

## **MOTHER TONGUE AS THE MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION AT SECONDARY LEVEL TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMME AND ITS IMPACT ON STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT AND CAREER.**

**Krushna Chandra Patra**

,Department of Education,  
Tamralipta Mahavidyalaya, Tamluk,  
Purba Midnapore-721636, West Bengal, India  
E-Mail : kcpatra\_78orissa@rediffmail.com

### **Abstract**

Language is the best discover of man kind. It is the language through which we express our feelings and communicate to each other. Mother tongue plays the vital role not only for day to day communication but also a medium of instruction. Now-a-days mother tongue is a medium of instruction at different levels of teacher education also. Though there are provisions for opting English as a medium of instruction, most of the student teachers opt for mother tongue which has both positive negative impact on student teachers achievement and career. The present paper tries to find out the pros and cons of using mother tongue as a medium of instruction at secondary level teacher education.

**Key words:** Mother tongue, medium of instruction, secondary level teacher education, achievement, career.

### **Introduction :**

Language is a powerful means of communication which has enabled us to be more developed in comparison to other creatures so far found in the world. It is the principal means used by human beings to communicate with one another. It is that divine gift for human being, 'species specific to man' that has enabled us to enjoy the pleasure available in the world. Our identity lies in the culture we follow. One of the most powerful forms of symbolization and central feature of all human culture is language. Moreover, it is a part of culture which is a system of symbolic verbal and sometimes written representation learned within a particular culture

A first language (also native language, father tongue/mother tongue, arterial language, or L1) is a language that a person has been exposed to from birth. Sometimes,

the term "mother tongue" or "mother language" is used for the language that a person learned as a child at home (usually from their parents).

Mother-tongue is the language that a child learns in his mother's lap. It is the language which the child learns almost without any conscious effort on his part. It is a language which the child acquires while living in his own social group.

- **Teacher education in India:**

It is well known that the quality and extent of learner achievement are determined primarily by teacher competence, sensitivity and teacher motivation. The National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) has defined teacher education as – A programme of education, research and training of persons to teach from pre-primary to higher education level. Teacher education is a programme that is related to the development of teacher proficiency and competence that would enable and empower the teacher to meet the requirements of the profession and face the challenges therein. According to Goods Dictionary of Education Teacher education means, —all the formal and non-formal activities and experiences that help to qualify a person to assume responsibilities of a member of the educational profession or to discharge his responsibilities more effectively. In 1906-1956, the program of teacher preparation was called teacher training. It prepared teachers as mechanics or technicians. It had narrower goals with its focus being only on skill training. The perspective of teacher education was therefore very narrow and its scope was limited. As W.H. Kilpatrick put it, —Training is given to animals and circus performers, while education is to human beings. Teacher education encompasses teaching skills, sound pedagogical theory and professional skills. Teacher Education = Teaching Skills + Pedagogical theory + Professional skills.

**Teaching skills** would include providing training and practice in the different techniques, approaches and strategies that would help the teachers to plan and impart instruction, provide appropriate reinforcement and conduct effective assessment. It includes effective classroom management skills, preparation and use of instructional materials and communication skills.

**Pedagogical theory** includes the philosophical, sociological and psychological considerations that would enable the teachers to have a sound basis for practicing the teaching skills in the classroom. The theory is stage specific and is based on the needs and requirements that are characteristic of that stage.

**Professional skills** include the techniques, strategies and approaches that would help teachers to grow in the profession and also work towards the growth of the profession. It includes soft skills, counseling skills, interpersonal skills, computer skills, information retrieving and management skills and above all life long learning skills. An amalgamation of teaching skills, pedagogical theory and professional skills would serve to create the right knowledge, attitude and skills in teachers, thus promoting holistic development.

Secondary teacher education institutes prepare teachers to teach classes 6 to 12. The minimum education required for admission to a secondary teacher education

programme is graduation. A large number of postgraduates also seek admission to these training institutions.

Secondary teacher education is offered by secondary colleges of education which are affiliated to different universities. Some university departments also offer a secondary teacher education programme. The minimum qualification for admission to this programme is graduation. These institutes are of three types: government, private aided and private unaided.

- **Mother tongue as the Medium of Instruction:**

Beginning from Wood's Despatch (1854) to Right To Education (RTE-2009), most of the committee and commissions of Indian education emphasized mother tongue as the medium of instruction from primary to secondary levels of education. In the course of time higher education and teacher education are also included.

Presently in south India, the medium of instruction is English and the local vernacular medium like Telugu, Kannada & Marathi in A.P, Karnataka and Maharashtra respectively. In the northern belt it is English & Hindi with the exception of Punjab University, which offers instruction in Punjabi also. In other states, there are provisions for both mother tongue and English as the medium of instruction, but most of the student teachers opt for mother tongue.

