Translanguaging as an Effective Approach for Implementing NEP 2020

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Abstract- *Languages are 'caught' not 'taught'. A child learns to speak and communicate by merely observing the adults who talk around them. The key aspect of Fundamental Literacy is that the child must read with understanding and not mere reading as per NIPUN Bharat initiative towards achieving the NEP 2020 goal of FLN by 2025.In a diversified country like India where English is the common language spoken in the entire country, regional languages play an important role in the education system. As per NEP guidelines, education can be in the mother tongue up to the eighth grade along with two more languages. Children's thinking process is in their first language which they translate to the medium of their education for the purpose of evaluation. Adopting two languages in the print material and teaching process to enhance the critical thinking and problem-solving approach of the learner is the first step towards implementing three language systems.*

Keywords: Translanguaging in classroom, multilingual print media, bilingual teaching approach, technology tools for translation

Introduction

In the Indian school education system, majority of the school education is done with English as the medium of instruction as the higher studies are only in English and not in regional languages. Children's thinking process is in their mother tongue only as they are mainly exposed to their mother tongue at home and in society at large. A lot of emphasis is laid on English fluency in order to prepare the students for employment. Education at the professional level is only in the English medium, so even if the students finish schooling in regional language, they will have difficulty in professional studies, at that stage of education, their struggle would be to gain language proficiency and not gain knowledge. Dropout rate in higher studies and failures rate are high mainly because of language problems and not that the learners do not have sufficient knowledge.

Translanguaging in Classroom

Most of the teachers in schools follow Translanguaging, they teach the concept in the local language to make the student understand better and repeat the same in the medium of language. Even though the teacher does not use the technical words in a regional language, the explanation process is done in the regional language. This practice is very common in all the subjects, be it Mathematics, Science, Social Science, Computer Science, Arts, or Physical Education. Students'

understanding is complete when a concept is explained in their language. The school management lays a lot of emphasis on teaching in English as the parents expect that their wards should converse in English, but the teachers take the liberty to explain the concepts in regional language to fulfill their desire to drive the concept into the learner. In reality, even English is explained in the regional language.

Translanguaging in classroom transactions increases the involvement of the students as they have the liberty to ask their doubts and discuss in their language. The language teachers emphasise on the linguistic components like reading, listening, comprehension, vocabulary, and grammar in a subtle manner with due independence for the learner. Exposing the learner to rich content in the language in audiovisual and text form, writing practice, peer interaction will help the learner to develop language on their own.

FLN – Fundamental Literacy and Numeracy
The importance of numeracy and literacy is preached by a great philosopher Thiruvallur around 3000 years ago in the following couplet of Thirukkural

எண்ணென்ப ஏனை எழுத்தென்ப இவ்விரண்டும்
கண்ணென்ப வாழும் உயிர்க்கு
(அதிகாரம்:**கல்வி** குறள்எண்:392)

Letters and numbers are two eyes of a man
A person without knowledge of letters and numbers is considered a blind person. The New Education Policy laid emphasis on attaining the Fundamental Literacy and Numeracy by all the children by the time they attain the age of 9 and a lot of directions have been given in this regard. The training of teachers in Early Childhood Care and Education to lay a good foundation for the learners at the right time and age is given the highest priority for the effective implementation of FLN. As per the NIPUN Bharat guidelines, the following are the key components of FLN:

Literacy:

- Oral language development – children must
- Phonological Awareness
- Decoding
- Vocabulary
- Reading Comprehension
- Reading Fluency
- Concept about Print
- Writing
- Culture of Reading/Inclination towards Reading

Numeracy:

- Pre-Number Concepts
- Numbers and operations on numbers
- Measurement
- Shapes and Spatial Understanding
- Patterns

In order to educate children properly, it is equally important that the educators also get trained on how to implement FLN. CBSE along with NCERT offers Diksha / Google classroom courses on the objective and modalities of FLN. Teacher resource material and student corner along with an illustrative compendium of worksheets for Grade 1 to 3 are available in FLN corner on CBSE Website.

