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Multilingual Education

Guest Editor:
Mahendra Kumar Mishra

NATIONAL FOLKLORE SUPPORT CENTRE

National Folklore Support Centre (NFSC) *is a non-governmental, non-profit organisation, registered in Chennai, dedicated to the promotion of Indian folklore research, education, training, networking, and publications. The aim of the Centre is to integrate scholarship with activism, aesthetic appreciation with community development, comparative folklore studies with cultural diversities and identities, dissemination of information with multi-disciplinary dialogues, folklore fieldwork with developmental issues folklore advocacy with public programming events and digital technology with applications to voice the cultures of the marginalised and historically disadvantaged communities. Folklore is a tradition based on any expressive behaviour that brings a group together, creates a convention and commits it to cultural memory. NFSC aims to achieve its goals through cooperative and experimental activities at various levels. NFSC is supported by grants from the Ford Foundation and Tata Education Trust.*

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EDITORIAL

Multilingual Education for Indigenous Communities

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Folklore as a body of community knowledge and a mode of communication contributes much towards creating a culturally responsive curriculum for children in different socio-cultural contexts. Local knowledge as a socio-cultural system offers the schools with the verities of pre-school knowledge which the school is unable to explore due to its monoculture curriculum.

Folklore is a stock of knowledge created by the community for their children's learning in context. Children's folklore like stories, games, songs, riddles, arts and crafts, music and dance, play songs and play materials contribute substantially to the cognitive and social development of children. This improves their verbal and non-verbal skills.

The guiding principles of National Curriculum Framework 2005 are to connect local knowledge with the school curriculum. For oral tradition, NCF 2005 envisages,

The oral lore and traditions of craft are a unique intellectual property, varied and sophisticated, preserved by innumerable groups in our society, including women, marginalised, and communities, and tribal people. By including these in the curriculum for all children, we could provide them with windows of understanding and kernels of ideas, skills and capabilities that could be worked into forms and inventions that could enrich their own lives and society. School privileges the literate, but cannot afford to continue to ignore the oral. Sustaining oral skills of all kinds is important. (p. 27 of NCF 2005)1

The NCF 2005 further elaborates the local knowledge tradition:

Many communities and individuals in India are a rich storehouse of knowledge about many aspects of India's environment, acquired over generations and handed down as traditional knowledge, as well as through an individual's practical experience. Such knowledge may pertain to: naming and categorising plants, or ways of harvesting and storing water, or of practising sustainable agriculture. Sometimes these may be different from the ways in which school knowledge approaches the subject. At other times, it may not be recognised as something that is important. In these situations, teachers could help children develop projects of study based on local traditions and people's practical ecological knowledge; this may also involve comparing these with the school approach. In some cases, as in the case of classifying plants, the two traditions may be simply parallel and be based on different criteria considered significant. In other cases, for example the classification and diagnosis of illnesses, it may also challenge and contradict local belief systems. However, all forms of local knowledge must be mediated through Constitutional values and principles. (p. 32 of NCF 2005: www.ncert.nic.in)

Regarding the use of home language or the first language of the children in the school where the gap of home language and school language is high, the Position Paper of National Focus Group on Schedule Castes and Schedule Tribes envisages for the inclusion of home or first language of the children in schools as the medium of instruction at least up to the end of the primary stage. Ignoring the cultural and linguistic diversities in school system is a part of the 'history of sanctioned injustice'.

Looking at tribal education in the Indian context, it is evident that not much effort has been made for the education of tribal children, except providing them inappropriate education. Fortunately, folklore as a community system has become gradually acknowledged at the national level as curricular framework and the language of the children as the pre-requisite for child-centred education. More dialogue is necessary to explore the Indian knowledge system in the school system where children can get their experiential life reflected in the school curriculum.

This newsletter contains articles contributed by practitioners and policy makers on indigenous education and multilingual education across the globe. Tove Skutnabb Kangas is a well known advocate of Multilingual Education and Linguistic Human Rights. David A. Hough is a Liberatory Pedagogist and his focus is on Nepal Multilingual Education Project to promote tribal education through bottom up approach, empowering the indigenous community. Iina Nurmela's paper is based on the experiential part of David's work in Nepal. Susanne Perez's article explores the indigenous education system of Peru. Dhir Jhingran has suggested appropriate educational strategies for implementation arrangements referring some feasible models drawing from the successful models from different countries where indigenous education has been made successful.

By bringing out this volume, NFSC has posed a question to folklorists about the role they play for the non-literate society they work with. A.K. Ramanujan has aspired to connect folklorists with educationists to explore the process of cognition system in folklore. That is still ignored in our educational domain. I am grateful to the authors for their kind contribution to the Indian Folklife. I am thankful to Mr. M.D. Muthukumarswamy for kindly offering me this opportunity to choose a topic like multilingual education for indigenous communities for the NFSC newsletter to strengthen the efforts of policymakers, theoreticians and practitioners of indigenous education in India and outside India.

Endnotes

[1] National Curriculum Framework 2005, National Council of Educational Research and Training, New Delhi, 2005 ❁

Linguistic Genocide : Tribal Education in India

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Most tribal education in India teaches tribal children through the medium of a language that is not their own language. This prevents access to education. It can also be seen as language genocide.

Robert Dunbar, human rights lawyer, and I wrote, with support from Indigenous colleagues, an Expert paper for UNPFII (*United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues*) (Magga et al., 2005). It contains sociological, educational and legal argumentation where we show that to educate Indigenous/tribal and minority (ITM) children (including immigrant minorities), through the medium of a dominant language in a **submersion** or even early-exit transitional programme prevents access to education because of the linguistic, pedagogical and psychological barriers it creates. Thus it violates the human right to education.

This right is expressed in many international human rights documents, also in the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* (Art. 29). The Convention has been ratified by all other UN member states except two: Somalia and the USA.

In submersion education, an ITM child learns something of a dominant language **subtractively**, at the cost of developing her own language. Often the dominant language replaces the child's own language. Submersion education often curtails the development of the children's capabilities and perpetuates poverty (see economics Nobel laureate Amartya Sen). It is organized against solid research evidence of how best to reach high levels of bilingualism or multilingualism and how to enable these children to achieve academically in school. Instead the children should have **additive** education, in a **mother-tongue-based multilingual (MLE)** programme where the child's own language is the main medium of education atleast during the first 6 years, preferably longer, and where other languages are taught as subjects by well-qualified bilingual or multilingual teachers who know the child's mother tongue.

Our recent Expert paper (Dunbar & Skutnabb-Kangas 2008) shows that subtractive dominant-language medium education for ITM children can have harmful consequences socially, psychologically, economically and politically. It can cause very serious mental harm: social dislocation, psychological, cognitive, linguistic and educational harm, and, partially through this, also economic, social and political marginalisation. It can also often result in serious physical harm, e.g. in residential schools, and as a long-term result of marginalisation - e.g. alcoholism, suicides and violence.

When States, including India, persist in implementing these subtractive policies, in the full knowledge of their devastating effects, the education can thus sociologically and educationally be termed genocide, according to two of the definitions in United Nations' 1948 *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide* (the "Genocide Convention").

Article II(e): *'forcibly transferring children of the group to another group'*; and Article II(b): *'causing serious bodily **or mental** harm to members of the group'*; (emphasis added).

Legally, this education can be labeled a crime against humanity. Our conclusion states that subtractive education

> ... is now at odds with and in clear violation of a range of human rights standards, and in our view amount to ongoing violations of fundamental rights. It is at odds with contemporary standards of minority protection. ... In our view, the concept of "crime against humanity" is less restrictive [than genocide], and can also be applied to these forms of education. ... In our view, the destructive consequences of subtractive education, not only for indigenous languages and cultures but also in terms

of the lives of indigenous people/s, are now clear. The concept of "crimes against humanity" provides a good basis for an evolution that will ultimately lead to the stigmatisation through law of subtractive educational practices and policies.

Subtractive education through the medium of a dominant language often transfers IM children to the dominant group linguistically and culturally within one or two generations. It may thus lead to the extinction of Indigenous/tribal languages, thus contributing to the disappearance of the world's linguistic diversity.

A partial result of this can be the disappearance of the knowledge about biodiversity and its maintenance, and, through this, diminishing prerequisites for human life on earth. Linguistic diversity and biodiversity are correlationally and causally related. Most of the world's mega biodiversity is in areas under the management or guardianship of Indigenous/tribal peoples. Most of the world's linguistic diversity resides in the small languages of Indigenous/tribal peoples. Much of the detailed knowledge of how to maintain biodiversity is encoded in their languages. Through killing them, we kill the prerequisites for maintaining biodiversity. If we continue as now, most of the world's Indigenous languages will be gone by 2100.

When States, including India, refuse to grant Indigenous/tribal peoples an unconditional right to the most decisive Linguistic Human Right in education, the right to be educated mainly in one's own language in a non-fee state school, they are seriously harming the children concerned, society, and our planet.

What can India and other states do in order not to participate in crimes against humanity?

Indigenous/tribal and minority education could be organised so as to promote high levels of multilingualism. This would give better results in terms of school achievement, learning of the dominant language and issues around identity. In addition, not even the initial short-term costs would be more than a few percent higher, and in the long term, mainly mother-tongue medium education would lead to considerable savings, including eliminating much of the "illiteracy" of tens of millions of children, and today's educational wastage.

