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The State, Market and Multilingual Education

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INTRODUCTION

The development of multilingual education discourse can be divided into two phases—one, when multilinguality was seen as a problem and was to be managed anyhow by the state and, the second, when multilinguality was seen as a reality and a positive resource believed to be contributing positively to better executive functions, metacognitive resources and positive social identities (Mohanty, 2019; Panda, 2017; Agnihotri, 1995, 2007, this volume). In the first phase, multilingualism was defined in modernist terms within the discursive frame of the nation-state. Like any other modernist project, this issue was to be managed effectively in order to minimise the chaos arising from multilinguality and maximise governance by careful planning and execution of language policies in education, media and administration. This led to an era of intensive and hierarchical language planning with a pyramidal structure, providing more options to younger children to learn in their home languages in lower classes, fewer options in the middle and high schools and almost no option except in few places where two languages (one international and one regional) were used for transaction in higher education (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1984, 1988; Panda and ohanty, 2015). Wherever more than one language was used, the languages appeared sequentially and hierarchically so that the home languages disappeared as quickly as possible in favour of the regional language and the regional language in favour of national and international languages. All activities to preserve indigenous and endangered languages were planned within this paradigm of 'one nation-one language'.

The modernist projects in the newly independent democracies in the postcolonial phase including India advanced in this discursive context. The early writings of Joshua Fishman (1973; 1974; 1987), Lambert (1977), Tove SkutnabbKangas (1998; 2000; 2007; 2008; 2015), Pattanayak (1981), Cummins (1966; 2002), Mohanty (1994; 2000; 2004; 2006;2008; 2018) and Philipson (1992; 2009), Heugh (1999) and Benson (2009) as well as the discourses carried out in different forums of United Nations (UNESCO, 1953) reacted to this paradigm, critiquing a politically-imposed monolingual education system or an Early Exit multilingual system whose primary commitment is to the dominant state project of linguistic and social assimilation than to the critical literacy needs of children from the socially- and linguistically-marginalised communities. These scholars subsequently employed a right-based approach in order to break the linguistic hegemony of the few named languages and demanded education of all children in their mother tongue/home language/first language till at least Grade VIII (Mohanty, 2004; 2007, Skutnabb-Kangas, 1998; 2000; 2008; Panda, 2009; Mohanty, Panda, Skutnabb-Kanga & Philipson, 2009).

Globalisation required massive internal and cross border migration resulting in an enormous amount of linguistic, cognitive and perceptual diversities that challenged the very foundation of the modern state paradigm: one nation-one language. World communities started looking at multilinguality as a sociolinguistic reality and as a cognitive, political and economic resource. A need arose ubiquitously to deepen our understanding of its nature, map the cognitive advantages arising out of everyday multilinguality with pedagogic exercises and optimise the learning and identity needs of all children. A surge in research was noticed in struggling to grapple with the new literature on bilingualism from the 1960s onward and the challenges posed by Asian and African nations to this minimalist paradigm, demanding a fresh enquiry into complex multilingual societies and the academic challenges arising out these contexts. In the process, the academic discourse on multilingual education underwent a paradigm shift from modern to postmodern and to the post-structural conceptualisation of world societies, languages and human minds. Language was seen as a multilingual repertoire with porous boundaries (Agnihotri, 1995, 2007) and monolinguality was considered to be one of the most profound myths of the nation-state paradigm, advanced in order to ease the state governance and protect

the interests of the powerful. The human mind was seen as multilingual, multi-modal, flexible and creative. Most societies were acknowledged as multilingual and the interpersonal and intergroup communications were driven more by heteroglossic ideology than by monolingualism (Panda, 2016, 2018). The concepts like language shift, language death and language maintenance were deconstructed against this new definition of language, mind and society to lay the foundation of an alternative paradigm for language education.

These two phases were not always separated temporally. They rather co-existed spatially in a dialogical space between three discursive communities: the first, that believed in monolingualism, the second that believed in multilingualism but treated languages as distinct entities and school education requiring 'a' medium of instruction at every level of education, and the third that believed in multilingualism but treated all languages as multilingual repertoires with porous boundaries. This chapter presents the dialogue between these three discursive communities within a triangular dialectical space of state, market and education in India. However, before presenting this, it will be prudent to place a brief history of language policy in postcolonial India.

