

Reconsidering Multilingual Education

An Answer to Whys and Hows

PALLAVI*

Abstract

The importance of mother tongue education, of recognising pluralities and of integrating the school knowledge into social, economic and ethnic backgrounds of children has been posited in the foreword of India's National Curriculum Framework (NCF-2005) and reiterated throughout the document. Numerous lines in the curriculum framework have been devoted to emphasise on the significance of utilising multilingualism as a resource in the classrooms. What remains unclear though, is how teachers are to translate this vision of multilingual education provided in the curriculum framework into reality. There are several practical questions that have remained unanswered. Further, the literature existing in the field shows that teachers (especially those who are 'in-service') are often unaware of the theoretical underpinnings that support the vision that is idealised by experts who craft national documents such as the curriculum framework. Disregarding such issues, NCF-2005 seldom explicates the theories that support the model of multilingual education that it has proposed. Unwarranted by theoretical framework or research, the statements that have been given in the curriculum framework remain suspended in the air, unable to bring the required perspectival shift in teachers (Batra, 2005). It is crucial to understand that if teachers are to translate the vision of national curriculum framework into their day-to-day classroom practices, not only must they be apprised with the theories and research that argue in the favour of multilingual education, but they must also be acquainted with the methodologies that collocate with these theories. This paper therefore attempts to assist teachers by providing them an insight on the 'hows' and

* Faculty, Mata Sundri College, University of Delhi, Delhi-110002, India.

'whys' of multilingual education, since they, like children, cannot be assumed to be passive recipients of knowledge provided in national documents. The paper is not only a document analysis of the NCF, but it rather presents a comprehensive overview of the field, providing its readers with a theoretical rationale along with some exemplary studies on multilingual education that can serve to guide classroom practices.

There is much analysis and a lot of advice. All this is accompanied by frequent reminders that specificities matter, that the mother tongue is a critical conduit, that social, economic and ethnic backgrounds are important for enabling children to construct their own knowledge. Media and educational technologies are recognized as significant, but the teacher remains central. Diversities are emphasized but never viewed as problems. There is a continuing recognition that societal learning is an asset and that the formal curriculum will be greatly enriched by integrating with that. There is a celebration of plurality and an understanding that within a broad framework plural approaches would lead to enhanced creativity.

(Foreword, *National Curriculum Framework-2005*)

INTRODUCTION

The importance of mother tongue education, of recognising pluralities and of integrating the school knowledge into social, economic and ethnic backgrounds of children has been posited in the foreword of the National Curriculum Framework (NCF-2005) and reiterated throughout the document. Numerous lines in

the curriculum framework have been devoted to emphasise on the significance of integrating children's mother tongue into the formal curriculum. Language has been seen as an axiom around which a child's world is constructed. The scope that it has as a medium of instruction in different content areas has not been disregarded. The role of language has been considered central from the development of concepts in various subjects to the development of identity of children in the NCF. In fact, it has been argued that multilingualism is comparable to any other national resource of the country. What remains unclear though, is how teachers are to translate the vision of multilingual education provided in the curriculum framework into reality.

In order to achieve the aim of 'multilingualism and national harmony', the curriculum framework endorses the application of three-language formula and calls for the 'use (of) the multilingual classroom as a resource' in the process of teaching and learning (NCF-2005, p. 37). Consider, however, the guidelines that have been provided in the document for the implementation of the three language formula —

- Language teaching needs to be multilingual not only in terms of the number of languages offered to children, but also in terms of evolving strategies that would use the multilingual classroom as a resource.
- Home language(s) of children... should be the medium of learning in schools.
- If a school does not have provisions for teaching in the child's home language(s) at the higher levels, primary school education must still be covered through the home language(s). It is imperative that we honour the child's home language(s). According to Article 350A of our Constitution, 'It shall be the endeavour of every State and of every local authority within the State to provide adequate facilities for instruction in the mother-tongue at the primary stage of education to children belonging to linguistic minority groups'.
- Children will receive multilingual education from the outset. The three-language formula needs to be implemented in its spirit, promoting multilingual communicative abilities for a multilingual country... (NCF-2005, p. 37)