There are many positive examples of Indigenous/tribal language medium education from many countries and peoples/groups. Some have started recently and have not come very far yet. A few examples are Nepal (Hough et al, 2009), Orissa (Mohanty & Panda, 2007, 2009, Mohanty et al. 2009), Peru (Perez 2009, Perez & Trapnell in press). In the Saami country in Norway and Finland (Aikio-Puoskari, 2009, Aikio-Puoskari & Skutnabb-Kangas 2007) mother tongue medium education can continue even at the university level, at Saami University College. And country-wide results from education in Ethiopia – see below - show that those children who had 8 or even 10 years of mother tongue medium education, with Amharic and English as subjects, had better results in all subjects (including English) than children who had fewer years of mother tongue medium or who had everything in English from the start (Heugh 2009, Heugh et al. 2007, Heugh & Skutnabb-Kangas, eds, forthcoming). Deaf education is also a case in point: Sign-language-medium education really works (Skutnabb-Kangas 2008, Skutnabb-Kangas & Aikio-Puoskari, 2003). Bolivia, Bangladesh, etc. also have positive examples. Likewise, there are many research studies showing the positive results of mainly MTM education for both national and immigrated minorities (see Mohanty et al, eds, 2009, García et al., eds, 2006, Skutnabb-Kangas 2000, for summaries). Still, in today's situation, there is a lot of nice talk and far too little action.

The Orissa example shows that this can be done in India. In July 2007, a project started in Orissa. In 200 schools, Indigenous ("tribal") children from 10 language groups are being taught through their mother tongues in the first grades, with materials collected from children, parents and teachers. The coordinator is Dr. Mahendra Kumar Mishra. Sixteen more languages will be added in 2008. The research project "From mother tongue to other tongue: facilitating transition in multilingual education of tribal children in India", directed by professors Ajit K. Mohanty and Minati Panda (Zakir Husain Centre for Educational Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi), follows some of the children. They show that there are still huge pedagogical problems, but they also present solutions. Teacher training, methods, materials, and many other issues need attention in addition to changing the medium of education and adding some local context. There are similar projects on a smaller scale in a couple of other states (e.g. Andhra Pradesh), and plans to start them in several other states.

The project Multilingual Education Programme for all non-Nepali Speaking Students of Primary Schools of Nepal (Ministry of Education, Nepal, Dr. Lava Deo Awasthi) is running 6 pilot projects where Indigenous and minority children will be taught mainly in their mother tongues in primary school. Materials and curriculum are bottom-up, largely planned by villagers. The plan is to extend this to all non-Nepali mother tongue children in Nepal. Nepal has over 100 languages.

The Orissa and Nepali projects have good cooperation, people have visited each other and exchanged materials and ideas – there is a lot to learn from this kind of South-South co-operation.

Ethiopia has an innovative and progressive national education policy, based on 8 years of mother-tongue medium (MTM) education. Regions have the authority to make their own decentralized implementation plans. Some regions transfer to English medium already after 4 or 6 years. A study across all the regions was

commissioned by the Ethiopian Ministry of Education (Heugh, Kathleen, Benson, Carol, Berhanu, Bogale & Mekonnen, Alemu Gebre Yohannes (22 January 2007). *Final Report. Study on Medium of Instruction in Primary Schools in Ethiopia, Commissioned by the Ministry of Education, September to December 2006*). There is an efficient collection of system-wide assessment data. These show very clear patterns of learner achievement at Grade/Year 8, 10 and 12. The Grade 8 data show that those learners who have 8 years of MTM education plus English as a subject perform better across the curriculum (including in English) than those with 6 years or 4 years of mother tongue medium.

"Every child in the world has the right to education through the medium of their mother tongue", the Minister of Education in Kurdistan, Iraq Abdul-Aziz Taib said when I interviewed him in Kurdistan 15 March 2006. This right is violated today in most countries, including India. Two of the most harmful myths in ITM education are that starting to teach ITM children early through the medium of a dominant language, be it a regional dominant language or English, and exposing the children maximally to this language, results in good competence in that language. Wrong wrong wrong! The more the mother tongue is used as the teaching language, the better the results also in English, the world's largest study, with over 200,000 children in the USA showed (Thomas & Collier 2002). The other myth is that knowing English is enough and guarantees a good job. A large-scale European study "Plurilingual competences on the labour market" (1998-2000, random sample panel, 8,232 individuals, aged 20-64) concluded: "The advantages of commanding English will tend to diminish when these competencies become more and more abundant" (Klein 2007: 278). English opens some doors – yes. But a safe way towards good competence in English – or a regional dominant language – starts with mainly mother tongue medium education.

All the references mentioned here can be found on my home page in my over 300-page bibliography at www.Tove-Skutnabb-Kangas.org. Several longer articles about similar issues can also be downloaded there. ❁

UN Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples: Applications for MLE from Nepal to India and Beyond

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Abstract

This paper explores how multilingual education (MLE) programmes for indigenous peoples in Nepal and worldwide can benefit from adapting the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples into their national language and planning structures. In particular it notes how Articles 13 and 14 can be used to design MLE programs which are controlled from the bottom up by local indigenous communities. The author is Professor of Communication at Shonan Institute of Technology in Fujisawa, Japan. He was the Chief Technical Advisor to the Nepal Ministry of Education and Sports for MLE from January 2007to May 2008.

Introduction

In her article in this issue, Tove Skutnabb-Kangas correctly argues that teaching indigenous children in languages other than their mother tongue prevents education and can be seen as genocide and a crime against humanity. In support of this, she cites numerous international human rights documents, expert papers and reports, including the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child [Art. 29], and the United Nation's 1948 Genocide Convention. Obviously, these are all necessary arguments for promoting MLE programmes among indigenous and minority language peoples. But is this argument sufficient? Particularly if it does not address the issue of education itself—of what education is for?

Even the best MLE programmes—if they are based on assimilative top-down educational standards that reflect the norms of the dominant culture—may fail to do the job. Indigenous peoples also need to have the right to control both the teaching content and methodology of their children's education. Here, the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) may be of added help.

Although a non-binding resolution—with the U.S., Canada, Australia and New Zealand voting against —it has been hailed by many as the most powerful instrument to date for indigenous rights worldwide. Ways of implementing UNDRIP dominated discussions at the 8th Session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues held from late April to early May, 2008, at UN headquarters in New York. Native Hawaiian activist Mililani Trask received a loud ovation from seated delegates and observers at a full session when she stated that UNDRIP is the single-most valuable instrument indigenous people have to reclaim their rights.

In this issue also, Taka Okazaki and Jennifer L. Teeter discuss in "Step Behind to Make Indigenous Voices heard: Education in Hawai'i", the significance of UNDRIP in the context of indigenising education in Hawai'i. I would like to follow from this, based on our experiences in support of democratic indigenous demands in Nepal, to cover some of the key issues which need to be addressed by those wishing to use UNDRIP in designing MLE programmes.

Support the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

On September 13, 2007, the United Nations General Assembly passed a non-binding resolution on the rights of indigenous peoples. Designated the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, it was passed by 143 countries including Nepal. Bolivia – a country with a large indigenous population like Nepal – is now planning to incorporate the declaration in its entirety into its constitution. In other countries, emphasis has been placed on issues of linguistic human rights and the effectiveness of teaching in the mother tongue. The declaration sets out far-reaching guidelines which, among other things, attempt to protect and promote indigenous languages and cultures. Paragraphs 13 and 14 of the declaration state the following regarding language, culture and education:

> **Article 13, Paragraph 1:** Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit for future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures, and to designate and retain their own names for communities, places and persons.
>
> **Article 14, Paragraph 1:** Indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning.

These two paragraphs call for the right of self-determination in indigenous education. Paragraph 13 gives indigenous peoples the right to control the content of their teaching, while Paragraph 14 states that the teaching of this content should be based on methods of teaching and learning which are appropriate to indigenous peoples.

Understand and Promote Indigenous Knowledge and Practices

This is often referred to as TEK, or Traditional Indigenous Knowledge. Winona LaDuke, a Native American Anishinaabe and former Green Party candidate for Vice President of the U.S., defines TEK as "the culturally and spiritually based way in which indigenous peoples relate to their ecosystems. This knowledge is founded on generations of careful observation within an ecosystem of continuous residence [and] represents the clearest empirically

David A. Hough

based system for resource management and ecosystem protection. ...Native societies' knowledge surpasses the scientific and social knowledge of the dominant society in its ability to provide information and a management style of environmental planning."

Develop Advocacy Programmes which Raise Consciousness about MLE

Consistently, indigenous peoples have raised their voices to say they want mother tongue medium of education for their children. These voices have not been listened to. As a result, there are many misconceptions about what MLE is and whether or not indigenous peoples want it. Such misconceptions are particularly common among officials in government. Given more than 250 years of discrimination against indigenous and minority peoples in Nepal—as well as the immense size of the indigenous and minority population—it is imperative that the government implement MLE nationwide by 2015. This is in keeping with EFA guidelines. In order to accomplish this, it is absolutely vital for high-level administrators and policy makers in Nepal to understand the issues. Here advocacy programs can help them understand why MLE is necessary, how languages come to be threatened and how people are marginalised as a result.

MLE and Curriculum Development from the Bottom Up

Articles 13 and 14 of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples give indigenous and minority peoples the right to develop their own curriculum, based on their individual languages, histories, philosophies, oral and written traditions. This means a decentralised curriculum that can be developed from the bottom up by local communities.

