



Language of Instruction at the School Level

The current issue of the newsletter focuses on 'Language of Instruction at the School Level'. This issue consists of articles focusing on the above theme by various experts and researchers from different member-institutions across countries such as China, India, and Pakistan. Apart from these articles, the issue also includes a section of key news and events undertaken in these member-institutions.

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The first article is in the context of Bangladesh and it traces the country's policy vis-a-vis language of instruction, to its national movement demanding the establishment of Bengali as the national language. However, the author notes that Bangladesh is also committed to respecting and recognising the regional languages, cultures, histories and respectfully promote its values.

The second article focusing on China underlines the value of the language of instruction in not just the education of children but also their holistic development, by improving students' learning effect, strengthening students' emotional expression, and essentially helping them maintain interest in classroom teaching.

The third article is written in the Indian context, briefly discussing the issues regarding the language of instruction at the school level. The author chalks out the benefits of sticking to home language/mother language as the language of instruction, and adds further, that there have been several policy measures recommending this and towards ensuring it. However, it is also noted that there is still a long way to go in terms of ensuring it at the ground level. Further, in the subsequent article, which is also in the Indian context, the authors underline the latest policies being undertaken in the context of language of instruction, especially in light of the new National Education Policy that was adopted in the country in 2020. Following suit, the fifth article throws light on the feasibility and advantages of taking up a multi-linguistic approach, towards ensuring rootedness to the cultural heritage as well as bridging with the global society, and thereby creating global citizenship.

Articles six through nine are in the context of Pakistan and narrate the challenges in terms of implementing the language of instruction in a country with such diverse linguistic communities. Article seven underlines the need for a uniform language framework that provides consistency to children across their schooling years that will enable them to have a better understanding of the concepts. On the other hand, the next article pin-points the disadvantages of enforcing English language as the medium of instruction at school, as well as considering the knowledge in English as the marker of academic capability. Following up on that point, the last article stresses upon the importance of a holistic and impartial view on the significance of language of instruction from its social, economic, scientific and cultural values.

Each of the articles in the current issue has approached the issue of language of instruction at multiple levels. The concerns and challenges of having a universal language such as English as the language of instruction, as well as the need of a multilingual approach have been discussed in detail in the chapters. There also seems to be much in common between the South Asian countries in this regard. Several measures and policies have been planned and undertaken by each country to address these concerns. The concise discussions of the policies and approaches provided here will enable the stakeholders in comparing and contrasting their approaches and fine-tuning them as per their own circumstances.

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Status of Language of Instruction at the School Level in Bangladesh

Language is the tool through which a nation expresses its cultural identity, history, tradition, diversity and its development across all domains. Bangladesh has a history of having undertaken a language movement. With the essence of its historical background, it respects all sorts of diversity and is determined to protect all sorts of challenges related to it. The journey of language instruction in Bangladesh is rooted in the language movement of 1952. The core aim of this movement was to establish the recognition of Bengali as the state language. To its recognition, UNESCO declared 21st February as the international mother language day to promote linguistic and cultural diversity and commemorate the sacrifices made during the Bengali language movement.

Within the short time of this movement, Bangladesh made a language policy to ensure the use of mother language (Bengali) as the medium of instruction in educational institutions, especially in secondary level (school level). To its continuation, in 1979 the education policy of Bangladesh declared Bengali (Bangla) as the primary language of instruction in schools and colleges. The main aim of this policy was not only to promote a sense of identity but also to ensure the equal access to education for all linguistic communities.

Nevertheless, Bangladesh faces a lot of challenges in implementing Bengali as the language of instruction because of country's linguistic diversity. Bangladesh is a country of various ethnic groups; each with its own language and cultural diversity. To address this diversity, Bangladesh took some initiatives to introduce bilingual education in some areas which allows the learners to receive instruction in both Bengali and their mother tongue during their early years of schooling. But it faces several challenges in implementing this; like shortage of resources, teaching materials, qualified teachers, etc. in the regional and tribal languages.

Besides, due to the need of global demand, English has gained the status of foreign language, and, in some cases, the second language in Bangladesh. Due to the demand of the job market and also the means of financial opportunities, the Government of Bangladesh incorporated English into the curriculum which starts from the school level. Considering the importance of English language, Government of Bangladesh took some timely steps.

