

## *Lokaratna Vol .VII*

An E-Journal of Folklore Foundation, Bhubaneswar



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Cover picture :Goti Pua Nacha, a Traditional Dance Form of Odisha

*Lokaratna* is an e-journal of the Folklore Foundation, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India . The purpose of the journal is to explore the rich cultural tradition of Odisha for a wider readership. Any scholar across the globe interested to contribute on any aspect of folklore is welcome.

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The objectives of the journal are:

- to invite writers and scholars to contribute their valuable research papers on any aspect of Odishan Folklore either in English or in Oriya. They should be based on the theory and methodology of folklore research and on empirical studies with substantial field work.
- to publish seminal articles written by senior scholars on Odia Folklore, making them available from the original sources.
- to present lives of folklorists, outlining their substantial contribution to folklore
- to publish book reviews, field work reports, descriptions of research projects and announcements for seminars and workshops.
- to present interviews with eminent folklorists in India and abroad.

Any new idea that would enrich this folklore research journal is welcome.

Content in Oriya and English

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## From the Desk of the Editor in Chief ...



### Culture and Education in the Postcolonial Contexts

As globalization spreads its wings to cover diverse domains of local life and cultures, different local communities too become assertive in affirming their identities. Tribal education is such a domain. It is pertinent here to take a look at certain issues related to tribal education and make some observations for sustaining indigenous educational practices.

The special aspect of tribal culture is the connection between mind and matter. For the tribal people, space is important than time. That's the reason why we find land is identified with a land, caste and language (*bhumi*, *bhasha* and *jati*). According to their belief, human being is part of the whole eco- system and not superior to others. The geography determines the nature of economic life of tribal society. Survival of the self is regulated by the community, and concept of individuality is shaped by the society. Life is a shared understanding, togetherness, freedom and autonomy of the self-guided by the social rules. The landscape determines nature of cognition. Tribal thought and creativity are designed by the situated cognition and visual images are drawn from the every day life and living environment.

Most tribal communities are oral in nature. An oral society retains the knowledge of the epistemic world through community sanction. Here, elders are authority of tradition and youngsters are learners of the cultural knowledge. All forms of knowledge by and large are connected to work, labour and production of matter and creation of ideas. Learning is possible through productive activities. Tribal culture is not static, but transitory across the time. So tribal mind is not confined to the present time only, but past and present inter-play in their everyday life. Visible and invisible both regulate tribal mind. Past is present in their every day practices.

Eco-spirituality is the basis of looking at the world around them. The rituals and festivals are results of the sanction of natural or economic products and their use in the community. Oral society retains the knowledge of the epistemic world through community sanction. Elders as authority of tradition and youngsters as learners of the cultural knowledge – all are connected to work, labour and production of matter and creation of ideas. Learning is possible through productive activities. Tribal culture is not static – but transitory across the time.

After the cultural assimilation started after independence, a self-hate developed among the tribal people about their own language and culture. Erosion of livelihood and life world has created a growing distinction between ecology and social complexes. Their new knowledge learnt from school and colleges hardly represent their culture.

Language is the signifier of tribal identity, culture and knowledge system. This was ignored, in spite of many Tribal Commissions' recommendation. Mainstreaming them eroded many tribal values and morals. Cosmopolitan tribal changed their cultural habits and assimilated into the so called mainstream.

Thus tribal culture is at the cross road. Here, one may ask two questions.

1. why has tribal education failed to get their intellectual access though physical access is ensured?

2. Why has the education system failed to provide quality education?

Are these for the contradictory resources that are provided to them for an assimilative education? Contradictory resources perpetuate inequality even among the tribal society, some assimilated and some marginalised resulting social division. The Nehruvian protective and

idealized definition of tribal development needs to be relooked in the in the light of changed social order of tribal societies. Definition of tribal society is much more complex than 1950s:

There is a need to look at the tribal culture and education in a new perspective that fits to the future of tribal development. We need to involve tribal thinkers and social leaders to shape the future education of tribal with equal status and opportunity to take decision for their own.

It is time for us to prepare ourselves to face the greater challenges ahead with local and indigenous knowledge in order to retain our identities in a globalized context.

Dr Mahendra K. Mishra

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#### Call for Papers

The next volume of Lokaratna will be published in January 2015. The broad theme of the volume will be Language, Pedagogy and Culture. Research articles are invited from authors and contributors. Last date of submission is 15th November 2014. Articles should be original i.e., should not be published or be under consideration in other books or journals.

- Should contain the author's institutional address, email id and address
- Should have an abstract of about 500 words with five key words below the abstract
- Should be in Times New Romans, 12 font, and in double space
- Should have followed the recent (7th )edition of MLA style of documentation

Articles, reviews and interviews may be submitted to Dr Mahendra K. Mishra at

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### About this Volume...



#### **Executive Editor**

#### *Language, Culture and Pedagogy in Postcolonial Contexts*

Postcolonial societies, in recent years have been engaging themselves in recovering their memories, language, literature and traditions and putting them in perspectives. We find enormous examples of such engagement in different domains in India as well as outside. These attempts are reflected in research, writings, and documentation, translation in the areas of language, literature, culture and pedagogy. Hence we decided to focus our attention to these areas in this volume.

One of the tenets of postcolonial writings is localizing one's culture, language and education. Though this is a challenging enterprise, scholars are fearless and vociferous in their endeavour in this regard. We are fortunate to receive some of the finest pieces of scholarship in these areas. B.N. Patnaik's article "Arjuna's Problem" makes a comparison of the treatment of Arjuna in Vyasa Mahabharata and Sarala Mahabharata. He says that though Arjuna has been depicted in both these texts, he has been represented differently. In Vyasa Mahabharata he is in a dilemma as to whether to take part in the war but in Sarala Mahabharata, there is no such dilemma. His dilemma is whether he should start the war by shooting the first arrow. Patnaik also mentions how Arjuna's despondency in Vyasa Mahabharata gives rise to Krishna's intervention, and a new text Srimad Bhagavat Gita is born, but it does not happen in Sarala Mahabharata. Because of the localization and variation, there is also variation at the levels of values and moral questions. . Anand Mahanand deals with how folklore can be a source of reading local history. He takes three myths and studies them to prove that folklore can also good resource for reading history of communities. Amit Rauth talks about how an insider researcher can unearth the resources of one's own culture. Panchanan Dalai discovers the Irish writers' attempt to resurrect their past through their folk traditions. He explores this by discussing Yeats contributions. Mahendra K. Mishra argues that the community has more knowledge about our culture and heritage. So it can contribute more than books and archival records. Hence it should be involved in a bigger way in museum building.

The second section deals with language and pedagogy. D. Venkat Rao in his article states that educational programmes and methods followed in rural universities were designed in a particular fashion prioritizing the elites during the colonial period and continue to follow the same model. Hence there is a need to re-orient them to promote learning for the margins. He stresses that our research and teaching have to be localized benefitting the communities instead of producing elite scholars who would be detached from our social realities. Ranjan K. Panda discusses the problems of tribal education. According to him, due to lack of inclusion of their mother tongue in learning tribal learners face multiple problems. Drawing theoretical input from Buber, he asks for mother tongue education for inclusiveness. Uma Maheshwari's article deals with perceptions of teachers and learners on translanguaging in a pedagogic space. She tries to find out how learners transact conversation using more than one language and what are the views of their teachers. Suchismita Barik's explores ways of teaching writing through process genre approach in a multilingual context. Chandan Kar's article discusses effective ways of evaluating text books.

The third section consists of review, conversation, and report of activities. Ajit K. Pradhan reviews a book of riddle titled Riddles for the Classroom authored by Phool Singh Narvaria and translated by Bhavesh Kumar and Anand Mahanand. In a conversation with Anand Mahanand and Joe Christopher Professor P.C. Kar shares his experience as to how engaging himself with the study and research on South South help in bridging the cultural gap. The conversation also acknowledges the acceptance and recognition of his work. There is a report by Sadananda Meher on a series of lectures and workshops conducted by Dr Mahendra K. Mishra at EFLU, Hyderabad. Thus this volume is a feast of scholarly articles, reviews and interviews- all related to language, culture and pedagogy in post colonial contexts. We are grateful to the contributors for their scholarly contributions. We also thank Subhashis, Sadananda and Amit Kumar for helping us with formatting the pages. We hope our readers will enjoy reading these valuable pieces of ratnas by picking them up from the shore of Lokaratna!

Anand Mahanand

Executive Editor, Lokaratna







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Sadananda Meher

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## **Arjuna's Problem and its Resolution in two Mahabharatas**

B.N.Patnaik

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The two Mahabharatas under reference are Vyasa Mahabharata (VM) and Sarala Mahabharata (SM). The latter may be said to be a creative retelling, by Sarala Dasa in the fifteenth century, of the ancient story of the Kuru clan in Odia. Both deal with Arjuna's problem on the battlefield of Kurukshetra, but the problem is not the same in these two narratives. In VM, Arjuna is despondent and refuses to fight in a war in which he would have to kill his cousins and relatives. In SM, he is not unwilling to fight and kill his cousins, relatives and his guru; he is unwilling to start the war by shooting the first arrow. Thus the problems are different, as are the moral questions associated with them. The resolutions of the problems in VM and SM are different too. As is well known, in VM, Krishna intervenes and explains to Arjuna why he should not hesitate to kill all those he did not want to kill. Thus Srimad Bhagavad Gita (GITA) is born. In contrast, in SM, Krishna played no comparable role in resolving Arjuna's problem. Thus there is no GITA or any discourse like it in SM.

### **I**

In VM, Arjuna said to Krishna: (a) nothing good would emerge from the killing of the members of his family and winning the war; in fact, it would be a terrible crime and utterly sinful, (b) he had no desire for victory that would come with the elimination of his relatives, and for things that that victory would bring, such as a kingdom and the enjoyment of the pleasures of the world, (c) such a victory would render life itself useless, and so (d) he wouldn't like to kill them for all the three worlds, let alone just one world. He wouldn't do so even if it brought him power over the gods themselves. No sacrifice in terms of wealth and fame would be too great to avoid such sin. (e) If his enemies killed him, it would be entirely acceptable to him. Just because his enemies had lost their sense of reason, it was no reason why he and those on his side should. Wrong doing on someone's part would not justify retaliation in the same terms on one's part. And the

consequences of his action would go far beyond the personal domain; these would certainly be long-term, and would hurt the society deeply. He surely knew what social problems the sage-warrior Parsuram had created by killing the kshatriyas many times over, and how many of their women had to take resort to the niyoga system. This had happened in his own family: Ambika, Ambalika, Kunti and Madri had children from outside the wedlock. So he told Krishna that if a family was destroyed, the family laws and values would be destroyed too, and the women of the family would be polluted, which would eventually lead to chaos at the societal level.

(g) The consequences would not be confined to the mortal world alone. If a family dies, its ancestors would not receive their due offerings. They will suffer in the other world. And those who caused this to happen, namely their descendants, would perish in hell. (h) All this was part of the hallowed tradition and they had been taught that those who undermined family duty went to hell, Arjuna told Krishna. Arjuna was sensitive and very well educated. He knew the shastras and had a keen sense of discrimination. This apart, he had also performed tapas successfully. His purpose was admittedly worldly, such as acquiring the infallible pasupata astra from Shiva. But tapas meant discipline and self-control, and these contributed to the spiritual growth of the doer of tapas. In short, Arjuna was was no ignoramus, although he was not as spiritually developed as some of the venerated sages or sage-like kings - he was no Janaka or Agastya or Sanata Kumara.

He would get peace, if he died in the hands of the enemy unarmed and unresisting, he told his noble charioteer and dropped his bow and arrows and sat down on the chariot. Dying that way would be a moral act for him, he told Krishna. He made a very powerful statement against using violence against violence when he said that in certain circumstances, even undeserved and unjustified violence must be responded to in terms of self-sacrifice, which is the ultimate sacrifice a person is capable of. He was in no doubt about the correctness of his stand and he was in no dilemma. He was clear in his mind that killing kinsmen was sinful and that he would not engage in that heinous act. At this stage he did not ask for Krishna's advice. Only after Krishna chided him for his faintness of heart and for his thoughts and action, which he said were unworthy of a ksatriya of his stature, he, sad, broken and despondent, told Krishna that he was confused, that he did not understand what his duty was and requested him to tell him, as his teacher, what he should do. But he, it must be emphasized, was in no dilemma. To be in a confused state is not the same thing as being in a dilemma; these are non-distinct, if at all, only in

appearance. What he told Krishna, namely, “I will not fight.” was devoid of ambiguity or of doubt and indecision that indicate one’s being in a dilemma. One who is aware of the possible consequences of the alternatives that one can think of and is unable to decide which one to choose, cannot use these words. Arjuna makes a categorical statement and it shows his conviction. Krishna till then had told him that what he had decided to do was unworthy of him as a warrior of great stature but had said nothing that would persuade Arjuna to realize that there was an alternative perspective in terms of moral action.

As the dialogue with Krishna proceeded, the reluctant warrior brought in another dimension to the deliberation: (i) among his enemies there were not merely kinsmen, there were his guru, Drona, venerable elders like Bhishma and the kulaguru (family preceptor), Kripacharya, and he said that he would not fight such persons who deserved his highest respects, and killing them would amount to eating food mixed with blood. (j) In short, that war would be a burden; he was unsure which of the two was worse: their victory or the Kaurava’s, because even if they won, they would like to kill themselves after the victory. A sensitive and perceptive person that he was, the great Pandava knew that victory and defeat in that war would be equally calamitous for him from a mundane point of view. From the higher, ethical point of view, as mentioned above, non-participation in the war or dying in the hands of the enemy without retaliation would be the best course of action for him.

These were essentially the points that Arjuna had raised. Most of these occur in the first adhyaya and rest in the beginning of the second adhyaya of GITA which contains eighteen adhyayas. Arjuna did ask other questions as the discourse proceeded, but those were rather unconnected with the issues that had troubled him on the battlefield. The GITA discourse was like a lotus, which began with the problems of the world and ended with the articulation of a profound vision that transcended the mundane and the worldly. One is inclined to think that one message of this remarkable composition is that for the human, the best and perhaps the only meaningful way of resolving the most complex and profoundly disturbing problems is for him to transcend the same. The objective reality would not change, so the best an individual can do is deal with it from a transcendental perspective. Sometimes the objective reality might change as a consequence, but that is a different matter – in fact, for the individual concerned, it is an

incidental matter. Not everyone might feel persuaded that this is the best way to decide what to do in deeply disturbing moral situations.

It is worth noting that Arjuna's concern was for his kinsmen - those were his own. Whether he was concerned about the others, who had assembled there to fight for his cousins and for the Pandavas - "the other" for him – or not, one does not know. He never said anything explicitly about that. In the present context, one is not referring to the soldiers but to the kings and the princes many of whom Arjuna would not have even known, at least at the personal level. It is also worth noting that the thought that any or all of the Pandavas might be killed in the war never crossed Arjuna's mind. Whenever the death of the Pandavas came to his mind, it was only his own death, and it was in terms of a sacrificial killing – dying in the hands of the enemy unarmed and without resisting.

There is, however, a part of a sloka (II:6) that appears to be a counter example to the above:

“And we do not know which is the heavier burden: whether we should win the fight, or whether they should win. Dhritarastra's men stand there, drawn up before us. If we were to kill them, we ourselves would no longer want to live.”

In the above, “whether they should win” is the relevant part for our present discussion. This may be interpreted to mean that the great Pandava was not unaware of the possibility that the Pandavas might be killed in the war, and even after death, they would have to carry the burden of defeat, which, one knows, is the destiny of the defeated. But one might think that Arjuna's mentioning the possible death of the Pandavas rather rhetorical. Since he was making the point that the results of the war were inconsequential for them, he mentioned both possibilities in that manner. Almost immediately after, he said what was in his mind, something he had said earlier too, namely the possibility of the Kauravas getting killed by the Pandavas: “If we were to kill them”.

Before we turn to Krishna's discourse, we should like to ask how credible is Arjuna's despondency and unwillingness to fight in the battlefield itself in the canonical Mahabharata narrative. For Arjuna fighting was not a new experience. Besides, it was not the first time that he was facing his preceptors and relatives on the battlefield. He had done so in the Virata war a few months ago. As he went to that battlefield, he had not decided against killing any kinsmen at

whatever cost to himself and Uttara, the prince of Virata, who was under his protection for all practical purposes. And as soon as he entered the battlefield, he did not shoot that arrow which made everyone in the Kaurava army unconscious. Soon after that incident preparations for the conclusive war against the Kauravas had started in real earnest. He was party to the war preparations. At no stage during the preparations had he expressed the view that he was firmly against killing his kinsmen. In fact, it was his grandfather Bhishma who had decided that he would not kill his grandchildren, the Pandavas, and had kept no one in the dark about this decision of his. Arjuna had not decided anything similar. Not that he could have taken such a decision even if he had so wished. He simply would not have been allowed to. He was not the decision maker in the Pandava camp. For all practical purposes, it was Krishna. In any case, given the above, it does surprise that he had those disturbing thoughts moments before the start of the war. Like others, by that time, he too had blown his conch indicating the imminent start of the war. It is difficult to accept that he was so unimaginative that he became aware of the possible consequences of war, only after he literally stood face-to-face with his enemies on the battlefield.

