

Education in Mother Tongue: Its Importance and Significance

Language and Literature

Khalid Raza¹, Abdul Nasir², Abdul Haleem Sadiq³
& Manzoor Ahmed⁴

Abstract

The paper focuses on one of the very important controversies of medium of instruction imposed in institutions. The medium of instruction is unfamiliar for the earlier age students although we know that language plays vital role in every aspects of life. The early school language should be approachable, comprehensible and understandable for the first admitted students in school. The native language describes as mother tongue is quite important to implement at the root of the education called primary. To indicate the mother tongue, it gives material assistance, promote and support the children in every aspects of school education. The mother tongue education can help them that obstacles can be removed and can strengthen the career of the child. The teacher can easily advocate the students in mother tongue. It starts with what is familiar and builds in new knowledge. In early age, students can fluently and confidently express their knowledge in both the mother language and later in other languages. It sets the basic trend for the future development of regional education.

Key words: Mother tongue, Education, Multilingual, Knowledge, Strengthen, lingua franca

Introduction

Language is clearly the key to communication and understanding in the classroom. (Benson, 2004). Language ability is natural in humans. Language is the identification of a human in which child can express their ideas their norm characteristics and can spread their knowledge easily as difficulties faced by using other language.

¹ Assistant Librarian, Balochistan Study Centre, University of Balochistan, Quetta, Pakistan.

² Assistant Professor, Department of Education, University of Balochistan, Quetta, Pakistan

³. Assistant Professor, Brahui Department, University of Balochistan, Quetta, Pakistan.

⁴ Lecturer, Brahui Department, University of Balochistan, Quetta, Pakistan.

Pakistan has been the abode of people belonging to different social and ethnic groups, each group can be termed in sociological term as nationality. They speak different languages, follow different of the customs and tradition, and have their own culture. The cultural blending of all these areas and regions have throughout the period of their records. (Allana, 1998)

Summary

Language is not only a tool for communication and knowledge but also a fundamental attribute of cultural identity and empowerment, both for the individual and the group. (Ball, 2008)

Language is integral to exploring and sustaining personal development, cultural identity and intercultural Understanding. As well as being the major medium of social communication, it is tightly linked to cognitive growth because it is the process by which meaning and knowledge is negotiated and constructed. It is the main tool for building our knowledge of the universe and our place in it. Language then, is central to learning, as well as to literacy, and is thus closely related to success in school.

Jessica Ball refers that differentiate of home practice language and school practice language may distress the child in early stage but in mother tongue education can encourage their qualities, attitudes and characteristics identification to their learning stage.

Many children speak a home language that differs from the language of instruction in education programs

In addition, research increasingly shows that children's ability to learn a second or additional languages (e.g., a lingua franca and an international language) does not suffer when their mother tongue is the primary language of instruction throughout primary school. Fluency and literacy in the mother tongue lay a cognitive and linguistic foundation for learning additional languages. When children receive formal instruction in their first language throughout primary school and then gradually transition to academic learning in the second language, they learn the second language quickly. If they continue to have opportunities to develop their first language skills in secondary school, they emerge as fully bilingual (or multilingual) learners. (Ball, 2008)

It is really difficult for children to understand the lectures in other language where he or she speaks their local language (Balochi, Brahui and Pashto) at home and in school communicate in urdu as considered official language of the country and read text books formatted in English. Language is the lifelong journey but in early age the child should be treated by their dominant language because this is the sensitive stage for children the circumstances isolate them when they do not use single language even they

cannot identify their native language nor they focus nor understand especially in early age.

Learning language

In the early stages of life when a child is first learning to communicate in a mother tongue, he or she is learning to use language symbolically in order to construct meaning and to interact. In a safe, secure and nurturing environment, rich in stimulating experiences, the child exchanges signals with others and learns to recognize, articulate and encode sounds, rhythms and intonations while associating them with meanings or concepts. He or she may associate the sound “bo”, for example, with a ball and learn that by uttering the word the mother is likely to respond in some way; perhaps by rolling it for him. The child is building up a resource for meaning. (International Baccalaureate Organization 2008)

According to Zafar (2002) Education is one of the most powerful instruments of change and its mind imbued with the knowledge, skill and competencies to shape the future destiny of the nation.

The education development depends on mother tongue which is really important for the child when he or she learns school at first stage. Mother tongue education is one of the most powerful tools in the class room positively affects opportunity to learn. Mother tongue proficiency serves as a bridge between the language children speak at school and the language they speak at home.