In 2003, a project named English Language Teaching Improvement Project (ELTIP) was designed and launched by the Ministry of Education and British Government to train the English language teachers and design the English textbooks at the secondary level countrywide. Many leading institutes like the National Academy for Educational Management (NAEM) have been designing and implementing different projects collaboratively with the Ministry of Education and the different donor-agencies like UNICEF, UNESCO, UNDP, ADB, etc. In recent years, NAEM has successfully completed several projects related to English language teacher training, designing of English Language Training (ELT) manual (with the financial support of UNESCO), Communicative English Course (CEC) teacher training manual (with the logistic support of American Embassy, Bangladesh), etc.

In 2023, NAEM is going to finish another project entitled "Capacity Enhancement for the Teachers of Secondary Education in Bangladesh through Contextualisation of ICT-CFT and Mainstreaming the GCED and ESD Aspects in NAEM Teacher Training Programme". Language diversity has been taken into consideration through the GCED component of this project, and 'ICT-CFT' computer language has been given the utmost priority through another component. However, the challenges are also quite stark. These policy implementations require quality English education,

quality teachers, standard teaching materials, unequal rural-urban learning opportunities, etc. It has therefore been a real challenge for the policy makers to address these issues.

In conclusion, it can be said that linguistic history and cultural diversity are reflected through the language of instruction at the school level in Bangladesh. At the same time, Bangladesh shows respect and recognises the regional languages, cultures, histories, and respectfully promotes its values. Though the implementation of bilingual education in some areas - especially in the tribal areas - is quite a challenge, Bangladesh is determined to make it possible.

To address all the challenges in this globalised world, it needs a comprehensive policy and strategy which can take into account the linguistic diversity and create equal opportunities to access education for all, and prepare students to uphold its importance at the national and international levels. It is a tough job for a country alone. So, it is high time to start working collaboratively with the local, regional and global organisations as well as countries across the globe.

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Language of Instruction at the School Level in China

As a language system in educational teaching activities, teacher's language of instruction is a unique language system that differs from other languages. As Comenius said, "A teacher's mouth is a source from which a stream of knowledge can be generated". Secondly, teachers' language of instruction is the main tool for teachers to impart knowledge and express their thinking in teaching, and it is the main way for teachers to cultivate talents and showcase themselves. Finally, teachers' language of instruction is an important embodiment of teacher's teaching personalisation, wisdom and art, and embodies teacher's wisdom and character. The teaching language of teachers is, therefore, the crystallisation of their wisdom and the embodiment of their teaching soul.

Teacher's language of instruction should reflect the educational concept of sustainable development between humans and nature, and have the value of realising the extension of life. The value of teaching language lies in actively guiding students' thinking from ignorance to wisdom, from simplicity to complexity, and from superstition to scientific thinking as well as in developing students' innovative thinking ability, and laying the foundation for students' innovative development. The development of students' thinking ability can not only develop students' intellectual factors, but also their non-intellectual factors, such as emotions, attitudes and values. Teacher's language of instruction is based on different environments, different stages to effectively instruct students, break students' thinking stereotypes, so that students' thinking becomes active, more imaginative. It could change students' way of thinking, and cultivate students' convergent thinking and divergent thinking.

Teacher's language of instruction is aimed at educating people, with the important purpose of cultivating students' noble character. Teacher's language of instruction must

change from "infusing" to "constructive" "dialogue-centred teaching", so as to make students consciously carry out the construction of moral concepts, enhance students' awareness of internalisation of virtue, and thus improve their moral level. Cultivating students' core socialist values means cultivating students' feelings of patriotism, cultivating students' noble character of righteousness and virtue, and enabling them to remain calm in the face of all kinds of temptations and threats. The value of teachers' language of instruction is also embodied in the auditory, visual and emotional connotation. It can beautify students' hearts and minds, increase students' understanding of teaching and learning, improve students' learning effect, strengthen students' emotional expression, and ultimately maintain students' interest in classroom teaching.