The collective knowledge that indigenous and non-Khas speaking communities possess is one of Nepal's greatest treasures. In every community, there are men and women with a wealth of knowledge about herbal

medicines and traditional healing practices, both traditional and modern knowledge and skills, local history, numerical systems, weights and measures, local religion, belief systems and related practices, life rituals, feasts, festivals, songs, poems, etc. By tapping into this vital resource, each community can build its own curriculum, based on their individual needs, histories, customs, traditional knowledge and democratic traditions.

Here students, teachers, parents and local knowledge holders can work together to produce classroom materials in the mother tongue – and multilingually where requested. For example, local elders can tell stories to children who can write them down with the help of parents and teachers. They can also draw pictures with paper and crayons. These materials can then be bound and printed as textbooks and distributed to schools speaking the same dialect. Additional materials can be kept in handwritten form and bound with string. They can be used as supplementary materials and library books. Such practices have already been tested in various regions around the country and have been shown to work.

Culturally Appropriate Methods of Learning and Teaching

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples not only addresses the right of children to get an education in their own language—and for indigenous peoples to control their own educational systems—it also calls for teaching in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning.

Again, this means a bottom up approach where each community is empowered to use its knowledge-base in teacher methodology and training. Indigenous ways of knowing include intergenerational learning strategies, the use of mnemonic devices based on oral traditions and story-telling, scientific observation of local ecosystems, and cooperative as opposed to competitive teaching styles. Here, local indigenous knowledge holders, teachers and students can come together to develop intergenerational learning strategies in a non-competitive, cooperative atmosphere.

MLE and Teaching Methodology

Empowering a community means working with its knowledge base to build MLE programmes. Rather than relying on Western educational benchmark standards based on competition, devaluing local knowledge, and individual assessment and testing, communities should be encouraged to develop teaching methodologies and approaches which reflect their traditions and values:

1. Generosity/sharing;
2. Caring for each other;
3. Collectivism (as opposed to individualism);
4. Cooperation (as opposed to competition);
5. Relatedness to one another;
6. Relatedness to nature/spirituality;
7. Individuality (respect for difference/tolerance)
8. Matrilineal bonds (gender equity);
9. Respect for elders/wisdom;
10. Intergenerational learning;
11. Patience;
12. The use of time and space as a function of the above.

MLE and Teacher Training

Many certified teachers in village schools lack fluency in the local language and knowledge about the culture. Furthermore, currently all teacher training is conducted in Nepali and teachers are not encouraged to use local languages as a medium of instruction. On the other hand, those with the greatest knowledge of the language and culture within the community rarely have teaching credentials. They often lack reading or writing skills,

An elder tells a story

but possess a treasure of oral knowledge. In order to correct these imbalances, the following steps should be taken:

1. Provide assistance for indigenous and minority peoples with School Leaving Certificates (SLCs) to become MTM teachers;
2. Incorporate indigenous teaching methodologies into the certification process;
3. Provide funding for community elders and knowledge holders to become teachers or teaching assistants even if they lack reading and writing skills. Privileging oral traditions and knowledge is vital;
4. Train teachers who speak only Nepali to become Nepali-as-second language teachers.

Job Creation/Funding

All of the above can be accomplished with relatively little money – but it will require some funding and a

good deal of commitment. For example, multi-grade and intergenerational programmes can be set up which allow community knowledge holders, teachers and students from different age groups to interact with and teach each other. Here, a master carver or story-teller might be called to share his/her knowledge in the local language with students and teachers. These stories can serve as a vehicle for MLE instruction where teachers not fluent in the language and culture can learn at the same time that they are facilitating. Later, students and teachers can work together to transcribe these stories. Finally, students may take on the role of teacher as they impart literacy skills based on these stories and written materials to their elders. All of this is best done in a multi-grade, intergenerational learning environment. In order to accomplish this, priority should be given to:

1. Primary funding at the local level rather than at the regional or national;
2. Local job creation which encourages the use of indigenous and minority languages in teacher training, curriculum development and local government administration;
3. The use of indigenous knowledge holders as teachers, teacher trainers and teaching assistants;
4. The allocation of NR300 per child for locally developed MLE textbooks and teaching materials.

Cascading

In order to make MLE sustainable nationwide by 2015 – the UN mandate for Education for All – local communities must take control of curriculum development, teacher training and methodology. If each community, after developing their own program, goes on to train five new communities, the goal can be reached. This approach is known as *Cascading*. If, on the other hand, MLE programme development and implementation are left to experts at the national and regional levels, only a fraction of Nepal's indigenous and minority languages will be covered – and even then it will take well over a quarter of a century.

Frequently Asked Questions

- ***Do indigenous and minority peoples in Nepal really want MTM/MLE?***

  Yes! They have been demanding education in their mother tongue for many years. This is especially true in the villages. Even among those who have moved to the cities and lost their language, there is strong feeling that English *only* is not the answer. Mother tongue education is also necessary.

- ***How many languages are there in Nepal?***

  It is not known how many languages there are in Nepal. Nor does it matter. The 2001 Nepal census lists 92. The Indigenous Linguistic Society of Nepal lists 143. If dialects are included, there may well be over 200. Whatever the number, however, children in each community have the right to learn in their mother tongue.

- ***Aren't there too many languages in Nepal for MLE to be practical?***

  No. Papua New Guinea with over 600 languages has done much the same. By producing materials locally and cascading the process—having each community be responsible to training five neighboring communities— it is not only possible, it is economically effective.

- ***Won't it cost too much?***

  First, it is a linguistic human right for people to be educated in their mother tongue. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples further stipulates that content and methodology be culturally appropriate. If these changes result in children staying in school, then it *will* cost more money. More teachers will be needed. Cost for materials and facilities will also increase. But children *will* be educated. In the long run, this will be an economic advantage to the country.

- ***What should be done about highly endangered languages?***

  There are some communities where few if any people still speak their languages. Even here children have the right to learn their indigenous language. Here, local knowledge holders may wish to invite linguistic documentation and revitalisation experts to assist. In such cases special funding may be necessary to pay for outside experts. All decisions and control of the process should be in the hands of the community.

- ***What should be done when many languages are spoken in the same community?***

  MLE programs can work where many languages are spoken. Each child can learn in her mother tongue and one or more other languages as well. Learning more than one language increases cognitive ability and academic achievement. Studying in only one language – especially if it is not your mother tongue – does the opposite.

- ***What should be done about languages with no writing systems?***

  There are indigenous languages in Nepal with no writing systems and others with inappropriate ones (e.g., Devanagari script for Tibeto-Burman languages). Developing appropriate writing systems can be very expensive and time consuming. The process also usually excludes community members from meaningful involvement. Each

community should decide what it wants even if these decisions contradict expert notions of what is best. For example, some communities with strong oral traditions may decide they do not want a writing system.

- ***A linguistic survey has been commissioned. How can it help?***
  The survey should only be used to supplement MLE programme development, not to oversee it. Each community should have the right to name its own language, and develop teaching materials and teaching methodologies based on its traditional knowledge. This material may later be incorporated into the survey as part of a national data base.

- ***How does MLE relate to Nepal's Linguistic, Cultural and Biological Diversity?***
  Nepal's richness lies in its great diversities—from its plants, animals and resources on the one hand to its human resources, cultural and linguistic diversity on the other. Unlike foreign development "experts" who often destroy diversity in the name of poverty alleviation, progress and globalisation, indigenous peoples know how to protect and enrich their traditional environments and ecosystems in a democratic manner. Promoting linguistic and cultural diversity helps promote biological diversity and democracy. Destroying any one form of diversity destroys the others.

Conclusion

At the time of writing, the legislature of Bolivia is considering the adoption of UNDRIP in its entirety into its newly revised constitution. If that happens, it will be a further model to nations around the world with indigenous populations—and most nations fall into that category – to emulate. It took more than ten years for UNDRIP to be ratified by the UN General Assembly. During that period, there were many rewrites, many victories and defeats. Even the title of the document —and legalistic arguments over the use of the word "peoples" (which presupposes collective communal rights) versus "people" (which does not) – was a cause for much struggle. The following quote comes from Joagquisho-Oren Lyons, Faithkeeper of the Onandoga Nation, Haudenosaunee, Six Nations Confederacy. Lyons was one of many American Indians who were instrumental in setting up the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and the subsequent UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

> *When they read and experience this Declaration on the Rights of the World's Indigenous Peoples and experience their right to self-determination, in the full sense of the word, equal to all under law, they will think kindly of us and sing songs about us, because they will know that we loved them. Dhnayto. (Now I am finished.)* ❁

Step Behind to Make Indigenous Voices Heard: Education in Hawai'i

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We, the authors, are the descendants of two of the colonial powers that have oppressed Hawai'i. Taka Okazaki is a Japanese national. Having resided in Hawai'i for four years, he experienced the unfair privilege that many Japanese blatantly enjoy in Hawai'i. Having grown up in the U.S., Jennifer Louise Teeter, feels responsible for the subjugation of Hawai'i. Hawaiian history continues to be retold and shaped by the colonial powers as opposed to the Hawaiian people. The landmark United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples provides that indigenous peoples have the right to educate themselves with content and methods they deem appropriate to their own cultures. Thus, in order to provide justice for the Hawaiian people and other colonized people, the task of an outsider is to critically examine received history, to take the responsibility for eliminating the oppression their societies internalise and externalise, and most importantly to "walk behind" the oppressed in their struggles to liberate themselves.

Whose Hawaiian history is it?

Received history informs us that the Hawaiian people are believed to have migrated to Hawai'i in the 8th century. It continues, "Hawai'i had been discovered by the English explorer Captain James Cook...after more than a thousand years of little change" in 1778 (Fuchs, 1961:3). Come 1893, Hawai'i is annexed to the United States. Most Hawaiians would provide a more intricate version of their own history that does not serve to showcase the heroic extravagances of their colonizers.