From the point of view of the Mahabharata narrative, the GITA discourse would have been integrated into the narrative much more naturally and elegantly had it occurred in Udyoga Parva, dealing with the preparations for the war. It could have been a dialogue between Arjuna and Krishna, as in its present form; there could have been other listeners too, had the narrator wanted it that way. Nothing in terms of deep insight and profound vision expressed in the discourse would have been lost. Occurring as it does in that tense and terrible moment immediately before the war, it might appear more dramatic and spectacular, but it appears much less natural. Some might think that it is more melodramatic than dramatic, and as for the spectacular, the Universal Form of Krishna is so spectacular and captivating that the absence of such an amazing happening as time stopping its flow during the GITA discourse, one of the consequences of which was that the armies stood unmoving, would not have diluted the effect of the spectacular for Sarala's audience. The Universal Form could be accommodated in Udyoga Parva too; Krishna would let his listener or listeners know that he had already killed all who would later die in the battlefield, etc.

Turning to a different matter, given GITA's injunction that it should not be told to an unworthy (in moral terms) person, it is ironical that it was told, indirectly though, to Dhritarastra, an apaatra (unworthy person), rather than to, say, Vidura. Krishna surely knew that Sanjaya was narrating to the blind, old king what was happening in the battlefield. It can be argued that this way the narrative purpose of making the king a participant in the war and suffer the agony as his army, his sons and grandsons and relations were being systematically destroyed was served. As a counter argument it can be observed that this purpose would have been equally well-served even otherwise. Frozen in time, as none of those assembled on the battlefield of Kurukshetra heard what Krishna was telling Arjuna, likewise Sanjaya and Dhritarastra would not have heard the discourse too. But then how would the GITA, one might ask, have been made available to mankind? A possible answer would be that it would have been in the same way as in the puranas: on being asked by Parvati, Shiva said, "this is what Krishna told Arjuna..." - the standard format.

In GITA we see a very different Arjuna from the rest of the Mahabharata. In the rest, he is sensitive but not sentimental, kind-hearted and conscientious, but not weak, not so very unsure about what was the right course of action for him and what was not, and certainly not oblivious of his duty. But in GITA, he comes out as an unimaginative person, to say the least, who needed to be physically present in front of his cousins and elders to be able to feel what it would mean to him to be the cause of their death. After the GITA discourse one sees the other Arjuna. The discourse had very little effect on him. Perhaps the only effect the profound, transformational discourse had on him was that he decided to join the war. Thus during the war he was reluctant to fight Bhishma with all his might, he was inconsolable to know about the killing of Abhimanyu and took an irresponsible oath to avenge his killing, he was reluctant to attack Karna when he was in a difficult situation and wanted to give him time to sort out his problem, to name only a few. He had forgotten Krishna's teaching about the real nature of death and the immortality of the dehin, the atma and the mortality of the body. The idea of taking revenge suggests that he had come to think of himself as the agent; he had forgotten about the Universal Form of Krishna and the message it conveyed to him.

What all Krishna told him in order to make him see things in the right perspective and act accordingly are too well known, making a detailed presentation of the same unnecessary here. It would suffice to list some of the main points he made. He said that Arjuna would be the

gainer in victory and in defeat: if he won, he would enjoy the pleasures of the earth, if he was killed, he would enjoy the pleasures of the heaven. If he did not fight, he would be denounced as a coward. By refusing to fight he would betray his ksatriya dharma; he would be guilty of failing to perform the duties assigned to the warrior class by tradition. In fact, he was extremely fortunate, said Krishna, to have the opportunity of participating in a dharma yuddha (just war) – an opportunity which does not come to all warriors. Besides, death is only the death of the body, which is like a dress that atman, the dweller in the body, wears. Since atman is immortal, death is like the atman's change of clothes, which is a normal activity and deserves no emotional response. Through his Viswarupa, Universal Form, Krishna made Arjuna aware that he was going to be only a nimitta, an instrument, and not the karta, since, as the karta, he, Krishna, had already killed those who would die on the battlefield.

One could argue that Krishna overstated things to an extent, but even if he did, conceding for the sake of argument, it is understandable, considering that he was trying to persuade to fight the one who had decided not to fight on ethical grounds. As for the charge of overstatement, it is difficult to believe that the great warriors who were his contemporaries or the future generations of warriors would have really judged him as a coward. Everyone knew that not long ago, singlehandedly he had defeated the Kauravas, Karna, Aswathama, and elders like Bhishma and Drona in the Virata war. He did not have to prove his competence to anyone: man or asura (adversaries of gods) or sura (god). He would, in all likelihood, have been condemned as an irresponsible warrior and sentimental person. From one point of view, all this is pointless, because once he felt that killing one's own was adharma, it would have mattered nothing to him whether his contemporaries condemned him and the future generations regarded him as a coward or a deserter. Neither would it have, whether he was going to win or die in the war and what he was going to get as a reward in either case. It gives one great mental strength and satisfaction when one feels that one is following dharma. Then no loss to self, however big, would matter to one.

In this context one would expect that the arguments based on the real nature of death and his role as an instrument in what only appears to be killing would be much more persuasive and indeed the same turned out to be the case. The argument, based on the knowledge, that one really never ceases to exist and that only the appearances change, creating an illusion of one's non-existence,

brought a new dimension to the argument that essentially rendered meaningless the earlier considerations at the rather mundane level. If there is nothing more to one than one's body and if the essential of one is not subject to destruction and what appears as death but is nothing more than just a change of clothes, then it would hardly matter whether one enjoyed the pleasures of the earth or of swarga. Arjuna was persuaded by this jnana, knowledge, to such an extent that it did not occur to him to consider whether it really changed things substantially. One's discarding worn-out clothes for the new ones is not the same thing as one's being made to do so. Quite obviously one is a voluntary act, the other, obviously not; one is a natural phenomenon, the other, not. Dying at an old age, which is like the embodied one's discarding worn-out clothes, is very different from getting killed in the battlefield, which is like being forced to give up clothes which are not worn-out. This is the power of the metaphor; it might sometimes subvert the truth. It is arguably on account of this that Arjuna did not notice that the moral issue he had raised remained unsolved by the argument of dress change.

Besides, no such moral issues as under discussion are involved at the level of atman, who is neither born nor undergoes death. Killing and getting killed are both mere illusion as a consequence, as are human relationships. When the atma takes a body, the being enters into relationships. Moral issues of the kind under discussion arise only at this level – the worldly level. Krishna's discourse sets aside this level and resolves the problem at a higher level, where moral issues associated with killing do not arise in the first place. So overwhelmed was Arjuna with the knowledge of the real nature of things that he was persuaded that the considerations that had made him despondent were not founded on clear thinking and were therefore misleading.

## II

In SM the war started in a different way. The Pandavas and the Kauravas had come to the battlefield to win the war. There was no hesitation in anyone's mind to kill his enemy, whoever he might be and whatever be the relation between the warriors concerned. Contrary to the VM narrative, Bhishma in SM had not decided not to kill a Pandava, which decision on careful thought appears to be rather odd, considering he was the commander-in-chief of the Kaurava army and purely sentimental. Interestingly, he had a problem killing a Pandava, but none in the case of their children, such as Ghatotkacha, Abhimanyu and the children of Draupadi. Only Karna, unknown to the Kauravas, was promise-bound to his mother not to kill any Pandava

except Arjuna. Yudhisthira, Arjuna and even Bhima in SM were not keen on war for the Pandavas' share of the kingdom and even for fulfilling their vow of revenge but once the war option was chosen, which they believed was thrust upon them, they had no inhibitions about killing their enemy.

Once on the war field, Arjuna was reluctant to start the war by shooting the first arrow against his enemy, as Krishna wanted him to do. "Shoot the first arrow" is in this context a rhetorical way of saying "attack the enemy". For Arjuna, as with some others, war was sometimes unavoidable but it was a sin all the same since it would result in large scale killing, and the killed would inevitably include the innocents. By attacking the enemy, he didn't want to be the immediate cause of the war and carry the burden of sin. He would wait for the Kauravas to attack him and then he would retaliate, he told Krishna. Those on the Kaurava side probably had the same perspective, which must have been at least one very important reason why none from that side attacked the Pandavas. They too were probably waiting for the Pandavas to attack them. In any case, in SM, Krishna told Arjuna nothing. He simply went to Yudhisthira and told him that his brother was unwilling to fight.

He could hardly have done anything better. In Sarala's narrative there is no room for a GITA like discourse. Here killing was not an issue, so there was no place for the perspective on death, on immortality of atma, etc. that Krishna offered to Arjuna in VM. One could only ask whether there was place for an argument based on considerations of self-preservation and victory. Arjuna had infallible divine weapons. Agreed that some of the warriors on the Kaurava side, in particular, Bhishma, Drona, Karna and Aswathama had them too, but Arjuna had more of them. Besides, he was the greatest archer of his time. Bhishma knew this, so did Drona, and on one occasion, during the preparations for the war, Bhishma had said this quite clearly to Duryodhana. There was no basis for the possibility that if the Kauravas attacked even with their divyashtra (divine weapons), which was unthinkable because those who had them would not have committed a totally unethical act by starting the war with them, irrespective of what was at stake, the Pandavas would perish without being able to even start a counter attack. Arjuna was quite capable of facing such a challenge. So in order to persuade Arjuna to attack the Kauravas, Krishna could not have informed him on the advantages of the attack-first strategy. In short "no first strike" was a moral position against which it is difficult to construct a persuasive argument

based on strong ethical considerations. As for it being untenable on strategic grounds, it was unpersuasive in that particular context.

If not Arjuna, Bhima was willing to start the attack, but Yudhisthira would not consent to it. He still wanted to explore the possibility of avoiding a terrible fratricidal war. He wanted to make one last effort. Thus without weapons he went to the Kaurava side. He sought blessings of Bhishma, Drona, Kripacharya, Aswasthama and his elder brother Karna, and they all blessed him for victory. At his pleading, Bhishma and Drona also obliged him by telling him how they could be eliminated. Then he met Duryodhana but his efforts to avoid war failed because of the latter's rejection of his request to give the Pandavas even a single village.

It is worth noting that in SM, not Krishna, but Yudhisthira made the last effort to avoid war. It is entirely appropriate, in our opinion, because a responsible member of the family, not an outsider, which is what Krishna and Sakuni essentially were, was crucially involved in the effort for a resolution of a family dispute and the matter was decided within the family. It is very much appropriate from another point of view too: here, at the laukika level, it is not the avatara but the humans who decide on their destiny. The war option was finally chosen by Duryodhana and Yudhisthira.

Still on the Kaurava side, Yudhisthira called upon all present in the battlefield to decide for the very last time whether anyone of them would choose to join him and thereby fight on the side of dharma. Such a person would get the protection of the Pandavas, he added. Durdasa, a brother of Duryodhana, chose to join the Pandavas. Very angry and upset, Duryodhana ordered an attack on Durdasa, who, along with Yudhisthira, was still on the Kaurava side of the formation. Things happened too fast for them to move to the Pandavas' side. Durdasa fought with the Kaurava army, protecting the unarmed Yudhisthira in his chariot.

The rest of this episode needs to be told here only briefly, even at the cost of sacrificing some important and to some extent, relevant, details and nuances. The war had started. The Pandava army came to Durdasa's support. And learning that his eldest brother was in danger, Arjuna requested his charioteer, Krishna, to drive him to the place of action. He joined the war. He didn't have to start it.

This version of the start of the war may appear to be more realistic than the canonical one. One could imagine that there must have been an atmosphere of tremendous excitement, nervousness and tension, almost palpable, hovering on the Kurukshetra war field when the two armies, committed to killing and dying, stood face to face. A tiny spark could lead to a terrible conflagration. The spark here was completely unexpected, and the response to it, unthinking and rash. In moments the battlefield was in flames.

One would never know who shot the first arrow or hit someone with his mace or decapitated someone with his sword and thereby started the war in Arjuna's sense. The poet does not tell us. But whoever did it, only obeyed Duryodhana's order. So, as the causer-agent, could Duryodhana be held responsible for the war? But then didn't Duryodhana order the attack against a deserter from his army? And again wasn't his a response to a big provocation from his enemy?

Yudhisthira's call to those on the Kaurava side to join him might be viewed as an honest and a genuine act of a virtuous man to give the respecters of virtue on his enemy's side to choose the side of dharma. He offered the virtuous his protection. It is a noble act. But from another point of view, his was an act of great provocation, a call for rebellion in the enemy's camp and for desertion. From the psychological point of view, wasn't it tantamount to the first arrow?

SM does not raise and clarify these issues. The great storyteller that Sarala was, once the war started, he got occupied with it and narrated the war. He left delicate moral issues behind. War eliminated all possibilities of reflective narration.

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## **Folklore As History: A Study of three Myths**

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Received knowledge informs us that historical narratives are factual and objective and therefore scientific. Hence they should be valued more than imaginative forms such as folklore and fiction.

However, since the middle of the nineteenth century, this view has been challenged. Hegel described historiography as interpretation, whereas Levi-Strauss stated that historical facts are constituted. Northrop Frye argued that historiographical narratives are structured through emplotment. Thus, as Hayden White explains, “During the nineteenth century, four major theorists of historiography rejected the myth of objectivity prevailing among Ranke’s followers. Hegel, Droysen, Nietzsche, and Croce all viewed interpretation as the soul of historiography, and each tried to work out a classification of its types” (52). If history is viewed as not objective, it implies that historical narratives construct, rather than objectively present, the past. If historiography involves imagination, interpretation, construction and emplotment, it is not radically different from other modes of representation such as folklore and fiction. These views explain two arguments. First, archival historiography is inadequate, and second, it should be supplemented by other forms such as myth, fiction and folklore. Using these two arguments, I would like to use the origin myths of the Gondas and suggest that they may also be used to reconstruct the past in addition to the colonial historical accounts about them.

### **Historiography as Interpretation**

Hayden White, a Professor of Historical Studies and a renowned scholar from the University of California, in his book *Tropics of Discourse* subverts the traditional notion of historical accounts as facts. He states that “critics of historiography as a discipline, have taken more radical views on the matter of interpretation in history, going so far as to argue that historical accounts are nothing but for understanding of historical progress in general” (55). White takes help from Levi-Strauss and Northrop Frye to substantiate his argument. Levi-Strauss’s argument is that “[h]istorical facts are in no sense ‘given’ to the historian but are rather ‘constituted’ by the historian himself

by abstraction and as though under the threat of an infinite regress.” (55) Strauss further adds that “if historical facts are constituted rather than given so too they are selected for an audience.” This means that in Levi-Strauss’s view history is never simply history but always history as history written in the interest of some intra-scientific aim or vision ( qtd. in White 56).

### **Historiography as Emplotment**

Northrop Frye views historiography as emplotment. As White points out : “A historical interpretation , like a poetic fiction, can be said to appeal to its readers as a plausible representation of the world by virtue of its implicit appeal to those ‘pregeneric plot-structures’ or archetypal story forms that define the modalities of a given culture’s literary endowment” (58). As White understands Frye, just as there can be no explanation in history without a story, so too there can be no story without a plot by which to make of it a story of a particular kind (61).

### **Folklore as History**

The above propositions not only demonstrate the inadequacy of archival accounts as history, but also redefine historiography as interpretation, employment and imagination. Can we then consider folklore as history? Myth is part of folklore and it precedes history. In the past mythological narratives served as history, for instance, mythological texts such as Iliad and Odyssey in Greece and the Ramayana and Mahabharata and many Puranas in India. Historical narratives not only describe what happened but how it happened. In Indian contexts, both the event and the process are given importance. Perhaps for this reason, history is understood as Itihas, which means “it happened this way”, meaning narrating the way it happened or the process of retelling the story of the event. Many historians including Romila Thapar have argued for including mythological narratives as history. As stated earlier, myths have been a source of history. Only in the 19<sup>th</sup> century western historiography, with its emphasis on archival research, monopolized itself as the history and underestimated other forms. If we take origin myth as history going beyond the prescribed archival history, will there be any difference in interpretation? It is worth exploring this. In this paper, I would like to respond to this question by studying three origin myths of the Gondas and comparing them in terms of representation of community.

A definition of the concept of myth will be helpful here. The word myth comes from the Greek word *mythos*, which means story of the people. Myths tell the stories of the ancestors of a community. Every culture has some kind of mythology of its own. They are not so popular nowadays. I heard them as a young boy. They have been documented by some scholars in recent years. They include Nityananda Patnaik, Sarat Chandra Mohanty and Basudev Sunani.

### **The Gonda: A Profile**

The term Gonda and Ganda are used interchangeably. Though many have confused it with the Gond tribe, Gondas are different from the Gonds.

“Gonda is the name of a caste in the Western part of Odisha bordering Chhatisgarh, and Jharkhand. They inhabit the districts of Sambalpur, Bargarh, Deogarh, Sundargarh, Balangir, Kalahandi and Koraput. Apart from Odisha, the Gonda population is distributed in Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal” (Patnaik and Mohanty 6).

Gondas have been enlisted as Scheduled Castes. K. S. Singh states that according to the 1981 census their population is 4,18,956. They speak Odia or its dialects. For instance, the Gondas who live in Sundargarh region of Odisha (bordering Chhatisgarh) speak Laria. These people are basically non-vegetarian and rice is their staple food. They have different sub-castes such as Odia Gonda, Laria Gonda, Kandharia Gonda, Khabaria Gonda and Saharia Gonda. Each of the sub-castes has been again divided into different bansas or clans.