LANGUAGE POLICY IN POST INDEPENDENT INDIA

Despite the all pervasive multilingual nature of Indian societies of all Indian societies and a prevailed heteroglossic ideology at the grass root level, the discursive genre of language policy discourse in post-independent India was primarily modernist. The quasi-federal Indian state aimed at handling the new multilingual giant within a nation state paradigm. The immediate goal of the quasi-federal state of India was to identify a few mediums of administration, education and media so that the state interventions were financially, administratively and academically manageable (Panda, 2012). The creation of the Eighth Schedule (ES) in the newly framed Indian constitution, identifying fourteen major Indian languages in the beginning and subsequently expanding the list to include eight more languages taking the total to 22 out of 1652 Indian languages was meant to create a pyramidal structure where official communications were to be done in select languages and informal communications in multiple languages spoken in a region. The

academic and linguistic needs of children of minority communities were accommodated through Article 365 that required the states to teach children in their mother tongues. Introduction of the Three Language Formula (TLF) in 1967, its adoption in the First National Policy of Education (1968), and acceptance of mother tongue education without making it a fundamental right marked the beginning of a phase that replaced organic plurilingualism with structural multilingualism, but within a soft majoritarian design (Khubchandani, 1995; Panda, 2017). However, the majoritarian design remained due to the rise in ethnic and religious tensions and political and state representation of the religious minority communities (Panda, 2017).

Khubchandani argued that the introduction of TLF after the creation of the Eighth Schedule led to an era of intense language planning in education, media and state administration. He saw the plurilingual ethos of the country getting gradually replaced by the concept of bi/multilingualism, as the latter didn't negate the inherently hierarchical state structures created within a modern-state paradigm for easy governance (Panda, 2017). 'With the new forces of modernisation penetrating in all walks of life, the issues of identity and development of different languages (indigenous or foreign) have acquired political significance. Consequently, India is fast turning away from an organically 'accommodating' plurilingual nation into an institutionally 'assertive' multilingual nation' (Khubchandani, 1995, p. 37). The stratification hierarchy of language in both the Eighth Schedule and TLF, he feared, was giving rise to explicit provisions of legislative hierarchy and benefitting speakers of some languages over others. 'Grassroots plurilingualism is replaced by mandatory bilingualism or trilingualism as envisaged in the Three Language Formula (TLF), through education and other systems of acculturation' (Khubchandani, 1983, p. 37). Khubchandani cautioned against generating mutual distrust among different ethno-linguistic communities due to the privileging of a few which could escalate the experience of alienation, domination and discrimination resulting in deepening the process of social fragmentation (Khubchandani, 1995, p. 37).

The creation of the Eighth Schedule was viewed critically by Gupta and Abbi (1995). Non-inclusion of most Indian languages in the Eighth Schedule, according to them, made language an intensely debated political subject. Panda (2017) and Gupta and Abbi (1995)

perceived this as an act of violence against hundreds of languages. According to them, the Eighth Schedule unleashed disruptive and divisive forces. Language transformed from being a socio-cultural reservoir and primary communicative force into a political issue. Gupta and Abbi observed that, 'The politicization of the (sic) language issue, to our mind, is a direct consequence of ES.' (Gupta & Abbi, 1995, p. 4) and the dominant ideology of assimilation was at the back of the Eighth Schedule as they failed to find any other convincing reason for inclusion or non-inclusion of languages in this schedule. Out of the fourteen languages included in the ES, twelve had states, but two languages—Sanskrit and Sindhi—didn't have states, and one language, Sindhi (added in 1967), was neither a classical language nor spoken by a majority of speakers. Gupta and Abbi apprehended social and political misgivings of these new constitutional provisions: 'This assimilationist ideology has, quite understandably, given rise to fears and misgivings among communities whose languages are branded as "minor", "tribal" or merely as dialects.... In some cases the fears might be unfounded, while in others, these are genuine fears—fear of being overwhelmed, being swept under, or totally lost under the expanding sphere of powers and influences that the languages of the ES have been granted' (Gupta & Abbi, 1995, p. 4–5).