What happened to the Hawaiian people through the changes in political structure? Although according to some estimates, the population of Hawai'i had

reached 1,000,000 in 1778 (Stannard, 1990)1, it was reduced to 24,000 in 1920 (Fuchs, 1961:68). This is a fairly common story. Anytime in recent history that a colonial force has dominated another people, the population is, first, underestimated at the time of the invasion, and then enigmatically, "is reduced" to an exceedingly lower number without mentioning an agent of action. If there is reference to the disease, infanticide, and mass murder, which were among the variety of means through which colonisers devastated the populations of their colonies, it is presented as if it were simply scientific data. The suffering and genocide of the colonisers on "their subjects" is completely disregarded. The colonisers in the process of recreating history to their liking eliminate their responsibility for the genocide.

And so the story goes that at the end of the 19th century, the Hawaiian language was forcibly replaced by English, as mandated by the U.S. government, to be the medium of instruction in schools as well as communication for all government business. This not only meant that the use of Hawaiian was legally prohibited in schools or administrative offices, but also forced the view that English would bring the kind of prosperity that the Hawaiian language and culture could not. Some Hawaiians reported that they were physically punished or humiliated for their use of Hawaiian in schools, ironically by other Hawaiians.2 Thus, the number of recorded native Hawaiian speakers fell to 2,000 by 1978 (Wilson 1978, cited in Warner 2001) and was mostly composed of people over 70 years old (excluding the 300 residents of the island of Ni'ihau who separated themselves from the other islands and still continue to use the language at all ages). This kind of forced language shift, perhaps more appropriately termed, "linguistic genocide," (see Tove Skuttnabb-Kangas, 1999, and this newsletter) has been used by European nation-states to dominate conquered groups of people for centuries.

As noted above, the Hawaiian people were forcibly submerged into an English language environment where the continued use of the Hawaiian language was a detriment to their survival and their psyche. The disappearance of the indigenous language was not only a matter of the "free market economy" but was beaten out of the people, both literally and figuratively. Indigenous language holders were prohibited from passing down their language to the next generation. Describing the universality of this genocidal process among indigenous peoples, Darrell Kipp of the Piegan Institute of the Blackfoot Nation emphasises that it is not ignorance that caused indigenous peoples to forgo their languages, but a desire to protect their children from the discrimination they had faced (cited in Wilson, 2004:81). However, some governmental officials and linguists continue to blame parents for not passing on their language and some young Hawaiians now learning Hawaiian are resentful of their elders. This completely overlooks the socio-historical causality of assimilation that prevented the transmission of the Hawaiian language.

The statehood and the renaissance

Colonisation was furthered when Hawai'i became the 50th state of the United States in 1959. This statehood is associated with the movement by nisei, second generation Japanese, to redress the past injustices where their parents had not been regarded as U.S. citizens. This did not take the interests of the Hawaiian people into consideration. It also allowed huge money makers to come into Hawai'i and "develop" the islands as they saw fit. As a founding member of 'Aha Pūnana Leo, a Hawaiian language and culture revitalisation organization, William Wilson writes,

> Where there had once been open beaches where Hawaiians and other local people fished, there were now hotels populated by haole [white] and Japanese tourists. Where there had once been primarily locally owned small stores, there were now large chains from the continental United States and Japan. (1998:327)

Many young locals, including Hawaiians and Japanese who were indignant at nisei, were disillusioned by this vast "development" and thus brought about the Hawaiian Renaissance in the 1970s. At the outset, this revolution focused on Hawaiians learning more traditional forms of hula and singing more traditional Hawaiian songs. The culmination of this movement was that a significant number of these young Hawaiians and other supporters won seats in the 1978 Hawai'i State Constitutional Convention. There they proposed constitutional mandates for the teaching of the Hawaiian language, history, and culture in all public schools, and for the recognition of Hawaiian as an official language along with English. These proposals were later implemented and are considered by many Hawaiians to have been the first step in the right direction.

'Aha Pūnana Leo

Having been inspired by Kōhanga Reo (Māori language immersion preschools), the University Hawaiian language educators and Ni'ihau community educators who were concerned with the number of Hawaiian speaking children being less than fifty established a non-profit organization, 'Aha Pūnana Leo. Its original purpose was to establish and operate Pūnana Leo ("language nest") schools with the overall goal of revitalising and perpetuating the Hawaiian language and culture through the creation of a new generation of native Hawaiian-speaking children.3 It has grown to have 11 Pūnana Leos throughout the islands of Hawai'i at the time of writing ('Aha Pūnana Leo, 2009). As the parents and teachers of Pūnana Leo lobbied

and requested that Pūnana Leo children continue to be taught in Hawaiian as the medium of instruction, or otherwise face the possibility that they not be able to keep and improve their proficiency in Hawaiian, the Kula Kaiapuni Hawai'i (Hawaiian Surrounding Environment School), a K-12 public immersion school program was established. At the time of writing, there are 21 Kula Kaiapuni. Annually, some 2,000 students are served from the Pūnana Leo level through to the twelfth grade in Hawaiian language medium education ('Aha Pūnana Leo, 2009). With the establishment of the Hawaiian-medium Ph.D. Programme in 2006, it is now possible for a student to go through all levels of education in Hawaiian language. Many people see this Hawaiian revitalisation movement as one of the most successful models of indigenous language revitalisation worldwide (Matsubara, 2006).

Two changes in public schools

Two changes were made in public school education as a result of the constitutional convention in 1978. One was a Hawai'i public school mandate to teach a course in the modern history of Hawai'i (from 1778 until the present), and the other was the introduction of the Kūpuna program. The kūpuna or elders visit schools and introduce the children to Hawaiian music, provide an oral history of life in Hawai'i, and explain aspects of Hawaiian cosmology (Reed, 2008).

Having worked as a public school teacher, Julie Kaomea conducted several studies on what is happening in the classroom of Hawai'i history as well as the Kūpuna program. She stated that "many shortcomings of the current elementary Hawaiians studies program are due in part to biased or ill-informed, non-Hawaiian textbook writers, unsupportive school administrators, and well-intended Native Hawaiian classroom elders who are unwittingly complicit in the perpetuation of colonial stereotypes of Native Hawaiians" (Kaomea 2005; 35) as well as the classroom teachers. For example, in spite of the intent that the curriculum was aimed to promote an appreciation for the Native people of Hawai'i, the students in the classroom she observed portray Hawaiians as horrifically violent and bound by many rules. One of the most frequently used textbooks is The Hawaiians of Old, a dated, non-Hawaiian authored textbook. One chapter is titled, The Hawaiian had Many Rules. The following is an excerpt from one chapter.

The Hawaiian had many wars... They fought often with each other. The chiefs seemed to enjoy fighting... But these wars were... hard on the maka'āinana who had not even started the war... Many of these people were killed in battle... Wars were awful for most of the Hawaiians [Dunford 1980:152]

Both Hawaiian and non-Hawaiian students cite and echo these horrific ideas as they are also supported and validated by ill-informed non-Hawaiian teachers. This is exactly how an oppressor-looking-in version of history is pressed onto the indigenous peoples. Similarly, the Kūpuna program has an oppressive nature as well. Classroom teachers (i.e. a teacher with the "proper" teaching qualifications) are given the right and responsibility to: monitor the weekly 30-minute classroom visits by Hawaiian studies elders; review and reinforce the elders' lessons with follow-up lessons; and provide regular instruction in those aspects of the curriculum not covered by the elders. In the class on Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) holders, kūpuna are portrayed as second-class citizen teacher assistants whose curricula are dictated by the classroom teacher. As Kaomea expresses, "this Hawaiian studies curriculum, such disrespectful use (and misuse) of Native Hawaiian elders and cultural experts serves to reinforce the unequal power dynamic between Hawaiians and non-Hawaiians, and undermines our Native right to assume authority over our Native culture."

Eliminating oppression both inside and outside

There are contentions within members of the community about the manner in which language education is to proceed and how to provide an education that will liberate the Hawaiian people from their colonial binds. For instance, the academic orientation of 'Aha Pūnana Leo has created a tension within the organisation and between the organisation and the community it tries to serve (See Warner 1999 and Wilson & Kamanā 2001 for details). A founding member of 'Aha Pūnana Leo, Sam L. Warner writes:

> Some non-Hawaiian language educators and academics in the revitalization movement have and are actively engaged in promoting ideologies through political rhetoric and discourse to serve to legitimize, justify, and empower their own voices not only to speak and decide for Hawaiians but also to silence those less empowered voices (1999:68)

Yet, all hope is not lost. Taiaiake Alfred, a Mohawk activist for indigenous rights argues that if the indigenous voice is erased from society and replaced by another voice, indigenous people are effectively alienated from their culture and heritage. However, "being careful not to romanticize the past" a "traditional framework" can be utilised to build a more just society for all parties:

> I am advocating a self-conscious traditionalism, an intellectual, social, and political movement that will reinvigorate those values, principles, and other cultural elements that are best suited to the larger contemporary political and economic reality. Not only has the indigenous voice been excluded from the larger social and political discourse, but even within our own communities it has been supplanted by other voices. The notion of traditionalism ...demands self-respect and the

> confidence to build on what we know to be good and right for our own people. (1999:xviii)

Angela Cavander Wilson (2004) has found after witnessing the deterioration of a Dakota language program, that it is imperative to critically examine "how colonialism has affected our health and mindset, and thus how we might meaningfully challenge that oppression [so] we can begin to reaffirm the richness and wisdom inherent in our traditional ways." A decolonising agenda must confront the internalised racism that has caused indigenous languages to be seen as frivolous.