### **The Gondas in colonial historical narratives**

Among the colonial writers who have described Gondas are H.H. Risely, E.T. Dalton and R.V. Russel. Risely, in his *Tribes and Castes of Bengal* (1891), describes them as a sub-caste of Pans:

...those pans who live in the villages of the Kandh tribes, work as weavers and perform for the kandhs a varieties of servile functions...these pans who serve Hindus and or live in villages of their own and then come to be ranked as a separate sub-caste as regards those slave class alleged to be included in the group. We know that an extensive traffic in children destined to human sacrifice used to go on in the Kandh Country, and that the Pans were the agents....(157)

While Risley called them agents for supplying humans for sacrifice, Dalton called them bastards:

The agents employed were usually people of the Pan or Panwa class, a low tribe of bastard hindus who are found diffused amongst the population of all Tributary mahals, under different denominations, as Pan or Panwas, Chiks, Gandas and Panikas. (286).

Risley adds:

Moreover, apart from the demand for sacrificial purposes, the practice of selling men as agricultural labourer was until a few years ago by no means uncommon in wider parts of Chhotanagpur Division, where labour is scarce and cash payments are almost unknown.” (qtd. in Patnaik & Mohanty 8)

Russel portrays them as criminals when he writes: “the Ganda of Sambalpur have strong criminal tendencies which have recently called for special repressive measures”(qtd. in Patnaik & Mohanty 5).

From the colonial narratives we find two images of the community. One is that they are products of mixed relationship. The other is about their status as agents for selling humans for sacrifice.

Now let us look at the myths of the community.

Dalton’s ethnographical accounts state that they have no particular custom:

We have besides thousands of weavers in the Pan or Panwas, Gandas, Chiks of the Southern Tributary Estates, and the Pan and Panikas of western districts. In features these people are Aryan or Hindu rather than Kolarian or Dravidian. Their habits are much alike; repudiating the Hindu restrictions on food, but worshipping Hindu gods and goddesses, and having no peculiar custom which stamp them as other races. (325)

Now, let us look at three myths that are prevalent among the Gondas and compare the kind of images we get in these two categories, the Gonda origin myths and the colonial accounts.

### **1. How Did the Gonda Became Untouchable**

Once there were four brothers. They lived in a casteless society wearing sacred thread. One day while walking on the road they came across the carcass of a cow. They thought that someone

should remove the carcass from the road side. They asked the youngest one to remove the carcass. They took his sacred thread and promised to give it back to him after a purification ritual. So, the youngest one agreed to do the job. He removed the carcass and came home and asked for his sacred thread. But the elder brothers deceived him. They told him that he had become untouchable, as he had performed an unclean job. Hence, he should not mingle with them and should live on the outskirts of the village. Since then they have called him Gonda and he has lived on the outskirts.

## **2. How Did the Gonda Get the Dombaru from Mahapuru**

One day King Kolbhol went to the Mahapuru and said, “Mahapuru I have been worshipping you continuously. You must give me whatever I ask you now.” Mahapuru replied, “All right. Since you have been worshipping me for a long time, I am pleased with you and I will give you whatever you ask from me. Kolbhol said, “You must promise three times that you will give whatever I ask you.” Mahapuru said yes. Then Kolbhol asked him to give his dombaru. Mahapuru was worried. But he had already promised, so he had to give the dombaru. Before giving it, he made Kolbhol promise certain things. First, he should play it for the Gonda community only. Second, he should not show it to others either inside or outside the house. Before playing, it should be worshipped with unboiled rice and incense. It should not be played in two houses at a time. He should not eat in houses of other communities but from the Gondas only. He should not sit on the cot of the Gondas.

Kolbhol agreed to all the conditions. The Mahapuru gave him his dambaru. Kolbhol went home with the dombaru. He thought his daughters-in-law would welcome him on his arrival, but everyone except his wife had gone to sleep. His wife, of course, came and welcomed him and and the dambaru, and ushered him into the house. While he was entering the house, he hit his head on the roof and fell down. His younger brother came and helped him get up and take him inside. But Kolbhol was angry and refused to go inside. He said he would beg at the doorstep and take whatever he gets. Since then he has been called Birttia, or priest of the Gondas. He begs at the doorstep but does not go inside the house. He collects alms only from the Gondas and performs death rituals by recalling the ancestors or dumas. Hence, the other name of the Gonda caste is also domas.

### **3. The Story of Patkhanda Debta**

One day Patkhanda debata came to Patanagarh and asked for permission to stay there. But Goddess Patenaswari did not give him permission. Instead, she said, “You can’t stay here. You must go to Jarasinghagarh.” So he headed towards Jarasinghagarh. On the way, he saw an old Gonda man weaving cloth on his handloom. He went to his house and asked for fire to light his picca. The old man was busy, so he asked him to go inside and ask his daughter for a light. When he went inside he saw a dhol hanging on the wall. As he came near it, it started playing on its own. The old man’s daughter fell in love with Patkhanda debta. Patkhanda wanted to marry her. The old man agreed. Finally Patkhanda requested the old man to go to Jarasinghagarh with him. The old man agreed to come with him. But he had other three sons along with the daughter. So they all went together carrying the handloom and settled in Jarasinghagarh, as king. The old man also settled on the outskirts of the village with his family.

### **Conclusion**

It may be seen that whereas the archival accounts of the Gondas present them as people of mixed blood or bastards or as criminals, the folklore of the people tell a different story about them. They tell the story of their dispossession, discrimination and segregation. The former is an expression of contempt motivated by racial prejudice, whereas the latter is a story of reconstruction of self identity and experience. Paul Thompson rightly states about oral history that “it is not only a discovery but also a recovery.” He further says, for the social history of any minority group the limitations of written documentation are such that the oral sources introduce an entirely new dimension to the subject (80). To recall Hayden White again, “a historical narrative is thus necessarily a mixture of adequately and inadequately explained events, an interpretation and an interpretation that passes for an explanation of the whole process mirrored in the narrative” (51).

The paper argues that certain facts from these myths can serve as a corrective to the existing views on the origin of this community informed by colonial history. Such “tropical discourse” informs us as to how a community understands itself, what kind of social order the community lays down for itself and also what kind of identity it constructs for itself (White 1). Such discourse may not correspond to a historical event or fact. Nevertheless, its study is also an enquiry into the past.

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### **The Evolution of Humanity in Terms of Ritualism**

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### **Abstract**

The paper maps the historiography of the evolution in the rituals and songs of a society and in the process trace its comprehensive cultural evolution too. In fact, both rituals and songs are instrumental in constituting the very foundations of human and even proto-human societies. The absolute ubiquity of rituals, however defined, supports the attribution of such profound significance to it.

**Keywords:** rituals, evolution, human, language.

Given the central place that ritualistic considerations have occupied in the thoughts and actions of men and women in all ages and societies, the conditions that predicate the production of these rituals appear inevitable. These suggestions concerning ritualistic origins and importance are meant to provide the most general context possible for the more specific arguments and discussions developed in the course of this paper. Neither ritualism as a whole nor its elements will, in the account offered of them, can be reduced to functional or adaptive terms. An account of rituals framed, a priori, in terms of adaptation, function or other utilitarian assumption or theory would, moreover, and paradoxically, defeat any possibility of discovering whatever utilitarian significance it might have by transforming the entire inquiry into a comprehensive tautology. The only way to expose rituals' adaptive significance as well as to understand it in its own right is to provide an account that is true to its own nature. This is not to promise that the account that follows is framed in ritual's own terms, whatever they might be. It is not. If it is in the nature of rituals to lay special claims to truth, then "rituals" own terms' would necessarily multiply into the parochial terms of innumerable religious traditions, and one shall be concerned with human universals, universals of the human condition, universals of religion and the relationship between them.

As a form or structure rituals possesses certain logical properties, but its properties are not only logical. Inasmuch as performance is one of its general features, it possesses the properties of

practice as well. In ritual, logic becomes enacted and embodied and is realized in unique ways. The next section talks about the role of evolution in a ritual process.

Let me now turn to the salient characteristics of humanity's evolution and to those of its problems that ritualism 'legitimately' ameliorates. The evolution of humanity in terms of ritualism emphasizes the capacity that sets our species apart from all others unlike in other, say biological, terms where evolution is an attempt to locate similarities. Our forebears became what might loosely be called 'fully human' with the emergence of language. All animals communicate, and even plants receive and transmit information, but only humans, so far as we know, are possessed of languages composed, first, of lexicons made up of symbols: that is, signs related only 'by law', i.e. convention, to that which they signify, and second, of grammars, sets of rules for combining symbols into semantically unbounded discourse. It is obvious that the possession of language makes possible ways of life inconceivable to non-verbal creatures, and even 'proto-language' a form of communication making use of limited vocabularies composed of symbols but possessing little or only rudimentary grammar must have conferred important advantages upon the early humans among whom they developed. With proto-language, communication could, perhaps (or even probably) for the first time in this world's evolution, not only escape from the confines of here and now to report upon the past and distant but also begin to order, to an increasing degree, the future by facilitating the division of labor and by making more precise planning and coordination possible. Social organization could, as a consequence, become increasingly differentiated, increasingly effective and uniquely flexible, and new dimensions of mutual support and protection could be attained.

Even more fundamentally, it is plausible to assume that increased communicational capacities both indicate and entail increased conceptual capacities. Moreover, the emergence of the symbol not only increased conceptual capacity but transformed it, and new forms of learning became possible. With symbolic transmission individuals can learn from the accounts of others as well as from their own direct experience, and this learning may be transformed in its mere recounting, into public knowledge which can, by further recounting, be preserved as tradition. The immediate advantages that such abilities confer upon those who possess them are patent, and, in light of them, it is plausible to believe that linguistic ability, once it began to develop, would have been very strongly selected for, which is to say that the anatomical structures on which it is

based may have been elaborated and transformed at rates that were, in evolutionary terms, unusually rapid. Proto-language and language could well have emerged in a relatively short time. Increased ability to plan, to coordinate, to report on the past and distant, to accumulate and transmit knowledge, to learn in new and more effective ways, must all have been among the early factors vigorously selecting for increasing linguistic ability. Other rather less obvious but by no means obscure entailments of language may, however, have been as consequential in the long run. With language, discourse not only can escape from the confines of here and now to recapture the concrete past and distant or to approach the foreseeable future. It could also eventually escape from the concrete altogether. It may be suggested that the transcendence of the concrete and the emergence of grammar were mutually causal, but, be this as it may, when discourse can escape from the concrete as well as the present, and when it is empowered by grammar, it finally becomes free to search for such worlds parallel to the actual as those of 'the might have been,' 'the should be,' 'the could be,' 'the never will,' 'the may always be.' It can, then, explore the realms of the desirable, the moral, the proper, the possible, the fortuitous, the imaginary, the general, and their negatives, the undesirable, the immoral, the impossible. To 'explore' these worlds is not simply to discover what is there. It is to create what is there. Language does not merely facilitate the communication of what is conceived but expands, eventually by magnitudes, what can be conceived. This expansion of conceptual power as much as the ability to communicate to others the products of that expanded power accounts, understanding, abstractions, evaluations – underlies the general human mode of adaptation and the specific adaptations of the many societies that evolve out. As such, language and proto-language before it, have been absolutely central to human evolutionary success. It would not, indeed, be an exaggeration to claim that humanity is their creation.

Language and its entailment, culture, the general way of life consisting of understandings, institutions, customs, and material artefacts, whose existence, maintenance and use are contingent upon language. But even such far-reaching claims as 'Language is the foundation of the human way of life' do not do language's importance justice, for its significance transcends the species in which it appeared.

The significance of language, however, is not confined to the recombination and transmission of the already existant class of information. With the symbol an entirely new form of information (in the widest sense of the word) appeared in the world. This new form brought with it new

content, and the world as a whole has not been the same since. The epochal significance of the symbol for the world beyond the species in which it appeared did not become apparent for many millennia perhaps hundreds of millennia after it had emerged. But earlier effects of language and even proto-language upon the life ways of the hominids in its possession must soon have become enormous. That language permits thought and communication to escape from the solid actualities of here and now to discover other realms, for instance, those of the possible, the plausible, the desirable, and the valuable, has already been emphasized. This was not quite correct. Language does not merely permit such thought but both require it and make it inevitable. Humanity is a species that lives and can only live in terms of meanings it itself must invent. These meanings and understandings not only reflect or approximate an independently existing world but participate in its very construction. The worlds in which humans live are not fully constituted by tectonic, meteorological and organic processes. They are not only made of rocks and trees and oceans, but are also constructed out of symbolically conceived and performatively established cosmologies, institutions, rules, and values. With language the world comes to be furnished with qualities like good and evil, abstractions like democracy and communism, values like honour, valour and generosity, imaginary beings like demons, spirits and gods, imagined places like heaven and hell. All of these concepts are reified, made into real 'things,' by social actions contingent upon language.

Human worlds with its linguistic edge are, therefore, inconceivably richer than the worlds inhabited by other creatures. Further, each human society develops a unique rite-based culture, which is also to say that it constructs a unique world that includes not only a special understanding of the trees and rocks and water surrounding it, but of other things, many unseen, as real as those trees and animals and rocks. It is in terms of their existence, no less than in terms of the existence of physical things, that people operate and transform not only their social systems but the ecosystems surrounding them which, in all but the cases of hunters and gatherers, they have dominated since the emergence of agriculture and collective living.

In taking ritual to be a mode of communication some of its strangest features the separation in time and space of some rituals from daily life, the grotesque quality of some ritual postures and gestures, the weirdness of some ritual utterances, the exuberant elaboration of some objects and structures used in rituals become clear. The effectiveness of signals is enhanced if they are easy to distinguish from ordinary technical acts. The more extraordinary a ritual movement or posture

the more easily it may be recognized as a signal and not a physically efficacious act. Among animals ritual gestures seem to be based largely upon instrumental movements like those of walking or resting or feeding, but ritual imposes what has been called a 'typical form' on those movements. Their scale may be exaggerated, their tempo changed, or they may be elaborated in other ways. Instances of ritualized elaborations of functional movements and objects are also to be found among humans (e.g., processional paces, the wielding of swords of state), although many of the artefacts and gestures of human ritual probably have nothing to do with forms of technical activity. Special time and places may, like extraordinary postures and gestures, distinguish ritual words and acts from ordinary words and acts. In ritual's time or place, words and acts that may be indistinguishable from those of everyday sometimes take on special meaning. The designation of special times and places for the performance of ritual also, of course, congregates senders and receivers of messages and may also specify what it is they are to communicate about. In sum, the formality and non-instrumentality characteristic of ritual enhances its communicational functioning.

It may be objected that a view of ritual as communication comes up against the fact that many rituals are conducted in solitude, and that to refer to solitary actions as communications events is to dilute the meaning of 'communication' to the point of meaningless. The subjective experience of private devotions is however one for which the term 'communication' is appropriate, for in such rituals the performers presumably do feel themselves to be communicating with spiritual beings. Moreover, given the extent to which in solitary rituals various parts of the psyche ordinarily inaccessible to each other may be brought into touch, and given the extent to which the emotions of participants may respond to the stimuli of their own ritual acts, it is reasonable to take ritual to be auto-communicative as well as allo-communicative.

Auto-communication is of utmost importance even in public rituals. In fact, the transmitters of ritual's messages are always among their most important receivers. To understand ritual to be a mode of communication does not restrict its scope. On the contrary, it entails an expanded notion of communication. It is possible to distinguish, although not to separate, two large classes of natural processes. First, there are those in which actions achieve effects in simple accordance with the laws of physics, chemistry and biology, through the direct application of matter and energy to whatever is to be effected. Secondly, there are those in which transmitters achieve effects by informing representing form to, transmitting form to, injecting form into, more simply

transmitting messages to, receivers. In this view, which is in accord with certain developments in linguistic philosophy over the past few decades and anthropology as well as information and communication theory and cybernetics, communication includes not only simple 'saying,' but also the sorts of 'doing,' in which the efficacious principle is informative rather than powerful.

To say that ritual is a mode of communication is hardly to suggest that it is interchangeable with other modes of communication. It is a special medium peculiarly, perhaps even uniquely, suited to the transmission of certain messages and certain sorts of information.

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### **Folk Tradition and Nationalism: Yeats in Ireland**

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Landlords fooled us  
England ruled us  
Hounding over passions to make us their prey;  
But in their spite  
The Irish UNITE  
And orange and green will carry the day!<sup>i</sup>

This is what Thomas Davis (1814-45), the Irish nationalist writer, declared to reunite the Irish people against the imperialist England who had crippled their country - socially, culturally and economically. After the continued failures of political struggles and uprisings, it was the nationalist and revivalist writers/leaders like W. B. Yeats, who realized the strength and significance of their Irish literary and folk tradition to galvanize the Irish people's penchant for complete freedom. Already there were books on folk lore such as *Ancient Legends, Mystic Charms, and Superstitions of Ireland, The Fireside Stories of Ireland, History of Ireland: Cuculain and his Contemporaries, Irish Folklore*,<sup>ii</sup> which were accompanied with one of the first historical account of the Irish history - *History of Ireland: Heroic Period* by Standish O'Grady, published around 1878-80. Besides, the coming of 'The Gaelic League' in 1893 stimulated increasing organized and institutional concerns for everything Gaelic. In the year 1884, the Gaelic Athletic Association too was founded to promote indigenous Irish games rather than the English games. It is at this juncture, the Gaelic folk tradition and literature were exploited to the highest artistic degree in the form of ballad, elegy, songs, speeches, vision poems, ethnographic accounts, and plays with an intention to be used as literary crusaders against the protestant English colonizers whose aim was to convert and colonize the Irish Catholics. For the first time, Irish nationalism became tinged with Gaelic colour due to increasing incorporation and representation folk heroes and heroines in nationalist literature in Ireland.

