is empowerment through multilingualism.

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APPENDIX

22

Towards a conference legacy programme: An agenda for research and action

Hywel Coleman

Introduction

Participants in the 11th Language & Development Conference with the theme 'Multilingualism and Development' were invited to complete a combined 'Research Agenda and Action Agenda' form on each of the three days of the conference. These forms were intended to capture the participants' thoughts on what future research is required and what further action needs to be taken, in response to the presentations they had heard and the discussions they had participated in during each day. The intention is that these responses will contribute to the development of a conference legacy programme (or programmes), so that the enthusiasm and momentum engendered by the conference are not lost.

The total number of registered participants in the conference was 266. Thus the maximum possible number of completed Research/Action Agenda forms was 798. In fact, as Table 1 shows, just 123 responses were received, a response rate of 15 per cent. Almost exactly 50 per cent of the responses came from participants from outside India and 45 per cent came from participants based in India; five per cent of respondents did not indicate where they were based.

Table 1: Completed Research/Action Agenda sheets

Day	Origin of respondents			Total
	Outside India	India	Not stated	
1	26	19	2	47
2	17	19	1	37
3	19	17	3	39
Total	**62 (50%)**	**55 (45%)**	**6 (5%)**	**123**

Some respondents provided their names but, for the purposes of this report, all responses have been anonymised. All the responses have been transcribed; however, in several cases longer responses have been summarised rather than transcribed in full.

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Some respondents did not complete both sections of the form. From the 123 respondents, 121 (98 per cent) provided their thoughts on future research and 94 (77 per cent) gave their ideas on future action. In fact in many cases responses regarding research and action are closely related; some respondents, for example, used the Action section to elaborate on how they thought their research proposal should be implemented. For others, research and action are inseparable, while yet others argued that research in itself is a type of action. In the discussion that follows, therefore, research and action proposals are not dealt with separately.

Outline

In quantitative terms, with a response rate of just 15 per cent, the data collected are rather limited. However, qualitatively the data are extremely rich. Respondents have provided thoughtful, imaginative and – in some cases – extensive responses. The discussion which follows identifies the major themes which emerge.

The analysis proposed here places the respondents' research and action proposals into five principal categories or themes and ten sub-themes, as shown below. Inevitably, there is some overlap between sub-themes.

Theme A: Multilingualisms in society

A.1 Scoping the phenomenon

A.2 Policy and planning

A.3 Language loss and preservation

A.4 Language, social integration and social exclusion

A.5 Language, employment and poverty

A.6 The context of medicine

Theme B: Multilingualisms and education

B.1 Roles and effectiveness of language in education

B.2 Mother-tongue-based multilingual education

B.3 Multilingual education, English and the role of the British Council

B.4 English as a medium of instruction

Theme C: Research actors and researching multilingually

Theme D: Translational research

Theme E: Future Language & Development Conferences

Each of these themes and sub-themes is explored individually in the following pages. The report concludes with a summary of seven prominent issues which might constitute the elements of a research and action agenda.

Note: The code used to identify respondents consists of three elements, for example 1.11.O. The first element (1, 2 or 3) indicates the conference day to which the comments relate; the second element is a serial number; and the third element (O, I or -) shows whether the respondent came from Outside India, from India or did not indicate where they were based. Thus 1.11.O indicates that the response relates to Day 1 of the conference, this is the 11th randomly ordered respondent and the respondent comes from outside India.

Theme A: Multilingualisms in society

A.1 Scoping the phenomenon

Basic descriptive work on the phenomenon of multilingualism is still required:

> *Research needed in multilingual contexts to uncover links between languages, patterns of communication in multilingual societies, roles of link languages and places of smaller languages.* (1.3.I)

> *Document the translanguaging practices going on in various multilingual settings around the world, in informal settings and daily practices, both in immigrant communities in 'developed' countries and in multilingual settings in developing countries. … How does translanguaging differ from code switching? Compare an industrialised country with a large population of immigrants (e.g. UK, Sweden, Norway) with a multilingual country in Asia (e.g. India) or Africa (e.g. South Africa).* (3.13.O)

All of these issues become even sharper in urban contexts characterised by linguistic hyperdiversity.