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Local Language and School Language at Early Grades: Issues at a Glance

The Sustainable Development Goals underline equitable, quality and inclusive education and recommend multilingualism in the medium of education to achieve this. It is a fact that a large number of children grow up in an environment where more than one language is spoken. Researches across the globe show that children, especially in their early grades, learn better when education is imparted in the language they understand. The languages at their homes and in their neighbourhoods are so different from the medium of instruction or the language of teaching learning in the schools, that the parents/guardians also find it difficult to support their children at home. This widens the inequities and leads to gaps in inclusion and quality education. The home language is not just a mode of communication for the young child but is a strong symbol of the child's personal, social, and cultural identity which is crucial to the development of self-confidence, positive self-esteem, and sense of autonomy. The alienation and discarding of their rich experiences and imposing a completely different language make children struggle a lot, impeding their learning and development.

India is one of the most multilingual nations in the world. Language learning both as a subject and a medium of instruction in education in such a linguistically diverse country is extremely challenging. Different policy documents like the Right to Education Act-2009, the National Curriculum Framework-2005 and recently the National Education Policy-2020 emphasised the usage of mother tongue or home language with multilinguistic approach from time-to-time. The most recent National Curriculum Framework for the Foundational Stage 2022 also endorses the mother tongue or home language and considers it vital to the holistic development of children besides helping them learn not just languages but all other subjects.

Despite the empirical evidences and the national policy that support the use of local languages, the ground level implementation has not been so effective. The possible reasons for such deviations could be many. But the predominant reason is the scarcity of trained and qualified teachers who are able to understand, speak and teach in a child's mother tongue. It could be due to the marginalisation of most of the local languages, which leads to a dearth of trained teachers in the system. In addition, there is a wide variation in the status of different languages, and the minority languages find lesser acceptance as mother tongue and tend to get overlooked in comparison to the majority languages. The issues pertaining to a local language's writing system, standardisation of the spellings, usage and vocabulary aspects also play a role for their pedagogical suitability. Further, the teaching learning in mother tongue requires additional resources making the process cost-inefficient. However, a closer look reveals that the rewards of education in mother tongue in the form of better education quality, lower attrition and dropout rates besides enhanced inclusion and equity; outweigh the cost aspects significantly in the long run. Keeping all these in view, it is important to address the issues in a holistic and multifaceted manner involving policy makers, curriculum developers, teacher educators and, most importantly, the ground level stakeholders i.e. teachers, parents/guardians, children and the community members as well.

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Creating New Paradigms for Mother Tongue Centric Foundational Learning and Development

The mother tongue becomes a part of the child's personal, social, and cultural identity impacting the child's development, actions, and speech as they grow up. Thus, the mother tongue is an indispensable instrument for the development of intellectual, physical, and moral aspects of education, giving the individual power or expression.

Using the mother tongue as the language of instruction in the kindergarten and primary school stages greatly facilitates the children acquire knowledge. UNESCO emphasises that when children come to school, the only language they can speak is their mother tongue. They learn faster when they are studying in their first language, especially in early childhood. We must remember that children can express themselves, understand concepts and subject matter taught in their mother tongue (Effiong, 2013). However, it is estimated that 40 per cent of the world's population does not have access to an education in a language they speak or understand. Additionally, with the disappearance of some languages, there is also a risk of wiping away entire cultures and intellectual heritage.

India is home to a total of 121 languages, and more than 19,500 languages or dialects are spoken in India as mother tongues. As envisaged in para 4.11 of National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, wherever possible, the medium of instruction until at least Grade 5 - but preferably till Grade 8 and beyond - is to be the home language/mother tongue/local language/regional language. Thereafter, the home/local/familiar language shall continue to be taught as a language wherever possible. It recognises that young children, especially between the ages of 2-8 years, learn more quickly in their home language.

The NEP also encourages efforts to be made by the state and central governments to invest in large numbers of language teachers in all regional languages around the country, especially the ones given in the 8th Schedule of the Constitution. The NIPUN Bharat Mission of the Government of India, through its Mission Implementation Guidelines suggests that the teaching-learning process and development of teaching-learning material should be done in the mother tongue. Similarly, Vidya Pravesh - a three-month play-based school preparation programme for Grade I - and NISHTHA FLN (Foundational Literacy and Numeracy) has also re-emphasised the same. The National Curriculum Framework-2022 also recommends that children be instructed in their Matribhasha (mother tongue) until they are eight. The G20 Education Working Group of 2022, presided over by India, also emphasised that teaching and learning must be promoted in the mother tongue as it is the most effective way of imparting initial learning, especially at the foundation stage.

However, in a country like India which is linguistically very diverse, finding qualified teachers to teach in the mother tongue can be challenging in itself, and the lack of teaching materials in the concerned mother tongue also proves to be a huge challenge.