Multilingual Print Media

Preparation of multilingual print material for the school education, especially for the FLN period and transaction of the same, is the initial preparation towards the implementation of NEP. The textbooks need not be in two languages but sufficient footnotes in regional language should be given to support the leaner in understanding the process and application. Another option for multilingual textbook can be that the main subject book should be a concise book with all relevant concepts with illustrations. An appendix for the important concepts can be provided at the end of the book in the regional language also for the students' understanding. To make the publication process hassle-free, the appendix can also be printed as a separate book for various regional languages. Students can be provided with a pair of books—the textbook in English and the appendix in the regional language. A teacher's manual can be provided to guide the teacher on the effective usage of both the books in translanguaging. The appendix book can have examples that are relevant to the local culture to which the learner is exposed to. The parallel development of two languages will be very effective in the practice of translanguaging. The learners will experience subject in their regional language and express it in the language of the medium of education. Wherever a learner is facing difficulty in understanding, a code can be provided which will direct the learner to a complete explanation as per the language selection of the learner. Creating equivalents for technical words, giving meaning for the same, and memorizing the same is unnecessary work. In AV lessons, an option for change of language and subtitles will be an easy add-on without much rework. When it comes to evaluation, whether the children will write in regional language or English is an important question, it is equally important the learner processes the concept in Multilanguage and so evaluation can be done in a mixed manner. Another suggestion for evaluation can be application-based questions can be tested in regional language and concept-based questions can be tested in English. As language learning is very effective in preliminary stages of learning, more importance can be given to the attainment of literacy skills with sufficient exposure to listening skills, sufficient writing practice in both languages. The parallel development of two languages gives the children multiple

advantages during their transition towards a more advanced learning process. In the end, when we have to declare the medium of instruction, it is important to point out that the approach is multilingual and not monolingual. It is equally important that the child gains proficiency in both the languages and not in just one. It is time to break the stigma of a single language medium of instruction to the Multilanguage approach.

Technology tools for translanguaging

Printed textbooks can be replaced with tabs. A tablet can be given to each child and it should be given and the tablet can be upgraded every year as the child progresses to the next standard. Children need not depend on internet connectivity all time. All the necessary content will be loaded in the tab and can be used all time throughout the year. Digital media is more flexible and economical in a long run. Audio lessons are more effective in teaching languages, and voice recognition tools help the children in practicing reading and pronunciation can be improved. This is especially helpful in remote areas where teacher is not available. Translation tools are available on the internet in almost all Indian languages and online dictionaries help students to find meaning for the words.

Barriers in use of technology

The digital divide is the major barrier to the use of technology especially in a vast country like ours. The technical knowledge of the teachers is also yet another challenge in implementing technology tools. Though the pandemic situation has forced the teaching community to the digital platforms, efficient usage is still a question to be pondered upon. The younger generation is very conversant with handling ICT tools but at the same time they are diverted towards social networking, gaming, and entertainment so monitoring the usage of tools is a major challenge. Technology is a boon in the hands of the creator and bane in the hands of the destroyer. Another important issue with the usage of technology is the health aspect. As the children get exposed to the radiations of the device and remain stationary for a long duration so it is not suggested to use ICT tools for more than one hour a day. Novel pedagogical practices like gamification, toy-based learning, experiential learning, activities with computer unplugged can be used to drive the concepts and at the same time make it an enjoyable experience.

Conclusion

Language is the mode to express and communicate with the people around. People who are involved in public service use the local language. For instance, IAS officers learn the local language wherever they are deputed to know the feeling of the people there; doctors communicate with the patients in the local language to know their problems; teachers speak to the parents in the local language. In general, the language of society is the language of thought. Everyone enjoys the movie in their language and admires nature, art and music in their own language.

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