Finally, outsiders must release their grips on the reins of power and accept the right of indigenous peoples to control their own destiny. More than 20 years after the original drafting in 1985, on September 13, 2007, the United Nations General Assembly passed a non-binding resolution on the rights of indigenous peoples called United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

What can outsider non-Natives do to be helpful for realising these rights, then? Kaomea suggests that outsiders should:

> ...work collaboratively with Native allies, listen carefully to our wisdom as well as our concerns, interrogate unearned power and privilege (including one's own), and use this privilege to confront oppression and "stand behind" Natives, so that our voices can be heard. (2005:40)

It's time to stop standing in front or to the side but step behind to make indigenous voices heard.

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Endnotes

[1] However, Many scholars cite 300,000 as the estimated population when the colonizers arrived, thus falling pray to the colonial version of history rather than the indigenous version (Schmitt & Zane, 1977)

[2] Similarly, physical punishment and humiliation is reported for the use of Okinawan by Okinawan and instead, students were told to use the standardized version of Japanese and quite often given a hogen huda, a dialect placard (Kondo, 2008)

[3] A number of difficulties that 'Aha Punana Leo went through have been reported well (See Warner 2001; Wilson 1998; Wilson & Kamanā 2001). ❁

Intercultural bilingual education: Peru's indigenous peoples' answer to their educational needs[1]

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'Latin America's option for the indigenous peoples has, from the beginning of the Republican era of the 19th century until very recently (and perhaps even still) been one of cultural and linguistic homogenisation.' 2 *(López and Küper 2000:26)*

Introduction

In January 2007, a group of indigenous teachers participated in a workshop on Intercultural Bilingual Education in the city of Cusco, Peru. One day, they saw Al Gore's documentary "An inconvenient truth" about global warming and its consequences. The video was part of a process, through which teachers slowly would recognise the dangers of neglecting indigenous language, culture and knowledge.

Research on the relationship between biodiversity and cultural and linguistic diversity proposes that indigenous peoples play an important role in the maintenance of biodiversity (Maffi 2002: 388) and that the maintenance and development of their languages are related to the maintenance and development of biodiversity.

In Peru, the reality in schools is tied to national norms which in almost all aspects are contradictory to the country's 42 indigenous peoples' world views, their cultural and productive practices and their language. Spanish is the dominant medium of instruction in almost all schools, regardless of the children's language. Also, the national curriculum and work and text books sent out by the Peruvian Ministry of Education reflect very little of indigenous children's lives. The assimilationist approach which has dominated and is still dominating schools in indigenous villages is threatening most indigenous languages and neglecting important indigenous knowledge about the maintenance of the existing biodiversity.

Since the 1970s, indigenous organisations have claimed their right to an education based on their own languages and cultures. They contributed actively to the development of an education model widely known as Intercultural Bilingual Education (IBE). In 2000, this educational model was in use in 17 Latin American countries (López and Küper 2000: 4).

In this article, I will refer mainly to an in-service teacher training programme for teachers from bilingual, rural areas around Cusco, Peru3. The programme underwent significant changes in training content, methods and activities after starting to emphasise the concept of interculturality, which resulted in an appropriation of the IBE model by teachers and local villagers.

History of intercultural bilingual education in Peru: policies and practices

Peru has always been a multilingual and multi-ethnic country. Today, the country has 42 living indigenous languages, Spanish, and several immigrant languages. The biggest indigenous language, Quechua, is spoken by more than 3 million people, which is almost 17 per cent of the population. It can be found in all Peruvian regions, but is dominant in the highlands. Forty indigenous languages are spoken by 0.7 per cent of the Peruvian population, mainly in the rain forest lowlands. Because of the power and status of Spanish and the 'hispanification' processes, many of these languages are in danger of extinction (Trapnell and Neira 2006: 258-262). Formal education has played a central role in the promotion of a Spanish-only policy:

> [I]n Latin America, school generally came to the rural zones hand-in-hand with Spanish. This fact stood out, and still does, in the conceptions that indigenous people have about this institution and about the roles and functions that the various languages occupy in it. For many people, their language still

> does not belong in the school, nor can it be used in it. It is believed that Spanish alone is the language of reading and writing, and many parents still believe that learning to write means learning Spanish, the language required to operate more fully and exercise their citizenship rights. (Lopez and Küper 2000: 28-29).

Even if there were instances of indigenous languages being used initially in schooling, since the end of the 18th century indigenous education has been dominated by the use of Spanish as the medium of instruction (ibid.: 26). This did not change after the country´s independence in 1821, as it was now governed by a small Creole elite which considered itself the direct heirs of European superiority and therefore continued to promote Spanish as the national language (Manrique Galvez 2003: 6).

In the 1930s and 40s, however, due to a strong national indigenist current, it was officially recognised that two of the indigenous languages, Quechua and Aymara, should be used as mediums of instruction (MoI) during the initial years of primary school. Teaching through the mother tongue was considered necessary in order to assimilate the indigenous peoples into the nation (Lopez and Küper 2000: 26-27).

Concurrently, the protestant North American Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) started offering its services to Latin American countries, i.e. linguistic studies of indigenous languages, teacher training, and materials for primary schools in indigenous communities. In 1952, SIL became the first government-authorised institution to train indigenous teachers in bilingual education in Peru (Trapnell and Neira 2006: 255, Lopez and Küper 2000: 28). The aim of the teacher training was to 'create a type of school that gives the pupils the essential elements of an initial culture, trains them for productive work, teaches them basic norms of civilised life, the concept of nationality and hygienic-sanitary practices.' (Supreme Decree 909, 1952, quoted in Lüdescher 1998). The indigenous languages were definitely only to be used transitionally during the first two years, until children were able to use Spanish (Trapnell 1985: 125).

After some years, it became clear that SIL was not only training young indigenous people as bilingual teachers, but also to become evangelist priests (Lüdescher 1998: 241). Indigenous organisations and anthropologists were severely critical of SIL's approach in the 1970s: its work was based on two false assumptions, that indigenous culture and tradition were backward and inappropriate for modern life, and that every culture has good and bad parts. Thus SIL established a logic whereby traditional life is the same as idleness and the cause of poverty whereas progress is achieved by hard work and a civilised life. By not revealing to indigenous teachers the real causes of their poverty, SIL was reproducing and contributing to the dominant discourse that legitimates the exploitation and domination of the indigenous peoples as cheap labour. Since indigenous culture was perceived negatively, it was not represented in the curriculum either. Thus indigenous cosmology was completely ignored in SIL's approach (Trapnell 1985: 125-128).

Several alternative teacher training programmes arose as a result of the critique. One of the most important is 'Programa de Formación de Maestros Bilingües de la Amazonía Peruana' (FORMABIAP) which was the kind of education that the indigenous movements wanted. FORMABIAP is qualitatively different from what most Peruvian teacher education institutions offered, and has greatly influenced the politics of indigenous peoples' education. Since 1998, FORMABIAP has functioned as an NGO through a contract between the indigenous organisation 'Asociación Interétnica de Desarrollo de la Selva Peruana' (AIDESEP4) and the state teacher education institution 'Loreto'. It is based on the Amazonian indigenous organisations' claim for culturally relevant education. Together with the first students and indigenous adults, an alternative curriculum for the Amazon region was elaborated and approved by the Ministry of Education (MoE). The curriculum was clear in language strategy and based on indigenous cosmology. The students spend half of their time in the institution and half in their communities or a school belonging to their language group, where they have to investigate aspects of their culture and apply IBE strategies.

Through the foundation of FORMABIAP in the Amazon region and similar projects in the Andean region in the 1970s and 80s, interculturality became a fundamental concept in bilingual education. It was felt to be necessary to introduce the concept explicitly in order to distance these programmes from assimilationist approaches to bilingual education.

The first national policy on bilingual education, in 1972, was supportive of this trend (Trapnell and Neira 2006; 267). The policy had resulted from expert meetings in the 1960s and reflected both linguistic and cultural considerations. It explicitly stated that bilingual education should be offered to children with an indigenous mother tongue or were incipient bilinguals in an indigenous language and Spanish. It recognised the use of bilingual education at pre-school level and the need for methodological variation depending on the pupil´s degree of bilingualism. However, it only decreed the use of indigenous languages as MoI until the 4th grade of primary education.

Not much has happened in bilingual education policy since the 1970s. According to the 2003 Education Law, Art. 20, IBE should be '(…) offered in the entire education system' to children from indigenous minorities,' '(…) guaranteeing acquisition [of curricular content] through the medium of the pupil's mother tongue and of Spanish as a second language, as well as the acquisition of foreign languages afterwards.'

Even if the law states that bilingual education should be offered at all educational levels, in reality it is still only offered in primary education, and in some cases kindergarten (Trapnell and Neira 2006: 267).

The concept of interculturality was not mentioned explicitly in 1972, but the policy was embedded in an overall educational reform policy which aimed at overcoming the indigenous population's poverty and addressing social and economic realities (ibid).

Since 1989, interculturality has been explicitly incorporated in Peruvian bilingual education policies, and, since 1991, it has been applied to the entire primary education cycle (ibid.: 268). When the concept was incorporated, it referred mainly to the inclusion of indigenous knowledge in the curriculum during initial schooling and thereafter gradually bringing in content from other cultural traditions. From 1991, interculturality and the acknowledgement of cultural diversity were to permeate all education (ibid).

