

# THE ROLE OF MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION IN EDUCATION SYSTEM

Pratima

ABSTRACT- After going through this article ,we should be able to understand the role of society in language development of child. This article also focuses on understanding language as a social system and decide on selection of a language for teaching in class room. If we carefully examine ,we will notice that language ,communication and education are interrelated processes. Language and communication are integral components of education transaction. To transact the prescribed curriculum the teacher has to devise various activities so that content can be transferred and then other activities are devised with the help of students so that the content transacted is thoroughly understood by the children. The level of knowledge of the teacher in the language and the mastery in the use of language is bound to influence the quality of teaching.

## INTRODUCTION

At the center of teaching learning activities is language. For those who have studied and understood the relevance of language it is not just a medium of instruction and communication but the most treasured symbol of the community, which speaks it. Every single fact of flora and fauna of the area ,beliefs and rituals of people ,facts of historical events and the minutest details of festivals and of the people speaking the language and saved in their language. These facts are not just of academic interest but have important implication on the success and failure of the speakers and so has important bearing on educational planning. If we look at the curriculum of pre-primary and primary classes it will be apparent that the emphasis is on developing language in children so that they can independently read and understand the texts prescribed in the curriculum or as independent reading. It is important to mention that normally we believe that like all other subjects prescribed in the school curriculum , language is yet another subject ;which is a misunderstanding. Language is a skill , which provides the tool of negotiate all other texts. To be precise, children can read and learn textbooks of all other subjects only after they have learnt the language in which textbook are written. Children who succeed in acquiring better linguistic skills are to decipher the message from all other texts better than those whose language skills in the medium of instruction and textbooks are not so well developed.

KEY WORDS: Language Deficit; National Curriculum Framework (NCF); Language planning; Language acquisition.

## LANGUAGE ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT

Children start naming objects and defining objects around them even since their birth. By the time they come to school they have a fairly developed language. Through language children understand both the objects and the concepts or ideas. We know through research that children could speak quite a lot when asked to explain concepts like mother land, honesty, sacrifice but equivalent words in different context appeared in the text book they offered different explanations. We take the expression used for new entrants as 'clean state' literally when we admit children to pre-primary or primary classes. They are not quite ignorant. It needs to be realized that by the age of 3 or 5 years when children go to Kindergarten or class 1 they would spent 1300 to 22000 hours either listening to other speakers or radio/TV broadcast or interacting with others. This process becomes very rewarding if children have grandparents or elders at home who can tell stories or answer their queries about the object and processes they see around. Some children at the age of 5 or even before can construct beautiful stories with imaginary characters or present commentaries on things and events around them.

## LANGUAGE AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

One of the objectives of education is to bring the best out of children through the process of education. Every child is born with certain individual features and if these features are identified and properly nurtured the child will grow without tension and perform one's best. It is human nature to always tell others and not hear them. Our teacher also do the same with children. Normally teachers devote not more than 5 to 10 percent of time to hearing the children's ideas, ambitions, desires so that they can put to assignments which interest them and more than that give them an opportunity to show their best. From the first day of child in school, teachers start lecturing and enforcing their views, that too in a language which have little competence. Our classrooms are brilliant examples of one-way communication; monologues. However, educationists have oft repeated- education is a process of dialogue. Howsoever young the learner, the process of education should be maximum dialogue and discussion so that teachers are aware of the cognition children have developed and accordingly build their world-view. This cannot happen if teachers constantly keep talking in language other than mother tongue.

## LANGUAGE DEFICIT

In last two or three decades the value and importance of education has been highlighted. It has been emphasized that education is important not only for individual growth but as an indispensable tool for development. Throughout the world efforts in reaching education to all has been emphasized. We find that a number of initiatives have been taken in developed countries since world war-2 and in the developing world since the Jomtein Conference on 'Education for All' held in 1990. Most of these efforts begin with primary education either for children or adults, and that too language teaching. Language is the primary tool to access knowledge and information. You may also be involved in some of these literacy programs. Besides, if your students come from rural background you would be able to understand the phenomenon very easily.

Two things are clear from the experiment that our place of living and education gives us our linguistic identify and that we are identified and something get credit or discredit because of our social identify rather than actual qualities because of perceivers biases. In brief, we wish to explain that teachers we must try and overcome biases.

This phenomenon is known as 'DEFICIT THEORY'. There has been criticism of this theory but it has great strengths. Besides, understanding of this phenomenon would help us understand our own linguistic capabilities and handicaps and overcome those weaknesses.

## LANGUAGE AND DISCRIMINATION

India like a number of Asian and African countries is linguistic goldmine. A large number of languages are spoken and also creative pieces are produced. There are also a large number of languages which have rich oral literature in print. The fact remains that all languages as far as a system is concerned are equal but their speakers are not equal when it comes to getting privileges. Some language speakers are more privileged than others.

It is often mentioned that language is key to success in education. Various researchers also proved that learners with better competence in language get better place in academic ranking as well as get better placement and also rise faster in professional life. It is important to study and/ report which are the crucial factors that lead to better language competence.

In bilingual and multilingual settings, the dynamics of language acquisition are quite different from monolingual situations. Children who speak, at home, a language other than the language of classroom communication are often found to lag behind in academic achievement. To put in other words children who speak the same language at home in which they are often found to be in a privileged position and very often fair better in academics. We need to study once again how a level playing field can be created for different groups. As this has been realized and mentioned for quite some time we have made various experiments with varied results which need to be reported and replicated.

## LANGUAGE PLANNING

Every nation plans its language development, besides other methods through curriculum planning. In India school based language planning is done through National Curriculum Framework (NCF) developed every ten years. The most recent NCF of India was published in year 2005. Text books for a few classes have already been developed. Another very important related issue is of training of teachers in language. Whenever training of teachers is considered, the group that gets the attention is of language teachers and more often primary school language teachers. We talk of language across curriculum but rarely consider training teachers of other subjects in language. Language development in children cannot and should not be considered as a responsibility of language teachers only. It is a wholesome responsibility of teachers of all subjects as well as the parents of children.

Another major issue in education is of providing education to children/speakers of non scheduled and tribal languages. Perhaps no more than fifty percent of the elementary school children speak the Scheduled language. In spite of the best efforts we have only been able to develop material in the Scheduled languages. It may be concluded that we as a nation have predetermined half our children to fail. Alternatives need to be thought. Isolated private initiatives have been made. The government has proposed providing education in tribal languages during the XI Plan.

## CONCLUSION

Even though language appears to be just a tool of communication but in the sphere of teaching learning it plays a crucial role. In educational communication the participants are put on a scale of most successful to least successful so it is a question of their lives. The chances of success and failure, is in a way pre-decided as soon as the language of instruction over the other, and similarly some are discriminated against by the same choice.

Every language provides to its speakers a set of 'codes' which are developed in a particular context of the society and the group which speaks that language. It must be clear that languages develop a vocabulary for the purposes they are used. Some languages are not used for teaching-learning processes so they do not possess the vocabulary required to be used as medium of communication in classrooms. Even though this is a practical problem in choosing a language as medium of instruction but learners are nowhere responsible for handicap of the language they may bring.

Most of the times in selecting a language for classroom interaction usefulness and popularity of the language are taken into consideration which may be practical but this decision has its implications on the learners. It is expected that this article clarify the relation between medium of instruction in classroom, chances of success or failure of students and similar other issues.

## REFERENCES

Bernstein, Basil. (1971). Class, codes and control. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul

Halliday, M.A.K. (1978, 1990). Language as Social Semiotics. London: Open University Press.

Hymes, Dell H. (ed.) (1964) Language Culture and Society. New York: Harper and Row