An analysis of the guidelines quoted above shows that although the guidelines claim to facilitate the promotion of 'multilingualism and national harmony' in Indian classrooms, they are largely

opaque in nature since they do not provide substantial action-oriented directions to the teachers who are supposed to implement the formula in their classrooms. There are several practical questions that have remained unanswered. Do teachers also need to learn the plethora of languages that children bring with themselves into the classroom? If not, then how would teachers use the languages that they themselves do not understand, as a resource? How would they support literacy-related activities in several languages within their classrooms, if they are themselves unfamiliar with many of those scripts? Should a teacher keep translating phrases from one language to another in such multilingual classrooms? As theories that argue against using translation method posit, would such translations not dilute the input that children get of the target language? Code switching/mixing is an integral part of language use in multilingual societies such as India. Should teachers allow (perhaps also encourage) students to code switch/mix in classroom context? Should they also accept texts written by students that contain script-switching/mixing? Several such questions haunt the day-to-day classroom practices that are organised by teachers. However, other than providing few examples of pedagogical activities that support multilingual education given here and there in the document, teachers have not been informed with practical

implications of the ideals that have been posited. The pragmatic aspects of multilingual education that the National Curriculum Framework fails to address, hence, result in enormous practical challenges for teachers.

Further, the literature existing in the field also shows that teachers (especially those who are 'in-service') are often unaware of the theoretical underpinnings that support the vision that is idealised by experts who craft national documents such as the curriculum framework. Disregarding such issues, National Curriculum Framework (2005) seldom explicates the theories that support the model of education that it has proposed. Batra (2005), for instance, posits that although the National Curriculum Framework argues for a radically different model of education as compared to those that had existed before in India, in regard to teachers, the curriculum makers seem to have taken the predominant view that consider them (teachers) to be agents of state, who merely need to be "oriented to the perspective" (p. 4349). However, unwarranted by theoretical framework or research, the statements that are given in the curriculum framework remain suspended in the air, unable to bring the required 'perspectival shift' in teachers. As a result, teachers either become pedagogically disoriented, or they reject the propositions that are given in the curriculum framework and continue to follow the pedagogical practices that they

have been following for years (Batra, 2005).

Hence, it is crucial to understand that teachers need to be equipped with answers to 'whys' and 'hows' of multilingual education since they are the primary agents of curriculum implementation. If teachers are to translate the National Curriculum Framework into day-to-day classroom practices, it is imperative that they are not only acquainted with the vision of curriculum makers but also with the theories and research that argue in favour of multilingual education. Further, they need to be appraised with the methodologies that collocate with these theories.

This paper therefore analyses the National Curriculum Framework-2005 in the light of research done in the area of multilingual education. The paper is not only a document analysis of the Curriculum Framework, but it rather presents a comprehensive overview of the field, providing its readers with a theoretical rationale, along with some exemplary studies on multilingual education that can serve to guide classroom practices. The attempt is to assist teachers by equipping them with a deeper insight in regard to the 'whys' and 'hows' of multilingual education, since they (like children) cannot be assumed to be passive recipients of knowledge provided in national documents such as the National Curriculum Framework.

The paper has been divided into five broad sections. The first

section introduces its readers to the problem of curriculum while establishing the need of writing this paper. The second section of the paper discusses the definition of the phrase 'multilingual education' with the aim of clarifying the concept. The third section provides a comprehensive review of the theoretical underpinnings of multilingual education. The last section, in an attempt to answer 'whys' and 'hows' of multilingual education, begins by providing a list of benefits that multilingual education has been reported to have in various studies. The section moves on to discuss certain intervening factors that often impede the benefits of multilingual education, and ends by reporting two classic studies that illustrate the nature of multilingual classrooms. A critical account on National Curriculum Framework-2005 has also been provided in this section. The last section summarises and concludes the paper.

WHAT IS MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION?