Over a period of time, as the country strode through these new modernists experimentations in language and educational planning, the majoritarian design in language policy in education founded deeper roots in Indian society. Gupta and Abbi (1995) state: 'Our constitution makers, perhaps, felt that the only way to contain the multilingual giant was to create a short, select list of "major", "dominant" Indian languages which shall take over, one after the other, all public domains of education, administration and so on, and in due course of time, the 1600 odd other languages will be submerged under these mainstream languages. This assimilationist goal, while laudable from the 'national' and 'administrative' point of view, is a device to swallow the small fish—the languages not included in the ES'. The concerns of universal education were reframed as 'how to mainstream tribals, Dalits and physically handicapped'. New bipolar categories such as majority-minority, dominant-subordinate, privileged-underprivileged were created that governed the public spheres of national life—ethnic, racial, cultural, religious, educational and political.

The history of Indian education has therefore been a history of struggle of equal representation of all linguistic communities in the language-in-education policy of the country. The 2011 Census had identified 1369 mother tongues following a process of rationalisation of all the 19,569 raw returns of mother tongue names. An inventory of classified mother tongues returned by 10,000 or more speakers was grouped under appropriate languages at the all-India level, wherever possible, and this was prepared for final presentation of the 2011 mother tongue data. The total number of languages arrived at was 121.

These 121 languages are presented in two parts viz. Part A: Languages included in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution of India (Scheduled Languages) comprising 22 languages; and Part B: Languages not included in the Eighth Schedule (Non-Scheduled Languages) comprising 99 languages spoken each by more than 10,000 speakers plus the category 'Total of other languages' that were returned by less than 10,000 speakers each at the all-India level. Several anomalies were pointed out in these processes of rationalisation so far as mutual intelligibility of the languages grouped under one name was concerned. There were twenty-seven languages listed under the language name 'Hindi'. Many languages like Lambadi and Hindi or Sadri and Hindi are not mutually intelligible. Carrying out of school education through an identified language discriminated against the speakers of other languages not included in the schools. The medium of instructions used in the education sector was without exception one of the Eighth Schedule languages or English.

Two parallel processes that constantly worked against vernacular or mother tongue-based multilingual education were expansion of the English-medium education market and a parallel movement called "classicalisation" by Gupta and Abbi (1995). Soon after Independence, Sanskrit was considered both an Eighth Schedule language and a classical language. The classical language net expanded to include Tamil in 2004, Telugu and Kannada in 2008, Malayalam in 2013 and Odia in 2014. In the current Draft of National Education Policy (DNEP), these six classical languages are competing with each other and with other languages for a larger share of instructional time in school and higher education. The DNEP now mandates to expose all children to two years of language learning in one of these six classical languages. The three language formula effectively becomes four language formula for most.

The process of language planning got intensified in the post-economic liberalisation period in India. With the beginning of IMF-World Bank funded District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), global pressure increased on the state for mother tongue-based multilingual education for children from ethnic and linguistic minority communities. Organisations like the World Bank, UNICEF and UNESCO played a major role in strengthening the multilingual education discourse within DPEP programmes. While a mother tongue-based, sequentially arranged, multilingual education programme was taking root in the Indian education system, a new and aggressive market for English education was evolving in India in the form of both high-end public schools as well as shadow schools. Language became a commodity in the neoliberal market and started to resemblea lucrative industry like iron, steel, coal etc. (Philipson, 2000). Many private companies like the British Council, Pearson, etc. entered the market for production of materials in English and also for teacher training. A new desire for English education was created by the market targeting parents. However, this lucrative language industry faced a severe moral and economic challenge due to the rise of this new paradigm called mother tongue-based multilingual education. The expansion of English education to poor and disadvantaged families required a home language support programme for making English education intellectually accessible to these poor and disadvantaged children. The academic logic of a multilingual education programme corresponded well not only with the academic but also ideological and economic logic of English education. It could now be argued that initial education should be in the mother tongue and learners should soon switch to English as they move to higher classes in their own interest. Their own languages would become increasingly irrelevant.

INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND MODERNIST'S PROJECT OF MLE

The contribution of international organisations to the modernists' project of MLE in the post-economic liberalisation phase is noteworthy. The Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB_MLE) was pushed in India and other Asian and African countries as a major

solution for enhancing quality school education among tribal and other linguistic minority children through regular financial and academic hand-holding from UN organisations like UNICEF and UNESCO. Sharing of best practices from Africa, Australia and other countries and indirect policing of state actions through stated UN goals in the area of minority language and education furthered this paradigm in India. These organisations supported the existing structural apparatus of the state, like the NCERT and SCERTs through DPEP that provided solutions based on sequentially arranged MTB_MLE for tribal children in states with high tribal concentration. The demand for a shift towards multilingual education for all children was ignored and the complex problem of educational underachievement among tribals was desired to be addressed through MTB_MLE. A specialised MTB_MLE programme was promoted in these schools. As this new programme needed a minor tweaking of the existing state programmes already designed sequentially within the framework of the TLF, adding one more language to the programme for tribal children was welcome by the states. The political establishments suddenly had a concrete solution for the problems of tribal children in schools. They also saw this as an opportunity to appease both the tribal communities and international organisations like UNICEF, UNESCO, DFID etc. in one strike. A micro-analysis of MLE programmes and the dominant MLE discourses in India shows how a discursive fuzziness was intentionally maintained in the policy documents that resulted in thwarting a major revision in the language pedagogy of the state. The issue of psycholinguistic needs of the children from these minority language communities were further subalternised in this special treatment of MLE programmes.

MODERNIST PROJECT AND THE METAPHOR OF 'BRIDGING' AND 'EXIT'

The choice of a particular model of MLE in these states is influenced by the dominant construction of the problem of tribal children's learning in regular government schools as one of 'poor' or 'inadequate' bridging between their everyday language and school language. Bridging and exit became two foundational metaphors of the Indian MLE programmes (Panda, 2012). These constructs were originally popularised by the UN

documents and were discursively embedded in the research and policy documents of India. Minor adjustments like using children's language and culture in the beginning of early school years were seen as sufficient for helping tribal children make a 'jump' to mainstream education imparted in the school language. These concepts were palpable because they did not require the language medium of the mainstream education to change; it was only the education of the linguistic minorities that required some adjustments of this kind in the early years.

The acceptance of these concepts in language education helped modernist's projects to remain majoritarian and manage educational challenges arising out of language hegemony through minor reforms. These minor pedagogic reforms worked as a blind for deeper structural questions on language, caste and ethnicity. The pedagogic discourses generated as a form of knowledge got re-contextualised in terms of language medium of instruction, requiring a formulaic approach to language education and pedagogy. The logic of 'A medium of instruction' determined the logic of educational planning. Moreover, the early transition models got quick state acceptance in states with high tribal concentration because they didn't question the status of the Eighth Schedule languages, nor did they demand any reform in language policy and pedagogy. They operated through the use of an identified single mother tongue as the medium of instruction in the class. Different languages appeared sequentially in these transition plans in perfect correspondence to their position of power in society. In these re-contextualised discourses, major pedagogic achievements rested in the act of the individual child crossing the *bridge* between two languages to a certain level of success and showing reasonable learning outcomes. Success here was defined more in terms of scholastic achievement (total marks obtained in the end-term tests) and less in terms of development of higher order cognitive functions and emotional capabilities, critical thinking and positive social identities (Panda, 2011b). The popular perceptions of language as merely a medium of instruction provided support to the politically motivated idea of experimenting mother-tongue based multilingual education only for tribal children obliterated the educational logic rooted in a larger reform paradigm.