This becomes even clearer in the Education Law of 2003. Here, interculturality as a principle is described as follows:

> Interculturality (...) sees the country's cultural, ethnic and linguistic diversity as richness and regards the recognition of and respect for difference, as well as knowledge about and an attitude of appreciation of others as the basis for living together in harmony and for interaction between the world's different cultures. (General Education Law 2003, Art. 8).

In addition, an 'intercultural approach' is perceived as a necessary tool to reach 'universal coverage, quality and equity in education.' (2003, Art. 10).

The use of the term 'interculturality' in the education policies of the 1990s has been criticised by several authors because it does not spell out reform. It is, rather, part of multiculturalism, which retains the idea of cultures as separate entities based on difference. The philosophy of difference leads to compensatory policies and policies of positive discrimination for certain groups. By doing this, it maintains the power relations that are in force between these groups (Tubino 2003, Walsh 2003).

Recently, several authors have therefore used the concept of interculturality to make a break with the coloniality of social and economic relationships (Tubino 2003, Fuller 2003).

> It is necessary to differentiate between interculturality as a de facto situation and interculturality as a normative principle. The first expresses the concrete fact that in a majority of nation-states different cultures co-exist, which may live together harmoniously or, as in the case of a huge part of Latin America, may reject and discriminate each other. The second refers to an ethical-political proposal which seeks to improve the concept of citizenship with the aim of adding the recognition of the cultural rights of the people, cultures and ethnic groups that coexist within the frontiers of a nation-state to the already established rights of liberty and equity in the eyes of the law. (Fuller 2003: 10).

Quechua pre-school pupils. Only few indigenous children are lucky like these to learn through the medium of their mother tongue when they start in pre-school. Author of the picture: Graham Freer, Progressio.

The civil war period between 1980 and 2000 may have made even clearer the need for radical changes in Peruvian society. It is estimated that almost 70,000 Peruvians were killed and that the main regions affected by the civil war were '(...) regions which were marginalised as to political and economic power and leaving the indigenous rural population as the victims *par excellence*.' (Comisiòn de la Verdad y Reconciliaciòn 2003).

The new discourse of interculturality, which proposes institutional changes in all sectors, has also penetrated educational practice in some regions and some projects. Even if it is not part of a coherent state policy, its potential can be analysed by looking at some of the concrete changes that have occurred in a teacher training programme when it integrated post-colonial criticism of education and state policies into its strategies.

Even if bilingual education has now officially existed in Peru since 1952, its actual extent is reckoned to address no more than approximately 10% of existing needs (Trapnell and Neira 2006: 267). This means that 90% of indigenous pupils still receive education that does not involve their language or culture. In addition, formal IBE teacher education is still very restricted in the country. The MoE has developed teacher training plans for bilingual education, but in fact the principal developers and implementers of minority mother tongue based education have been NGOs, universities and research centres which have financed experimental projects (ibid.: 269). The MoE's lukewarm treatment of IBE was manifest when the department in charge of IBE was merged with the department of rural education.

IBE policies and practices are thus still very weak, as they are not supported by a coherent state policy. Most of the achievements that have been reached are due to indigenous organisations' struggle for their cultural and linguistic rights and the insistence of anthropologists, linguists and national and international NGOs working with education.

Teacher training

Between 2003 and 2007, I worked in a Peruvian in-service teacher training programme for indigenous bilingual teachers (hereafter 'the programme'). It is one part of a local education NGO that has worked in and around Cusco since 1981. Since 2002, the programme has trained teachers in rural schools, and I will only refer to that part of the experience.

The aim of the programme is to qualify teachers working in rural, bilingual areas with methods from intercultural and bilingual education. The main activity of the programme is teacher training, along with producing some school and training materials. Each year the programme investigates a particular aspect of IBE.

The programme is on a small scale, as only 50 teachers in service attend at a time over a three-year period, but the programme is interesting in itself, because it has moved from a culturally assimilationist bilingual education model towards a culturally revitalising and reaffirmative model, integrating aspects on biodiversity.

Characteristics of the teachers

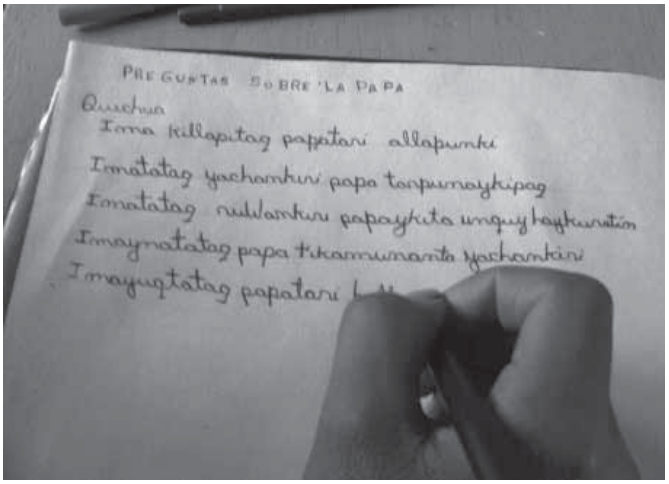
Except the village kindergarten teachers, all teachers have been trained. Even if they work with bilingual children, almost none of them have been formally trained in bilingual education when they start in the programme. But most of them are fluent bilinguals in Quechua and Spanish, and many have lived in rural areas during their childhood and youth. This fact has been crucial when the programme applied strategies of linguistic and cultural revitalisation.

There seemed to be an interesting difference in the level of linguistic and cultural sensitivity between trained teachers and villagers who taught in the alternative kindergarten programmes. Thus village teachers often responded much better to the intercultural approach. This difference has also been observed by Trapnell (2005), who interviewed indigenous village kindergarten teachers about the utility of supposedly contextualised teaching guidelines elaborated by a kindergarten expert. The village women working in the informal kindergartens showed systematically how the guidelines did not correspond to indigenous teaching strategies, led to misunderstandings, and bored children.

All teachers, with few exceptions, live in Cusco, which is the biggest city in the area. Therefore many of the teachers have to stay at their schools during the week, or even a month at a time, as the villages they work in are far from Cusco. The teachers' living conditions in the schools are often poor and their access to conventional educational materials such as books, maps, and photocopies is restricted. On the other hand, the teacher training experience shows that teachers spending so much time in the villages can be turned to advantage.

Quechua as a medium of teaching and learning, and as a subject

Teachers are not generally reluctant to switch from Spanish to Quechua as the medium of teaching and learning, as most of them are fluent Quechua speakers. However they identify several problems that the programme is trying to address.



A Quechua child is writing about potatoes in his language. Author of the picture: Programa EIB, Asociacion Pukllasunchis

Translating academic content from Spanish to Quechua and creating academic text in Quechua

The MoE has elaborated national textbooks and workbooks for the four curricular areas and all grades which are distributed in all schools. But these materials are written in Spanish. Even if the MoE has started producing books in some indigenous languages, these are often criticised by teachers due to a massive use of neologisms or unfamiliar sentence structures. While some teachers simply rule out using the materials, others use parts of them.

Basically all programmes in IBE are simultaneously involved in the production of educational materials both in the indigenous languages and for teaching Spanish as a second language. In the Cusco region, NGOs exchange their materials in order to make them accessible in as many schools as possible. The IBE network also decided to catalogue the existing materials so that teachers and other interested persons can know what is available for IBE.

Even if the volume of teaching materials for IBE has increased, it neither covers all areas of the curriculum nor

all levels of education. Especially in relation to abstract concepts, very little has been done. A lot of academic terminology has not been elaborated in Quechua, so that words like 'cell', 'atom' or 'atmosphere' need to be invented. Mathematical terminology has been created, but not enough social and natural science terminology. Especially in secondary school, this is a growing problem.

Questioning the neutrality of academic knowledge

A rather different question is whether academic language should become part of the indigenous languages *at all*. This leads to considering the importance of post-colonial theory and analysis when discussing the purpose of bilingual and intercultural education. This should not be reduced to a 'technical' question of finding the best indigenous word for 'cell' or 'atmosphere', but requires discussion of the ideological implications when it is assumed that the introduction of what counts as academic knowledge, reasoning and 'truths' is good.

Indigenous peoples, anthropologists and others have questioned this truth, but their efforts were branded as 'ethno-academic', for instance, ethno-mathematics, ethno-biology, ethno-medicine, and ethno-astronomy. But why is some knowledge classified as 'ethnic' in contrast to 'pure' knowledge, as in 'pure mathematics'?

> Nowadays, 'ethno-' is used in a quite liberal way (...), in order to indicate that the investigation of a particular field of study (as biology or astronomy), is made from the perspective of and based on the knowledge of a 'traditional' non-occidental society. (Urton 2003: 21).

By classifying non-occidental knowledge as 'traditional' or 'local wisdom', it is fixed in time and space. At the same time, words like 'abstract', 'neutral', 'pure science' or 'universal knowledge' hide the fact that all knowledge is produced *by somebody, at a certain time in history and at a certain place in history*. By defining academic knowledge as time- and spaceless, Western scientists are trying to hide their own philosophical foundations (Urton 2003, 21).

> '(…) [T]he 'history' of knowledge is marked geo-historically, geo-politically and geo-culturally; it has a value, colour and a place "of origin" ' (Walsh 2004: 2). Thus when indigenous epistemologies, philosophies and ways of 'doing science' are questioned and reduced to 'local wisdom', or 'ethno-sciences' by occidental scientists, they are actually reproducing colonial and neo-colonial power relations. It is a colonisation of knowledge. Access to occidental academic knowledge is presented as access to the 'modern world' and 'development', which ultimately reproduces the bonds of colonialism.