The classic definitions of multilingual education, such as that provided by Anderson and Boyer (1978), interprets the term as the use of more than a single language in a classroom as a medium of instruction while teaching content areas. This definition, however, is being increasingly criticised in the current literature of multilingual education. Scholars such as Garcia, Skutnabb-

Kangas and Torres-Guzman (2009), Cummins (2009a) and Prahlad (2005) argue that it is not enough that schools offer instructions in 'more than a single language' or that they serve a group of students that is linguistically diverse. These, in fact, may be common features of any school that is situated in a multilingual society.

The term 'multilingual education' can only be attributed to educational programmes that exert special educational efforts to promote the use of multiple languages in the school premises. Schools that specifically aim to provide multilingual education go beyond the 'acceptance', 'tolerance' or 'maintenance' models that simply recognise the existence of multilingualism within school and society. They rather include those kinds of educational programmes that *cultivate* multilingualism amongst students by utilising and building upon the linguistic diversities that are brought to the classrooms. These schools undertake the endeavour of encouraging mother tongue in order to *promote* (as compared to maintain) multilingualism in the larger society. It is in this sense that the term multilingual education has been used in this paper.

THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS OF MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION

The fundamental theoretical assumption that underlies various studies that support multilingual education pertains to neuro-

psychological aspect of language learning. These studies assume that the structure of mental lexicon is organised such that different language systems interact within the minds of multilinguals. In other words, it is believed that there exists a common underlying proficiency or a unitary system (as opposed to distinct systems for different languages), which is composed of general principles of grammar that coordinates with sub-systems of language specific lexemes to construct meaningful sentences in one language or the other, depending upon the sub-system of lexeme that has been chosen. This section discusses some of the theories of multilingual education that were based on this assumption, in detail.

The construct, argues Prahlad (2005), can be traced back to Weinreich's studies on bilinguals. In his book, *Languages in Contact*, Weinreich (1953) had argued that bilinguals can be described as being coordinate, compound or subordinate bilinguals depending upon how different languages are organised within their minds. Coordinate bilinguals have distinct systems for disparate languages that exist in their minds. Compound bilinguals, on the other hand, have one common system, or a singular conceptual and semantic framework that have two different realisations in their minds. Subordinate bilinguals, like compound bilinguals, have a common underlying system but one dominant and the other subordinate

realisation of it. Subordinate bilinguals process their subordinate system of expression through the medium of their dominant system of expressions (Prahlad, 2005).

The issue of the organisation of mental lexicon remained debatable for many years henceforth. It is only recently that research has been able to take a definitive stand on it and support an interaction-based model. Studies done in the area of linguistics on code-switching/mixing show that languages interact with each other in a systematic manner within the minds of multilinguals. Research conducted on contact language phenomena such as pidgins, koines and mixed languages also posit what Bakker and Mous (1994) call a natural process of 'language intertwining' in human mind. The idea has been restated by Cummins (2001) who purported the dual iceberg model of language proficiency and elucidated it with a number of supportive studies.

Cummins (1979) proposed the existence of two distinct forms of language proficiency. The first is conversational proficiency or basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) that manifest commonly in casual day-to-day conversations, while the second is cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP), which relates to cognitive and literacy skills, and is learned typically in classroom context as a result of direct instruction. In his famous book, *Negotiating Identities: Education for Empowerment in*

Diverse Societies, Cummins (2001) reviewed a number of research where literacy-related aspects of bilingual proficiency in L1 and L2 were seen as common or interdependent (p. 173). Based on these studies, Cummins concluded that although surface level oral proficiency remains confined to specific linguistic systems (languages) within mind, there is a significant transfer of conceptual knowledge and academic skills across languages. Therefore, a common underlying language proficiency model (CUP model) was proposed in which cognitive academic language skills (rather than basic interpersonal communicative skills) were posited to compose language-related knowledge that is common across disparate languages. The following diagram accurately represents the dual iceberg model of language proficiency proposed by Cummins.

The model implies that learning of Hindi by a Tamil speaker is not only facilitated by direct instructions in Hindi, but also by the knowledge that the learner has of Tamil's linguistic system. Concept such as directionality while reading texts, use of metaphors or rhetorical

arguments, once acquired in L1, can easily be transferred to L2 contexts. The following are examples of some studies that support the CUP model.