A.2 Policy and planning

> *Undertake historical trajectories of language policy and planning.* (1.5.O)

Unpack the concept of prestige planning for languages, i.e. deliberate attempts to raise the status of particular languages:

> *There is a need for closer investigation of the concept of prestige planning, to be done by a team of social scientists from developing and developed countries. What does prestige planning entail? How can it be done? What examples are available of prestige planning carried out by the state for languages of instruction? Look at examples available in Europe and Canada, but look also at historical examples (which may no longer be practised) in Somalia, Madagascar and Guinea to see what can be achieved. And look at potential cases in Rwanda and Tanzania.* (2.14.O)

> *There is a need to make policy more enabling and flexible.* (1.14.O)

There is also a need for awareness raising and advocacy:

> *How to help government ministries and international agencies understand basic concepts of inclusiveness, additive multilingualism and equity in education?* (1.14.O)

A.3 Language loss and preservation

Several respondents (e.g. 1.7.O, 1.18.O) recommended that endangered languages should be investigated with some urgency:

> *Grassroots exploration to understand gravity of the situation for endangered languages.* (2.8.I)

Efforts to preserve languages should be explored, including developing MLE and the use of digital tools:

> *How to integrate MLE and language development into community development programmes (e.g. Torwali, Pakistan) in rural settings with endangered languages?* (2.4.O)

> *Digitalisation software for languages using non-Latin scripts needs to be developed. Especially for all endangered and minority languages.* (3.4.O)

> *Use of digital devices to protect endangered languages across the world.* (3.18.O)

> *Develop scripts (writing systems) for endangered languages in social media in remote areas of India.* (3.8.I)

> *[Develop digital technology for] protection of endangered languages through documentation.* (3.16.I)

Despite these frequent calls for the use of digital technology to preserve threatened languages, it is not entirely clear that respondents understood exactly how this might be undertaken. The fascinating 'Beyond Niamey' blog owned by Don Osborn provides many examples of how this can be done in the context of Africa (http://niamey.blogspot.co.id/).

A.4 Language, social integration and social exclusion

Much basic research is still needed to describe the ways in which languages facilitate or constrain social cohesion:

> *What are the roles of dominant languages (English, Spanish, French) and non-dominant languages in social integration, social exclusion and related issues. NB [we need] not just opinion surveys but more innovative ways of studying what dominant languages are doing at grassroots level in multilingual societies.* (2.17.I)

Does the use of ICT offer potential for 'greater linguistic and cultural inclusion'? (2.6.O)

It would be valuable to research the effectiveness of 'language exchange' for social cohesion (i.e. planned bilingualism where the minority and majority communities learn each other's language at school, as in Sri Lanka).

A.5 Language, employment and poverty

Examine how language relates to 'employability pathways, getting a job and progressing opportunities along the socio-economic scale' (1.2.O). For example:

> *Language needs vary according to speakers' experiences and what they wish to be doing in future. E.g. (1) pilots and air traffic controllers must have English – legal requirement internationally. E.g. (2) Aircraft mechanics need to have names of parts translated into their languages. E.g. (3) Aircraft cleaners have no particular language needs. If contexts are understood then tools directed towards them can be adapted accordingly.* (3.9.O)

> *The relationship between language policy and poverty should also be investigated* (1.17.O).

A.6 The context of medicine

Topics for research here include background surveys which would:

- *'identify communicative vulnerability in health care'* (1.2.O)
- *highlight the 'consequences of language imbalances' in interaction between doctors and patients* (3.9.O)
- *facilitate the development of 'interdisciplinary training for health professionals who face multilingual challenges'* (1.11.O), and
- *identify 'key terms which could be translated multilingually and downloaded as needed, for example in instructions for the use of medicines and descriptions of ailments'* (1.1.O).