Neoliberal Market and Multilingual Education

Linking of language skills to economic capital in the free market driven modern societies has converted language into a commodity. Multilingualism became an object of interest both to the state and private market. Exaggerated minority sentiments, MLE activism, and the newly emerging school education market went hand in hand. In a performance-oriented state, the sequentially-arranged minimalist Early Exit Multilingual Education Programme benefiting—if not substantially—the linguistically-marginalised children cognitively, socially and psychologically worked as minor spectacles for educational administrators and politicians. This success not only legitimised the modernists' solutions to education of children facing language barriers, but also brought the market closer to school education. The profit-oriented private organisations like the British Council found a new text for its legitimisation in the education market in India. They found a new slogan for promoting English education through the mother tongue of children. The number of requests that the National Multilingual Resource Consortium, JNU received from different government and non-government organisations for help in the production of MLE materials and story books in tribal languages increased manyfold. Every organisation wanted to develop MLE books of their own, with a desire to partner with the state or private schools for language education in the future. Non-profit organisations like Pratham saw this as an opportunity for entering into the market of material production and language pedagogy.

Excessive focus on pre-primary and early grades of primary education in tribal areas for material production is suspected to be perpetuating the majoritarian design of the state. Language as a commodity in this new paradigm is delivered with a lower investment than would be needed in a programme fully committed to the languages of the tribals. Panda has called this a win-win situation for both the state and the market (Panda, 2017). The state could show some additional initiatives for tribal children without displeasing the dominant groups. Easy availability of international and corporate welfare funds for material production in tribal languages and quick appropriation of international MLE jargons within the limited academic discourse of the implementing agencies (designed within a modernist paradigm) furthered the process of marketisation of early exit MLE paradigms.

A new desire for MLE materials was constructed in majority language schools including low-cost English medium schools.

The interventions by Save the Children and NEG FIRE in armed conflict and border areas in India promised to include children's language and identity texts in the curriculum and classroom transactions which in turn might reduce the violent relations between schools and the state. It enhanced the quality of educational experiences of the linguistically marginalised children, lowered their fears and anxieties regarding academic learning, enhanced cognitive and academic performances and motivated the children to stay longer in the school system. This further motivated the states to see this as a specialized programme needed for children in border areas as well as in language minority areas.

Deconstruction of 'A' Language and New Directions in MLE Discourse

According to Agnihotri (2006, 2012), India, unlike many industrial nations, acknowledged the complex multilinguality of the country right from the beginning and saw multilinguality as a positive sociocultural and economic resource. But it failed to see multilinguality as a positive cognitive and academic resource. It lacked an understanding that all languages are equal in terms of their grammatical complexity and creative potential and, therefore, regarded some as 'languages' because they had scripts and literary history, and others as 'dialects' as they didn't have separate scripts and were mostly oral. This division was mapped onto either-or dimensions like dominant-subordinate, majority-minority, primitive-modern etc. leading to privileging the speakers of a few already powerful languages over others. As Agnihotri observes (2015, p. 37), 'Any language, given suitable opportunities and support, has the potential to perform all those functions we normally associate with such well-established languages as English, French, Greek, Sanskrit, or Tamil. In the Constituent Assembly Debates (CAD), there is no reflection of this awareness, particularly when it comes to the rights of language sof the underprivileged. If the makers of the Constitution had recognised the multilingual character of the polity, equality of all languages therein, and had made special provisions for the recognition and growth of

the languages of the underprivileged, particularly in the domain of education, we may have had a different kind of India today.'

Language planning within educational system was, therefore, mostly hierarchical and majoritarian. Its philosophy contradicted the basic tenets of the Preamble of the Constitution that talked about equality and equity. The standard varieties of the select Eighth Schedule languages and English were used for all kinds of pedagogic works including material production. The idea of standard and pure languages continued to delegitimise the multilingual repertoires of the majority of speakers. Most children in their everyday domains were found to be multilinguals, not only switching between languages, but also translanguaging all the time (Agnihotri, 1995, 2007, 2016; Panda, 2016, 2018).