In a research carried out on students with language learning impairments by Brück (1978, 1982), it was observed that the immersion programme benefited impaired students with superior French language proficiency much more than the students who were receiving only core French instruction. In a strenuous study conducted by Swain and her colleagues (1990) on French immersion programmes, it was found that students who had developed literacy skills in their first language prior to joining the immersion programme scored considerably higher on a French reading comprehension test than those who had acquired only oral proficiency in the first language.

It is this set of research (and theory) that supports the claim for multilingualism (as being a resource that assist the processes of teaching-learning) that has been made by National Curriculum Framework-2005.

Surface features of L1

Surface features of L2

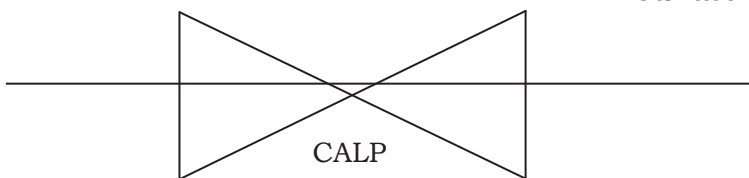


Diagram 1. Dual Iceberg Model of Language Proficiency

THE WHYS AND HOWS OF MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION

As often is the case with ‘why and how-questions’, the answer to the questions ‘why multilingual education?’ and ‘how multilingual education?’ lie in the implications that multilingual education has for the particular context in which the questions have been asked. Although there are some studies done in the Indian context that expose the implications of various models of multilingual education, a number of relevant studies have also been conducted in the western context that provide us with profound insights into the issue in question. Some of such studies have been quoted in this section. The section begins by quoting a number of studies that forefront the benefits of multilingual education. Essentially, these studies show why multilingual education should be supported in contexts such as India. The section moves on to trace certain factors that might function to impede the benefits of multilingual education and therefore must be catered to in Indian classroom. Further, in an attempt to answer ‘how’ related questions that pertain to multilingual education, the section quotes two classic examples of multilingual classrooms. The pedagogical practices followed in these classrooms have been analysed in detail in order to highlight the practical implications that the curricular goal of multilingual education has. A simultaneous analysis of the National Curriculum

Framework–2005 has also been provided in this section.

Cummins (2001) argues that there are close to 150 studies that have been conducted during the past three decades that show “a positive association between additive multilingualism and students’ linguistic, cognitive or academic growth” (p. 164). These studies consistently show that bi/multi-lingualism promote metalinguistic capabilities such as structural awareness and communicative sensitivity (the act of making appropriate language choice given the context) in students. Multilingualism has also been shown as positively correlated with various other cognitive capabilities such as creativity or divergent thinking. A significant study in this regard, argues Garcia (2007), was conducted by May, Hill and Tiakiwai (2004). The study shows that multilinguals score consistently higher on tests that access creativity demonstrating high levels of originality and flexibility in thinking. Further, Hawkins (1983) has proved that multilinguals have an improved capability to acquire new languages. Further, studies such as those conducted by Linton (2003) show that there exists a positive correlation between upward mobility and multilingualism.

Some of the benefits of multilingualism that have been described above have, in fact, succeeded to find space in National Curriculum Framework. The NCF states that “several studies have shown that bilingual proficiency raises the levels of cognitive growth,

social tolerance, divergent thinking and scholastic achievement. Societal or national-level multilingualism is a resource that can be favorably compared to any other national resource" (p. 37). Further, the socio-economic benefits of learning new languages is specially significant in contexts such as India where employment opportunities often correlate with one's proficiency in different languages.

However, although the NCF mentions a few of the benefits of multilingual education that have been enlisted above to support its claim for multilingual education, what is not mentioned is the fact that all of the statements describing the benefits of multilingual education given above should be taken with a pinch of salt. Such statements undoubtedly hold true, however, certain basic conditions are to be necessarily met. Consider, for instance, the interdependence hypothesis of the structure of mental lexicon provided by Cummins. Cummins (2009b) argued that proficiency in first language will transfer to second language *provided* there is adequate exposure and motivation to learn the second language.

