



Research Paper

Multidisciplinary Approach and the Role of National Education Policy (NEP) and its Emphasis on Bilingual Teaching and Learning.

Sushma V

Research Scholar, Jain Deemed-to-be University,

Dr Charles Godwin K

Associate Professor

Center for Management Studies, Jain Deemed-to-be University
Lalbagh Road, Bangaluru

Abstract

The National Education Policy 2020 aims to create a learning hub to nurture the potential of students by providing a wide range of subjects thereby providing avenues to learn and to pace with 21st century skills. A curriculum of paradigm learning abode in which learners enjoy stress free learning. The curriculum focuses on conceptual learning, problem solving, experiential learning, engaging activities, art integrated teaching, thematic activities, vocational skill training, inculcating a range of life - skill among tribal children, incorporate core values from the usage of mother tongue for primary schools, exposure to language learning, skill based, hands on learning activities and to promote bilingualism from an early age emphasising on activities pertaining to the similarities between home language (translation method). The article throws light on various recommendations in teaching second language as well as to build trust in classroom thereby developing a language for moral enquiry, through formulating a smooth translation method from one language to other. The methods can be of creating exposure for expression by introducing key vocabulary grid. The training of efficient ESL instructors to impart skills on bilingual education and ESL, through scripted sign language, dialogues, explanations, instructions and examples with voice over or written text added in English. Multidisciplinary Approach and the Role of National Education Policy (NEP) and its Emphasis on Bilingual Teaching and Learning.

The research paper, 'The role of NEP-2020 in transforming higher education' gives exposure to language learning activities LSRW skills development and mindful engaging sessions. According to the findings "Bilinguals show a fascinating version of the process of combining words from different languages" says senior author Liina Pylkkänen, professor in the linguistics and psychology department. Earlier studies have unravelled how human brains can interpret an infinite number of expressions within a single language, says Phillips. The research shows that bilingual brains can with striking ease, interpret complex expressions containing words from different languages. There are different kinds of Bilinguals as classified by Bloom Field accordingly, compound bilinguals, coordinate bilinguals and subordinate bilinguals. This paper strikes at consequences of Bilingualism and recommendations to manifest the aims of NEP 2020.

Key words: vocabulary grid, translation method, ESL training, bilingualism

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The new reforms are the new lease of life given for young learners to spread the wings of knowledge to soar up in the vistas of education. The new policy, National Education Policy is a key to the ever changing and evolving world. It's a holistic approach which helps in nurturing and providing a conducive platform to access

individuals their innate abilities as NEP upholds the five pillars; Accessibility, Affordability, Quality, Equity and Accountability.

The common problem in the Indian context is accessibility, Most of the schools strive to provide quality education by adopting holistic approach where children are prompted to opt a basket of choice, the choice of subjects to study across arts, humanities, science and other vocal subjects. This flexibility in choice of subjects has given exposure to classical languages of India, English or regional language as an optional subject.

The conscious inclusion of mother tongue in early grades using bilingual format which assists in acquisition of regional language. There are scores of child centred activities which promote the desired objectives to create interest to learn and incorporate the core values from the usage of mother tongue. Songs to teach community values, norms and customs accompanied by dance forms in mother tongue, proverbs to impart indigenous knowledge to promote cultural, moral and social values. The values wrapped in sayings easily sink into the minds of children in mother tongue.

Though there are various approaches Bilingual teaching has its own implications on learners. This paper unfolds the impact of bilingual teaching and the challenges that surmount the fraternity of teaching as each language delimits a speech community. There is a burning question before us: how do we determine and name a speech community that operates with and uses two or more languages? Canada is an excellent example. There most of the people learn, use and function with English and French. Do we then call a community of such people the French community or the English speech community?

BI/Multilingualism and the notion of speech community: The speech community of these groups may share the same cultural ethos, religion and other features of life. But the commonality in this context is that it is a homogeneous group in which all members speak the same language. They are "real" group of people living in a "real" world. As individuals each person is unique in every respect, including the way one speak language but by and large all the members of the same speech community speak the same language, oblique variety with equal degree of competence and fluency. Thus s speech community has the following traits.