But, the allowance of linguistic fluidity of the region in the classroom and use of multilingual repertoires of children as medium of instruction was held morally and academically problematic. The tensions between linguistic fluidity (language practice) and language planning (hierarchical language policy) became evident from 1980 onwards in India. Linguists such as Agnihotri, 1995, 1997, 1998, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2012, 2015, Garcia, 2009, Srivastava, 1992 and Pandit, 1969, 1972 engaged in the process of deconstruction where they questioned the very nature and structure of languages. They, time and again, showed the multilingual foundation of language and the porous boundaries between what are called different 'languages'. Agnihotri's (2002) critique of 'a' language destabilised the purist's efforts to project an isolationist paradigm on language and demanded a fresh look at the way language is understood in mainstream discourse on language education and multilingualism. Panda, in three different studies in the Saora district of Odisha (2009), Barwani district of Madhya Pradesh (2018) and Sirohi district of Rajastan (2016), has shown how commonplace multilingualism is in these states, and how heteroglossic norms govern the everyday communication of people in urban and rural areas equally.

Agnihotri's relentless deconstruction of 'a' language required a major shift in language pedagogy from a sequentially arranged mother tongue/home language-based multilingual pedagogy to the use of the multilingual repertoire of children right from the beginning in school education. Agnihotri argued for foregrounding language pedagogy on this unique multilingual capacity of the human brain and the

multilinguality of the language ecology of the children. Treating languages as isolated systems both inside and outside the classrooms, according to him, create cognitive and affective disadvantages for the children. These concerns regarding school learning and creativity were appreciated by the academia, but the modernist structures of state governance created resistance for a structural reform founded in this critique of 'a' language.

Postmodernism is too Messy

The dialogue between the 'right based approach' and the critique of 'a' language approach within a broad multilingual paradigm dominated the language planning and language education discourse in the post-economic liberalisation phase in India. The difference was not on whether languages are one of the major markers of identity in India and therefore be respected in school education, but on whether the political use of language names should be distinguished from social and structural idealisations used to study linguistic diversity as well as fluidity (Panda & Mohanty, 2015; Mohanty, 1994; 2018; McSwan, 2017); whether the grammatical structures need to be distinguished from linguistic repertoires (McSwan, 2017); whether multilinguals have a single multilingual repertoire and a single mental grammar (Wei & Garcia, 2015) or they have diverse mental grammars and multiple linguistic repertoires; how far children are the victims of the predatory fantasies of an English-speaking India as harboured by parents and exploited by politicians; is 'medium of education' still a valid concept or it needs to be replaced by 'media of education'? what will be the nature of multilingual pedagogy if we use the term 'media of education' where more than one language is used in the classrooms and textbooks for academic work; or, we use a multilingual repertoire all through the education system? Both the groups seem to agree on many issues while disagreeing profoundly on the issue of language planning using the political names of the languages and the related issue of medium/media of education.

The multilingual education discourse in India however has received its vibrancy from the periodic dialectical return of many sociolinguistic issues pertaining to education. A greater political will to accept mother tongue-based multilingual education over the idea of working with expanded multilingual repertoire of children as advocated by

Agnihotri (2007, 2010, 2012) and Garcia (2009) could be explained using the modernist's preference for 'being' with a sense of oneness. Modernism as a mode of thinking attempts to locate this 'being' in a sense of permanence within the flux of existence, while postmodernism questions this oneness in favour of many. It abandons any sense of 'being' rooted in homogeneity in favour of the 'many', becoming or flux. Derrida's idea of 'a' structure shows how it rejects fluidity and how it suppresses heterogeneity as well as hides contradictions in order to appear consistent, politically and administratively manageable. Mother tongue-based multilingual education provides this sense of being as 'one' out there, whereas Agnihotri's concept of 'multilinguality' rests in this flux or a dialogical becoming of many, and therefore appears non-real or subversive to those Indians whose political socialisation is long done within the modernist paradigm of one nation-one language.