The idea has been derived and can be explicated adequately by quoting the research that was conducted by Ogbu (1992) in the United States. Ogbu's study inquired into the general patterns of difficulties experienced by immigrant minorities in the United States. The results of his study showed that in-group identity constructed by minorities played a significant role

in determining not only the patterns of their behaviour with respect to the dominant community of the society but also their performance at school. He differentiated between voluntary minorities and involuntary minorities and argued that although voluntary minorities do not adopt defiant attitudes, involuntary minority group members take on certain cultural behaviours that oppose dominant group norms to show resistance to subordinating cultural practices. Such psychological oppositions impede learning within school contexts in involuntary communities. Further, norms such as linguistic and cultural loyalties play a central role in the process of defining identities in these groups.

He argued that a major reason why students belonging to involuntary minorities face persistent difficulties in academic area is that schools reproduce the power structures that are typical of society at large. Schools consolidate and reinforce resistant identities that are already acquired by children through their interaction with peers, parents and other adults in involuntary communities. Hence, exclusionary practices popular in macro interactions (interactions at the level of society) get reflected and function to define micro interactions (interactions between teachers and students) within classrooms resulting in educational failure for the already marginalised groups of the society (Cummins, 2001).

The role of similar exclusionary practices has been discussed by eminent scholars such as Kumar

(1996) and Agnihotri (2009) in the Indian context too. Social stereotypes such as inferiority of dialects as compared to languages, and inferiority of script-less languages (see Agnihotri, 2009, for a detailed account on language-related stereotypes) result in an added layer of complexity in the context of India.

Although NCF-2005 recognises that language is an integral part of identity, and that identities as well as languages are socially constructed, but it does not tell the teachers what is to be done when student's identity functions as a restraint in developing

linguistic proficiencies. Suggesting a solution to the problem, Cummins (2001) argues that classrooms need to be (re)conceptualised as sites of identity negotiation that would provide students an opportunity to alter the power quo that defines their identities. An exemplary study in this regard, argues Cummins (2001), is "The Pajaro Valley Family Literacy Project". The study also illustrates 'how' the goals of multilingual education programmes can be effectively achieved by introducing certain pedagogical changes in the classrooms.

Located in Watsonville (California), Pajaro Valley School district served its rural surroundings which were populated by Latino communities. More than half of the Latino students who entered formal education dropped out of school before completing high school. During 1986, a popular author Alma Flor Ada was called to the school in a 'meet the author' programme where she was to read some of her Spanish stories and discuss the process of writing with children. Children's ebullience and enthusiasm for the programme could not be ignored, and the teachers, the director of bilingual programme and Alma Flor Ada decided to follow children's newly stimulated interest in literacy.

This incident led the designers to construct a literacy programme where parents' active involvement was also sought. Monthly meetings were organised for students and parents (many of who were illiterates) to involve them in literacy-related activities. Invitations written in Spanish were sent to the parents and follow-up phone calls were made by teachers. Parents who did not have conveyance were provided with transport facilities. The meeting was conducted in the library rather than in the school building in order to create a non-threatening and positive atmosphere as parents had negative associations related to the school.

In the first meeting, issues such as importance of promoting home language, pride in cultural heritage and the purpose of the programme were discussed. After a general discussion on these issues, Ana Flor Ada read selected children's books to the parents, accompanying her reading with actions and showing illustrations given in the book. Parents were then invited to select a book (that they could take home) and to join in a small group discussion on that book.

Discussions were conducted in Spanish and teachers made sure that parents' responses were validated and accepted. Teachers gradually led the discussions to deeper levels of reflection. At the end of the meeting, parents were provided with a general guide enlisting activities and pointers for discussions that they were to carry out with their children at home after reading books. A blank book was also given in which children (or parents, when dictated by their children) could write their own stories.