Theme B: Multilingualisms and education

B.1 Roles and effectiveness of language in education

Although much research in this area has already been carried out, there were several recommendations for further extensive surveys of medium of instruction policies and practices to be carried out across Asia and Africa (e.g. 1.12.O, 1.15.O, 1.3.I). One respondent recommended:

> *In multilingual classrooms, how to examine processes of learning and language use (rather than simply looking at outcomes based on possibly irrelevant assessment measures)?* (3.10.O)

Another respondent proposed looking at the question from the perspective of children:

> *How do children who speak minority languages use those languages in their educational lives? Document the ways in which the mother tongue is used in educational space, with evidence from the playground, school corridors, meal times, classrooms. Which languages do children use to talk to each other, do group work etc? How are these other languages used by the English teacher?* (1.18.I)

The second proposal above related specifically to 'Indian rural classrooms and urban slums' but of course similar studies could be carried out in any contexts where speakers of minority languages find themselves in schools which use other languages.

B.2 Mother-tongue-based multilingual education

There is a growing trend to adopt multilingual education in different parts of the world and much has been written on this issue. However, some respondents felt that discussion of the phenomenon is still insufficiently rigorous:

> *There seem to be many MLE programmes taking place in Asia and Africa. But we need conceptual, theoretical and methodological mapping of these programmes to ensure that when researchers are talking about MLE practices in a particular location we know exactly what they mean and to facilitate comparison with similar programmes elsewhere.* (3.13.I)

More work is needed to overcome implementational difficulties associated with MLE. It is therefore important to learn from examples of best practice:

> *No longer why L1-based MLE but how, particularly in low-income contexts. More case studies needed of solutions to how questions based on what conditions (i.e. context).* (1.14.O and others)

Several respondents (for example 1.3.O, 1.4.O, 1.6.O) emphasised the importance of preparing teachers well for teaching in an MTB MLE system:

> *Pay attention to training of teachers of vernacular languages. No point in establishing multilingual education if there are no teachers to teach these languages. Action: Develop an agenda for training vernacular language teachers, with syllabus and course materials.* (1.1.-)

It is also important to identify teachers' *perceptions* of teaching with the mother tongue; if they have been educated to believe that the MT should be avoided in classrooms then it will not be easy for them to adapt to a radically different paradigm.

There was some recognition – though not explored in detail – of the particular challenges facing the implementation of MTB MLE programmes in linguistically diverse urban areas (2.2.I). How can MTB MLE be practised without segregating

children on language grounds? Does translanguaging offer a solution? But what does translanguaging mean in classroom practice? Who defines it and what examples of translanguaging are available?

> *Explore the role of translanguaging as a teaching resource in multilingual classrooms in contexts where two or more languages are in close contact and have overlapping domains of use.* (2.12.I)

> *Document translanguaging practices in multilingual classrooms and develop a strategy for this type of practice which is workable in an educational setting.* (3.13.O)

According to some, MTB MLE should be applied throughout the education system, not only in the early years:

> *Apply MTB MLE at the highest levels of education. Restricting it to primary level will never produce [the] counter-hegemony that we wish against English and other major languages. Thus policy and curriculum changes in higher education will be required.* (1.13.I)

Others proposed that using the MT in examinations would have a positive washback effect on MTB MLE, as it would valorise the MT. But this needs investigation (1.7.O, 1.11.O).

In contrast, there was a suggestion that further research is required to clarify whether MTB MLE schools really bring the benefits that are claimed for them:

> *We need independent evaluation of government MTB MLE schemes implemented in certain states of India. These are being cited as successful. [However] not all are the success stories [claimed] by certain organised studies. Look at the real picture of what is happening in the majority of classrooms. This needs to be investigated by independent researchers.* (3.17.I)

B.3 Multilingual education, English and the role of the British Council

What is the role of English in multilingual societies and in multilingual education? What role should the British Council be playing?