It can be said that the medium of instruction in the class-room of a young learners should be quite as approachable and understandable for them as the mother tongue because they can have better comprehension with the least exertion for the perception of the fundamental ideas involve in the study of basic sciences. (Shah, 2013)

By the time children begin school, they have begun gaining confidence in their ability to Communicate meaningfully in their mother tongue. They have built a foundation of knowledge and experience through observing and interacting with peers and adults in their community. The language, knowledge and experience that children bring to school form an important foundation for their learning in the classroom. (Malone, 2007).

The educational problem faced by many children from ethno linguistic communities is twofold. In the first place, some have no access to education at all. Those who do have access to school but do not speak the official language when they enter the education system find that their knowledge, experience and language—rather than serving as a foundation for learning—are treated as a disadvantage. Their language skills do not serve them because their language

has no place in the classroom. Instead, textbooks and teaching are in a language they neither speak nor understand. Their learning and problem-solving experiences and their knowledge of “how things work” in their own culture and social setting do not serve them because the culture of the classroom, the teachers, and the textbooks is that of the dominant society. The consequences for many students are predictable and have been described in numerous studies, as noted in the quotations that follow. (Malone, 2007)

The child must pass through various stages to acquire mother tongue. He cannot proceed to the next stage until the previous stage is learned. It is claimed by someone that if any of these points in development are missed, the child is never able to go back and learn in the same way. Once the age of puberty is reached, the ability to acquire language rapidly deteriorates. Language seems parallel to other developments like motor and intellectual. 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. Mother tongue has tremendous importance in education and in the curriculum. (Hans, 2014)

Mother Tongue education results in a number of advantages in terms of quality and efficiency in the provision of education. The advantages include: increased access and equity (also related to gender); improved learning outcomes; reduced repetition and drop-out rates; socio-cultural benefits, and lower overall costs. Mother Tongue education helps students to develop not only the Mother Tongue itself but also their skills in the majority education language and research shows clearly that a second language is learned best when a first language has been learned well. Bilingual students perform better in school when the school teaches the Mother Tongue effectively and, where appropriate, develops literacy in that language. When students develop their abilities in two (or more languages) throughout their education, they gain a deeper understanding of language and how to use it effectively. They have more practice in processing language, especially when they develop literacy in both.

Stages of mother tongue acquisition in child

Sounds From birth, infants make and respond to sounds. First there is crying and gurgling. The next stage is cooing. This sound is commonly heard when the baby is in a pleasant mood. As early as a month, infants make these sounds in response to the attention they get. This is called the pre-verbal speech or the development of expressive language. (Hans ,2014)

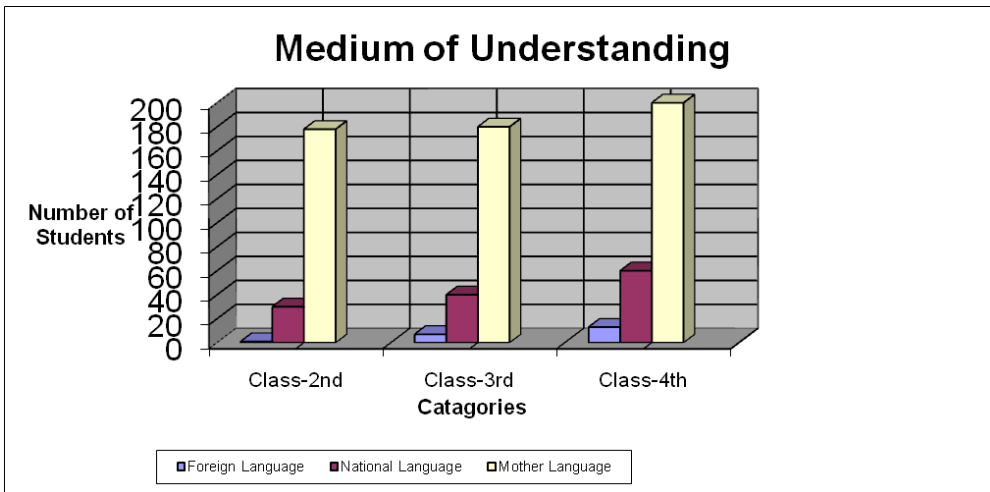
Stress to convey the message

In every corner of the world, young children are learning languages at home that differ from the dominant language used in their broader social world. These children arrive at school with a precious resource: their mother tongue (hereafter referred to as L1).P6 jessica

L1 (Mother language) is an easy way for the child to understand the educational terms in class but L2(second language) make difficulties during class which can isolate the children. The formation of other language in early stage can depress the child. Because of child's lack of confidence it can harm the child's memory. In early age a child cannot express their views because of other language which can disturb the child and it is absolutely necessary that the mother tongue education should be the best way to teach the child in early stage. The mother tongue education cannot harm the thoughts of the children in early stage instant of other languages in school. The child gets stress when child convey his educational terms in other language but it can be easy for child to convey the message through mother tongue.