In a move to promote multilingual education in the country, the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has allowed schools to offer education in regional languages right from pre-primary to Class XII. According to CBSE, the minister of education has directed the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) to prepare the new textbooks in 22 scheduled Indian languages, and these will be made available from the 2024-25 academic session.

Furthermore, with an objective to promote all major, minor, and tribal languages of India, the National Book Trust has been bringing out books in various tribal languages. The SARTHAQ guidelines also emphasise and encourage learning through the mother tongue or regional languages in the early stages of school education. Additionally, a few states have also taken initiatives to promote the use of mother tongue in teaching and learning practices as well as resources. Andhra Pradesh has developed textbooks in 6 tribal languages. Similarly, Gujarat has also developed story books in their local languages. Maharashtra has developed the Vidya Pravesh Module in the Marathi language. Odisha has

also developed books for children in 14 tribal languages. Thus, states must work towards recruiting well-qualified teachers, incorporating their mother tongue in teaching-learning practices, and sharing best practices with each other to achieve NEP 2020 goals.

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Language Policy in Education: Bridging Cultures, Building Global Minds

Language is the bedrock upon which education is built. It serves as the conduit through which knowledge flows, ideas are conveyed, and understanding is cultivated. In the sphere of education, the choice of the language of instruction wields immense influence, shaping the learning experience, cognitive development, and cultural preservation of students. This essay delves into the pivotal role of language of instruction at the school level, specifically highlighting the significance of utilising the mother tongue, and how this aligns with educational policies. Education is not just about acquiring knowledge; it is also about preserving culture and heritage. Learning in one's mother tongue serves as a vehicle for preserving cultural identity. It allows students to delve into their traditions, history, and values in a way that reinforces their cultural pride. This cultural preservation contributes to a more holistic and well-rounded education. Research indicates that students who receive instruction in their mother tongue

tend to perform better academically. This advantage can be attributed to the fact that learning in a familiar language reduces cognitive load. Students can focus more on understanding and internalising new concepts, rather than struggling with language comprehension. This cognitive ease enhances their problem-solving abilities and critical thinking skills, setting them on a path to academic success.

Early childhood is a critical period for brain development, and language plays a pivotal role in this process. When children are exposed to their mother tongue, the brain forms stronger neural connections related to language acquisition. These neural pathways not only facilitate language skills but also lay the groundwork for overall cognitive development. Thus, learning in the mother tongue, during these formative years, can have a lasting positive impact on a child's intellectual growth. The role of the mother tongue in education is not only crucial

for individual development but also aligns with broader educational and societal goals. For instance, the National Education Policy (NEP) of 2020 in India underlines the importance of the mother tongue in elementary education, mandating its use as the medium of instruction up to Class 5 in all schools. This policy reflects a deep understanding of the cognitive and cultural benefits of the mother tongue, and it underscores the importance of aligning educational practices with research findings and global best practices.

However, the implementation of such policies requires careful consideration of the multilingual nature of societies. It is crucial to ensure that the chosen language of instruction does not marginalise minority languages and cultures. A balanced approach that values all languages and cultures is essential to creating an inclusive and equitable education system. Schools can adopt bilingual or multilingual approaches, integrating the mother tongue with other languages to enrich the learning experience and promote linguistic diversity. Implementing a multilingual approach ensures cultural inclusivity and fosters mutual respect among students from diverse backgrounds. It allows students to explore and appreciate various cultures, traditions, and perspectives, fostering an environment of tolerance,

empathy, and open-mindedness. When students learn about different cultures through their languages, it cultivates a sense of appreciation and respect for cultural diversity, contributing to harmonious coexistence in multicultural societies. Promoting linguistic diversity through multilingual education is also a stepping stone towards fostering global citizenship. Proficiency in multiple languages empowers individuals to communicate and collaborate across geographic, cultural and linguistic boundaries, enabling them to participate effectively in global dialogues and contribute to addressing international challenges. It provides the tools to understand and appreciate the interconnectedness of the world, fostering a sense of responsibility and commitment to global values and principles. Schools and educational policymakers should prioritise and invest in multilingual education by giving importance to mother language, as a pathway to fostering unity in diversity, promoting mutual understanding, and building a more inclusive and equitable world.