1. A common language
2. Frequent interaction and communication
3. Distinguishable from other communities or groups.

Some speech communities are small and mostly restricted to a particular region in which the differences are minor and few as the speech community expands, say in the case of English the difference among various communities within the larger speech community are major and pertinent for example, though British, Americans and Indians speak English there are vast differences between British English, American English and Indian English.

Entry of other languages and inter mixing of speech communities tend to have their influence on speech communities and they undergo distinct changes, So we can say that individuals are constantly redefining their linguistic identities and relocating themselves in relation to this or speech community as well as in relation to different sub groups within a large, diversified and widely dispersed speech community.

While the statement "all the people who use the same language" may appear very attractive, it can only account for very small, localized communities, like some small tribal groups living in relative isolation from the rest of the world, and using a language that does not have any variation on the basis of geographical area (dialect) or social class (sociolect). The members of this small, isolated, relatively uniform and geographically restricted community may truly be said to use the same language. However, when we come to some of the major languages of the world we find that the speakers of these languages are infinitely larger in number but also that they are distributed in different geographical areas (even different nations) and also there is great deal of social differentiation among them. To illustrate this point, the best example one can cite is that of the English speech community. English is spoken and used widely. Then it is difficult to count the members of the English speech community, we are still left with a huge population spread over America, Canada, The United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand which taken collectively constitutes the speech community. Within this extremely large speech community one can immediately see divisions which are universally acknowledged and often asserted by the members of this community. It's quite common to hear people talk about the American or Canadian or British or Australian English speech communities.

Furthermore, within the British English speech community, we often hear of distinctions made between Yorkshire English, Scottish English, Irish English, and Welsh English and so on, plus, of course, Standard British English. This makes people to find social class distinctions within American or British or Australian English speech community, one would naturally find varieties of English associated with the upper class, the middle and the lower classes as shown in Labov's study. Thus, the fact that major languages (spoken by large populations) tend to have regional and social varieties and that speakers of these varieties are often identified, recognised and evaluated on the grounds of dialects they speak, makes the notion of a common language or the same language rather problematic. One can cite more examples (such as the example of the French or the Hindi speech community) to further support this position. French spoken in Canada or in France is different from each

other. Similarly, Awadhi is different from Bhojpuri and Khari Bholi. So, while to the outside world there is one English speech community, to the insiders i.e. to the members of the community, there are perceptible differences between different Sub-groups and the speakers often invoke and highlight these differences in order to assert their distinct identity.

The second feature of the definition of speech community viz. frequent interaction and communication, also poses a problem. Again, given small and localized speech communities where everyone knows everyone else and there is almost daily interaction among the members, it may be reasonable to set up the criterion of frequent interaction in the case of large speech communities over different parts of the globe, it may be unrealistic to talk of frequent or regular interaction. If we take the example of the unrealistic to Hindi speech community, we shall immediately see the point being made here. Hindi is spoken by several million people who live in different parts of India. Moreover, Hindi speakers have also gone and settled in other parts of the world such as the West Indies, Mauritius, the U.S.A., and the U.K. etc. While one can reasonably assume a fair degree of interaction among people living in the same or adjoining areas, it is hard to imagine any degree of frequency of interaction among groups in countries other than India. Not only is there an absence of frequency of interaction, let us say, between Hindi speakers settled in Trivandrum and other Hindi speakers in the Hindi-belt or between Hindi speakers settled in Trinidad and Tobago and those Hindi speakers who have settled in Mauritius or Fiji, these groups who migrate and settle in countries abroad also develop forms of Hindi which use-1 may be substantially different from the forms of Hindi used in the Hindi heartland (Utter Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Delhi, etc.) It may thus be said that whereas within sub-groups (e.g. Trinidadian Hindi speakers, Mauritian Hindi Speakers, Kerala-based Hindi speakers) i.e. at the level of small groups, there may be frequent interaction, communication and shared linguistic features, at the level of the huge Hindi-speaking population, clubbed together under the label "Hindi Speech Community" not only is one likely to encounter a great deal of linguistic diversity and variation, but also an absence of frequent interaction. That being so, how is it and why is it that members of such large groups identify with a particular language and assert their belongingness to a speech community.