As in India, where folk resources were utilized to evoke nationalism among fellow Indians in the wake of India's freedom struggle by great litterateurs like Rabindranath Tagore, Sri Aurobindo, Bankim Chandra, etc., in Ireland too folk literature served many nationalist purposes: for the revival of Irish literature as against the domineering English and Anglo-Irish Literature whose market was in London; for forming an anti-imperialist fervor among the Irish people who were constantly being exploited by landlords and England; for serving as an alternative to their geographical and political loss at the hand of the colonizers; and finally to recalling their own Gaelic heroes like Cuchulain, Aengus, etc. to replace the reference towards Greek heroes like Hercules and Achilles, etc. Understanding the importance of indigenous Irish folk and literary traditions, Sir Samuel Ferguson (1810-86) made a post colonial appeal to revisit the history of their tradition, particularly when it was being distorted and anglicized:

The genius of a people at large is not to be learned by the notes of Sunday tourists. The history of centuries must be gathered, published, studied and digested, before Irish people can be known to the world, and to each other, as they ought to be.<sup>iii</sup>

Ferguson was an Anglo-Irish and a 'Keeper of Irish Records'. He was knighted in 1878 for his archaeological/archive works in Ireland. His appeal was to his own class, Anglo-Irish not to distort and misrepresent the Irish folk tradition, but to seriously authenticate the Irish and Ireland to the world outside. For many early native writers of Ireland, defending the Celtic or Gaelic history, myths, and legends was to defend their beloved Ireland who was often viewed as a symbol of beauty, an actual beloved to be freed from the oppressor, an incitement to war and the priestess of an occult shrine. Many of the works, particularly poems by the nationalist leaders celebrated these and therefore belonged to a tradition call "Aisling". The Irish peasantry whose identity was closely associated with their folk tradition, envisioned Ireland as 'Rose' as seen in Yeats' poem 'The Rose' or 'Erne, ' and 'Dark Rosaleen' as in James Clarence Mangan's (1803-49) poem 'The Dark Rosaleen':

My dark Rosaleen!

My dark Rosaleen!

The judgment Hour must first be nigh,

Ere you can fade, ere you can dies,

My dark Rosaleen<sup>iv</sup>

It was around this time that William Butler Yeats realized to be the spokesperson for Irish culture, particularly to fill the void of Irish cultural leaders who would culturally reunite the Irish men during the time of Irish freedom struggle. He expressed his desire to join this company of the native writers who embraced the duty of singing Ireland's past glories and traditions in their works and literature. In one of his poems, Yeats captured this desire of his thus:

Know, that I would accounted be

True brother of a company

That sang, to sweeten Ireland's wrong,

Ballad and story, rann and song

\*\*\*\*\*

Nor may I less be counted one

With Davis, Mangan, Ferguson,. . . .<sup>v</sup>

At the same time, Yeats was critical of and gave little prominence to the Anglo-Irish writers such as Jonathan Swift, Edmund Burke, Oliver Goldsmith and Berkeley though they were elevated by him later. On the other hand, he brought into prominence writers who sang the song of Irish peasantry and traditional and oral composition of the Irishry. Like his fellow Revival Writers such as John Synge, George Russell, Isabella Augusta Gregory, and Douglas Hyde, W. B. Yeats too urged his fellow Irish writers to indulge in a renewed literary and cultural discourse having Celtic or Gaelic tradition at its centre. He therefore appealed to them to get back to Celtic myths, legends, and folk tradition for several significant reasons that would assist them to revive the old and indigenous Irish tradition crippled by the British colonizers. He therefore made an ardent appeal thus:

I would have our writers and craftsmen of many kinds master this history  
and these legends and fix upon their memory the appearance of mountains

and rivers and make it all visible again in their arts, so that Irishmen, even though they had gone thousands of miles away, would still be in their own country.<sup>vi</sup>

In his early works, Yeats tried to revive Irish myths in a “pure” form, pulling strongly on figures from Celtic mythology in poems such as “The Hosting of the Sidhe”. However, during the time of colonial imposition of British English and protestant culture, the task of revival was difficult, as Ireland never had a chance to define itself in modern terms independent of English control. For example-names of figures and myths were Anglicized, even within the myths themselves. So freeing and restoring the distorted stories and myths was another dimension of fashioning folk. And we would remember how in between 1888 and 1894, Yeats went out to collect folklore around Sligo or in Connaught in cooperation with Lady Gregory. To this end, Yeats began introducing characters such as Hanrahan, who he was placed in the center in many myths of his own creation, such as “The Book of the Great Dhoul and Hanrahan” and “Red Hanrahan’s Curse. His autobiography *Reveries Over Childhood and Youth* (1914) reflects on this. In *The Celtic Twilight* he declared that “Folk art, indeed, is the oldest of the aristocracies of thought.”<sup>vii</sup>

What is also worth noticing is that during the colonial era, the Irish people looked upon folk tradition as an alternative to their political loss in the hand of the Britishers. Their constant fights to regain their freedom was constantly suppressed and ignored by their colonizers. Several political measures such as the Act of Union (1800) did not succeed in the political and cultural stability of Ireland. The anti-imperialists writers and revolutionaries imbibed an alternative way that relied on use of history and reinvention of the nation’s self. This necessitated for new heroes, myths, religions, as well as a resurrection of Irish native languages. Going back to the romantic Ireland, was both a literary and political recluse and many writers and leaders like George Russell, O’Leary, Standish O’Grady, and Douglas Hyde (the Anglo-Irish leaders) did take this recluse in the rural Ireland. And Yeats was no exception to this. His intention to take recourse and recluse in nature and rural Ireland is evident in many of his poems and prose pieces. Part of this recluse was to regenerate the lost Irishry, to revive Irish literary tradition, as well as to heal his frustration with the political riots and rising like ‘September 1913’ and ‘Easter 1916.’ His nostalgia for an idealized Ireland during the choleric colonial time can be best witnessed in the following lines:

I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree

And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made:

Nine bean-rows will I have there, a hive for the honey-bee,

And live alone in the bee-loud glade.<sup>viii</sup>

It would be pertinent to remember that at this juncture of his career, Yeats was influenced by the new scientists like Darwin, Huxley and Tyndall and felt thwarted and deprived by the strength of atheistic or agnostic fashion. This too forced Yeats to embrace Irish soil, Irish geography and literary genres such as stories, anecdotes, proverbs, poems, legends etc as his passion and fashion. In fact he confessed this thus:

All that we did, all that we said or sang

Must come from contact with the soil, from that

Contact everything Antaeus-like grew strong<sup>ix</sup>

Most prominently, however, Irish folk literature was used as an anti-imperialist weapon against the English colonialist. Daniel Corkery, famous for his books *The Hidden Land* (1925) and *Synge and Anglo-Irish Literature* (1931) vehemently criticized the Anglo-Irish's claim to depict Ireland and wrote thus: "the ingrained prejudices of the Ascendancy mind are so hard, so self-centered, so alien to the genius of Ireland, that no Ascendancy writer has ever succeeded in handling in literature the raw material of Irish life."<sup>x</sup> Even, his beloved Maud Gonne too asserted that "If only we could make contact with the hidden forces of the land it would give us strength of the freeing of Ireland."<sup>xi</sup> To this effect, Yeats brings in many Irish heroes such as Cuchulain, Aengus, Sidhe, Oisín, Cathleen, etc. to orchestrate the beauty, simplicity, religiosity and sacrificing traits of Irish people. In fact living in country side like Sligo, making frequent trips to Glencar Waterfall, fishing in rivers and sea, climbing mountains, riding pony and stallion, collecting folk stories and anecdotes, etc were part of Yeats' creative and intellectual indulgences that aimed at making what Yeats considered as "a new religion, almost an infallible church of poetic tradition."<sup>xii</sup>

Nevertheless, following is a list<sup>xiii</sup> of heroes and heroines of Irish folk tradition that were incorporated into literature by Yeats and others to sing and contextualize the sordid plight of Ireland in the hands of England. For example:

**Aengus/Aonghus Og** — He was a beautiful love god who fell in love with Caer Ibormeith, who lived in the shape of a swan on a lake with 150 other swans. Aengus had to identify her beloved correctly before he could claim and free her. Aengus can be viewed as a folk representation for the Irish people who had to identify themselves correctly before they could claim freedom from England. Yeats used this Aengus' story to evoke Irish nationalism and appealed to other poets thus —“Irish poets, learn your trade, Sing whatever is well made, \*\*\*\*, Sing the peasantry, and then Hard-riding country gentlemen, . . .”<sup>xiv</sup>

**Fergus** — He was the King of Ulster. Once he made a deal with his brother's widow, Nessa, promising that her son, Conchobar, could rule for one year in exchange for her hand in marriage. At the end of the term, he found himself betrayed, and eventually exiled. This story bears similarity with England's promise of freedom to Ireland. Like the Irish, Fergus has lost control of his country. The Irish had a similar promise from the English, who promised to reinstate self-rule, but kept postponing when.

**Cuchulainn** — He was a mythical Irish hero who single-handedly defended Ireland against invading forcers prior to the English. He was also a tragic figure, because he was constantly in love with women (several of whom he lost), and was forced to kill his son as well as his best friend. Cuchulainn's troubles are equal to the endless, futile riots and resurgences across Ireland that angered Yeats. In poems such as “Easter, 1916”, “September 1913”, and “Nineteen Hundred Nineteen” Yeats laments over the futile acts of his countrymen and the loss of young leaders.

**Niamh** — She married Congachas MacDaire, a warrior whom no one could slay, and then revealed his weakness to her father so that he could slay Niamh. Accordingly Niamh was murdered and MacDaire married Conchobar Mac Nessa, son of the woman who betrayed Fergus. This reference to Niamh is seen later in Yeats' work, after he has seen Maud Gonne provoke so many men to battle and wasteful death. Yeats refers to this in ‘Easter 1916’ also.

**Niamh & Oisín** — Niamh was supernatural goddess, who enticed Oisín into living with her for 300 years but Oisín believed that only 3 weeks had passed. This story is referred to show

Ireland's situation, stuck for an infinite amount of time in someone else's control because of deceit. Ireland has been deceived by Danish, Normans, Vikings and English people for centuries. So Oisín's plight here is parallel with that of Ireland's enticement with English rule.

**Sidhe** — It was the dwelling place of De Danaan after their defeat by the Milesians. The De Danaan were ancient gods, driven underground and minimized in memory to fairies. The ancient gods of Ireland were minimized in power, just as Yeats' Ireland was slowly taken over and politically lost to the English.

Thus nationalism in Ireland was intrinsically connected with the Gaelic land that had a long history of myth and legends. Yeats' infusion of folklore into literature depended on his personal efforts to collect folk materials from fairies, contemporary peasants, as well as ancient heroes of Gaelic tradition. Both the nationalist writers as well as the revivalist writers took the Gaelic tradition of myths and legends to the highest order of nationalism, very rarely witnessed in other colonial countries. Though some of these writers were controversial because of their origin like Yeats himself, yet they proved with a passion how a country's folk tradition can be exploited to incite the national sentiments of its people, more appropriately during the time of their freedom struggle. By their indomitable Gaelic passion, these writers formed a formidable folk who wished to live and die with everything that would make the modern Ireland. Any nationalist pre and post to their country's freedom would cherish and understand the fiery nationalistic fervor as can be witnessed in the lines of Yeats below:

‘Whatever stands in field or flood

Bird, beast, fish or man,

Mare or stallion, cock or hen,

Stands in God's unchanging eye

In all the vigour of its blood;

In that faith I live or die.’<sup>2</sup>

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## **Community Contribution and Involvement in Museum Building**

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India is a living museum of carrying the past heritage in present context. Coexistence of centuries and attachment of cultural symbols in present social context signifies the continuity of cultural tradition in the collective memory of both folk and elite. When Nagamandala is a traditional ritual, it is also a modern drama staged by Girish Kanrad. When Rani Kokila is a legendary epic in Punjab sung by the bards, it is equally recreated in form of Hindi film to portray the women rights. River Ganga or Mountain Himalayas have mythical significance, equally all the rivers and mountains, hills are significant in the local histories and folklore. People have sixteen Ganga and eighty-four mountains in their ritual practice and collective memory. By this way past is associated with the present, but why not a museum in the public memory. Is it due to the denied access to the people or if allowed, what purpose and meaning does it carries for a common man in the current society?

The most important aspect of Indian mind is that when there is no evidence of Rama, Krishna and Siva, they are alive in the rites and rituals, religious practices, sacred texts and literatures. Whereas the evidence of existence of Ashoka or Buddha, Samudragupta or Kharavela is found in the inscriptions and stone encaving, they are forgotten heroes in the community memory. Even people who visit jagannath temple cannot say who was the king who built the temple. But he can tell hundred myths on Lord Jagannath.

Indian society lives with living tradition where mythic thought, historical characters and events play an important role in glorifying the land. The cultural symbols in form of stone images, wooden images, cave paintings, inscriptions, palm leaf painting, scroll paintings are tangible and durable. But there are some art forms, which are repeated across the life, time in a particular time/ occasion of the year and plays its socio—religious role and function. These are intangible

heritage. Creativity is ingrained in these occasions. Wall paintings during rituals both in case of tribal and non tribal society, singing songs and tales for entertainment or experiential learning, performing narrative story in social occasion etc are some of the intangible heritage which is dynamic as well as fast vanishing. Modernity changes this art form, some survive and some perish. Thus, the rich collective expressive tradition of human society is unnoticed.

An African proverb therefore says,

“When an old man is passed away from our village, a rich store of knowledge and experience is lost.” Another proverb runs, relating to the local knowledge is that “those who are uninitiated can never be able to understand us.” Till to day the dichotomy of “folk” and “elite,” “Akam” and “puram,” “shastriya” and “loukika” have not been able to understand in isolation. Indian culture can be understood in a in a holistic manner.

The normal concept related to museum in Indian mind is to see the past from some static art and monuments. But these have, as stated earlier, have one-dimensional in which very reflective few have participated and authored the tangible heritage.

When a rural visitor visits a museum and sees innumerable stone images, models, icons, and many more things, what impression he carries in his mind?

Is the museum able to offer him some thing meaningful, which prompt him to feel that the stone image make him proud of his land, history and culture? When we come across the huge ruins of Nala kings of 5<sup>th</sup> Century AD in Podagarh (Navarangpur district of Odisha) we lament for its preservation. Many stone images are scattered here and there in the whole locality. Out of two inscriptions, one inscription is worshipped in a nearby village as local village God. The villagers reinterpret the inscription telling that the scripts are written down by the Gods are esoteric. Another huge inscription stone is at the hilltop with out care. The hill and the total landscape bear the local imagination. Interestingly this may be true for a historian to understand the whole thing easily. But the community perception to the whole archeological site having this much of cultural materials need to rethink, how the history and current belief of people can be understood in right perspective.

Weaknesses of Museum are that it is unable to communicate the actual meaning of an individual item of cultural object on display and their connection with original or reference to historical – geographical context. In Orissa, State Museum is a place where people often come and see many images in isolation.

But in the district level community doesn't feel the presence of a Museum although it is true that there are some museums. District level small museums are available in the district headquarters, which are not maintained properly.

Local people are ignorant of the rich cultural heritage of the locality

Even the local school and college students have also no information regarding the heritage of their district. The catalogue or information of the available stone images is not available to the office bearers.

Every year the District Council of Culture organizes annual functions in where the folk and classical dance, drama, performance are organized. Souvenir is published in which the writers write about history, literature and folklore.

For last ten years we see the same kind of articles on history and folklore and literature are repeated in the souvenir and the efforts are more or less left to the group of people who even do not select the focal aspects of culture in the district.

Souvenir does not reflect the totality of culture in a district. The amount of efforts and money spent for such souvenir can be substantiated with bringing out some authentic books and monographs of the group of writers working on culture, history, folklore and literature of the district. This can be possible if the district authority taking help of the academicians adopts some systemic approach. For instance, bringing out a catalogue on district Museum, bringing out monograph on artists, folk dancers, craftsmen of different genres, painters, musicians, writers, dramatists and oral tradition can be helpful for the tourists to get secondary knowledge which can be the source of cultural tourism. Proper planning in the district with the experts on culture and history can help the Council to present the festival in more closer to the community. It should not be a one time exhibition of a district, but to keep the artists and scholar people “in culture” to create new expressions throughout the year. Directory of cultural heritage and

artistic treasure can be helpful in cultural planning. Marketing of cultural artifacts are also possible to promote the standard of living of the artists who live in poverty. Information about the art and craft should be made available to the artists to get their right dues. State department of Culture may bring out a comprehensive guideline for such cultural conservation and preservation and dissemination. At least the expenditure of one year is sufficient to promote district cultural heritage in a more intensive manner, than to repeat the dance tradition and publication of souvenir every year.

Economic exploitation of natural and cultural heritage (Ghumra, Fiddle, metal craft, textiles, wall paintings etc.) is very often found in the country. The mediator between the creator and the consumers of art and craft and textile exploits the artists. They hardly bother about the ethnography of the artists, or to promote them in changing context. Participation of the artist in all the stages is not cared. Similarly, intangible heritage like folklore, oral tradition, folk art etc are also exploited and the non-authorship of collective creation is exploited. I have witnessed that since last twenty years, folklore items from my books have been taken by many scholars, but the ethics of giving reference to the works of the originator or the compiler is neglected, rather, deliberately ignored. This is against the intellectual property rights. Unfortunately community is ignorant of their intellectual property both in terms of history and folklore.