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Language of Instruction at the School Level

Teaching and learning activities are organised in educational institutions, and language is a main source for transmission of information and knowledge to the students. Therefore, language that is used to teach and impart instructions in any discipline at any level is called medium of instruction. Pakistan is a multilingual country with a rich traditional and cultural history. Consequently, more than one option for the medium of instruction is used in educational institutions - Urdu (as national language), English (as foreign language and also as medium of instruction in urban areas) and mother tongues (as per the locality). This situation means that medium of instruction is a controversial policy issue particularly at the school level because of various mother tongues in different parts of the country. The successive governments have made efforts to resolve this controversial issue through constitution/ education policies. The Constitution of Pakistan declared Urdu as national language whereas Urdu and English are both official languages. The other dominant languages in Pakistan are Punjabi, Sindhi, Pushto, Siraiki, Hindko and Balochi. National Educational Conference (1947) and National Education Policy (1959) recommended that provincial languages would be the medium of instruction at primary level and Urdu would be the medium of instruction from primary to secondary levels whereas English is used as medium of instruction at higher education. According to the National Education Policy (1979), English medium schools, established by the Government, will use Urdu or language recommended by the Provincial Assembly as the medium of instruction and gradually Urdu will be used as medium of instruction in higher education. National Education Policy (1992) declared that Urdu would be the medium of instruction at primary to middle school levels.

However, the 18th constitutional amendment gave power to provincial governments for arranging educational facilities, including curriculum development, textbooks development and medium of instruction in their respective areas. In spite of these policy interventions at national level, there is still a lack of clarity regarding the medium of instruction; consequently educational systems in Pakistan are giving birth to dissimilarity and division of social classes. In fact, there are three systems of education working simultaneously - English medium, Urdu medium, and Deeni Madrasa. These three education systems have their own medium of instruction and this is not portraying a commendable picture of the whole community. This situation has also deepened social segregation as every social class chooses separate mode of education for their children. For example, those belonging to upper class, upper middle class or middle class, who can afford a huge fee send their children to English medium schools. The lower middle class, who can hardly afford the basic needs, and whose first priority is to get their children educated, sends them to Urdu medium schools. Some very religious people or poor people, who cannot afford the expenses of schools at all, send their children to Deeni Madrasas where the medium of instruction is totally different. They are imparted education in Arabic or in their native or regional languages. It is in light of this that the federal government has introduced a single national curriculum with consultation of provinces in order to maintain uniformity and provision of quality education in the country.

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Language Matters: Consistent Use Boosts Maths and Science Scores in Pakistan

Pakistan, a multilingual country, grapples with a complex educational landscape. Children speak their mother tongues at home, Urdu bridges communication gaps, and English holds the status of the official language. This diversity extends to schools, where the "Language of Instruction (LoI)" becomes a crucial puzzle piece.

The ideal LoI has been debated for years, with some advocating for mother tongues (Mustafa, 2021; Nag et al., 2019), others pushing for languages like English (Azam et al., 2013; Coleman, 2011), and some advocating for a flexible "translanguaging" approach (Back et al., 2020; García, 2009). However, Bhutta and Rizvi's (2022) nationwide study sheds light on a previously overlooked factor – consistency. The study, encompassing 15,391 students and 589 teachers across 153 elementary schools, examined the language dynamics in Pakistani classrooms, particularly in science and mathematics. The results explicitly demonstrated that students exposed to consistent use of one language, be it Urdu or English, outperformed those navigating a mix of languages with statistical significance ($p < 0.001$), regardless of the subject (Bhutta et al., 2024).

In addition, the study also revealed that language consistency interacts with other factors like school systems and teaching quality. For the former interaction, the results highlighted that private school students suffer the most due to inconsistent use of language. For the latter interaction, better-quality teaching is more prominently reflected where the consistent use of language is ensured. This suggests that while language matters, it is part of a larger educational landscape where all instruments need to be in tune. These findings hold valuable lessons for Pakistan and other multilingual countries. Policymakers can prioritise consistent language use across textbooks, instructions, and assessments. The study underscores the

need for a uniform language framework in instructional materials and advocates for contextualising language use to local contexts, considering linguistic diversity within classrooms. Teachers can leverage this knowledge to create more focused learning environments in the form of adapting their language strategies while maintaining consistency.

