

CHAPTER-21

Language learning and innovation: Promoting linguistic diversity through action research in multilingual classrooms

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ABSTRACT

The study promote and improving the multilingual school's environment and the way teachers use various methods in classroom with regard to improving language skills for students - engaging & including students to create a better learning environment, classroom observations, teacher interviews and their reflection on this research, to develop methods by which teachers can most effectively teach through code-switching, translating into students' first language, or paraphrasing. Garcia, Felia, and Otheguy (2020) indicated that multilingual classrooms that utilize language as part of their instructional model produced a significant increase in pupil language proficiency; classroom participation; and affirmation of pupil identity. In addition, Li Wei (2021) demonstrated how the informed use of home languages by educators increased pupils' understanding of the scaffolding techniques used in their classrooms and enhanced their ability to make deeper connections with concepts being taught. Higher level of knowledge about Multilingualism by Teachers have a Positive Impact on Scaffolding Students Learning, Developing Culturally Responsive Learning Environments and working with Multilingual Students. The participants were secondary school students who were studying under multilingual environments through purposive sampling. Moreover, 2 to 3 language teachers acted as practitioners for the action research process. The classrooms represented the diversity of linguistic backgrounds: the students spoke regional and minority languages along with the school language of instruction. This Study Demonstrates How Transformational the Teacher can be when they create a Multilingual Learning Environment with Opportunities for Students to Learn in their Mother Tongue Based Learning Language in a Multilingual Environment. It gives a backdrop for the teachers and their preparation and thus has given a work plan for successful multilingual education. The results of this research are very significant for those involved in education and for educational policymakers and developers as they continue to develop programs for multilingual education in India and have been incorporated in India's National Education Policy 2020.

KEYWORDS: Multilingual Education, Linguistic Diversity, Mother Tongue-Based Learning, Teacher Strategies, Inclusive Classrooms

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Background of the Study*

India stands out as one of the world's most linguistically diverse countries because its various regions and communities and social groups use hundreds of different languages. According to

the Government of India, this linguistic plurality is a defining feature of Indian society and culture. In secondary schools, particularly in multilingual regions, students frequently speak regional or minority languages at home while learning through a different language of instruction in school. The linguistic gap results in negative effects which impact how students understand material and take part in class activities and display self-assurance and achieve academic success.

The learning environment in multilingual secondary classrooms depends on the teaching methods which educators use to create the environment. The effectiveness of student language transition depends on teachers' understanding of multilingual teaching methods and their assessment of language diversity and their teaching methods to help students learn. The teachers who purposefully use home languages through paraphrasing and explanations and peer discussions and reflective teaching methods create classrooms which respect different cultures and include all students.

The classroom environment of the world today demonstrates through its various languages that different cultures now exist throughout the planet. The demonstration of this fact occurs in India, which contains more than 121 recognized languages and multiple dialects. The educational systems of the past have implemented "monolingual instructional habits" which direct schools to teach students through their main language of instruction which typically uses English or the primary language of the state. Recent changes in educational psychology research show that when students lose access to their first language learning base their education suffers and their mental health declines while their personal identity deteriorates.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 of India marks a revolutionary departure from this monolingual bias. The document states that schools should use students' native tongue or regional dialect for teaching purposes until students complete Grade 5 and preferably continue this practice until Grade 8 and beyond. The policy acknowledges that multilingualism provides cognitive benefits which improve intellectual flexibility instead of presenting itself as an obstacle.

1.2 Theoretical Framework: Translanguaging and Scaffolding

1 The research utilizes current theories of Translanguaging and Scaffolding as its foundation. Garcia, Felia, and Otheguy (2020) posit that multilingual individuals do not have separate linguistic systems for each language they speak; rather they possess one integrated repertoire. Through code-switching and paraphrasing teachers can use the complete language repertoire of their students to confirm student identity and enhance language skills.

2 Li Wei (2021) further argues that the "informed use" of home languages serves as a critical scaffolding technique. The approach enables students to connect their existing knowledge from their native language with the new school language concepts which results in improved understanding.

1.3 The Research Problem and Action Research

Many teachers in secondary schools lack sufficient skills to teach language-speaking students despite the NEP 2020 vision. The education system indicates a clear "pedagogical gap" since the system lacks efficient ways to teach different languages while ensuring educational standards. The research gap is indicated by Action Research. The researchers apply 2 to 3 language teachers as "practitioner-researchers" to develop research methods that transcend mere observation. Action Research allows educators to develop culturally responsive learning environments through its planning, acting, and observing cycle.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The study aims to:

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- 1 Promote a multilingual learning environment in secondary school classrooms.
- 2 Examine teachers' use of code-switching, translation, and paraphrasing.
- 3 Improve students' language proficiency and classroom participation.
- 4 Explore teachers' reflections during the action research process.
- 5 Develop effective multilingual teaching methods aligned with NEP 2020.