Muhammad Imran Shah (2013) analyzed 600 young learners who were approached in a group discussion to find out the results about the medium of instruction in their schooling. He described the results in the following table with percentage of the level of understanding in three medium of instruction: Table 1. Analysis on the basis of Medium of Understanding

Sr.No.	Total No of students	Level of F.L		Level of N.L		Level of M.L	
		Student	%	Student	%	student	%
Class-2nd	200	1	0.5	30	15	178	89
Class-3rd	200	7	3.5	40	20	180	90
Class-4th	200	13	6.5	60	30	200	100



Source: Muhammad Imran Shah (G.C. University Faisalabad, Pakistan)
International Journal of Linguistics ISSN 1948-5425 2013, Vol. 5, No. 5 p 5

The Balochistan introduction of mother language as compulsory additional subject at primary level Bill 2014, (Bill No. 03 of 2014) having been passed by the provincial Assembly of Balochistan on 25th January, 2014 and assented to by the governor, Balochistan on 3rd February, 2014 is hereby published as an act of the Balochistan provincial Assembly.

(Balochistan Provincial Assembly Secretariat Dated Quetta, 3rd February, 2014.)

The provincial Assembly should be praised that they have passed the legislation in respect of Mother tongue education as compulsory subject which will be more valuable to increase the Literacy rate of the province.

Recommendations

In spite of above approved notification by government of Balochistan to implement mother tongue as compulsory additional subject at primary level it should be implemented as soon as possible. The government should instruct the teacher how to teach in mother tongue. It is a serious issue to be solved and the government has taken the step to implement the mother tongue education as medium of instruction. Find out awareness raising campaigns on the importance of the development and use of mother tongue medium of instruction. The government should support clear, sustained political commitments to bi/multilingual education in policy frameworks and administrative contexts at national and regional stages.

Support mother tongue development to the level of reasoning academic language proficiency to support additional language learning. Identify mother tongue achievement, rather than gaining of imposed national or international language, as the first priority in judging children's achievement in preschool and throughout primary school. The Government should appoint teachers who are well known in the regional languages.

Conclusion

The mother tongue, native or first language is what a child has learned from early age or within sensitive conditions. There are many studies that have argued convincingly that children do better in school when their mother tongue serves as the medium of instruction. Mother tongue is the first phase for the child to learn and express their ideas easily in every field and support better quality of educational outputs especially in enhanced literacy rates. It is highly strong practice in early stage education meanwhile the lack of medium of instruction in mother tongue has hugely negative effect on child's knowledge capacity. Education progress starts early in life if the medium of instruction is in mother tongue or regional language it can help to achieve the number of good literate students. When child receive instruction in their native language throughout initial education they learn the second language in short time. Thus the mother tongue education is important to enhance the literacy rate.

References

- Allana, G.A. (1998). Papers on Sindhi language & linguistics. Institute of Sindhology University of Sindh jamshoro.p.1
- Ball, Jessica. (2008) Enhancing learning of children from diverse language backgrounds: Mother tongue-based bilingual or multilingual education in early childhood and early primary school years. M.P.H., Ph.D. University of Victoria) Pp2 - 9
- Benson, Carole (2004). The importance of mother tongue-based schooling for educational quality, Background paper prepared for the Education for All Global Monitoring Report.,P2
- Hans ,dr. Anjali,. Hans Emmanuel (2014). *CHILDREN ACQUIRE THEIR MOTHER TONGUE THROUGH VARIOUS STAGES*, scholars world-IRMJCR, online Volume. II, Issue II, April 2014 [18] www.scholarsworld.net editor@scholarsworld.net
- Hans dr. Anjali,. Mr. Emmanuel Hans (2014). Children acquire their mother tongue through various stages volume. Ii, issue ii, April 2014 [18]
- International Baccalaureate Organization, (2008). Learning in a language other than mother tongue in IB Programmes. Published April 2008, International Baccalaureate Peterson House, Malthouse Avenue, Cardiff Gate Cardiff, Wales, United Kingdom.
- Malone, Susan. (2007). Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education: Implications for Education Policy, Presented at the Seminar on Education Policy and the Right to Education: Towards more Equitable Outcomes for South Asia's Children. Kathmandu, 17-20 September 2007 P8
- Shah, Muhammad Imran. (2013). Role of Mother Tongue in Primary Schooling of Young Learners in Punjab. International Journal of Linguistics 2013, Vol. 5, No. 5 P 20
- Zafar, M.D. (2002). Pakistan studies, Aziz Publishers, Lahore.