Within the English speech community itself, as we have seen earlier, there are major divisions such as American English, British English and Australian English. Thus, the three together with Canadian and New Zealand English speech communities, constitute a speech community, the members of these communities may perceive themselves as belonging to distinct separate speech communities the American speech community, the British speech community and the Australian speech community. So much so that their scholars and linguists write separate grammars of their English's and the speakers pride themselves on being different from the others. Do they then constitute three or four different speech communities or a single, large speech community the English t speech community?

Again, there may be cases where one community considers itself as being distinct from another in respect of language e.g. the Konkani speakers consider themselves as a separate speech community while the Marathi speech community, by and large, considers Konkani only to be a dialect of Marathi and hence, denies Konkani speakers the status of a separate, distinct speech community. More all less similar was the case with Bangla and Assamese till a few decades ago - the Bangla speech community considered Assamese à dialect of Bangla, while the Assamese speakers thought of themselves as possessing a distinct language and hence constituting a separate speech community. Such examples can be multiplied; point is that on close examination even the criterion of distinctiveness turns out to be rather problematic.

Within the Indian context, widespread societal bilingualism is the norm rather than an exception Large sections of populations in India operate with two or more languages/dialects. Thus, it is not uncommon to meet people in Delhi who know Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi and English, or people in Tamilnadu who know Tamil, Kannada, Hindi and English and so on. While, obviously, such people cannot constitute the English speech community, what name/label would be most appropriate for such communities. One way of taking care of such a situation could be to variously name the Delhi population as Hindi speech community, Punjabi speech community and Urdu speech community. But this would be a tedious way of dealing with the notion of speech community. One would, in defence of such a labelling invoke the notion of mother tongue' of 'native language' and say that it is the mother tongue or native language which defines a speech community. But the notion of mother tongue is problematic since we know of many people within our Indian. context who do not know how to speak, read or write their so-called mother tongue, while they are quite proficient in several other Indian languages including English (and, indeed, even proficient in some foreign languages) It is not rare to meet a Malayalee who does not know Malayalam, a Gujarati who doesn't know Gujarati and a Punjabi who doesn't know Punjabi. How can they then qualify to be members of these speech communities? It might be more sensible then, to think in terms of bilingual or multilingual speech communities where two or more languages serve the communicative and interactional needs of large groups of people. For doing this, one would have to suspend one's belief in the 'one language: one community' equation. In the light of the foregoing it may be reasonable to suggest that speech communities may or may not be co-terminus with one or the other language.

Each group of people, each social aggregate has to be viewed as operating not just with one language but with a verbal repertoire, and it is this notion of verbal repertoire that we shall discuss in the next section.

Verbal Repertoire: Even while considering so-called monolingual societies or communities, it has been widely acknowledged, that language manifests itself in different forms (varieties). These different forms may be determined and generated by such factors as age, education, sex, socio-economic class, regional location, etc. And it is the sum total of all these that, somehow, constitutes a given language. Thus, even while talking about monolingual communities, it is a good idea to think of different varieties, dialects, styles and registers (use based) varieties. A monolingual speech community, then, would have a verbal repertoire comprising different dialects, styles, registers, etc. with each of its members sharing in a varying degree the total verbal repertoire. It may be clarified here that it is only a rare individual (if at all) who would control the entire verbal repertoire of his/her community. By the same logic, bi/multilingual communities may be seen to have different languages with their styles, registers, etc. in their verbal repertoire, with each member having differential control over small or large parts of that repertoire. Recalling the earlier example we gave of a community of speakers using Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi and English, would have differential control over parts of verbal repertoire. However most members know two or more parts such as a community characterised as a multilingual or bilingual community. Such communities possessing multilingual verbal repertoire also evolve the tacit rules governing use of different languages in different spheres of life such as home, market, office, school, place of worship, etc.,

Becoming a bilingual: One of the important dimensions in any discussion of bilingualism is the process of learning a second language (L2). In order to understand this process of learning, one has to find answers to the following questions:

When and in what circumstances does the learning of L2 take place?

How is the learning of L2 encouraged and supported by the society of which the learner is a member?