In order to make a break with the colonisation of knowledge, Walsh proposes the construction of an 'epistemic interculturality':

> (...) the construction of new epistemological frames that incorporate and negotiate occidental and non-occidental knowledges, indigenous but also black (and their theoretical and lived bases, from the past but also from the present), always maintaining as fundamental the necessity of confronting coloniality of power to which these knowledges have been submitted. (Walsh 2004: 4)

She proposes three steps, which have been used by the programme in teacher training sessions as a tool for reflection:

- To recognise that knowledge has a value, colour, gender and place of origin and there, the place from which you think *is* important.
- To recover, re-value and apply ancestral knowledges, but also to question the temporality and locality attributed to them and that tries to reduce them to 'ancestral wisdom' rather than 'knowledge'.
- Knowledges should not simply be related to each other as blocks or clearly identified and closed entities, but rather as critical contributions to new processes of intellectual intervention. (Walsh 2004: 6).

Content based on indigenous cosmology

One of the ways that the programme has worked with epistemic interculturality as proposed by Walsh is by strengthening the status of Andean indigenous knowledge (and of the bearers of this knowledge) by bringing it into the school curriculum and giving it the same status as 'universalised' western knowledge or knowledge based on Peruvian dominant discourses.

In principle, this can be done relatively easily, as diversifying the national curriculum is allowed. Teachers, schools, or regions can recreate the national curriculum taking into consideration local circumstances and the local context both in content and methodology. In practice, though, the task of diversifying the national curriculum needed to be discussed in many teacher training sessions. Teachers had to train analytical skills, recover their own knowledge about Quechua cosmology, modify their view of the local population that they generally looked down on and did not identify with, and they also needed to learn to apply the new strategies in practice.

Between 2003 and 2006, training sessions about this theme had the following topics: Geopolitics of knowledge; why should we know Andean cosmology?; what does 'quality of life' mean to indigenous peoples?; Andean cosmology is part of our pupils' way of thinking; teachers are also 'knowers' of Andean cosmology;

how to recover indigenous concepts; mathematical thinking in Andean cosmology; introducing literacy in a culturally appropriate way; curricular diversification and planning the school year and classes through the community calendar.

Apart from teacher training sessions, in 2005 teachers were invited to participate in a special project; they were asked to plan and implement a school project under the following conditions: the project should use the communal calendar and be based on a local (mainly agricultural) activity; the pupils should be participants in the local activities, and members of the community should be integrated in the project as knowledge persons and teachers.

Every participant teacher was given a camera in order to document the process and central activities. Afterwards they asked the community to comment on and explain what could be seen in the photos. The projects were published in 2006 (Asociación Pukllasunchis 2006). They give other teachers in the region ideas for how they could plan sessions and projects based on the community calendars. Some of the projects were filmed throughout the year to produce videos as educational material for schools. Finally the knowledge gathered through the teachers' projects has also been produced as interactive CD-ROM material for teachers, pupils and other interested persons. Around 2006 to 2007, a group of volunteer teachers received intensive training during their vacations about the relationship between biodiversity, indigenous cosmologies and the school as an institution. Amongst other things, they were taught by community members about agro-diversity and the communal calendar.

When teachers open up to indigenous ways of thinking in school, they often do not stop with the content, but start to redefine other aspects of school, like methodology, educational materials, school traditions, language use, even clothing used in schools.

Redefining the relationship between school and community

When entering the programme, teachers generally identified with their profession, their schools and the national curriculum, including very specific ideas about 'development', 'quality of life', 'progress', etc. The majority did not – as could be expected – identify themselves as belonging to an ethnic group or identify with the communities they worked in, even if many of them had grown up in similar conditions and contexts.

Therefore the aim of the programme was triple: to restore many teachers' identity, as they had abandoned Quechua and rural identity due to discrimination throughout their life and the absence of alternatives to Western thinking about 'the good life'; to re-establish the relationship between school and community, making school part of the community and redefining the school's role in it and in society in general; to actively involve teachers in community life and to create space for communities to influence the kind of school they want; and to open up for communities to participate on equal terms in other public spaces.

Training sessions that treated themes related to the role of school in society and for indigenous peoples were, for instance: the goal of schooling in society; the colonial history of languages of instruction in schools in indigenous villages; teachers' perceptions of the community and pupils; iskay yachay ('both knowledges'); cultural and linguistic discrimination in school; discrimination in the classroom.

Apart from training sessions, a pilot project was initiated in a secondary school where teachers and villagers together redefined the goals of school and, as a result of this, school curriculum, structure and subjects taught. The main change has been that villagers and teachers have stopped considering higher education as their sole source of inspiration, and instead identify local developments and employment routes that would not mean 'just to continue in poverty as our parents' but are based on the region's potential.

Other initiatives to strengthen the communities' voice and participation, especially in education, are radio programmes and videos elaborated by teachers and villagers, and an annual conference where education is discussed.

In 2006, teachers and villagers together made half-hour radio programmes in which they presented the community, development opportunities or problems in the community. The programmes were bilingual in Quechua and Spanish and broadcast in the local region. This was followed up in 2007 by a process whereby villagers had the opportunity to produce videos that were to be broadcast on local television.

Perspectives

In many multilingual postcolonial societies, bi- and multilingual education have been introduced in order to improve the education of groups whose mother tongues are not the colonial language. The choice of bilingual education model often not only depends on theories of language pedagogy but also on the way the population to be educated is perceived by those who make the policies.

When introducing the concept of interculturality into the discussion on bilingual education, several questions have to be asked: is bilingual education just a tool in an acculturation process or is it a tool that can lead to a multicultural state and intercultural citizenship? If so, which other aspects of society need to be reformed in order to make this happen? It is apparent that the concept of interculturality is not only a methodology in education, but rather can potentially reopen discussion of the colonial conditions that remain in place in many post-colonial societies.

Thus bilingual education does not in itself guarantee a break with colonial social structures. On the contrary, Peruvian history shows that bilingual education from the 1950s until today has mainly served to assimilate the indigenous population to the dominant political, economic and social order. The introduction of the concept of interculturality by indigenous organisations in the 1970s was crucial, and has resulted in a permanent focus on the cultural hidden curriculum in teaching methods, educational materials and curricular content and on the ways in which formal schooling reproduces colonial power relations. However, it is very recent that that the claims of interculturality as a generalised ethical-political project have been formulated across Latin America.

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Endnotes

[1] This article is heavily based on my article "The contribution of postcolonial theory to intercultural bilingual education in Peru: an indigenous teacher training programme." In Mohanty, Ajit, Minati Panda, Robert Phillipson and Tove Skutnabb-Kangas (eds): *Multilingual Education for Social Justice: Globalising the Local.* New Delhi: Orient Blackswan [former Orient Longman], 2009 (in press).

[2] Citations from Spanish sources are in the author's translation.

[3] Proyecto 'Escuelas rurales cercanas a la ciudad', Asociación Pukllasunchis.

[4] AIDESEP consists of a conglomerate of almost all Amazon indigenous organisations and is therefore important politically. ❁

The Story of Elders in Mother Tongue Education in Nepal Built upon notes from my field journal

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Sunsari 23.—25.6.2007

"The elder exemplifies both the good and the bad experiences of life, and in witnessing their failures as much as their successes we are cushioned in our despair of disappointment and bolstered in our exuberance of success." (Vine Deloria Jr. 2001, 45)

I write about *Puhulal Uraw*, *Balram Uraw*, *Budhu Uraw*, *Deolal Yadav* and *Ashok Kumar Yadav*. They are members of two non-Nepali speaking communities in Nepal: Uraw and Tharu/Maithili. They are Indigenous Knowledge (IK) holders from the south-eastern district of Sunsari, men who speak fluently their language, and who possess a vast knowledge of their culture, history and traditions. They are worried about their children and grandchildren losing their language and their culture, and falling behind at school and in society.

During our first visit to the community and school, we invited them to try storytelling in their mother-tongue to the students. They came. They brought their language inside the school, told stories to the children and showed how there is a place for their knowledges, for their experiences and for oral traditions.

This is their story—which I, as an outsider, tell incompletely and with my cultural background, I tell it with written words. But I feel it must be told.

"[Women and elders] in the community were often the groups who retained "traditional" practices, had been taught by elders, were fluent in the language and had specialized knowledges pertaining to the land, the spiritual belief systems and the customary lore of the community." (Tuhiwai Smith 2001, 110)

We arrived in Sunsari for the first time in June 2007 and invited teachers, parents, school management committee members, community members, representatives from Indigenous Peoples Organizations and the District Education Office to discuss possibilities, benefits and challenges of mother tongue and multilingual education, and their interest in beginning to pilot the program in Nepal. We also introduced one community-based model of material development: storytelling.

The storytelling was preceded by a long discussion about education, schooling experiences of parents, grandparents and other community members. There were a lot of stories of loss of language and slow degradation of culture, and the worry that both would disappear if nothing was done about it. The community members expressed sadness that the speakers of their own language were falling behind and at the same time the language had fallen behind, they felt agitated and said they had lost their voice. We presented them a possibility to start implementing mother tongues as media of instruction, having their own cultural content in teaching and learning activities and being responsible for the design of their own model of education. They all welcomed the programme and were thankful for the opportunities this was going to create for their children. They requested mother tongue education at least till grade 5 because it would provide better education, children would learn faster and the community would be able to preserve their language and culture without which there would be no development in the community.