1.5 Research Questions

- 1 How does multilingual pedagogy influence students' language proficiency?
- 2 What role does code-switching and translation play in improving conceptual understanding?
- 3 How does teacher knowledge of multilingualism impact scaffolding and classroom engagement?
- 4 What changes occur in classroom participation after implementing multilingual strategies?
- 5 How do teachers reflect on and modify their instructional practices during action research?

1.6 Delimitations of the Study

- 1 The study is limited to secondary school students.
- 2 It involves 2–3 language teachers as practitioner-researchers.
- 3 The research focuses on multilingual classrooms in a specific region.
- 4 The duration of intervention is limited to one academic term.

1.7 Significance of the Study

The research study provides essential value to teachers, students, teacher educators, and policymakers who work within multilingual Indian school environments. The research demonstrates how action research contributes to the preservation of linguistic diversity while it helps teachers develop better classroom methods. The program enables teachers to understand multilingual teaching methods better while it motivates them to think about their instructional methods. The program helps students develop better language skills while building their self-assurance and classroom involvement and sense of identity. The program provides teacher educators with an effective training model which helps them prepare students for successful multilingual classroom teaching. The research study enables curriculum developers and policymakers to implement the National Education Policy 2020 through its demonstration of how multilingual classrooms enable students to develop regional language skills and their official teaching language proficiency.

1.8 Operational Definitions of Key Terms

1.8.1 Multilingual Education

This is an approach to education through the medium of the different languages of instruction to make it possible for students to engage in academic work well as well as knowledge of languages.

1.8.2 Linguistic Diversity

Indeed, any learning environment that has got a number of languages is a great benefit for learning and should be recognized as an asset by the education industry.

1.8.2.1 Mother Tongue-Based Learning

Mother tongue-based learning implies imparting education by using the learners' own language as a medium to teach new languages and subjects.

1.8.2.2 Teacher Strategies

In their ways of instruction, the teachers will resort to switching languages, translating between languages with the help of the students' understanding skill, i.e. code-switching, and also provide a hint of guidance, which is scaffolding, interpreting or paralanguage.

1.8.2.3 Inclusive Classrooms

Inclusive classrooms are ones in which students of diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds have an equal chance by being given an appreciation of their differences.

2 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 *Multilingual Education*

Multilingual education refers to the application of two or more languages in the learning process. Multilingual education enables language development and academic achievement and helps students learn about different cultures. In India, multilingual education exists as both a teaching requirement and an actual educational practice. Research shows that multilingual education helps students develop better cognitive skills and achieve academic success while building their self-confidence.

2.2 *Linguistic Diversity in Classrooms*

Classrooms display linguistic diversity when students use different languages. Students in many Indian schools speak regional or minority languages at home while they learn through another language used for instruction purposes. Research shows that students become more engaged and better understand material when teachers recognize and apply linguistic diversity in their instructional methods. Valuing students' home languages contributes to inclusion and identity affirmation.

2.3 *Translanguaging and Teacher Strategies*

The concept of translanguaging, introduced by scholars such as Ofelia García and Li Wei, supports the flexible use of multiple languages for learning. Multilingual pedagogy knowledge enables teachers to establish learning environments which better accommodate all students.

2.4 *Mother Tongue-Based Learning*

Mother tongue-based learning uses learners' first language as a foundation for instruction. Research shows that learning first language literacy enables students to learn new languages while achieving academic excellence. The program helps learners build confidence while it decreases learning gaps that exist in multilingual environments.

2.5 *Action Research in Multilingual Classrooms*

Action research uses a cycle that includes planning, acting, observing, and reflecting to develop better classroom teaching methods. Multilingual classrooms enable teachers to test new teaching methods while they assess how well those methods work in practice. Studies show that action research helps teachers develop professionally while it helps them connect theoretical knowledge with real-world applications.

2.6 *Research Gap*

The existing research demonstrates how multilingual teaching methods benefit students yet there exists a research gap because researchers struggled to conduct classroom-based studies at secondary schools throughout India. There exists an urgent requirement for practical models that will enable teachers to handle linguistic diversity while they implement national educational reforms.

The literature shows that multilingual education together with mother tongue learning and translanguaging methods leads to better language skills and student involvement and greater student participation. The Indian secondary school environment needs more action research to create usable classroom models. The next chapter presents the research methodology which the study uses to conduct its research.

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 *Research Design*

The study used qualitative action research design as its research methodology. Teachers can enhance their classroom methods through action research because it empowers them to execute planning and implementation and observation and reflection processes repeatedly. The design enabled researchers to test and assess different multilingual teaching methods.

3.2 *Population*

The study included secondary school students who attended multilingual classrooms together with two to three language teachers who served as practitioner-researchers. The students came from diverse linguistic backgrounds, speaking regional and minority languages along with the official language of instruction. The researchers used purposive sampling to choose study participants.

3.3 *Tools for Data Collection*

The researchers collected data through the following methods:

- 1 Classroom observations
- 2 Teacher interviews
- 3 Reflective journals
- 4 Student participation records

The selection of these tools enabled researchers to track changes in teaching methods together with student learning progress.