> *[We need] effective and comparative/contextualised formulation of how English can be located in a multilingual framework. British Council needs to spell out workable proposals for how English can be a part of MTB MLE in English-dominated multilingual societies.* (1.3.I)

Can English be an effective 'neutral' alternative to an imposed majority language?

> *Research could focus on areas where English is an alternative to a language which is perceived to be politically imposed by an external majority, such as Malay in Sarawak.* (2.17.O)

B.4 English as medium of instruction

A cluster of proposals related to the flight from state education – not only by the middle class but also by people of much humbler circumstances – which is being experienced in many parts of the world. The schools to which many aspirational parents are tending to send their children are characterised as being of 'low cost' and 'English medium'. These are sometimes referred to as 'low cost English medium' (LCEM) schools even though there is little concrete evidence yet that language of instruction policy plays a major role in parents' decision making. Education researchers and commentators tend to look askance at these schools.

For example, there were several calls for research to examine why LCEM schools exist and why they are so popular:

> *Analyse the great interest in English among rural people and the mushrooming of English-medium schools.* (1.13.I, also 1.10.O and 1.18.O)

One possibility is that what appeals to parents is not (only) the medium of instruction that these schools claim to use but, rather, a more disciplined approach to the delivery of education:

> *Teacher absenteeism and neglect in state schools has led to rise of low cost EMI private schools. These private schools bypass the state system and train their own teachers, who are not employed by the state and are easier to replace if they don't turn up or perform poorly. EMI might not be the main appeal of private schools to parents; it may instead be their accountability, the simple fact that the teachers actually turn up. Therefore the research questions could be:*
>
> *(a) To what extent is the popularity of low cost EMI schools driven by the poor quality of state schools and the neglect and absenteeism of state school teachers?*
>
> *(b) Can L1 medium education be promoted using the model that low cost private education providers such as Bridge International have used in Kenya?* (3.15.O)

One respondent recommended researching the economic costs associated with LCEM education where children do not understand what is happening in their classrooms:

> *Investigate the economic loss to a country when a foreign language is used as MOI – look especially at low-cost English medium (LCEM) schools. Consider a) number of dropouts because children don't understand, b) teachers' competence in English, c) number of children who never enrol. The whole LCEM phenomenon in Asia and Africa needs research and documentation.* (1.13.O)

But there was also a perception that LCEM schools are being demonised without sufficient evidence and that impartial investigations are required:

> *Avoid being judgmental about low-cost English medium schools. We need descriptive research on what is happening in them in terms of negotiation*

between English and other Indian languages. Aim should be to understand the role that English plays without judging. (1.13.I)

Much discussion of the shortcomings of EMI, but a) How far does it satisfy expectations of pupils and parents? b) Does it really help school leavers find better jobs? c) Does it really contribute to high dropout rates? Or do other factors contribute (teacher absenteeism, poor buildings, etc)? (2.13.O)

Although the prevailing academic consensus opposes EMI, especially in early years, there is undeniably a popular movement toward it, driven both by parental perceptions of social mobility and by profit-seeking education providers that offer it. It seems extremely challenging for the small voice of the academic community to raise adequate awareness about the merits of L1 medium education. So in addition to trying to move the pendulum toward L1 medium, should academic research also focus on researching successful implementation of EMI, more closely examining models such as Singapore and some low cost private schools in Kenya which have produced some positive results in standardised exams? (2.17.O)

Some respondents argued that LCEM schools are here to stay and that it is therefore important to find ways to support those learners in these schools who have limited English (1.16.O).