In conclusion, the results address a literature gap and provide actionable insights for teachers, policymakers, and researchers, advocating for the integration of consistent language practices. Ultimately, endorsing the importance of finding the right language fit for each context while recognising that consistency is key to unlocking students' full potential.

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Language of Instruction: A Double-edged Sword

In multilingual contexts such as Pakistan where the linguistic mosaic comprises approximately 73 languages, the language of instruction in schools has often been a cause of disagreement in policy debates and curriculum development. With a myriad of languages used in the country, it becomes quite complex to decide which should be the language of instruction. Building on the premise of a child's first language as most appropriate to language of instruction, the question here is whose language? While Urdu is the national language of Pakistan and is often used as the medium of instruction, interestingly it is the first language of less than 10 per cent of the population. For most other Pakistanis, Urdu is their second language. This underscores questions regarding the practicality and utilitarian value of such decisions. The misalignment between the home/first language of a student and the language of instruction results in learning loss. These losses cumulatively spell disaster for the children, their families, society, economy, and the international community.

On the other hand, for most private schools in Pakistan, English is the medium of instruction. Most parents admit or attempt to admit their children in private schools simply because the instruction is in English. They intend that their children are not left behind simply because they did not have opportunities to learn the language. This seems a bit paradoxical given that if a child does not comprehend the language of instruction, the child is already left behind. The language of instruction has been a selling point for admission to schools in Pakistan. Hence, a low-quality private school boasting of English as its language of instruction, irrespective of whether instruction is really happening in English or not, is sure to secure some admissions. So, the question is why English?

The answer is quite straightforward. English holds the status as an international language. It undoubtedly holds promise for those who can communicate and use the language. It provides opportunities to connect with others in today's global village and English is also the language of science and research. Given that English

holds linguistic dominance in the world today, we need to be wary of how English when used as a language of instruction in particular contexts may not reap the rewards it promises accruing to a lack of thoughtfulness and reflection when making standardised decisions. The language of instruction paradox in Pakistan continues with debates between local and international languages. Such decisions regarding the language of instruction need to be made in the best interests of the children. While teaching English language is important and necessary, it is unnecessary to teach them in English if they do not have the necessary baseline in the language to benefit from the instruction. While English is an important language, it cannot be enforced as the language of instruction in multilingual contexts. Using English as the language of instruction without considering the children in the schools and where they come from, could do more harm than good. People wrongly use the language as standards or criteria of inclusion or exclusion. Hence, if people are not able to communicate in the English language, they are considered illiterate or of lesser intellectual ability. Hence, students who may not speak the English language are viewed through deficit lenses in classrooms. Our colonial history has certainly contributed to the society's preference of one language over another resulting in the devaluation of our own indigenous languages.

Schools, colleges, universities, and societies in general, need to recognise and accept that a language is a medium of conveying one's thoughts and ideas, etc. Regrettably though, English, as a language of instruction, is used to make decisions of students' general competence or ability based on their proficiency in the language. It is important to learn and use languages like English; however, this should not be at the cost of compromising or demeaning indigenous languages.

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Language of Instruction at the School Level in Pakistan: Need for Holistic Approach

The language of instruction at the school level is a matter of paramount significance because the aims and outcomes of schooling are all dependent on it. Choosing a medium of instruction is not only a matter of deciding how to transmit the knowledge, but also shaping the culture, identities and future of the young children. In that sense then, it is a complex decision. Therefore, there are various key determinants that influence the decision on what the language of instruction should be. Often these determinants are manifested in the form of a tussle between choosing indigenous language with inherent cultural value or an international language with an embedded economic value.

In South Asia, for instance, there are historic examples of policies that aimed at reducing the emphasis of English in curriculum. In Pakistan, during the period of President Zia-ul-Haq, there was an emphasis on making Urdu as a medium of instruction to reduce western influences. Similarly in Bangladesh, English was banned as a medium of instruction in favour of Bengali language, in the initial years. However, recognising the global importance of English, it was re-integrated in the curriculum in both nations. The general public no longer view English as a colonial legacy. Rather, it is not only viewed as a global language that could create global connections and networks but also a key to scientific knowledge and research and, to a certain level, marker of high social status.