The session was highly successful and was followed by a series of monthly sessions where (gradually) stories that were written by parents and children themselves were read and discussed. All the sessions were videotaped and shared in the wider community which gave the children an opportunity to see their parents on television while providing them with a sense of pride. The consequences of the programme were remarkable. The parents and children began to borrow books from the school library and even went to public library in search of books of their interest. Increase in self-confidence in parents was evident when they took to facilitate small group discussions and made presentations on the use of children's literature at the Regional Migration Educational Conference. A mother who participated in the program remarked:

"Ever since I know I have no need to feel ashamed of speaking Spanish I have become strong. Now I feel I can speak with the teachers about my children's education and I can tell them I want my children to know Spanish. I have gained courage..." (p. 7)

Hence, the programme gave the parents and children belonging to the Latino community, an opportunity to construct a new, more confident and a literate identity for themselves. In Cummins' (2001) words, parents had gained 'internal resources, confidence and motivation to exert greater control over the forces that effect their lives' (p. 7). Apparently, the empowering experience that the parents and children of the minority community had through the programme was a result of an inverted pattern of power relations that was initiated by teachers in the school context. The pedagogy that was followed reflects the theoretical paradigm of critical

pedagogy proposed by Friere in his book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1968) as opposed to constructivist paradigm which the NCF-2005 largely reflects.

Another example of such a study has been quoted by Cummins (2009a) in the book, *Imagining Multilingual Schools: Languages in Education and Glocalization*. The example comes from Michael Cranny Public School in Toronto, Canada. A characteristic feature of this school was its linguistic and cultural diversity. In this school, grade one and grade two children were encouraged by their teachers to create their own stories in English, which was the language

of school instruction. Children were then asked to translate the stories into their home languages with the

expand children's sense of self-worth. The process has been illustrated through the following example:

The students had arrived from Pakistan at different ages: Kanta and Sulmana had been in Canada since grade four (3 years) while Madiha had been in the country for less than a year. They collaboratively wrote the story entitled *The New Country* based on their collective experience. It was written in the context of a unit on the theme of migration that integrated social studies, language and ESL curriculum expectations.

Over the course of several weeks, the three girls discussed the general content of their story using both Urdu and English. As they were writing the story, there were many points where they discussed appropriate translations from one language to another, as well as aspects of grammar of each language. The fact that the story was written in both languages enabled all three students to participate fully in the creative process and to contribute their experiences to the text. For Kanta, whose Urdu literacy was less well developed than that of the other two girls, it reinforced Urdu and brought it into contact with English, her stronger literate language. Sulmana was the most bilingual and biliterate of the three girls and she took major responsibility for scribing in both languages. Madiha's English proficiency was not sufficient for her to write anything substantive in that language or to participate fully in class discussions that took place only in English. However, as a result of the collaborative creation of the bilingual identity text, she became a proud author of a lengthy book in both Urdu and English. (p. 60)

help of their peers, older students, multilingual teachers and their parents. After adding illustrations, the stories were posted on the 'Dual language website' to be shared with a larger group of audience. Students' creative efforts and performances resulted in what Cummins (2009a) called *identity texts*. Identity texts, argued Cummins, are the texts created by students in which they invest personal identities and that in turn function to reflect students' identities in a positive light. Such texts not only enhance language proficiency in children, but they also

A defining feature of this programme is the acceptance that has been provided to the learners. The school has accepted not only their home language but also the experiences that children bring to the classrooms, validating their cultures in the process. As a result of this pedagogy, students have been able to create new and empowered identities for themselves as well as for the communities to which they belong. Their roles have been changed from legitimate peripheral participants to legitimate central participants in the process of teaching and learning (Lave

and Wenger, 1991). The role of the teacher is apparently transformative as they function to bring fundamental changes in the power quo that dictates society. It is also important to note that the pedagogy has not led to simplistic *maintenance* of linguistic diversities in the classroom; it has rather functioned to *encourage* multilingualism at large. Multilingualism, in fact, will be naturally *acquired* by students in such classrooms.

The examples such as 'The Pajaro Valley Family Project and Michael Cranny Public School' that have been provided earlier have obvious relevance in the Indian context. The pluralistic nature of Indian society which is accompanied by social, economical and political inequalities makes it imperative that teachers employ pedagogies that are of similar nature if goals that have been envisaged in the National Curriculum Framework are to be achieved.