Others, aware that in many contexts in Asia and Africa English is an elite language, proposed researching how English could be 'democratised' (e.g. 1.4.O, 1.8.O):

Focus on child learning of English which essentially casts anyone who does not learn English effectively in school as a 'lost cause' who will spend the rest of their lives linguistically excluded. This includes billions of people who have many decades to live, as well as many children today and in future who will never attain English proficiency. So, what are the needs for living a life where English does not factor at a level equivalent with the fortunate minority who are able to use it instrumentally? (2.7.O)

Theme C: Research actors and researching multilingually

We need to be multilingual ourselves in the way that we work: 'Promote a multilingual ideology in word and deed' (1.14.O). For example, researchers should research multilingually and should publish their findings multilingually, not only in English.

Throughout the respondents' recommendations there were repeated reminders of the need to involve:

- stakeholders at the grassroots level
- education providers (state and private)
- experts from a wide range of disciplines
- bureaucrats and policy makers (whose perspectives may be very different from those of language practitioners and researchers)

- NGOs
- international development agencies.

Theme D: Translational research

One respondent made two important recommendations for translational research in two different manners:

> *Translational research is translation across domains of research-cum-practice, from language education to medical education. Insights from research on multilingual education (e.g. participation in the classroom) have the potential to be translated into other social domains, including healthcare delivery (e.g. participation in the clinic). The wealth of research findings from genre-based and classroom-oriented studies in language education and literacy can provide points of contact for medical education, (e.g. writing case notes, oral case presentations, use of information-seeking questions in clinical history taking, offer of explanations during diagnostic and treatment phases of a consultation).* (3.19.O)

> *In the developing world there is very little applied linguistic and communication/ discourse-oriented research addressing 'the everyday facts of life and death', especially in the context of mediated healthcare encounters. By contrast, in the developed world, there already exists a robust body of research in healthcare communication, particularly dealing with linguistically and culturally diverse settings, which can offer a platform to consolidate translational research.* (3.19.O)

Theme E: Future Language & Development Conferences

Although the Research/Action Agenda instrument was not intended to be used to evaluate the New Delhi Conference, several respondents used the opportunity to make comments about the event and to offer suggestions for the organisation of Language & Development Conferences in the future.

One respondent (3.4.O) felt that there had been insufficient involvement of policy makers in the conference; the implication seemed to be that the policy makers would have benefitted from participating rather than that the other participants would have had much to learn from the policy makers.

However, another respondent suggested that it is impossible for conferences like this to have the impact on policy that their organisers might have expected for as long as there is no involvement of a wider range of disciplines:

> *Issues raised in the conference pointed to the need to look at multilingualism (language/culture maintenance or language in education including MOI and EMI) within the macro-context of social, political and economic issues a particular country is addressing. But by discussing language matters in isolation we won't get far in influencing policy making, will we? Multilingualism and development are just part of a complex puzzle. We need input beyond language teaching experts,*

i.e. linguists, economists, politicians, education planners. In the next conference, [explore:]

- *what ideologies/philosophies underlie the language and other policies of countries, looking at the integratedness of language/education and other policies of a country*
- *language planning, past, present, future*
- *medium of instruction, including EMI; is there any country which has implemented a non-EMI policy and is thriving in the world, socially, politically and economically? If so, we need to learn from them.* (I.26.O)

A similar comment about involving economists was made by respondent 1.17.O, who then added that major development bodies should be involved:

> *Future conferences: involve major development organisations, e.g. DFID, USAID, EU, GIZ, SIDA, CIDA, World Bank. Next conference should be hosted by one of these.* (1.17.O)

Respondent 1.5.O also recommended that future conferences should be more 'trans-disciplinary' and that they should provide 'more explicit opportunities to form research networks after the event.'

Another respondent wanted a focus on practical ideas for the successful implementation of multilingual education:

> *Organise a conference where experts from developing nations discuss solutions for MLE, especially in mainstream schools and higher education.* (2.15.I)

Multilingualisms and development: Towards an agenda

The issues summarised in Box 1 run across the various themes and sub-themes which have been identified above. They can be seen as the elements of a research and action agenda (or several agendas in different contexts).