The dominance of English in science, economics and technology has made it an integral part of the education system. This has resulted not only in the decline of the national and local languages but the detachments from other elements of indigenous culture as well. The solution lies, not on choosing one language over the other, but being multi-lingual. There is no need of sticking to only one language of instruction. In fact, research studies

inform that introducing multilingualism, right from the early childhood education, provides several benefits to the children. The exposure to multiple languages helps in developing cognitive abilities, linguistic flexibility, neuro plasticity and improved academic performance among children in early years of schooling.

It is important to have a holistic and impartial view on the significance of languages from its social, economic, scientific and cultural values. Often one language may not encompass all these values and, therefore, multilingualism in school will strike a balance by preserving heritage languages as well as learning international languages for meeting the global and fast emerging needs.

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The *January-June 2024* issue of the ANTRIEP Newsletter will focus on the theme **‘Importance of Incentives in School Education’**.

News from ANTRIEP Member Institutions (January-June 2023)

Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER)

Australia

- ACER and the Malawi National Examinations Board (MANEB) have entered into a collaboration on 25 May, 2023, seeking new insights into the capabilities and learning needs of students in Malawi.
- ACER India supported the development, implementation and reporting of Bhutan's large-scale learning assessment for Grade III students on 17 March, 2023.
- ACER has completed the baseline study of the Integration and Mainstreaming of Refugee Children into the Sudanese Education System (IRCSES) project on 28 February, 2023.

Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC)

Bangladesh

- BRAC held "Smart Education Festival" on 1 June, 2023 to create a smart educational framework.
- BRAC fun-learning boats for children were inaugurated in Chandpur on 29 January, 2023.

Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE)

Bangladesh

- CAMPE organised a day-long workshop entitled "Ensure Services to the Domestic Workers: Our Role" with the representatives from different

government and non-government agencies on 31 January, 2023 at YWCA Auditorium, Dhaka, to sensitise and motivate service provider agencies to take positive measures in favour of domestic workers.

National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA)

India

- A workshop on "Global Teacher Education Policies and Practices for Equitable and Quality Education", was organised at NIEPA in collaboration with University of Sussex, UK; JMI, New Delhi; AUD, New Delhi and TISS, Mumbai from 9-12 January, 2023.
- NIEPA organised an online workshop on "Present Status of School Participation of Children with Special Focus on Post Covid Pandemic Period: Understanding the Possibility of Using and Strengthening Social Capital for School Participation," from 16-20 January, 2023.
- Conducted a consultative meet on "Ensuring Foundational Literacy and Numeracy Especially in the Context of Blended Learning" as part of the G20 Education Working Group on 13 February, 2023 at NIEPA, New Delhi.
- NIEPA organised a "Faculty Development Programme on Design, Develop and Deliver Online/Blended Learning Courses" on from 1-6 May, 2023.

National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT)

India

- CIET-NCERT organised a five-hour online training on “Emerging Trends in Educational Technology” from 12-16 June, 2023.
- CIET-NCERT organised a five-hour online training on “Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing - DIKSHA” from 27-31 March, 2023.

The Aga Khan Education Service (AKES)

Pakistan

- On 12 May, 2023, the Aga Khan Nursery and Primary School, Dar es Salaam took part in “Soma na Mti”, a nationwide tree-planting initiative by the Tanzanian government aimed at promoting environmental awareness and encouraging schools to plant trees provided by the government.
- On 13 March, 2023, Grades 7-10 students from the Aga Khan Mzizima Secondary School (AKMSS), Dar es Salaam participated in a competitive Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics (STEAM) Fair at the school under the theme, "Recycle to Survive."

The Aga Khan University (AKU)

Pakistan

- The Aga Khan University Institute for Education Development, East Africa (IED, EA), in partnership with Muni University in Arua, Uganda, have launched a Diploma Programme in Educational Leadership and Management (DELM) on 27 May, 2023.

- The National Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (NACTE), a prestigious division of the Higher Education Commission, has awarded the highest 'W' category accreditation to the Aga Khan University Institute for Educational Development's (AKU-IED) Master of Education (MEd) Degree Programme on 3 May, 2023.
- The Aga Khan University (AKU) has been selected as one of eight nominees, amongst 700 applications, for the prestigious Times Higher Education (THE) Asia Awards 2023 in the category of Teaching and Learning Strategy of the Year on 23 March, 2023.