Now a days folk narratives, caste genealogies, myths and legends, tales and proverbs are not promoted in modern societies where as this is the medium of entertainment and experiential learning among the tribal and rural societies of India. Similarly, folklore as one of the dynamic and changing aspect of culture has close relation with the other aspect of culture. It is related to past as well as present. This is also possible to see folklore in changing form in future.

Collection and preservation and dissemination of such living art form should be promoted through cultural policy.

WIPO and UNESCO have jointly thought of promoting these art forms and have discussed on role of Museum and archives in the context of community participation.

In Orissa context, it is found that the Museums are established in all the district head quarters.

In order to provide access to the Museum and cultural aspects of the districts: Following steps may be taken:

- The Achieves are in regional and community level can be promoted involving the Cultural clubs and schools/ colleges
- Resource Centers at the District level may be made operational hiring the Resource Persons on preservation of tangible and intangible heritage systematically.
- Preservation should have permanence
- Cooperative network of documentation, archive Resource community
- Providing ample scope to the community and scholars to explore the local museum
- Museum can be the gateway to cultural tourism
- Museum should be natural and cultural

This is confined to a territory having environmental and historical context

Educational and social function of museum need to be broaden

Public and private body may be provided access to promote museum

Valorize the territorial and local cultural heritage (regional culture)

Promoting cultural Identity (Vastar art, Saora paintings, pata Paintings, textiles, brass / metal craft etc.)

The National goal on cultural preservation should be made available to the community also to the school and colleges.

Museum should be a contributing agency to contemporary creativity than a treasure house.

Setting new cultural role of Museum and archives in the context of globalization.

Safeguarding cultural diversities: multiple cultural identities of the communities

Safeguarding the intangible heritage:

Revitalization and regeneration of ethnic culture by safeguarding their cultural symbols like Caste genealogies, Oral epics, Sacred centers, Stone images, Wooden images, Palm leaf manuscripts, Oral tales, legends and myths, Proverbs and riddles, Songs and narrative poetry,

Musical instruments, Metal craft, Bamboo craft, Paddy craft, Wooden craft, Wall paintings, floral painting, Weaving Handwritten manuscripts.

All these cultural materials are intangible and fast vanishing with the changing of time. Documentation and preservation maybe made through multimedia in its proper context.

In Santal community, wall painting is one of the most fascinating arts. Women folk decorate their wall with the indigenous colour prepared by them. The walls are decorated with geometrical shapes along with many flowers and natural objects on the wall. The decoration of wall is recurring due to the auspicious occasion like marriage, and clan ritual etc. Two-dimensional and three-dimensional art is frequently found among the santal art. Similarly in Saora paintings, the perpetuation of worship in wall painting representing each god or goddess in any natural object carved on the wall signifies the importance of art in ritual. It is through sacred rituals that the arts are maintained. Now days Saora art is exploited by the modern artists. The purpose and meaning of using the art is distracted from its ritual context and it has become the source of earning by the modern artists. The ethics of giving back the art to the Saora community in a changing context is still to be thought of by the artists or the art historians.

Therefore the involvement of the creator of original art need to be regenerated and culture department should take care of it.

In Juang community, the Mandaghar- community house is the storehouse of economy and culture. Eternal fire is burning there. The musical instruments are preserved there. Paddy and grains are stored there for community use.

In other tribal group also, the community owns preservation of sacred symbols. The priest is the preserver of all sacred symbols. Among the Kondhs when Meriah – human sacrifice was in practice, the hair of the Meriah was preserved in a Jhapi- bamboo box for the goddess. For Pendragadien, there is a shop in Raipur, a capital city of Chhatishgarh, where people from southwestern Orissa and Chhatishgarh purchase the saree, blouse, and basket, ornaments specially designed for the Goddess Pendragadien. This is preserved with care in that community where the Goddess is worshipped.

Similarly the ethnic singers like Parghania preserve the Kikri- fiddle as his bana- symbol of Gond God. The Devgunia worship the Bramhaveena, Doms the Muhuri, Banjara the Daphli, and

Bogua- the Kondh bard to Dhundhunua. This signifies that preservation of cultural materials is perpetuated with the association of sacred rituals or sacred performance.

The community can share their traditional knowledge since these are no more useful to the younger generations. It is the modern education system that has replaced and neglected the traditional knowledge. The value of traditional knowledge is only confined to the seniors. They also feel their local knowledge obsolete with the emergence of modern knowledge.

The educated youth may be oriented to their cultural values. Training may be given to the younger generation on their cultural treasure. Some professionals like epic singers are fast vanishing genres. Those can be documented on priority basis.

Heritage represents the past but folklore represents the present. In museum there is little about the social history of the people. This can be rebuilt from the folklore, which is found in the collective memory of the people in form of oral tradition and dynamic arts. Then the reconstruction of history in the context of past and present can be possible and role of museum can be meaningfully discernable.

**Class Margins: Learning to (Un)Learn**

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I have always thought that the Indian classroom is the most challenging arena for testing one's reflections. These reflections may pertain to the pedagogical domain (involving issues such as what one teaches, how one reads, what one writes about, how/what one inquires into); they may also pertain to one's political and ethical concerns of living today. This may surprise one - but the challenge largely comes from the non-metropolitan classroom situations. Unlike in the metropolitan cities, these classrooms cannot be treated as unified or homogenous ones. The metropolitan classrooms are mostly composed of affluent and class-mobile students.

Moffusil or rural-based universities complicate the teaching scenario. Educational programmes and teaching methods, reared in the colonial epoch are not oriented toward these marginal universities. The original goal of English (or modern) education was to prepare a corps of literate subjects who facilitate the governance of the colonized. These literate subjects also form the conduit for imparting selectively the culture of imperial metropolis. Macaulay's Minute and Wood Despatch on Indian education explicitly discounted and discredited Indian (Sanskrit, vernacular and Arabic) learning. Consequently, thousands of pathshalas, tolls and madarssas that existed in villages and towns were closed down. Modern education had no place in it for the radical cultural divergence that forms the subcontinental Indian existence and experience. Consequently, the modes and the material with which our educational models function have become deeply disoriented and disorienting practices. They have not offered any significant direction and rationale for education in our decolonized society. They are in no position to enable us to understand the distinct compositions of cultural forms and cultural formations of this country.

The most entrenched model of education that prevails today is based on a derivative two-culture idea. This divides and opposes the science (and technology) education from the humanities. The latter are seen to be non-rigorous and superfluous and above all, cognitively and practically of little worth. This model has sunk into the most vulgarly philistine path of science and technology education pandered by private coaching centres.

As can be seen, among the scores of coaching centres mushrooming in any city, there is not a single one that attends to the training in the humanities and social sciences. This is the symptom of our times: our mindsets have been altered by fear of falling behind in the race. The only ideal or imaginary that seems to shape the idea of our education is the vulgar utilitarianism of self-interest. The new pragmatic institutions spur these interests. Such institutions work with totally authoritarian, top-down approach and impose fierce and mind-killing “discipline” among the wards. These pedagogical models and methods have increasingly two disturbing side effects. Firstly, they confine and constrict the student’s capability to grasp and interact with the world outside (for nearly 12-14 hours of the day the student is imprisoned in the coaching centre). Secondly, thus ghettoed, students develop a skewed understanding of the world outside: that the outside is evil and that s/he thus trained through confinement has the right to denounce and be vengeful about the world and people outside. Such centres of training are by definition incapable of conceiving and imparting an education that enriches the student’s biocultural existence and cultivates his/her competence in grappling with issues in the world.

Given that the coaching centres cannot provide the required education, one must turn to public (or any adventurous and enlightened private) institutions – universities – for a new learning and education. But the universities in the country have dismally worked to uphold the vocation and task (of transformative teaching and research) which was entrusted to them. Our ailing public institutions – the universities of higher learning – have given up the imperative to think; they have abandoned the persistent need to reflect on the nature and purpose of the university. Expediency seems to norm the governance of the university today. We live in destitute postcolonial times. These are destitute times for thought and reflection. Destitution in matters of thinking concerns the inability to know what questions to ask, what inquiries to pursue.

The kind of learning that these unreflecting institutions (both public and private) impart is once again largely a derivative one. The aim and method of learning that are prevalent are deeply dubious. They do not evince any kind of sensitivity toward the student composition and its biocultural heterogeneity. The opportunity that such a composition provides for a radical rethinking of our educational goals, methods and material is barely probed in our context. Crippling cynicism regulates teaching and learning in the universities today.

Today the largest number of students enrolled in higher education move into the humanities and social sciences. With 620 universities, 35,539 colleges, over 40 institutes of technologies (IITs, NITs, IIITs) and scores of other higher educational institutions India has a substantial public and private academic infrastructure (this is, though, hardly adequate in a population of 1.2 billion). Over 20 million students enrolled (only) in higher education institutions in 2011. The humanities and arts subjects dominate the enrolment lists in colleges and the universities. About 37% (that is, over 6.5 million) opted for the humanities and the social science subjects (in contrast to about 18% in the sciences). Predictably the humanities and social sciences produce more graduate and doctoral students every year (over 450 doctorates every year in science and technology studies against thousands in the arts and humanities in recent years). According to one account India aims at producing about 100 million graduates to take up jobs (the country hopes to create) by 2020. For this the country needs 1,000 new universities and about 4,00,000 teachers. But the unfortunate reality is that there are barely any competent institutions of higher learning that offer a vibrant humanities programme for these increasing numbers. A serious and vibrant humanities inquiry alone can provide the basis for a meaningful and just education in the country – an education that takes our mindsets beyond the dead-ends of cost-benefit education.

### **Critical Humanities**

In the new conjuncture formed by the global flows and bio-info technologies, education is indeed the issue of great magnitude. Now the most challenging task is what kind of education should one design? How should one impart it? Who are our audiences? What is our content? How do we address our contexts? Should expediency alone be the determining factor? These are not mere desperate questions. These are questions concerning our common future.

I have said earlier that our classrooms are the most challenging sites for testing our reflections. The challenge of Indian classroom comes from its heterogeneous composition. When we carefully observe our student composition, we are bound to become aware that one cannot treat the group as a homogenous one. For our classrooms are composed by divergent jatis and communities. Over 50% of this enrolment mentioned earlier comes from what is called the “reservation” (“affirmative action”) category. This category itself is divided into three components and each of which gives only the illusion of a unifying totality. Whereas even a cursory look at these components reveals that each one is composed of thousands of significantly

varied communities or *jātis* (which the Portuguese turned into “castes”.) On even a most conservative estimate these *jātis* (as currently configured) run into about five thousand communities. Four separate federal ministries of the Indian state are entrusted with the task of safeguarding reservations and thus maintaining *jāti* compositions. If one were to figure out the *jāti* compositions of the other 50% of student population one can imagine the radically heterogeneous nature of the Indian classroom. The British abandoned such an enterprise to count the *jātis* in the 1930s. The institutions and the modern system of thought they (the British) established foreclosed any new reflection or inquiry into the heterogeneous *jāti* formations and the alienating but (now) ineluctable structures of colonial modernity. Critical humanities education must affirm its task of addressing the questions posed earlier in this double bind.

If the faculties of humanities are concerned with human creativity and reflection, are these faculties in a position to grapple with the creative and reflective forces and forms of these diverse *jāti* formations of India today? The negative answer that awaits such questions goes to prove that the structure, method, content and pedagogy in the humanities (let alone in the sciences) are dominated by the Euro-American paradigms. Caught in a juncture of such a glaring cognitive asymmetry what is to be done?

As pointed out above, traditionally the domain of humanities explored human creativity and reflection. But the conception of the human and the evolving methods and theories about human creations and reflections have remained the legacy of the West in the last two hundred years. This legacy programmes and shapes (not only) the discourses and institutions of the humanities today. Critical humanities affirm the need to unravel this legacy from the receiving contexts of cultures that faced colonial domination. While questioning the “human” in the humanities, critical humanities emphasize the necessity to attend to the radical reconceptualization of life and living advanced by life and techno sciences today. In this complex conjuncture formed by European intellectual legacy and bio-techno ascendancy – how does one reconfigure the reflective space of cultures that flourished for millennia outside the fold of European heritage? How to rearticulate non-European inheritances from within the discourses and institutional structures formed by the European heritage? Critical humanities affirm the urgency of collective reflection across the traditional disciplinary and institutional borders in the Indian context today.

The universities especially with rural, provincial bases must be made to play a crucial role in bringing forth and realizing of the imports of critical humanities education indicated above. More concretely the universities, with their research and training agenda can initiate what can be called a “virtual adoption” of specific villages to develop such education. The idea of a virtual adoption, aims at building capabilities through shared work, through inculcation of confidence and encouraging responsible decision. More concretely, such “adoption” helps the colonial-modern institutions to learn more about the cultural forms and cultural formations that compose Indian creative and reflective traditions. Such learning can contribute to specify how Indian culture(s) differ from other cultures of our planet.

But in order to undertake such risky educational/research initiatives one is required to cultivate intimate affiliation with the heterogeneous resources of the creative, reflective, recitational, narrative and performative forms of non-cohering jatis. Above all, even (when), if one wishes to rearticulate and reorient these intimations, one must primarily learn to affirm, say “yes” to, these heritages. Needless to say that there is an imperative need for such a research into our inherited resources. The deep heterogeneity of Indian cultural fabric in languages, narrative, visual and performing traditions would provide challenging material and modes for thought and action. It must be said that after the early British and European explorations and their sketching of the cultural (and other resources) map of Indian living traditions, a comparable work of quality, critically examining that earlier sketch is yet to be undertaken. It seems to me that the institutionalized social inquires in our context have barely contributed to cultivating such critical affirmation. One must be ready to learn to unlearn the institutionalized colonial pedagogy and at the same time learn to learn from below and put to work our mixed inheritances. Without such affirmative openings, our inquiries, pedagogic ventures and researches can only reinforce our postcolonial destitution.

**In the Language of the Other:  
Education for Tribal Children from Philosophy of Engagement**

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## **Introduction**

“Education is a tool of transmission of culture, accumulated knowledge and experience of a society. It is also the tool of economic betterment of societal change. India provides an interesting case study of social change. A meeting ground of several language families, economic groups and mosaic of cultural patterns, India presents a unique case of sociolinguistic pluralism bound by a single thread of cultural homogeneity. Therefore, commonsense would suggest variety rather than uniformity in education, both as an expression of cultural diversity and as a strategy to meet diverse needs and aspiration of different cultural groups. But the current concern for uniform design, structure and content of education caters to neither, confuses issues relating the purpose and goal of education and is by and large irrelevant to most sectors of society, particularly the tribal sector.” (Pattanayak 1981: 80)

“Among the Indian states in India, Odisha is probably the state with the largest range of linguistic and cultural diversity. For one, it shows the excellent example of commingling of the Dravidic and Indo Aryan languages, the presence of the one not subdued by the other. In terms of the social composition, Odisha has amazingly diverse tribal communities. The historical continuity of cultures in Odisha is lot more pronounced than it is in the states of its south and north. When one thinks of various forms of creative expressions of the Adivasis, one naturally turns to Odisha for the most alluring instances, be it dance, painting, song, theatre, music, craft, traditional medicine, agricultural practices, rural architecture and such. All these have been kept alive by Adivasis for centuries through their oral traditions. Therefore, when one looks at the oral traditions of Odisha, one must once think a little beyond the normal expectations that ‘folklore’ brings to us.” (G. N. Devy 2012: ix).

Education brings changes to society. It helps in transforming social, cultural and economic conditions of people. Societal changes basically mean the renewal of belief systems, practices and values that is instrumental in developing standard of living. The complexity of human societal living can be measured through language. Language is an important element that knits knowledge, culture and economy of a society. It not only represents the social nexus but also

forms identity of the people. As multi lingualism has been practised in India both at the macro and micro levels, one tries to find out a commonality focusing on broad canvas of linguistic expressions namely art, painting, dance, music, etc., which represents culture. Odisha is an example of a multilingual society where apart from Odia, many of its adivasi communities speak different languages. Still tribal children are deprived of being educated in their mother tongue. Learning becomes a great challenge when teaching conducted through a second language. At a very early stage of learning, children when find it difficult to relate, they give up going to schools. Fear and ambiguities start building up in the tender mind of these children and eventually act as reasons of social alienation. It is important to note that Devy has tried to show that a diversified adivasi society does contribute to the cultural and economic heritage of Odisha. But unfortunately, in the schools of tribal areas the medium of instruction has been Odia which is the state's official language. Tribal language and folklore do not find a proper place in their curriculum. The children fail to relate the contents of the text with their everyday experiences of life which create ambiguities. In addition to that when the texts are taught through a second language they find that quite burdensome. Apart from the other challenges like untrained and unmotivated teachers, we also need to overcome the challenge that causes ambiguities and linguistic alienation. Therefore, there is a need to talk about the larger canvas of language that adivasis have preserved for us for centuries. The larger canvas of language includes their manifold forms of expressions, such as, art, paintings, music, dance, agriculture, medicine and folklore. The non inclusion of adivasi language and their folklore in teaching and learning creates a space of disengagement that has further deepened alienation in society. Hence, there is a need to talk about notion of engagement that has potential to bring about the creative power embedded in their forms of life. In this connection, we theorize the notion of education following some of the key component of philosophy of engagement maintained by Martin Buber. Education for him is the creative power through which life flows, forms and flourishes.