Box 1: Towards an agenda for research and action
1. **Terminology** There is a need to achieve consensus on the interpretation of key terms, such as 'multilingual education', 'low-cost English medium education' and 'translanguaging'. Without shared understanding we will not be able to describe multilingual phenomena in a useful way. One way of starting will be to look carefully at how these terms are actually being used in practice.
2. **Language use in multilingual contexts** There is a need to describe, non-judgmentally, how languages are being used, for what purposes and with what consequences in multilingual contexts. These descriptions must take into account the experiences and perspectives of the speakers of minority languages, the speakers of majority languages, children, adults, education providers, service users, service providers, migrants, host communities and governments. These descriptions should be undertaken in rural, urban, developing and industrialised contexts in Asia, Africa, Europe and elsewhere.

3. **The practice of multilingual education (MTB MLE)** The practice of multilingual education – and, particularly, mother-tongue-based multilingual education – has already been widely described and discussed. But much more non-judgmental work is needed to describe MTB MLE as it occurs in a wide range of contexts in Asia and Africa. What are the languages of the participants (learners and teachers) in these schools? What languages are actually being used and in what ways in these schools? How do participants feel about these language practices? Have they been adequately prepared for these language practices? How have policy makers and communities been persuaded to accept MTB MLE? What languages are being learnt and what other subjects are being learnt? What are the long term impacts for learners in MTB MLE schools? Does MTB MLE really have the benefits that are claimed for it?
4. **The practice of low-cost English medium (LCEM) education** We need detailed non-judgmental descriptions of English medium – and especially low-cost English medium – education as it occurs in a wide range of contexts in Asia and Africa. Why do parents use these schools? Do they get what they are hoping for? To what extent is English really being used and how are other languages being used? Which English is being used? What languages are being learnt and what other subjects are being learnt? What are the long-term impacts for learners in LCEM schools? Do LCEM schools really have the dangers and disadvantages that have been laid against them?
5. **Service provision in multilingual contexts** How do service providers – particularly in health care – provide the services which they offer in contexts where multiple languages are in use? We need detailed descriptions of practice and (if any) policy in a range of different contexts in Asia and Africa. How do service users and providers perceive their experiences? How successful or otherwise are their interactions?
6. **Translational research** What scope is there for exploiting the substantial research which already exists in the area of classroom discourse for improving our understanding of communication in clinical contexts? What scope is there for replicating the substantial research which has already been undertaken in clinical contexts in developed countries in order to assess its relevance and appropriacy in developing country contexts?
6. **Future L&D Conferences** The Trustees of the L&D Conference Series need to pay attention to the pointers provided by conference participants (cf Theme E above) as they plan the 12th and subsequent Conferences.
7. **We are not alone** All of these proposed research and action activities need to involve a much wider range of participants and organisations than have been involved so far.

Contributors

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Multilingualisms and Development is the latest in the proceedings of the ongoing Language & Development Conference series. This volume brings together twenty of the most important presentations from the 11th Language & Development Conference, which took place in New Delhi, India, in 2015. One of the objectives of the conference was that mother-tongue-based multilingualism in developing world contexts should not only be described and its achievements celebrated, but also that it should be subjected to critical scrutiny and its limits identified. The conference also aimed to examine the growing phenomenon of low-cost so-called English-medium education establishments serving disadvantaged communities. Additionally, the conference considered whether current work on linguistic super-diversity in the cities of the West has any relevance for the vast urban areas of Asia and Africa.

These issues and others are explored in the contributions to this book. The volume is organised in four parts:

- Multilingualism, marginalisation and empowerment
- Mother-tongue-based multilingual education
- Multilingualism and the metropolis
- English in a multilingual world.

A discussion by Professor D.P. Pattanayak prefaces the collection, while an agenda for further research into multilingualism and development forms an appendix.

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