SEAMEO INNOTECH

Philippines

- SEAMEO INNOTECH, through its Educational Research and Innovation Office and Knowledge Management and Networking Office, conducted a webinar on 6 February, 2023 to discuss the different contexts and situations of Southeast Asian (SEA) countries in using technology in education.

Korean Educational Development Institute (KEDI)

South Korea

- KEDI organised 2023 Korea-OECD International Seminar on 13 January 2023.
- KEDI announced the release of KEDI Journal of Educational Policy Vol. 20 No.1 on 30 June, 2023.

ANTRIEP Member Institutions

1. Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), 19 Prospect Hill Road, Private Bag – 55, Camberwell, Melbourne, VICTORIA-3124, Australia (www.acer.edu.au)
2. Balitbang Dikbud Centre for Policy Research (Puslit Penelitian), Office for Educational and Culture Research and Development (Balitbang Dikb), Ministry of Education and Culture, Jalan Jenderal Sudirman, Senayan, JAKARTA-12070, Indonesia. (www.kemdikbud.go.id)
3. Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) 75, Mohakhali Commercial Area, DHAKA – 1212, Bangladesh (www.brac.net)
4. Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE), 5/14, Humayun Road, Mohammadpur, DHAKA – 1207, Bangladesh (www.campebd.org)
5. Centre for Multi-Disciplinary Development Research (CMDR), R.S. No. 9A2, Plot No. 82, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Nagar, Near Yalakki Shetter Colony, Lakamanahalli, Dharwad-580004 KARNATAKA, India (www.cmdr.ac.in)
6. National Institute of Education (NIE), P.O. Box 21, High Level Road, Maharagama, Sri Lanka (www.nie.lk)
7. Institut Aminuddin Baki (National Institute of Educational Management and Leadership), Malaysia Education Ministry, Value Education Complex 71760 Bandar Enstek, Negeri Sembilan, MALAYSIA (<http://iab.moe.edu.my>)
8. International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP), 7-9 rue Eugene-Delacroix, 75116 PARIS, France (www.iiep.unesco.org)
9. Korean Educational Development Institute (KEDI), 7, Gyohak-ro, Deoksan-eup, Jincheon-gun, Chungcheongbuk-do, South Korea (www.kedi.re.kr)
10. National Academy for Educational Management (NAEM), Dhanmodi, DHAKA – 1205, Bangladesh (www.naem.gov.bd)
11. National Centre for Educational Development (NCED), Sanothimi, BHAKTAPUR 2050, Nepal (www.nced.gov.np)
12. National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi - 110 016 (INDIA) (www.ncert.nic.in)
13. National Institute of Education (NIE), 80, Preah Nordon Blvd, Phnom Penh-120207, Cambodia (www.nie.edu.kh)
14. National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA), 17-B, Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi –110016, India (www.niepa.ac.in)
15. Pakistan Institute of Education, Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training, Taleemi Chowk, G-8/1, ISLAMABAD-44000, PAKISTAN (<http://aepam.edu.pk>)
16. Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development (CERID), Tribhuvan University, G.P.O. Box 2161, Balkhu, KATHMANDU, Nepal (www.cerid.org)
17. Institute of Human Resource Development (SIHRD), Shanghai Academy of Educational Sciences 21 Chaling Road, SHANGHAI, P.R.C.-200032, China
18. South-East Asian Ministers of Education Organisation Regional Centre for Educational Innovation and Technology, SEAMEO INNOTECH P.O. Box 207, Commonwealth Avenue, U.P. Diliman, Quezon City 1101, Philippines (www.seameo-innotech.org)
19. State Institute of Educational Management & Training (SIEMAT), 25, Sir P.C. Banerjee Road, Allenganj, Prayagraj-211002, ALLAHABAD, Uttar Pradesh, India (www.siematup.org)
20. The Aga Khan Education Service, Pakistan (AKES,P) 1-5/ B-VII, Federal B Area, Karimabad, Karachi – 75950, PAKISTAN (www.akdn.org/akes)
21. The Aga Khan University - Institute for Educational Development, (AKU-IED), 1-5/B-VII, Federal B. Area Karimabad, KARACHI-75950, Pakistan (<http://www.aku.edu/iedpk>)
22. Vietnam Institute of Educational Sciences (VNIES), Centre for Higher and Vocational Education Studies 101, Tran Hung Dao Hoan Kiem HANOI CITY, Vietnam (www.vnrw.vnies.edu.in)

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