- **Importance of mother tongue as the medium of instruction and achievement of student teachers.**

Mother-tongue plays a tremendously useful role in the education of a child. It has a great importance in the field of teacher education also.

Specifically, the importance of mother tongue is due to the following reasons:

1. *Medium of Expression and Communication.*

Mother tongue is the best medium for the expression of one's ideas and feelings. Thus, it is the most potent agent for mutual communication and exchange of ideas. Student teachers exchange their ideas effectively through it during their training.

2. *Formation of a Social Group.*

It is through language, and especially through the mother-tongue, that individuals form themselves into a social organisation. Student teachers of secondary teacher education level also form the social groups which needed to make better teachers.

3. *Easy to Learn.*

Of all the languages, the mother-tongue is most easy to learn. Full proficiency or mastery can be achieved in one's own mother tongue. Student teachers' achievement in their both theoretical and practical examinations is comparatively higher than those who opted English as medium of instruction.

#### *4. Best Medium for Acquiring Knowledge.*

Thinking is an instrument of acquiring knowledge, and thinking is impossible without language. "And training in the use of mother-tongue-the tongue in which a child thinks and dreams-becomes the first essential of shoaling and the finest instrument of human culture." (P. B. Ballard.)

It is therefore of the greatest importance for our pupils especially for student teachers to acquire knowledge through mother-tongue.

#### *5. It brings about Intellectual Development.*

Intellectual development is impossible without language. Reading, expressing oneself, acquisition of knowledge and reasoning are the instruments for bringing about intellectual development; and all of these are possible only through language, or the mother-tongue of the child.

#### *6. Instrument of Creative Self-Expression.*

We may be able to communicate in any language, but creative self-expression is possible only in one's own mother tongue. This is clear from the fact that all great writers could produce great literature only in their own language. So student teachers also express their creativity in mother tongue.

#### *7. Instrument of Emotional Development.*

Mother-tongue is the most important instrument for bringing about emotional development of the individual. The emotional effect of literature and poetry is something which is of vital importance in the development and refinement of emotions. And the are the best teacher who control their emotion. Hence mother tongue teaches to be good teachers to our student teachers b controlling their emotions.

#### *8. Instrument of Growth of the Pupils.*

The teaching of the mother tongue is important because on it depends the growth of our pupils. Growth in their intellectual life ; growth in knowledge ; growth in ability to express themselves; growth in creative and productive ability-all stem from the mother-tongue.

#### *9. Source of Original Ideas.*

Original ideas are the product of one's own mother tongue. On account of the facility of thought and expression, new and original ideas take birth and get shape only in one's own mother tongue.

Thus, mother tongue has tremendous importance in teacher education and in the curriculum.

- **Impact of mother tongue based teacher education on student teachers career.**

1. *Painful shift in higher education:* The student teachers who will opt for M.Ed. after completion of B.Ed. programme may face problem since medium of instruction in most of the institutions offering M.Ed. degree is English.

2. *Connecting with the rest of the world:* Mother tongue based education promotes the mother tongue at the cost of the bridge languages (in India it is Hindi and English) that would enable the students to connect with the rest of the world. If the school doesn't expose them to English, they will find it very hard in mastering the language (as their parents and surroundings don't). Similarly the student teachers who will visit across the globe for education or teaching will face huge problems communicating to others.

3. *Difficulty in getting greater opportunities.* In the highly fluid world we are in, people need to be conversant with English. Most of the Mediterranean and European countries prefer teachers from India but due to lack of their communication skills in English the student teachers of India miss the opportunities.

- **Conclusion:**

Contrary to general perception that only Indian techies and entrepreneurs are in demand globally, for the past couple of years, the focus of Indian immigration has shifted to teachers who have joined the gallery of India's 'global citizens.' But problems persist in communication. Ideally, we should have a blend of English and mother tongue, where the parents teach the kids in mother tongue and schools teach in English with some sort of a bridge facilitated by both of them. In teacher education specially at secondary level English should be given due weightage either the medium of instruction or as a communicative English as a compulsory subject, as a result the would be teachers must be well equipped to face the competition at the global level. Experts say Indian teachers who have educational advantage over other Commonwealth countries in subjects like English, Science and Mathematics, have huge potential to tap new avenues in the field of teaching globally. These days, the United States and the United Kingdom are also emerging as new markets for Indian teachers, who earlier took teaching jobs in non-English speaking countries in South-East Asia, Africa and the Middle East.

According to a survey by the US education department, the country would need more than a million teachers over the next decade.

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