"Education in the traditional setting occurs by example and not as a process of indoctrination. That is to say, elders are the best living examples of what the end product of education and life experiences should be."(Vine Deloria Jr. 2001, 45)

After our long discussions, we invited some community elders – IK holders – to do storytelling in the classrooms. We wanted them to show how mother-tongues belong inside the school, how the Indigenous Knowledge of the community is interesting and familiar to the children, and how the community, teachers and students together could start implementing multilingual education. It was very exciting to see the IK holders, other community members, students and school staff interacting and making a place for the mother tongue for the first time. Each IK holder had a small group of students, about 5 or 6, of different ages and they

told a story in their mother tongue. In some cases they used the school yard, sitting on bamboo mats under the shade of trees. Students listened very attentively and had their eyes on the IK holder. Other students, who were not a part of the activity, gathered around or stood outside the windows and doorways, curious to witness and hear what was going on. The stories were about traditions—wedding ceremonies, name giving ceremonies, hospitality—important festivals, the history of the group, creation tales and other aspects of the culture.

After hearing the story, the children first drew pictures and then wrote sentences in their own mother tongue about the story they had heard. For many children it was the first time they heard their mother tongue being used inside the school, as part of formal schooling. The drawings and texts were each labeled with the child's name and collected to make printed teaching and learning materials. The authors, both the IK holders and the children, were photographed with their work and these photos were included in the printed readers. This way they can feel ownership, pride and achievement for the pioneer work they have done.

The oral stories were also recorded on audio and video tapes to be used later as part of oral teaching methodologies or awareness-raising material.

"The marvel of oral tradition, some will say its curse, is this: messages from the past exist, are real, and yet are not continuously accessible to the senses. Oral traditions make an appearance only when they are told (…) How it is possible for a mind to remember and out of nothing to spin complex ideas, messages, and instructions for living, which manifest continuity over time, is one of the greatest wonders one can study." (Reagan 1996, 7)

Inviting the IK holders for a storytelling session was not only to show how local content/knowledges and language can be quickly and easily introduced in formal schooling in any community and connect the non-Nepali speaking children and the Nepali speaking teacher. It is also a celebration of the oral traditions that form the basis of the culture and traditions of most non-Nepali speaking peoples in Nepal. There is no reason why formal education could not embrace teaching methodologies that are derived from and respect the oral traditions of the community. Non-Nepali speaking children will feel comfortable being taught in culturally appropriate ways and giving a place to oral traditions in the sphere of formal schooling will reinforce their value.

There are many exciting ways to celebrate oral traditions, to fuse oral with written, to form partnerships with IK holders and to imagine ways in which formal schooling can be built around the mother-tongue and the culture. The communities themselves have the knowledge and the know-how necessary to design and implement their MLE models and programs. They want this and need this:

"I think we have got a new life today. I never imagined we could get this opportunity." Representative of the Child Club, Sunsari, 23.6.2007

Sunsari 22.1.2009

The MLE program has been running in the pilot school in Sunsari for one and a half years now. The teachers, IK holders, parents, representatives from Indigenous Peoples Organizations, and other implementers have participated in regional and national workshops. They joined a study tour to visit MLE programs in India. They have interacted with representatives from other pilot schools, government officers and international experts in the field of MLE and have shared their hopes, opinions and ideas. For several months now, they offer mother tongue education to the students.

This is my third visit to Sunsari, I have come to accompany a research team who is investigating what kind of MLE policy and strategy recommendations can be made at the central level, based on experiences in the pilot school. Teachers, parents and IK holders have come to the school to share their ideas and opinions. The weather is foggy and cool, typical of mid-winter here in the southern lowlands.

We have walked a long way since the first visit in the hot month preceding the monsoon. That day, no one thought their language or culture had a place inside the school. In seven months since, they are implementing their own mother tongues as the media of instruction in grades 1 to 3 through models they devised themselves.

Today, they show the way to all non-Nepali speaking children and teachers how everyone can learn in their own language and feel comfortable coming to school with their own culture and background.

I feel pride and accomplishment of the road we have walked together.

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Endnotes

[1] The Multilingual Education (MLE) Program is a part of the Education for All (EFA) in Nepal. It is funded jointly by the governments of Nepal and Finland. It started in January 2007 and it runs till July 2009. It aims at developing MLE models for all non-Nepali speaking students so that they can have mother-tongue based multilingual and quality education. The MLE program is piloted in seven schools and in eight languages. Two schools have a multilingual student population and five schools are monolingual in one mother tongue. The goal for all students is strong bi- or multilingualism. The MLE settings vary enormously from community to community and therefore the approach must be as bottom-up as possible to enable each school to develop the best model for their needs.

In the MLE program, the role of Indigenous Knowledge and the role of the community elders in the formal education of children were discussed and explored as the first step towards mother-tongues as media of instruction. This is in keeping with the spirit of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples 2007 (http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/drip.html), according to which different peoples have the right not only to their language as the medium of instruction but also to appropriate cultural content and teaching methodology. In the non-Nepali speaking communities in Nepal, the community elders—or IK holders, as they are referred to by the MLE program—are much respected. Throughout the project they have been the core members involved in the review of national curriculum, collection of Indigenous Knowledge and in the development of materials. ❁

Appropriate education strategies in diverse language contexts

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A significant proportion of students in primary schools in India face a learning disadvantage since they enter school speaking a language that is very different from the standard language used at school. In the early primary grades, there is no scope to help such children learn the school language before they are expected to start learning *through* that second language. The instruction methodology followed in most government schools in India is one of monolingual submersion-teaching through an unfamiliar second language from the first day at school, with no effort to make the input comprehensible to children who come from a different language background. There is also no effort to develop the children's first language. This is definitely the most inappropriate methodology for such situations. The ideal strategy, from the point of view of the child's social, affective and cognitive development, would be instruction in the first language till as late a stage as possible.

Certain Non-negotiable elements:

Ideally, context-specific bilingual/multilingual education programmes need to be designed for these situations. However, there are four non-negotiable elements that need to form part of the primary education school system and all education programming:

I. Development of the children's first language should be promoted.

II. Textual materials and classroom transaction in the second language should be in a form that is comprehensible to the children at every stage

III. Teachers should be bilingual, i.e. have fluency in the children's first language as well as the language that is being used as medium of instruction in the later stages.

IV. Use of appropriate first and second language teaching methods.

Factors to be considered for framing educational strategies:

The language situations in schools are very diverse in various parts of India as well as within a state or even a district. Therefore, a range of approaches would be necessary to address the needs of children who are presently studying in a language that is different from their first language.

These are:

i. Distance of the children's first language from the school language

ii. Status of child's home language in the society

iii. The motivation of the children, parents and society for the learning of second language

iv. The socio-economic and literacy status of the social group and the exposure to the standard language

v. Multilingual or mixed language background situation at school, i.e. children with different first languages in the same classroom

Mother Tongue Instruction in the Indian Context

It is a commonly held belief that India has too many languages/dialects and it would never be possible to introduce mother tongue based instruction in so many languages. But, Papua New Guinea has managed to introduce and sustain 400 languages as the medium of instruction at the primary stage. Countries like New Zealand, Ethiopia, Bolivia and many other countries have established multilingual education as the programme strategy for equitable quality education. Late-exit bilingual/multilingual education programmes are most appropriate in certain situations. However, the solution is not always a structured model of transition (from L1 to L2) that prescribes all the materials and sequence of classroom instruction. Such a fixed model would apply to only one kind of language situation. It would definitely be useful for remote areas with (say) tribal populations that have remained somewhat isolated from other areas and maintained their own language. But, language situations in most parts of the country are more complex, and need more flexible strategies.

Based on the linguistic diversities and language distribution in the society, it may be inferred that four kind of approaches would be necessary to address the children's first language issues. These are:

a. For areas/schools where the children's first language is a well-developed language that is being used as a medium of instruction elsewhere

b. For areas/schools where the children's first language is a dialect of the main state language (whose standard dialect is used as the medium of instruction in schools)

c. For areas/schools where the children's first language is a very different language that is unwritten and needs to be elaborated and standardised

d. For areas/schools with a multilingual situation

Each of these categories of approaches would include a variety of strategies based on various situations.

There have been some initiatives in a few states to address the problems faced by children who study through an unfamiliar language. Most of these have targeted situations where the school has a monolingual situation (in terms of children's home language) in tribal areas and the medium of instruction is a completely unfamiliar regional language. Presently, two very promising pilots of MT-based MLE programmes are being implemented in the states of Andhra Pradesh and Orissa in ten and eight tribal languages respectively in about 400 primary schools. The distinguishing features of both these experiments are:

a) maintenance of the MT has been planned at least till grade 5, though the MT is not proposed to be used for teaching other subjects after grade 4

b) the entire process has drawn strength from the motivation of local communities

c) the curriculum has been developed by incorporating local knowledge and culture and the materials are, therefore, child-centred in the true sense

d) these are comprehensive approaches that include dimensions of curriculum development, teacher development, additional supplementary materials

e) they are state-owned and part of the regular state-run EFA programmes and are, therefore, more likely to be sustained.

However, planning and implementation of these strategies requires strong backing on the part of state governments, a clear academic perspective, a sustained long-term vision and policy and a commitment to working with local communities. The challenge of multilingual contexts, which are most common, is really daunting. There has been little work in India in primary education in multilingual situations. This should be pursued seriously. ❁

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