Answer to question (a) would obviously relate to the age at which L2 is learnt and the kind of formal or informal training one received in L2. One may begin learning L2 at a very young age, almost as early as one learns L1; or one may learn it at a later period in one's life. For instance if we take the case of English, we will see that many Indian children begin learning it almost along with their L1, while others learn it either from the age of five or ten, or even later, depending on the school they go to or due to other circumstances. Some learn English both inly and formally, while others get to learn it only formally in the classroom. This has obvious implications for the amount of exposure one has in L2, as well as, for the degree of proficiency one attains in it. Those who learn L2 at an early age and continue to grow up in circumstances that provide adequate exposure and reinforcement to L2, naturally attain greater fluency and proficiency in it. They also find it much easier to learn L2 than those whose process of learning. They also later stage or in different circumstances. To make the point clear, let us think of the difference between a child belonging to an educated, affluent family in a big city, who is sent to an English medium public school, and a child belonging to lower middle-class family in a small town or village, who goes school and starts learning English only in class V, and that too only as a subject. Moreover, it is also important to remember that the early years of one's life are the best time for learning an L2 in a metropolitan area as a subject.

Bilingualism: No one learns a language for its own sake while the learning of one's mother tongue (L1) takes place without any specific purpose in life. A second language is learnt variably for specific purposes. The purpose for learning second language L2 other than mother tongue influences the range of language learnt the amount of language picked and the way it is learnt.

It is interesting to observe beggar boys at tourist's spots frequented by foreign visitors speaking 'impeccable English'. A professor who teaches English in a college or university may not be able to speak with such a native accent as the beggar boys can do. We cannot say that the L2 of the beggar boys is superior to that of the professor. It is to illustrate that the amount and kind of L2 that one picks up depends on the need and purpose of the user.

Bilingualism is not an absolute state, "not an all or none phenomenon, but a relative state". It may range from a very minimum knowledge of L2 enough for a limited specific purpose, an extensive and almost full command over the language which may be as good as or even better than that of a native speaker. A man who keeps visiting "other" places where he has to transact with people only in English which is required for carrying out his business in those places. On the contrary a CEO heading a corporate office that transacts business with various countries thus necessarily has a far wider range of proficiency in English than the occasional visitor to other places. On the other hand a doctorate in English literature working as a lecturer in a typical degree college in India undoubtedly knows a lot of English but the kind of (literary) English that he knows is far different from the kind of (transactional) English that the CEO of the corporate office is in command of.

There are different kinds of bilinguals, as classified by Bloom Field, there are compound bilinguals, coordinate bilinguals and subordinate bilinguals. Subordinate bilinguals are those who have been taught L2

through the grammar translation method. He can have only minimal proficiency in the L2 as he depends only on item to item translation method. A co-ordinate bilingual on the other hand has two separate semantic bases - one for L1 and the other for L2. He doesn't proceed on the simple item to item translation. But operates on two separate items (reference) and produces the matching linguistic signs in the two languages concerned. In other words a coordinate bilingual learner's L1 and L2 as separate entities to a great extent independent of each other.

A compound bilingual operates with a fewest or single semantic use. He has complete control over two linguistic codes L1 and L2. He is proficient enough both in L1 and L2 to the extent that he does not translate from one to the other. He doesn't have the feeling that he refers to two different objects or reference.

Domain: In a typical Indian situation L2 is used in the following domains: family, neighbourhood, school, trade and commerce, government and administration, work place and religion.

Consequences of Bilingualism: Bilingualism is an enabling and enriching phenomenon it enriches a person's linguistic repertoire, makes him more versatile in communicative and interactional terms, more open minded and more receptive to varied cultural conventions customs and usages. Bilingualism expands ones access to knowledge and information. A bilingualist has increasing deceptively access and awareness so that he becomes more tolerant and open minded. There is no doubt that bilingualism facilitates rather than hinders learning processes.

Bilingualism has its effect on group too. In communities where wide spread bilingualism is an accepted phenomenon there is a general tendency to allocate different functional roles to the two languages by a fast consent L1 is used for a set of functions, L1 and L2 in yet another set of functions.

For example; I use L1 (When I speak to my people at home. I use only English in the class room. (Even at home when I get angry I use only L2) If I want to impress emphasize something I use both L1 and L2

Consequences for L1 and L2: In a society where L1 and L2 are learnt, spoken and are used by individuals and whole group of communities they come to co- exist and may have the following consequences.