The concept of 'structure', like all concepts, derives its meaning not from a self-identity or a one-to-one correspondence to what it describes, but from its subterranean relationship to what it is not. Structures are supposed to be fixed, motionless and synchronic, as opposed to their opposites such as events, play, systems and the diachronic. The modernists' preference for 'a' structure, 'a' language, 'an identity' is also rooted in regulating selves and consciousness. The postmodernism looks messy here too as existing classroom pedagogy still can handle multiple selves, voices and events as long as they are defined using fixed criteria and not those that remain in perennially fluid state. The pedagogic choices made within a broader framework of multilingualism in India lend support to this perceived fear of messiness.

Dialogical Tensions between two MLE paradigms in India

As discussed before, the decision to implement the Three Language Formulain school education, with one of the three languages being the primary medium of instruction determined the language pedagogy as well as the status of each language in the class. Three different languages appeared separately and the language pedagogy remained officially monolingual in each of these language classes. School principals and teachers always took pride in saying that they teach English in English

only, Hindi in Hindi only etc. This approach is called 'sequentially arranged multilingual education' and the multilingual approach by Agnihotriis 'simultaneous' where different languages appear in the same class at the same time. Unfortunately, this articulation missed the point that Agnihotri was trying to make about multilingual foundations of each language and the everyday communication being multilingual without any exception.

As the concept of 'medium of instruction' was foundational to the mother tongue based multilingual education, the Indian state saw this as a panacea for addressing the problems of low performance and high drop out among children from linguistically distinct and marginalised tribal communities. The mother tongue-based multilingual education programme was recommended for schools located in remote tribal villages and not in schools where children of the majority-language-speaking communities study. Out of 29 states, only two states, Andhra Pradesh and Odisha decided to run a five-year multilingual education programme on an experimental basic in select tribal area schools. Eventually, this five year MLE programme got reduced to a three-year one. The Early Exit transition programme in Odisha and a four-year transition programme in Andhra Pradesh (Panda, Mohanty, Nag & Biswabandan, 2011; NCERT, 2011). These special programmes ran successfully till there was administrative and political support from the state governments and lost the special features after the political and administrative support was weaned. Many of these schools are now officially called MLE schools but without books in the children's languages. Most of the teachers trained in MLE pedagogy were transferred out to regional medium schools. The new teachers started teaching in the state languages very early in these schools. Panda (2012), however, had apprehended this long back. According to her, if MLE was practised only for the groups trapped in the status of subalternity, it would fail to challenge the overall mono-cultural and monolingual educational practices of the state.

The follow-up studies showed that the multilingual education practices were delegitimised not only by the state officials, but also by the teachers themselves. In less than ten years, the MLE teachers were replaced by the regular teachers in Odisha and many MLE schools quietly replaced MLE textbooks by Odia textbooks on the pretext of short supply of MLE books by the state. As the schools continued

officially as MLE schools and the state records showed the presence of a good numbers of MLE schools in tribal areas, the state absolved itself of any additional responsibilities for providing good quality education to tribal children. A similar story was reported in Andhra Pradesh as well (Panda, Mohanty, Nag & Biswabandan, 2011; NCERT, 2011).

Interestingly, the implementation history of the education programmes founded on the critique of 'a' language is not very encouraging either. Our analysis of the textbooks developed using this paradigm shows that the shift to dominant languages occurred even earlier in these programmes. The assumption that the children's languages don't exit ever as the children's multilingual repertoires were used in all the classes and at all levels of school education was belied in practice. Moreover, accountability couldn't be set up with regard to the length of children's language use in education. In many cases, the implementers were in a hurry to shifti to the majority language early. The teachers used some lexical categories and short sentences in the children's languages along with the school language and made an exit to the school language within a year. Even though the teachers had the flexibility to use the children's languages at the oral level in higher classes, very few developed a rich multilingual pedagogy using this freedom. The problem was, of course, not with the theory but with the practice, because teaching through the dominant group's language continued to derive support from both the state apparatus and parents. This programme, unlike mother tongue-based multilingual education programme lacked political and bureaucratic support in the states. Bureaucrats, teachers and teacher educators saw this as a soft and quick assimilation programme than the mother tongue based multilingual education programme.