### **A Story of Disengagement**

While narrating the ground problems concerning teaching to tribal children, Arungangshu Lodh, one of the National Award Winning teachers, writes "Ninety five percent of the girls in my school are from tribal communities, teaching them is a unique challenge. One needs trained teachers, but the problem in Tripura is that teachers are often not trained, there is only one

Government institution in the state that has a B. Ed. Course,” he said, adding that in a state like Tripura where poverty is rampant training teachers should be priority.” (2013) Lack of trained teachers is one problem and their motivation and commitment to be engaged in their profession is another problem which seems to me requires a philosophical scrutiny. Because one can establish training centres and make suitable courses to produce qualified teachers which is basically to deal through adequate funding and issues concerning development of infrastructure. Nevertheless, these reasons are not sufficient to bring about motivated and committed teachers. Unless teachers are self motivated and committed to their duties that they have undertaken the societal status of these children will not improve. They remain disengaged in their everyday life. Teachers as community must create a culture of learning. Their motivation and commitment create the desirable environment of teaching and learning. A suitable environment of learning, as pointed out by Drèze and Sen, is created if the learner and the teacher are being creatively engaged. According to them, “Learning and studying can be immensely enjoyable and creatively engaged activities, and the process of schooling itself can add greatly the quality of life of young people, quite apart, from the long run benefits they receive from it”(2013, p.109). To be creatively engaged is to create scope for ‘openness, directness, mutuality and presence’ which are treated as central theme of an engaged I-Thou relationship stated by Martin Buber (1965: xiv). We would like to theorize the notion learning as creatively engaged activity from the point of view of Buber’s notion of I-Thou relationship. In this section, rather we intend to discuss various form of the important fragments of disengaged story about learning at school.

Uptrend teachers engaged in teaching children belong to tribal communities not only encounter challenges concerning teaching, but also fail in making learning and studying an enjoyable and creatively engaged activity. The failure is due to several reasons, such as, lack to proper curriculum, the medium of instruction, and above all the cultural milieu in which students live. Apart from these reasons, there are more than half a dozen reason indicated in the study of Drèze and Sen. (2013) Referring to the cases of schooling in the tribal areas, they mention that unfortunately, children in these areas have poor attendance because school education is underfunded, but our ‘rhetoric claim is that education is our first priority.’ Raising their concern, they write, “We mentioned earlier the incidences of absenteeism by teachers, which is very large indeed in some parts of the country, and on top of that, as was also discussed in many regions the teachers who do show up seem reluctant to teach. There is something quite chilling in thought

that a large portion (possible as high as half) of country's children are sitting ideally in classroom on an average school days – eager to learn, but deprived of any guidance, and condemned in many cases to leaving the schooling system without even being able to read and write. Most of the children are, of course, perfectly able not only to acquire basic literacy or mathematical skills, but also to study well beyond the constitutionally guaranteed minimum eight years. The schooling system's failure to respond these aspirations and abilities is a manifest and colossal injustice, and yet it has remained unaddressed for many decades" (2013, p.131). Tribal areas are still considered remote places and that becomes burdensome for the teachers to opt for teaching in those areas. Lack of infrastructure and communication facility has created this poor impression among the teaching community and could be a source of demotivation. Teacher appointed in those areas are reluctant to go and teach on a regular basis. Why it is a challenge to keep the children engaged during schooling hours? Why most of them are deprived of guidance and not motivated to read and write? To explicate these questions further, I would like to bring to your notice experiences from the grassroots level of dedicated persons working in the tribal literacy programme.

The Rural Education Committee<sup>xv</sup> that worked more than a decade ago in the tribal areas of Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj districts of Odisha reports that parent's socio-economic condition is a hindrance. Some school going children who belong to poor families are forced to work, whereas others had poor motivation and exhibited carelessness. (Barik 2000, p.4) There are schools without children. It is stated that "Teachers in some schools are seen lying on the verandha without having a single child talk to. Thus all motivational work and money behind it go waste utterly failing an unrealistic elitist idea, which admits the effect and forgets the cause." (Barik 2000, p. 5) Teachers were present in the school only to receive their salary. It was in a sense misuse of government's fund which shows lack of vision and planning on the part of Govt. On the other hand, as there is a common time-period prevails all throughout the state, children do not like to come to school for the whole day. In the elitist's school programme, one finds that children spend more time in the schools. The academic curriculum designed in these schools is mainly to inspire the children to move higher in their academic ladder and become engineers, doctors, IT professionals, managers or administrators. In the cultural milieu of tribal's such a curriculum creates 'ambiguities.' So there is a need to have separate curricula and orientation programme for the tribal children.

Secondly, since the medium of instruction is not in their mother tongue, rather in Oriya or in the official language of the state which the tribal children find difficult to cope up with. Barik emphasizes that “Records are aplenty to show that innumerable tribal children do not succeed in schools and this is so because they are continually wronged by the existing education system. Opening up opportunities for these children to learn as well as be examined through their mother tongue would be a large step in the right direction” (2000, p.14). The importance of language cannot be ignored when it is a matter of cognitive and cultural development children. With the use of a second language this means of development becomes a burden for the children as they fail ‘to connect the message of the text and social progress.’ Language opens up the field of communication and various intentional dimension of human engagement which binds us culturally. Language is also a medium through which we disclose our ideas and thoughts systematically. Thus, Language plays an important role not only in building up cognition but also building up the culture. (Devy, 2011, p. 91) It is a huge challenge for the tribal children when they encounter that their medium of instruction in the school and is different from their mother tongue. This could a prime reason of alienation. D. P. Pattanayak, an eminent linguist and scholar of tribal studies maintains that this issue of “language has not been properly addressed” (1981, p. 85). He writes, “Education is expected to develop the necessary skills including the linguistic competence, participation and involvement in the administrative process and in nation building. Therefore, the planning of language use in education and administration must be compatible with each other. If language of education acts as a counter pose to language of administration than it will create tension which may frustrate planning itself. For most tribals, both the language of education and administration are alien... The tribal frustration about the process and product of planning is thus rooted in the discriminatory use of language.” (Pattanayak 1981, p. 84) The insulation of second language as medium of instruction in the school not only is a reason of disappointment but also creates an inferiority complex in the mind of the tribal children and within entire community. Unless we have trained teachers who belong to the same linguistic community, the provision of formal education through second language remains a problem. The teachers who know both the language are placed within the binding of their language, but those who are not could silently induce a feeling of difference (Pattanayak, 1981, p. 85). The teacher becomes an outsider when s/he speaks a different language; in the language of administration and education. This was the typical challenge which Lodh points out

while addressing needs of trained teacher for the tribal children of Tripura. There is an urgent need to have training centres to train them and whoever is equipped bilingually – it becomes easy to communicate and relate to the needs of the tribal children, and consequently that helps in bridging the differences. While creating such opportunity, there is a need to keep certain important things in mind, for instance, ‘the tribal children are not completely alienated from work orientation. And, their labour is not physically burdensome for them. Most importantly they are not exploited in any circumstances and to be rescued from vicious life of boredom and stagnation.’ (Barik, 2000, p. 5)

### **Education in the form of engagement**

As a most famous puranic saying goes: *sa vidya ya vimuktaye*<sup>xvi</sup>. It means knowledge has the liberating power. It can free us from all kinds of bondages and stagnations and save the life from the vicious cycle of exploitation and unhappiness. If education is cultivated in that spirit then it opens up a new form of learning that directs teachers and students to get engaged to realize their sense of mutuality and presence. (Buber, 1965, p. xiv) As engagement is a mutual relationship that intentionally binds both teacher and student; it gives an opportunity to experience each other. Buber defines this engagement as I-Thou relationship where the other is spontaneously included in the experience of the self. As Rich summarizes the notion of I-Thou relationship, “The relationship of I-Thou is a relation of love. It also is the instinct for communion. The educative relationship is one of inclusion; it is a “true inclusion of one another by human soul.” The educator’s concern is the person as a whole, in his “present actualities and future possibilities.” (Rich, 1971, p.84) The relation in love involves the other. The notion of inclusion is significant in Buber’s illustration – “is that which makes it possible to meet and know the other in his concrete uniqueness, and not just as content of one’s experience” (Buber 1965: xv). Engagement is therefore a meeting where ‘the imagination of the real goes hand in hand with remaining one’s own side of the relationship.’ Unless the teachers intend to meet and experience the other side of the life of these children a mutual relationship will not be established. Such meeting is essential for giving birth to a new meaning that emerges in showing the seed imagination in the mind of illiterate children and creating the hope of learning. Imagination is a faculty of creative thinking which everyone is endowed with and needs to be cultivated for the development of the natural activity of the self (Buber 1965, pp.84-85).

The notion of self, for Buber, is social and a relational concept (Rich 1971: 84). In this regard, students should not be dealt as a mere individual without any sense of freedom and dignity, rather to be treated as a person. An individual without freedom and dignity is a victim of social exclusion. Education nurtures the sense of self considering that an individual is a subject to be engaged mutually. Buber writes, “Yes, as an originator man is solitary. He stands wholly without bonds in the echoing hall of his deeds. ...only if someone grasps his hand not as a ‘creator’ but as a fellow-creature lost in the world, to be his comrade or friend or lover beyond arts, does he have an awareness and share of mutuality” (1965, p. 87). A student is not aware of this mutual relationship. Self development, therefore, requires engagement grounded on the intense mutual relationship of the individuals. In the context of education, to enter into the realm of a mutual relationship presupposes how the student and the teacher have undertaken a course of action. The notion of undertaking is important as it provides opportunity of sharing the experience of learning together. This togetherness creates a realm of mutuality in which both students and teacher dwell with hope to discover and practise whatever follows from it.

Buber says that education begins when we experience the other side, i.e., the teacher construes the process of learning from the view point of the student. While being engaged in learning, the mutuality of relationship shows the inclusive power of the intentionality of the teacher and student operating in reality. Buber maintains that “Inclusiveness is the complete realization of the submissive person, the desired person, the partner, not by the fancy but by the actuality of the being” (1965, p. 97) The teachers not only intend to teach but the students also do show the genuine interest to learn. Illustrating the notion of inclusion, Buber further suggests that it is a “dialogical relation” which shows “genuine conversation.” “The relation in education is one of pure dialogue” (1965, p. 98). The need of having dialogue and to maintain the dialogical relationship speaks about having unfailing communion between the self and the other. In the context of education this is about educative relation that upholds the teacher and the student which further develops into friendship – “is based on a concrete and mutual experience of inclusion. It is the true inclusion of one another by human souls” (Buber 1965, p.101). In educative dialogical relationship friendship does signify a spiritual bond that co-exists between the teacher and the student.

Buber emphasizes that we need to appreciate the “truth of co-existence” and “truth of recognition”. The later unfolds the mode in which the teacher and student are involved in understanding one another while being engaged in learning. The teacher is inclined to think about the needs of the students and problems that they encounter while engaged in learning. If they fail to recognize and have no inclination towards knowing or identifying their problems, then one does not necessarily co-exist with the experience of the students. The truth of co-existence refers to the attitude in which the self is engaged with the other. In the realm of co-existence the teacher is not only engaged in educating the students but also is “being educated.” Thus truth of co-existence and truth of recognition are complementary to each other to explicate the normative dimension of truth. In other words, understanding truth in an educative relationship goes along with the notion of responsibility which is shared among the teacher and students. While being engaged in sharing responsibility, the being unfolds its true character. This normative dimension of human engagement is an essential aspect of educative relationship. Responsibility emerges from within, that is, the domain of mutual engagement where the self feels obliged to the other. One experiences the need to cultivate good will to relate to the other. This intentional attitude of responsibility unfolds the normative co-existence of individuals in a society.

### **Dialogical Engagement: Broadening the Canvas of Language**

Human normative relationship that operates within the societal living is mostly expressed in language. “Language originates in life and is basically rooted in the fabric of life.”<sup>xvii</sup> (Pradhan 2009) The intrinsic relationship between language and life is central to cognitive as well as the cultural development of human beings. It is through language our encounter with the reality is meaningfully conceptualized. As Heidegger puts it, “Language brings face to face with a possibility of undergoing an experience with something – be it a thing, a person, or a God – means that this something befalls us, strikes us, comes over us, overwhelms and transforms us” (1971, p.57). As a linguistic being, the humans have the great opportunity to not only to speak language or articulate their thoughts, but language also provides an opportunity to them to undergo an experience. Language has the power which runs into the interiority of life where one experiences the content of expressions and live with it. Its potentiality of bringing change comes up when we begin to live with it. The notion of living involves various things such as “receiving,

enduring, suffering, and submitting.” This aspect of language shows the inner dimension as one lives with what is being felt – that is, to undergo an experience with language. We often overlook this when we talk about language is means of communication. Communication not only shows the outer function of language, but also connects to interiority of human life.

It is through language one experiences the world and tries to make sense of the world. At the very early stage of the learning when the children are curious about the world, language equips them to meet those challenges. While undergoing various experiences, the children do manipulate their cognition and understand a thing which is a part of their engagement with the world that helps in their development of linguistic concepts or categories. One of the important observations that Krishna Kumar makes in this regard is that schools at the very early stage do n’t give importance to language as the central point of learning (Kumar, 2011, pp. 5-6). Teaching language to the children at the stage where one hardly makes a distinction between knowledge and skill; it is necessary to examine the mode in which a child is engaged in reading and learning. He maintains that “One of the primary means of doing these things is language, and a grade one child is already familiar with marvellous capacities. He has already used it to establish relationships, to internalise these relationship and then to apply these internalization to explore wider world. Along with movement, touch, vision, hearing, and smell, a child of six is familiar with the exciting possibilities of language. He knows from the social lore that school is where he will learn two new powerful skills reading and writing, and much else.” (Kumar 2011: 59) Children come to school with a lot of curiosity and hope, but if the environment of learning is not conducive to nurture the tender minds in the right direction, they will feel alienated. Linguistic alienation is much stronger as the children fail to internalize the lesson and exhibits helplessness to communicate with teacher. Apart from this the life of tribal children undergo some of the severe problems and addressing them, Barik writes, “Drawbacks in the articulation, lack of confidence a tiny world to wonder about, unhygienic habits inherited from the elders and the invisible inhibitions to express the inner potential are some of the personality traits in the children, a wholesome education cannot afford to ignore” (2001, p. 20). Language is a great facilitator as opens up the being. We not only share our problems but also gain self-confidence. And without a language one fails not only to articulate thoughts, but also starts breeding inferiority complex which eventually diminishes the child’s being. The wholesome education, in this regard, requires an alternative language.

This alternative language is cultivated through extra-curricular activities. When a classroom curriculum becomes ineffective and fails to hold the dialogical educative relationship, there is a need to transcend the existing language and expand the horizon of learning introducing the extra-curricular activity. The scope of extracurricular activity includes all kinds of sensory experiences to articulate expressions to be engaged in a communion. As Buber maintains that dialogue is a “communion in education is just communion, it means being opened up and drawn in” (1965, p.90). A child is invited to participate in extracurricular activity in order to open up new door of learning to restore the being of child and unfold their personality. Extra-curricular activities involve study tours and excursions, games and sports, dance and drawing. Illustrating the epistemic intensity of learning through extracurricular activity, Barik maintains that “Knowledge is power and animating, but that is not gained so much from books or classroom teaching as when learned from personal contact with living and vibrant world around” (2001: 21). Dance and drawing, game and sports, visiting zoo and sea shore do not require a special language for the tribal children. Rather, children are initiated to learn through performance. Story telling is about performative learning. The narration of a story or folktale is profoundly engaging. It creates motivation to learn language in a creative manner. As Mahanand and Goswami put it, “Folktales as a genre have a great potential in teaching and learning language. Learners are assured of variety in terms of themes and style. A folktale motivates learners and sustains interest among them. The brevity of a regular story implies that it does not require more than one or two sessions to read and discuss it. Learners get to initiate a discussion after just one or two sessions. When a learner completes reading a story, he/she has a sense of achievement. Researchers have shown that extensive reading of stories helps in developing proficiency in learners, like music and dance stories bring life to performance. Storytelling is more interactive. It enhances eye contacts and provides for a relaxed and free atmosphere, a situation that increases the chance of learning without any strain” (2011 x). Learning becomes a joyful activity as it involves the children naturally. When children are asked to draw and name the drawing, or when the sing the folk-songs and dance; they effortlessly do it without showing any sense of strain in them with the spirit of co-operation and friendship. There is no competition involved in such form of performance; rather the potentiality of an individual learner emerges in togetherness (Das 2007). Learning in this mode enriches the collective culture (Barik 2001: 22).

To conclude, togetherness is a fertile ground for learning. It helps in developing educative relationship that unfolds the creative power of the children. Once the child recognizes this relationship then he/she embraces learning. The child starts feeling that they deserve it which results from the unconditional friendship that teacher and students maintain while being engaged in learning. In an educative relationship the teacher not only involves the students but also shares the content of teaching with a great responsibility of understanding the deeper potential of the child. In this regard, both teacher and student are spontaneously initiated into the learning – deep learning. (Das 1980) Human learning engagement thus has to have a spiritual grounding on which its actual practice takes place. Buber's dialogical engagement is cultivated with purpose of realizing the spiritual existence of the other. (Buber 1965: 89) Both Buber and Das agree that language of the spiritual is the language of "freedom, love and commitment."<sup>xviii</sup> Humanity survives in speaking and listening to the voices of this language. Heidegger has reminded while narrating the being of language that "speaking is of itself a listening. Speaking is listening to the language we speak" (1971, p.123). The urge here is to listen to the voices that are even silent and voices that are silently gazing. Unless the teachers listen to the voices of these types that they encounter in the eyes of tribal children and in their silence, their engagement will remain a failure. Their effort will fail to open up the creative power of the children. Hence, education as a product of educative relationship must bind the teacher and students in the language of love and commitment. It is ultimately a commitment to the humanity, because in such binding the self will keep unfolding its creative contents freely. This freedom of the self will always assure us a greater sense of self-reliance and joy of learning.

