Local Lingua Franca in Multilingual Pedagogy: A Workshop on Developing Teaching-Learning Materials

GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE WORKSHOP

ORGANISED BY

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CONCEPT NOTE

In pre-colonial Bengal, literacy practices were grounded in the use of local languages as the medium of instruction. The absence of a centralized curriculum and an organized educational network meant that these local languages, often serving as lingua franca for intergroup communication, were crucial for early literacy and foundational education. Only during the colonial era did a centralized education system, curriculum, and school network emerge (Acharya, 1978). This period also saw the documentation and analysis of languages, as exemplified by the Linguistic Survey of India (Grierson, 1909), and the codification of certain linguistic varieties for administrative use. These developments significantly altered the pre-colonial multilingual landscape of India. In undivided Bengal, the early establishment of the printing press, driven by missionary efforts, furthered the use of standardized Bangla in the centralized school system, impacting the region's diverse linguistic fabric, especially in areas with multiple contact-induced languages.

Jain (2017) argued that language barriers have been a significant impediment to educational achievement in India, with the issue being particularly acute in densely multilingual areas and border regions. Six highly multilingual districts in West Bengal are notable examples of this "melting pot" of languages, where educational disadvantages due to language barriers persist. Although pre-colonial lingua franca are still used for inter-community interaction, their role in formal education is under threat.

CONCEPT NOTE

However, the growing interest in mother-tongue-based multilingual education, as recommended by India's centralized education policies (NCF, 2005; NEP, 2020), presents an opportunity to address these barriers. By incorporating local lingua franca as a teaching tool, it is possible to revive traditional educational practices and support early literacy among children.

IIT Kharagpur has conducted extensive research in six multilingual districts of West Bengal, focusing on recording, analyzing, and documenting the various local lingua franca. The proposed workshop aims to: (a) share findings on the patterns of lingua franca in selected schools within these districts, (b) gather and discuss teachers' feedback on using these local link languages as instructional tools, (c) develop teaching-learning materials based on the collected and transcribed data (both printed and audio-visual), (d) identify potential partners for networking and collaboration, and (e) plan the next steps for disseminating this model to teachers, teacher-educators, and researchers.

References

Acharya, P. (1978). Indigenous vernacular education in pre-British era: Traditions and problems. *Economic and Political Weekly, 13*(48), 1981, 1983–1988. https://www.jstor.org/stable/4367149

Government of India, Ministry of Human Resource Development. (2020). National Education Policy 2020. https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NEP_Final_English_0.pdf

Grierson, G. A. (Ed.). (1903–1928). Linguistic Survey of India (Vols. 1–11, in 20 parts). Office of the Superintendent of Government Printing, India.

Jain, T. (2017). Common Tongue: The Impact of Language on Educational Outcomes. The Journal of Economic History, 77(2), 473–510. doi:10.1017/S0022050717000481

National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT). (2005). National Curriculum Framework 2005. NCERT.

TENTATIVE PROGRAM SCHEDULE

THE WORKSHOP WILL TAKE PLACE FOR 5 DAYS (23.9.24 TO 28.9.24).

Date	Agenda
23rd September, 2024	• Induction and Presentations by Experts • Discussion on Proposed Network for Future Work
24-26th September, 2024	Formulation and development of TLM
27th September, 2024	Presentation on the tools developed: Sharing the tools developed during the workshop with the stakeholders.

Detailed program schedule for the sessions shall be provided a few days prior to the event.

INAUGURAL DAY: TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

DAY 1	SESSION DETAILS
SESSION 1	**Introducing the Workshop: Goals & Expected Outcomes**
SESSION 2	**Identifying Language Problems in Multilingual Rural Bengal**
SESSION 3	**Analyzing the Structure of Multilingual Data**
SESSION 4	**Discussing Critical Questions on Multilingual TLMs**

Representatives Expected From

ANANDABAZAR PATRIKA

AZIM PREMJI FOUNDATION

AZIM PREMJI UNIVERSITY

BHARTI AIRTEL FOUNDATION

BRITISH COUNCIL

CYRIL ACADEMY

DISTRICT INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION & TRAINING (DIET), BANIPUR

JADAVPUR UNIVERSITY

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING (NCERT)

PRATHAM BOOKS

PRAAJAK

PRATICHI EDUCATION TRUST

PRISM

STATE COUNCIL OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH & TRAINING, GOVT. OF WEST BENGAL (SCERT, WB)

TEACH FOR INDIA

VISVA BHARATI UNIVERSITY

WILD CHOTANAGPUR PLATEAU TRUST

Additional Information

EVENT VENUE

IIT Kharagpur Kolkata Campus, HC Block, Sector III, Salt
Lake City, Kolkata – 700106

ACCOMMODATION

TECHNOLOGY GUEST HOUSE
IIT Kharagpur Kolkata Campus

CONTACT

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Thank You

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