3.4 *Procedure*

The researchers conducted the study through a four-step process which included:

- 1 Planning: Identifying classroom language challenges.
- 2 Action: Implementing strategies such as code-switching, translation, paraphrasing, and scaffolding.
- 3 Observation: Monitoring student participation and understanding.
- 4 Reflection: Reviewing outcomes and refining teaching practices.

3.5 *Data Analysis*

The researchers conducted qualitative data analysis to detect themes about language development and student engagement together with their confidence and social integration.

4 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 *4.1 Improvement in Language Proficiency*

The study results showed that students achieved enhanced subject knowledge through the observation results and teacher reflection materials. The three techniques of code-switching and translation and paraphrasing enabled students to comprehend challenging concepts with greater clarity. Students used their mother tongue to establish connections between new information and existing knowledge which resulted in better language skills.

4.2 *Increase in Classroom Participation*

The introduction of multilingual strategies led to a major boost in student participation rates. Students who were previously hesitant to speak began contributing to discussions when allowed to express ideas using their home language along with the instructional language. Students used their mother tongue during peer discussions which helped them learn together.

4.3 *Development of Academic Confidence*

The teacher interviews showed that students developed higher confidence levels when they needed to ask questions or participate in classroom activities. The multilingual classroom environment created a supportive atmosphere which helped students to learn without fear of making mistakes.

4.4 Identity Affirmation and Inclusion

The research found that students experienced a sense belonging when schools recognized their regional and minority language backgrounds. Students felt respected and included when their linguistic backgrounds received recognition. This development helped to create better teacher–student relationships which resulted in a more positive classroom atmosphere.

4.5 Teacher Professional Growth

The teachers used reflective journals to develop better understanding of multilingual teaching methods. The teachers reported two improvements as they learned to manage different languages through better scaffolding methods. The teachers used action research to create teaching methods that matched their students' classroom requirements.

4.6 Overall Impact

The research results demonstrate that schools which implement structured multilingual programs achieve positive results in five areas which include Language proficiency and Classroom participation and Student confidence and Inclusive learning environment and Teacher professional development. The National Education Policy 2020 goals about multilingual education and mother tongue-based learning receive support from the results. The analysis shows that action research works best when combined with multilingual strategies can transform secondary school classrooms. The findings highlight the importance of recognizing linguistic diversity as a resource for effective teaching and learning. The next chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations of the study.

5 FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Major Findings

The research study found these primary outcomes through its investigation. The first finding demonstrated that students achieved better language proficiency through Code-switching translation and paraphrasing techniques. The second finding demonstrated that students from different linguistic backgrounds participated in classroom activities when teachers recognized their native languages. The third finding showed that multilingual learning environments helped students build academic confidence because they lost their fear of speaking and gained the ability to express themselves. The fourth finding demonstrated that students from various linguistic backgrounds experienced belongingness when their teachers recognized their regional and minority languages. The fifth finding showed that action research enabled teachers to develop as reflective practitioners and dual language instructional methods for their multilingual classroom teaching.

6 Conclusions

The research study demonstrates that multilingual learning approaches through action research implementation lead to positive changes in classroom practices and improved language learning results. Educational institutions should treat linguistic diversity as a beneficial asset which enhances students' capacity to understand and participate in learning activities. The teachers who work at schools have the power to create multilingual educational spaces which help students succeed academically while maintaining their cultural heritage. The results of the study support the National Education Policy 2020 vision which uses mother tongue-based multilingual education to deliver quality education for all students.

6.1 Educational Implications

- 1 Multilingual strategies should be integrated into regular classroom practice.
- 2 Teacher training programs should include modules on multilingual pedagogy.

3 Schools should create policies that encourage the use of students' home languages as learning materials.

6.2 Recommendations

For Teachers:

- Teachers should apply code-switching and scaffolding techniques to better student comprehension.
- Teachers should promote peer conversations in students' native languages.
- Teachers should establish a practice of ongoing self-assessment.
- For Teacher Education:
- The institution should deliver professional training programs about teaching methods that support multiple languages.
- The institution should encourage teachers to utilize action research for their classroom development needs.
- For Policymakers and Curriculum Developers:
- Policymakers should provide funding for schools to execute their multilingual education initiatives.
- Develop curriculum materials that reflect linguistic diversity.
- Strengthen the practical application of multilingual education in line with national reforms.

6.3 Suggestions for Further Research

- Researchers can perform similar studies at primary and higher secondary educational levels.
- Researchers can conduct studies that compare different regions with diverse research methodologies.
- The research team will conduct quantitative studies to assess how multilingual teaching methods affect student academic performance over time.

The research study shows how action research combined with multilingual teaching methods creates secondary school classrooms which function as effective learning environments for all students. Teachers who demonstrate respect for linguistic diversity can enhance student language skills and classroom engagement while building student trust and achieving national educational objectives.

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