**Notes:**

<sup>1</sup> Here we refer to the report written by Satyananda Barik (2000).

<sup>1</sup> Complete sloka is as follows: “Tat-karma yaa bhandaaya, sa vidya ya vimuktaye, aya saaya parama karma, vidya-anya shilpa naipurnam.” Vishnu Purana, 1. 19.41

<sup>1</sup> R. C. Pradhan illustrates Ludwig Wittgenstein’s notion of language and tries to examine the language-life interface.

<sup>1</sup> Giri traces the great meeting of two philosophers and creative writers who belived in dialogue and world transformation, writes “He [Das] visited Israel in 1950s on his way back to India from Denmark and had met with Mrtin Buber, the great seeker and philosopher of dialogue. He [Das] also visited and taught in Kibbutz schools. He was happy to come back to Israel after thirty seven years in 1991 and his book on Isreal brought these two journeys together.” (2012: 25)

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## **Abstract**

Existing research on how learners draw on their other languages in performing a skill in L2 claims that such strategic application of languages has a pedagogic impact i.e. it aids in the learning processes. While this claim does appear to acknowledge the linguistic performances of multilingual language users for a combination of purposes, identity marking and networking and that a requisite condition for the same would be the creation of an interactional space for other languages, few studies have examined the nature of what the perceptual learning potency of such interactions is from the view point of learners and teachers. This paper attempts to understand divergent perceptions of the pedagogic potency of the eventualities that happen through translanguaging in a translanguaging space in a learner identified critical episode. The study defines a critical episode as that interactional episode of learning where the learners are critically aware of its processes and impact on their learning. From a corpus of Collaborative dialogues, learner interactions on one task were used to identify critical episodes. Learner pair responses and teacher reactions to the critical episode gathered through semi structured interview were documented and analyzed. Variations along major themes are reported. The study finds that learners' perceptions of learning are holistic while teachers' perceptions are piece-meal in nature.

## **1. Introduction**

Rampant research investigating whether knowing one language can influence the performance in the other language has been a constant engagement in investigations in L2 as English. Specific research investigations in Second Language Writing has conscientiously found that writing for a bi/multilingual is a bi/multilingual activity where the 'other' languages that the learners possess in their repertoire are activated and in myriad ways support and contribute to the complex thinking processes involved in 'L2 writing' (Grosjean 1989, Cook 2001; Cummins 2007). These investigations owing to what Wei (2011: 1223) calls as “a predominant frequency

and regularity-oriented pattern seeking approaches” have adopted a dichotomous view of one as influencing the other rather than a view of an integrated languages representation in the mind.

This paper documents what seems to be happening in a collaborative writing activity from two perspectives: the learners’ and the teachers’. Empirical investigations of collaborative writing have reported positive findings for language learning from two theoretical view points. The use of L1 has been a specific focus of interest in an ESL or EFL context. From an SLA stance, investigations of L1 use in L2 writing have reported a possibility of ‘uptake’ of specific linguistic component through the use of various linguistic repertoires (research in the Interactionist and the IIO paradigm). The same has been of interest also from the SCT perspective where the L1 is seen as a tool and not necessarily just a linguistic tool as with studies that use both arguments from SLA and SCT (Merrill Swain and her colleagues’ research). The impact of this strand of research is that collaboration by itself is considered to be a strategic propeller of learning that induces visible, observable and modifiable changes in learning behavior. However we contend that learning and any observable change in learning is a learner internal affair and that to understand the eventualities and processes of learning through an investigation of an episode of learning is required. We define an episode of learning as an episode of collaboration between two (or more learners) identified by the participants as a potential trigger for learning to happen and a critical episode as that episode of learning where the learner is critically aware of its processes and impact. This construct builds on Woods’ (1994) construct of a critical event, but goes beyond since a critical episode supports learner agential behavior as they decide the episode and self introspect the nature of learning. This paper attempts to understand the learners’ and the teachers’ perspective of what ensues in one such episode of learning- a critical episode.

The structure of the paper is as follows: we begin by explicating the theoretical construct of translanguaging and translanguaging space in the multilingual context and then follow it up with a discussion of what Wei (2011) calls as Moment Analysis. Following this the paper presents the diverging perceptions of teachers and learners of what ensues through translanguaging in a translanguageing space. It revolves around the major themes that emerge from the retrospective interviews with the learners and teachers. The concluding section discusses the results of the study.

## **2. Pedagogic potency of Translanguageing: Explicating the Theoretical constructs**

Translanguageing as a teaching practice laden with unrealized pedagogic potency was first highlighted by Cen Williams (1996) in a bilingual English-Welsh context. It is the legitimate and deliberate use of providing inputs in other languages while the output would be in a different language. Translanguageing is realized as probably reading and listening to concepts in one language and producing a written report or an oral presentation in another language. Theoretically the construct of translanguageing supports an integrated view of language representation in the mind (Wu and Thierry 2010); that they support each other (Jessner 2002); and are not inactive but pitch in as a support while performing in another language (Grosjean, 1989).

Tracing the expansion of the phenomenon of investigating translanguageing sees three clear phases with its inception as the first phase; the second phase being classroom-based investigations of translanguageing by teachers and learners as a strategy for extending understanding, constructing meaning, and mediating higher understanding (Gracia 2009) and a clear third phase where Translanguageing is conceptualized in curricular practices as attempts to build on a range of literacy practices learners arrive with and as an acknowledgement of learners flexible linguistic practices as representing learners transient identities in learning (Hornberger, 2003, 2012; Canagarajah 2011).

The idea of translanguageing space is particularly relevant for a multilingual not just because they have 3-4 languages and traverse through different linguistic worlds and identities constructed through them while communicating but also because the space they create through their linguistic practices has far reaching effects on their identities, personalities, ideals and values. Homi Bhabha (1994) argues that this is not just a space where two or more different identities meet or merely co-exist but that they combine to create new identities and practices. He says that it is here that the cultural transmission takes place between tradition and generations. This is not a concrete space but a constructed neural space that is constantly shifting, expanding and shrinking at the same time, dynamic and ongoing in nature.

But the question we need to raise is: What does the construction of this space involve in terms of individual investments? Lefevre's (1991) notion of first space, second space and third space

amalgamated as the trialectics of spatiality i.e. "space is constructed through a three way dialectic between perceived space, conceived space and lived space". Lefebvre calls the perceived space as the first space which includes the concrete first hand experiences that learners encounter on a daily basis and have lived with. His conceived space or the second space comprises of the imagined mental constructs that are discursively devised representations of the spatial workings of the mind". Crudely this would involve the belief systems, ideas, values and ideals that Bhabba (1994) says are discursively and culturally transmitted. Lefebvre in questioning the dualism between the concrete and the imagined proposes a third space or the lived space where the first two meet. Soje (1996) building on this thirdness argues that what happens in this "space is understood as the ongoing result of collaborations and negotiations between physical realities and mental or cultural constructions" (p.97). It is the space that, according to Soje is, "radically open to additional otherness, to a continuing expansion of spatial knowledge" (p.61). Bringing Bhabba's argument of cultural transmission together with Soje's argument of third space implies that the translanguaging space is essentially a collaboratively, interactively constructed social space by its participants. Wei (2011) contends that this space has three dimensions: a cognitive dimension where the participants invest in "indexical interactions and interpretations"; a socio-historical dimension where the space they created through translanguaging overlaps and engulfs other social spaces and contours of interactions; and a cultural dimension where the space includes lived experiences of everyday social practices which include their multilingual practices.

What does this mean for us as language teachers and language learners? This means that 'monolingualism' and the assumption of the 'native' as the ultimate standard can no longer be the pedagogic aims and that a genuine cum legitimate space for the multilingual capabilities in the language classroom (L2) is warranted. A further implication is that operationalising such a space in a classroom context would mean that learners need to be invariably given opportunities to bring in their multilingual experiences, practices, identities and criticalities into the classroom. They need opportunities to be creative and critical about their learning through their own translanguaging eventualities in the translanguaging space.

Both from a pedagogic perspective and a research perspective, it would be enlightening to know how learners' version of eventualities would differ from a teacher's version. This we believe

would aid in taking informed decisions on an array of pedagogical aspects ranging from materials designing and sequencing to methodology to curriculum designing to teacher education.

Though the larger study (in progress) attempts to document such variations pertaining to various aspects of the construct of ESL writing, this small study attempts to document variations in learner and teacher versions of eventualities in a set of critical events documented from collaborative writing activities. In order to document the eventualities and the various reactions to the same in the translanguaging space requires a paradigm shift away from etic accounts and approaches that aim to universalize statistically analyzed frequency-based regular patterns of occurrence to embrace a more emic, spontaneous and impromptu actions and performances that can have a long term impact on one's learning behavior, identity and personality. We adopt Wei (200x: 1224) construct of moment analysis which she defines "can be a point in or a period of time which has outstanding significance". Wei describes that a moment is "characterized by its distinctiveness and impact on subsequent events or developments" for the participants to such an extent that they not only recognize its 'spur-of-the-moment-value but also adjust subsequent actions accordingly as it becomes a reference point or a frame.

Analyzing a moment of significant impromptu action would require data from multiple sources chief among which are participant reflections and metalanguageing data i.e. commentaries of the participants on their language use and practices. This would shed light, in a 'meta' sense on learners making a critical sense of their lived worlds while simultaneously hoarding a scope for a third person view of the learners' lived worlds. Thus in order to capture the perceptual pedagogic potency of a moment or a critical episode we need to understand how the same moment is viewed and valued by the two key players in a classroom: the learners and the teachers. We believe that an understanding of what the participants rationalize through metalanguageing of what is happening in the critical episode and juxtaposing it with teachers' reactions would shed light on variations in perceiving learner interactions and also gather teacher perspectives on translanguaging. This we believe would inform us of the teacher beliefs and ways to address teacher related aspects in making space for multilingual practices. This study aims to understand and document participant and teacher reactions to one specific critical episode that occurs in the course of a collaborative writing task.

The question we investigate is

Do participants perceive the events of translanguaging in a critical event differently from practicing teachers? On what aspects is the difference prominently observed?

### **3. The study**

The study is set in a government school attended by learners from low socioeconomic and low literacy environments. The participants of the study are both teachers who teach in the government schools and learners who study in government school in the outskirts of a metropolitan city in the state of Telangana (erstwhile united state of Andhra Pradesh).

#### **3.1 Participants**

Eight teachers of English out of the sixteen teachers whom we approached for the study consented to be a part of the study. All of them worked in different government schools and consented to discuss various aspects pertaining to the study. All eight teachers had varying periods of teaching experience (mean 13.8 years), were trained teachers, possessed a postgraduate degree and were keen on research in their classrooms. Three of them had registered for research degrees in a local university. Of the eight teachers, four of them have taught on the MLE project being implemented in parts of the state. Twenty four students (12 male and 12 female), aged between 12-13 years studying in class VIII of a Government run Zillah Parishad High School participated in the study. These students come from low socioeconomic background with poor home literacy environments. 18 of the participants contributed to their family income by working either as a domestic help or assisted their parents in their labor work. Technically they have had no writing instruction either in their L1 or their L2 and all the writing that the participants do is either copied from the black board or from the guides. The participants had about 3-5 years of exposure to English as SL in the school context. All of them were aware that knowing English would have a + impact on their socio-economic-institutional access and hence were eager volunteers for the study. They clearly had the domains for English marked out – higher education and employment.

No prior assessment of their language proficiency was made but an assessment of their writing ability was done prior to collaborative writing sessions. When the texts were analyzed along linguistic and semantic parameters, we found that many of the writers were either in a pre-

sentential stage or the word phrase stage of text production. All the 24 participants were randomly paired into 12 pairs. The 12 pairs participated in three collaborative writing tasks.

### **3.2 Methodology and Tools**

The study employs qualitative methods of data collection and analysis. Initially the collaborative dialogue of the 12 pairs as they attempted the 3 tasks was transcribed and analyzed in order to identify the critical events. In order to identify a moment of significance, critical events in each of the 12 collaborative dialogues need to be identified.

We followed the following steps in doing so-

1. We read the collaborative dialogue to identify and isolate a set of specific critical episodes.
2. The episodes were shared with the corresponding pairs who generated them and asked to identify the most critical events that impacted their collaborative writing processes. They were also asked to reason out why they felt so. This discussion was recorded and used in answering the research question.
3. An initial set of several episodes pertaining to analytical parameters of writing namely: strategy for lexical search, organisation of the text, understanding the task expectation, content generation, grammar discussion and mechanics of writing were identified. In this paper we use the 1<sup>st</sup> episode- a grammar-based episode.
4. This set was shared with the 8 teachers and were asked a set of questions to understand how they see translanguaging and the events in the translanguaging space. (Appendix 1)

In this paper we discuss the salient aspects of variations in differences in learners (pair **(PC2p23T1<sup>1</sup>)**) and teachers' perceptions (n=8) to the eventualities in a translanguaging space through translanguaging for one critical episode.

### **4. Data<sup>1</sup> analysis Procedures and Analysis**

Since our interest is to explore whether the two principal stakeholders in a pedagogic context perceive the happenings in a translanguaging space differently and along what aspects the variations exist, two methodological modifications were implemented. One, first the learners' perception to 'what' seems to be happening in the critical episode and what they perceive of their languages use behavior in a translanguaging space was captured through semi-structured interviews; the themes evolved in interviewing the learners were used in evolving semi-

structured questions along which teachers could be prompted to react. Two, following principles of grounded theory the multi-tiered levels of analysis was adopted. Initially, the larger themes were identified. Then, a fine-tuned second level of analysis of the themes was done to identify an array of variations at two levels: intra group perceptions and inter group perceptions to the happenings in a translanguaging space. In the next segment we present the salient variations between the pair that produced it and two responding teachers with respect to one particular episode (Appendix 2) since it generated significant discussions regarding various aspects from the two teachers.

#### **4.1 Models of action: Learning? Or Pseudo-learning?**

One of the clearest impact translanguaging has had on all the 12 pairs is the fact that all of them were extremely comfortable with each other; that writing with a peer has made them notice aspects of writing that they would normal tend to overlook; that their peers served as models of actions for how to learn and what to learn. A thorough discussion of this aspect is attempted in Sathuvalli and Chimirala (forthcoming). However, teacher perceptions to the same critical episode varied. The teachers are responding to the question: what do you think is happening in the episode?

JT1<sup>1</sup>: This is in Telugu! How can they be allowed to use Telugu? (Takes a look at the transcript and replays the tape to listen to the episode four times). Is this from my classroom? I think I recognize the two voices. Did they do this kind of talk many times?

R: yes, their entire talk is in Telugu but the text they have written is in English. You can see the text this episode has generated. What do you think they are doing here?

JT1: I think they are deciding on the grammatical category of a word. But the boy says “is laugh a work we do?” Is he giving a feedback to the other one? Teaching?

R: That is what both of them say that one helped the other notice the differences in word categories.

JT1: but this is not feedback. This is not how we do it. Where is the explanation? I explain a verb and an adjective clearly so that they can understand. I am not sure if the other fellow has understood and learnt the difference.

Excerpt1 is a typical example of teachers' assumed 'monolingual expectations in an English classroom. Of the eight, five of our teacher respondents began by questioning the allowance of Telugu in the English class and seemed to think that the interaction itself was out of place. As VGT6 strongly puts it, allowing other languages is a "blasphemy" in ELT". A stronger objection was voiced on whether it could be considered a feedback at all. JT1Not only explains how she would do it but also lays threadbare what her view of language learning is.

Contrasting her is the perception of JST5, in excerpt 2, who not only sees that interaction with awe but also reasons out how the peers' explanation could catalytically trigger an understanding of their stronger language to highlight how it would differ in English. Recognizing a learning potentiality, we contend, would require an understanding of the complex linguistic processes where a multi-lingual's linguistic competencies are put to differential use and linguistic crossing in order to result in such expressions of contrast. JST5 definitely sees a stronger opportunity for learning in comparison to his counterpart JT1.

Excerpt 2:

*JST5: I wouldn't have thought of such a statement in Telugu to make the boy understand that happiness is not an action like in Telugu but a feeling in English. I think this is unique.*

R: what makes it unique? Do you see this as feedback?

JST5: its against what I would do in class. He asks a question in Telugu and that requires the boy to think what of the word category of happy in Telugu and its synonymous terms. I think that is a brilliant way of making people see differences and get clarity.

#### **4.2 Focus of interaction: Text creation Vs. Grammar and Contrastive Analysis**

We wanted to know what teachers' would perceive of what the focus of the interaction were and hence were asked what they perceived as the focus of the interaction in the critical episode. Four of the teachers replied that in the specific interaction, the learners were discussing 'grammar' aspects. However, two teachers went a step ahead in identifying an element of contrastive

analysis in what the peers were doing. SMT3, a teacher who had worked in the Multilingual Educational Programme, pointed out that

#### Excerpt 3

This is something I have noticed in the MLE project classes. If you observe math or science classes, we notice that the lesson is explained in their tribal language first so that they get the meaning of the lesson first and then the same lesson is done in English. Ultimately it is in English that they will have to master. So what I see here is identical to *that. One is explaining the concept of verb and noun forms using the example of 'Happy'* as used in Telugu so that the variation in English is visible. Though I doubt how much the other student understood, I think this is a genuine case of Contrastive Analysis. (SMT3)

This perception of the teacher sees learners' languages as strategic linguistic practices that learners resort to in order to deal with concept knowledge albeit from a deficiency view of language competency. This view sees events in the translanguaging space as compensatory in nature where the inadequate capability in L2 competence is compensated by the L1 rather than a view that the use of L1 is a genuine multilingual practice that is both a creative and critical use of languages for an array of purposes.