Being an insider of a particular discursive community, one fails to recognise the problems of their paradigm. Over a period of time, the members learn to prioritise certain values over others, construct goals in line with those values and, support social and cognitive strategies that perpetuate those goals. This is unfortunately true about both the groups resulting in the emergence of periodic monologues in India. The mother tongue-based multilingual education group still pursues goals like transition and exit, assumes linguistic homogeneity of a classroom and emphasises egalitarian values and linguistic rights without examining the language use practices of children sufficiently. It fails to provide

solutions to those classrooms where children speaking different mother tongues study unless the children are segregated into linguistically homogenous groups for instructional purposes. As sociolinguistic surveys show, the large majority of Indian schools have children speaking four or more different mother tongues (Agnihotri, 2009; Panda, 2016, 2018). Mother tongue—based multilingual education becomes a deficient paradigm so far language pedagogy for these classrooms are concerned. The other group (Language as Resource Group) treats all languages as multilingual repertoires and therefore equal in terms of linguistic status. It rightly assumes a classroom to be multilingual and uses the children's multilingual repertoires for pedagogic works. But, it fails to recognise that such a paradigm stays skin deep with many implementers, as it requires a major shift in the way languages and classroom pedagogies are understood in a state that still believes in 'a' medium of instruction, conducts tests in 'a' language and organises major activities within a nationstate paradigm. Most of the teachers teaching within the paradigm of 'language as resource' continue to use the term 'school language' and not 'school languages'. As a result, these schools make an even quicker shift to school language. In many cases, this paradigm robs the speakers of their linguistic rights[1] and therefore a political power to rally demands around their languages. Contrary to its power to raise fundamental questions about linguistic democracy, this paradigm furthers the linguistic assimilation process in schools. As has been observed, this approach is either supported more in urban schools catering to linguistically diverse poor neighborhoods as it doesn't require another language medium of instruction, or is rejected for it being too abstract. Either way, it fails to achieve its goal of empowering the linguistically-marginalised communities in education sectors.

A DIALOGICAL SOLUTION

A recipient of a monologue is denied a voice of his own. We need 'polyvocality' where the insiders of a discourse cross the boundaries of specific discursive constructions and transcend the monologue of its own discursive practice to critically examine the hegemonic power of its own conceptual tools and objects. As evident in the writings of the proponents of these paradigms (see Mohanty 2019, Panda, 2018;

Agnihoti, this volume), is a consensus between then on the fluidity of languages, the multilingual history of each named language and the multilingual ability of a child. Both accept that language is a terrain on which legitimacy and belonging are constituted and people are still trapped in their communal/regional/language-based identities even if their everyday communications are heteroglossic (Panda, 2016; 2018), the monolingual paradigm de facto retains its position within a nation-state design and the native speaker ideal remains alive in the discussion of language acquisition goals and attainments (Canagrajah, 2009; 2016; Canagarajah & Wurr, 2011). Both the teams therefore need to work together against the majoritarian tendencies of the state actors as well as policies.

The image of a homogenous speech community with 'a mother tongue' or 'a home language' is challenged in recent studies. As most schools in India have speakers of five and more languages in the same class, Agnihotri's approach of using amultilingual repertoire of children as the primary resource for establishing classroom dialogues works better for these schools. The facility of this multilingual pedagogy is well documented in getting children engaged in the process of linguistic enquiry, discover the nature and structures of different languages spoken in their socio-linguistic milieu and develop a sense of shared multilingual consciousness (see Agnihotri, this volume). Asclassroom pedagogy based onmultilinguality and heteroglossic ideologyis far too abstract and cosmopolitan to attract the administrative and political support from the stateagainst an ontologically-bounded mother tongue—based multilingual education, both the groups need to come together and redefine the scope of a linguistic rights paradigm, where languages are no longer seen as pure entities and the communities as linguistically homogenous. Abandoning a language rights approach in education might weaken the scope of inclusion of languages spoken by the marginalised communities in educational processes.

Note

1. Languages as multilingual entities fail to work as a reificatory category in the ways the named languages conceived within 'a' language paradigm work.

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