1. Consequences for L1 and L2

Due to mutual influence L1 and L2 may undergo structural changes in sound, syntax, vocabulary and semantics i.e. both of them will develop.

2. On account of historical and social reasons one of the languages may acquire greater importance and be used more in governance, education and so on and the other language may be looked down upon.

3. In the case of free users of L1 and L2 there is a tendency to switch over from one language to the other or mix up the two languages. These are called code switching and code fixing respectively. In course of time the two languages get so much mixed up that we wonder whether the speakers are speaking L1 or L2. For example the anchors of Kannada TV programmes and radio mirchi mix up English and Kannada to such an extent that we wonder what exactly they are speaking.

4. In course of time a kind of hybrid of the two languages may be evolved. We have already such hybrids in Hinglish (Hindi cum English) used by writers like Salman Rashdi, Chetan Bhagat) Kinglish (Kannada + English and so on.)

Sociolinguistic reality of a relatively homogenous society of America is very different from the heterogeneity of India. The fact that as many as 1,652 languages are spoken in India is in itself a good enough reason to believe that there is a great deal of diversity. Yet, despite this diversity and linguistic variation, there seems to be a kind of underlying unity, which enables communication to take place quite easily. It is not unusual for an individual in India to maintain multiple identities. For a Gujarati speaker in Delhi may be speaking in Gujarati at home with his family members, English in his office, Hindi with his friends and yet another language in another context. What is important is to remember that each social context should be examined in its own right.

Another concern of sociolinguists has been to regard language as a marker of group solidarity and group identity. An individual creates his/her identity in terms of the social group or groups he/she belongs to. He/she shares certain social and linguistic norms with the other members of the social group. There is, therefore, a sort of conformity to a social group. Yet, the uniqueness of each individual's experience of language and the society he/she belongs to enables him/her to filter his/her experience of new situations in his/her own way. This obviously means that since no two individuals are alike or have the same experience, they interpret situations in different ways and construct mental maps according to their own interpretation. Hence, there are as it were, two forces operating, one leading to similarities between individuals by conforming to a social group or groups and their norms and the other leading to individual differences. These forces are often referred to as conformity and individualism. The amount of variation between speakers within a social group depends on the relative strengths of these two forces.

Language is also often used as a tool of power in all spheres of social life, be it education, religion, media, administration and so on. Language of the rich and the powerful is often made a 'standard' variety at the cost of all other varieties, which are in no way linguistically inferior. Think for a moment about a school classroom in India. Just the way a school uniform is imposed on children so that they all start looking similar,

standard Hindi/English is made a compulsory media of instruction in schools. This negates the multiplicity of languages that children bring with them to the classroom and leaves them feeling socially disadvantaged. More so, because a standard variety becomes essential for upward social mobility. Instead of using multilingualism as a classroom resource, variability is shunned at and classroom interaction remains largely monolithic in nature. Sociolinguists in India are now increasingly getting concerned with issues such as these and are keen to bring about a social change in keeping with our sociolinguistic reality.

Recommendations: Oral language and vocabulary skills are essential foundations for multilingualism. Activities pertaining to similarities between home language translation methods for instance, providing rich contexts for oral language use, including play way methods and interaction in relation to stories and other texts. Vocabulary grid comprising of word hacks with meanings and contextual usage. Story scaffolds with a written text added in English, simulations narrated in mother tongue help to develop values like honesty, respect, discipline manners, sharing, caring, courage and hard work.

Introducing a material consisting of a video, accompanying work books and work sheets need to be facilitated. Engaging activities with communities by training community volunteers in scaffolding local songs, ballads, etc to potentially improve learning outcomes. To teach subjects through experiential learning: field based learning including group work, case studies, role play, presentations, practices etc.

The schools across the nation are under the impression that children should have the exposure of learning English right from be elementary school, switching over to the new policy would be a dramatic shift in the phase of schools 'repertoire. Moreover many experts have shared their solidarity in swaying with the new policy. The immediate transition would be textbooks and other resource materials, where schools need to have clarity and conviction about the new policy.

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