NCF-2005, at various places in the document, also indicates the need of the guiding classroom practices by principles that have functioned to guide The Pajaro Valley Family Project and Michael Cranny Public School in their endeavours. It proclaims that —

- Our children need to feel that each one of them, their homes, communities, languages and cultures, are valuable as resources for experience to be analysed and enquired into at school; that their diverse capabilities are accepted; that all of them have the ability

and the right to learn and to access knowledge and skills; and that adult society regards them as capable of the best. (p. 14)

- Language(s) in education would ideally build on this resource (students' mother tongue), and would strive to enrich it through the development of literacy (scripts including Braille) for the acquisition of academic knowledge. (p. 36)
- ...while helping children to use their home language and make a transition to the school language, teachers may seek inputs from local language speakers to facilitate communication in the mother tongue(s), teaching of languages and creating material. The choice would depend upon the particular curricular plan adopted and the kinds of expertise that are available and accessible. The school must explore opportunities for active engagement by parents and the community in the process of learning. This relationship will help in sharing the content and pedagogy of institutionalised learning. (p. 88)

Although they have been included in the document, the difference in page numbers from which the above statements have been extracted must be noted. Disparate sections of the document have been interspersed with such statements about language teaching. As a result, it fails to convey accurately to its readers what would be the true nature of an

ideal multilingual classroom. Lack of exemplary studies adds to the bewilderment. It also seems to have totally ignored the challenges that teachers might have to face while applying these principles in reality in the context of India.

Nowhere in the document is it mentioned that application of these statements in reality will require teachers to bring fundamental changes in attitudes of their learners. The macro interactions that defined the power and status of minority communities were being fundamentally reworked during micro interactions between teachers and students in the Pajaro Valley Project and Michael Cranny Public School. Such changes cannot be brought in those classrooms that remain isolated from the outer world. Since family and peers play significant role in shaping children's attitude (Hedges, Cullen and Jordan, 2011), such a change will require teachers to reconstruct the self-concept of not only children, but also of parents and the community to which they belong. Active participation of parents and communities in educational processes, therefore, cannot remain a matter of "choice" or depend upon the kind of "particular curricular plan (that has been) adopted" as stated in the NCF (p. 88). Critical pedagogy is inevitable if the goals envisaged in the curriculum are to be turned into reality.

Further, the NCF vaguely mentions that —

An objective of curriculum planning, social justice has many

obvious implications, but there are some subtle implications as well. One obvious implication is that special efforts will be required to ensure that education promotes an inclusive identity. Children belonging to religious and linguistic minorities need special provision and care in accordance with the perspective reflected in the Constitution. In the case of tribal languages, certain states have taken significant measures to facilitate early schooling in the child's home language. A more adequate set of measures providing for multilingual facility on the part of the teacher is needed. (p. 103)

Clearly, the load of comprehending the 'subtle implications' of the social justice objective has been left on the shoulders of teachers. How such 'inclusive identities' are to be promoted in classrooms, what are the 'adequate' measures that the teachers 'need' to take and what should be the nature of 'special provision and care' that has been asked for by the Constitution with regard to religious and linguistic minorities, are just few of the questions that have been left unanswered in the document. Examples such as 'The Pajaro Valley Project and Michael Cranny Public School', on the other hand, accurately illustrate to the teachers, the pedagogical implications that such curricular objectives have. The inclusive pedagogy practised in the programmes reflects 'how' true democracy, harmony and social

justice, as they have been envisaged in NCF-2005, could be brought about in the classrooms through integrative multilingual practices designed under the paradigm of critical theory.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it can be stated that within the context of education, it is desirable that multilingualism is seen as relevant and in fact crucial in promoting values such as tolerance and harmony in pluralistic, democratic and secular societies like India; however, such a perspective will only be based on maintenance

theories of language teaching and learning. If multilingualism has to be truly used as a resource, as envisioned in the National Curriculum Framework-2005, it is imperative that classroom pedagogies are steered by critical theory. The process will involve radical structural changes in the exclusionary practices that have been amalgamated in our education system to such an extent that they have been normalised. Teachers play a central role in this regard and, therefore, cannot be left unassisted. They need to be given full access to the rationale and methodologies of multilingual education.

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