Interestingly, when we posed the same question to the pair from whose interaction the critical episode was picked, the pair's is responded holistically "this is the park task. We are writing the description of the park. Using L1 we are creating a paragraph that is ours" (PC2p23T1). Note that terms like grammar, feedback or contrastive analysis have not found space here.

### **4.3 Creating and valuing the learning Space for realizing the multilingual identity**

We wanted to know what the perceived value of the specific critical episode was for the pair in question and then contrast it against what the teachers' perceived could be the nature of learning in it. It must be noted that even before the required question could be asked there were hints of the 'learnability' in their responses (see last lines in excerpt 3).

Teachers were asked the question: Do you think this episode has any learning potentiality that could be realized by the learners? If yes what? If no, why do you think so?

Three of the teachers felt that some learning might be possible and that the focus could be the grammar point they thought the pair was engaged in. The other five teachers expressed to varying extents that the possibility of learning was not high and cited two reasons: one, that they did not have evidence that learning has happened and two, that what the learners are discussing may not be either correct in linguistic terms since there are two languages being used and that the concept itself may not be learnt accurately by both of them. Interestingly, three teachers included humanistic and affective aspects for enabling learning through pair collaboration. DST4 argues,

#### Excerpt 4

I think what is happening here is a reminder that what we deem as learning may not actually be what they value. In the episode, the learners were allowed to take help which is not a part of a regular class. Additionally they were also allowed to use any language. You are calling it Translanguaging but for us it is L1 use. Allowing that by itself is an aspect of valuing their identity. I think a critical understanding of our own capabilities as multilinguals practitioners and as strategic language users in difficult situations is required. (DST4)

The same question was modified (for learners) as follows: Have you benefitted from this episode of interaction? If yes, in what ways?

Both the learners in the pair revealed that their discussions have had tremendous impact on their learning behavior. They cited instances that range from meaning-making to error focus. They realized that through interactions they could create a shared reality where the two knowledge systems would come together to create a new understanding of the unique problem solving situation. These aspects have been discussed in Sathuvalli and Chimirala (forthcoming). Nevertheless the specific response that is vital to us is that the learners' other languages capabilities are not a bane but a boon while learning and that the indigenous knowledge they hoard through their multilingual identities and heuristic systems trigger supporting socio-cultural-historical-linguistic intermediaries that help in problem solving. This is a clear variation

of how teachers perceive how their learners construct their learning through their histories and identities are visible.

## **5. Results**

Do participants perceive the events of translanguaging in a critical episode differently from practicing teachers? On what aspects is the difference prominently observed?

We present the findings of the qualitative analysis of the critical episode materialized through translanguaging in a translanguaging from the perspectives of the two stakeholders: the pair of learners and the teachers. The analysis shows that the two stakeholders perceived the events differently. Where learners felt they were learning general and specific linguistic and non-linguistic aspects, teachers were relatively skeptical about both what was being learnt and how it was being learnt. The variations become very prominent along 3 aspects: the creation and constitution of the space, the focus of the interactions and the nature of the interactions.

Firstly, while learners perceived the creation of a space where they lived, co-constructed and shared realities find application and in turn act as catalysts for further creation of more inclusive spaces through translanguaging, teachers see the other languages as a strategic behavior that was triggered due to deficiency in English capabilities and that the presence of other languages as invasion of the learning space.

Secondly, Learners seem to have a holistic perception that what they were doing in the specific episode will culminate in a readable text. They seem to be aware of how small aspects contribute to the evolution of a bigger script. Teachers, on the other hand, despite being given the entire transcript of the collaborative dialogue, did notice the specific componential focus of the episode. Additionally they also commented on how they would have dealt with the language focus in the episode.

Thirdly, we believe that our learners are willing and eager to learn if they can see opportunities for investing their learned, lived and shared experiences for specific language gains. We also believe that this attempt is driven at enriching their lives since each of them was aware of their needs. So when a translanguaging space was initiated through translanguaging, they realized the opening up of spaces and networks of learning experiences not only from their partner but also

from other peers. A recognition of their multilingual identity through their translanguaging did seem to have a pedagogic effect.

## **6. Conclusion**

In this paper we have tried to give a comprehensive account of how a critical episode realized through translanguaging in a translanguaging space is perceived by the participating learners and a set of teachers. We believe an understanding of their perceptions would give us a dip into the biases and the assumptions of their respective views on learners' multilinguistic practices. In order to be more critical in documenting perceptions, we used the data generated from one critical episode of interaction. The study shows that while learners know that they are constructing a social space in which they would realize pedagogic benefits. They also realized that in this space they can flexibly and strategically use their multilingual, cultural and historical experiences for shuffling and recreating their identities and personalities. Principally, they also realize that this space can only be created only through interactions with others who will contribute to the situated nature of the interactions. What strikes us blatantly is the teachers' relative underestimation of what ensues in this space. We humbly accept that the consequentiality of the events of translanguaging cannot be accurately measured and estimated since it is a social space that is constantly evolving, dynamically changing and a very cerebral activity. Nevertheless studying it is recognition of the agential behavior of the learner because the space they create is also the space they live in and this happens to be based on their investment of their resources. Thus the inherent capacity to invest lies with the ways in which the creation of the space is mediated so that learners can engage with the multilingual practices for scaffolding their academic achievement.

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## Appendix 1

Critical episode used for the study.

S: emi...cheppu raa?: children are...doing happy and running to the balloon seller...( *What... go ahead tell...Children are doing happy and running to the balloon seller...*).

P: cheyyadam annaru raa...ahan.... Happy gaa vunnaru..Cheyadamni pani..Panni cheyyadam .. pani chestharu raa... navvadam pani aa raa? ( *Work is done..we do a work but we don't do happy...we say we are happy... is laugh a work we do??...* (PC2p23T1)

## Appendix 2

### Semi-structured interview questions for Teachers.

1. What do you think is happening in the excerpt?
2. Can the interactions be in any way considered to be feedback?
3. If no why do you think so?
4. If yes, what features make it so?

5. Do you think this episode has any learning potentiality that could be realized by the learners? If yes what? If no, why do you think so?
6. Would you be interested in allowing other languages in the English language classroom? Why? Why not?

**Semi-structured interview questions for Learners.**

1. What are you and your partner doing in the excerpt?
2. What have you learnt from this particular excerpt?
3. Has that impacted further learning in the classroom and outside the classroom? How?

**Using Process Genre Approach to Teach Writing: An Experiment in a Multilingual Classroom**

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**Abstract**

Cohesion is a crucial skill that L2 writers need for academic success (Mirzapour & Ahmadi, 2011), as without the ability to create cohesion through the appropriate use of language, texts are rendered difficult to follow (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). Cohesion consists of related lexical and grammatical markers throughout discourse to facilitate coherence, and is a means by which speakers meet communicative goals effectively (Schiffrin, 1987; Witte & Faigly, 1981).

Learners of English need to acquire the ability to manage cohesion to achieve communicative competence (Cumming, 2001; Mirzapiur & Ahmadi, 2011). So, in this context the present study explores the possibility of using narrative writing in Odia (learners' L1) as scaffolding to teach narrative writing in English in a multilingual classroom. This study was an attempt to teach cohesion and coherence in narrative writing. The experiment was done with a group of 15 tribal learners of Eklavya Model Residential School (EMRS), Odisha. EMRS are set up in states and Union Territories with grants under Article 275 (1) of the Constitution of India. Chain story writing technique in L1 was used to teach narration in English. The objective of this study was to teach cohesion and use of linkers in narrative writing by using L1 as a scaffolding tool.

**THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK:** The present study draws on the following theories.

**AFFECTIVE FILTER HYPOTHESIS:** Krashen's Affective filter hypothesis states that there are various 'affective variables' which play an important role in second language acquisition. Variables like self – confidence, anxiety, fear, motivation are included in these affective variables. According to Krashen's claim, learners having high and strong motivation, self – confidence and low level of anxiety and fear are more successful in second language acquisition than learners with low motivation, self – confidence and high anxiety. According to this hypothesis, factors like low level of motivation, self – confidence and high level of anxiety and fear create a mental block or barrier by raising the affective filter. Thus, this barrier blocks comprehensible input to be used for second language acquisition. In other words, these emotional variables do not directly prevent learning but do not allow input to be used. So, in this context, it is very important to try to create a stress free, anxiety free and welcoming atmosphere for learning. Learners need to feel safe and motivated to produce language. So, learners must be encouraged and the learning environment needs to be positive for language learning.

**BICS AND CALP:** The concept of Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP), introduced by Cummins, tried to focus on the challenges faced by the second language learners while trying to match with their peers in the school environment. At this point it is important to understand the difference between the two. BICS focuses on the oral fluency and CALP refers to learners' ability of understanding and expression of important ideas, in oral and written form. The BICS & CALP distinction has

thrown light on the difference between oral fluency and academic language proficiency. In the context of present study, it is very important to understand the distinction because the present study is conducted in a multilingual classroom where every learner brings in a different L1 to the class but learn the same L2, which is the school language.

## DATA COLLECTION

Introduction: For the present study the Researcher collected data in three steps. This experiment was conducted in three steps. In the first step, the researcher administered a task on narration with the students. The task was: write one of your most memorable days. The aim of administering this task was to collect the writing sample from the learners on a narration task that gave some idea about how the learners wrote. Then in the second step, the researcher gave a sample piece of writing to the learners and the piece of writing was titled as “ A memorable day”. Then the researcher asked the learners to find out the difference between their own writing and the sample piece given to them by the researcher. In the third step, the researcher

Detailed procedure for each step is given below:

**STEP 1:** The very first step of the present study includes the pre intervention and intervention phase by the Researcher. The aim of the pre intervention stage was to collect the writing sample of the learners and to have an idea about the learners’ level in writing. The writing samples were collected one month before the present study. The learners were asked to write on the topic, “My Village” both in Odia and English in ten sentences and based on these writing samples, tasks for the present study was designed. The reason for choosing the topic, My Village was because of its function that is **description** which is the first and easiest function according to Bloom’s taxonomy. Next, for the present study that was conducted after one month of the pre-intervention stage, narration was chosen by the researcher. This function was chosen after a careful analysis of the learners’ English textbooks. It was found that in their English textbooks almost every lesson had a writing task which focused on narration. Moreover, narration also comes second after description in Bloom’s taxonomy. So, the function narration was chosen for the present study.

The intervention by the researcher began by asking the learners to write a paragraph on a memorable day of their life. After collecting the learners' writing sample, the researcher gave them a sample piece of writing on **A Memorable Day**. The purpose of providing the sample piece of writing later was mainly due to the following reasons:

1. To have an idea about how much and what the learners knew about writing something on narration.
2. To show them the main features of writing a narration task.
3. And a sample piece will always help them to refer to it when they needed.

**STEP 2:** The second step included a group work for a chain story writing task. This task was in Odia, that is the 11 of the learners. The task was administered in the following manner:

Division of the class into groups: the class was divided into 5 small groups, each group consisting 3 members. The division of groups was random. And the groups were named like Group 1 to Group 5.

Instruction:

1. You have to complete a story. The first two lines of the story will be given to you (which were given by the researcher) and you will have to continue and complete the story.
2. Each group gets only one chance to contribute to the task and they can give only two sentences. Most important, all the group members must agree to the sentences chosen by the group ( it was to promote discussion in the group and help them in decision making)
3. Group 1 will start the continuation and Group 5 will complete the story. So, every group has to remember this while providing sentences and while deciding on the sentences, read the previous sentences carefully. ( it was to make them understand the concept of maintaining connection in the story)
4. Each group will be given equal time to think and give the sentences. When time starts for one group, all others will count from 1- 20. And the respective group has to stop discussing and give their sentences when counting is finished.
5. The same process will continue till we reach at Group 5 completing the story.

6. The beginning and continuation of the story will be put up on the black board by the researcher. So, one person from each group has to read the sentences aloud to the whole class.

**STEP 3:** Step 3 marks the last step of the data collection procedure and it is further divided into two steps. In the first step, the researcher reads the complete story aloud to the whole class. Next, all the learners are asked to read and understand the story as a whole. By asking them to read, they are made to try and see and refer to the features of a narrative writing (which was discussed in Step 1). By doing this, the researcher tries to promote the learners to make the necessary changes, for example, inserting linkers, rephrasing or restating the introduction of a character, filling up some possessive pronouns, correcting the tense form (changing to past tense) etcetera. Next, the learners are asked to make a note of all these changes and rewrite the story in Odia with all the changes made. And later, at last, the learners are asked to write the same story in English using the final Odia copy of the story as the sample piece.

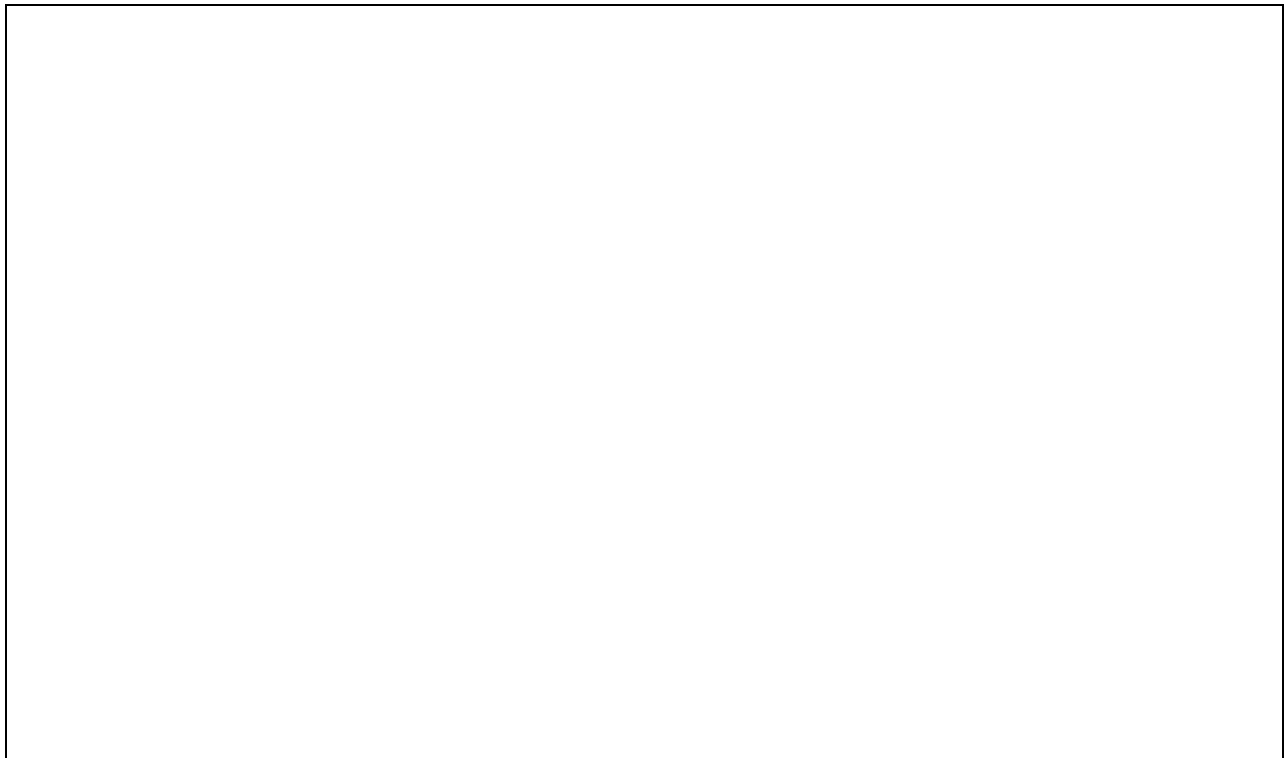
Then, the next day, all the learners are asked to write a story ( one story for every learner) in the classroom. All the learners are asked to write any story which they can recall from their past. They are also instructed to write the story in about ten sentences and they are also reminded to refer to the discussions, corrections and modifications which was done in the previous class after the group work.

## **LEARNERS' PROFILE**

The learners chosen for the present study are class VIII of Eklavya Model Residential School (EMRS), Odisha. The learners are from different tribal groups. They joined EMRS in standard VI. These learners study CBSE syllabus in the school. The most important thing about these learners is their linguistic background. Odia, the state language of Odisha, is the second language for most of these learners because they learnt Odia when the school environment demanded. So, exposure to Odia language is 8 years and exposure to English is 6 years. At this point, the interesting thing to notice is that, English in this particular context becomes these learners' third language.

**DATA ANALYSIS**

Learners' scripts were given to four independent scorers. The scorers were teachers of English at The English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad. They were instructed to score each script of the learners on a rubric which was adapted from the Writing Narrative Marking Guide. According to this marking guide, learners' scripts were scored on 4 categories and they were text structure (4 marks), ideas (6 marks), cohesion (4 marks) and sentence structure (6 marks). 20 marks was allotted for the above 4 categories and the scorers were instructed to score both scripts (one script written before the Researcher's intervention & another script written after the Researcher's intervention) independently. Inter – rater reliability was found to be 0.94 and 0.56 for the first script and second script respectively and these values were significant at  $p < 0.05$ . Details of the rubric are given below.



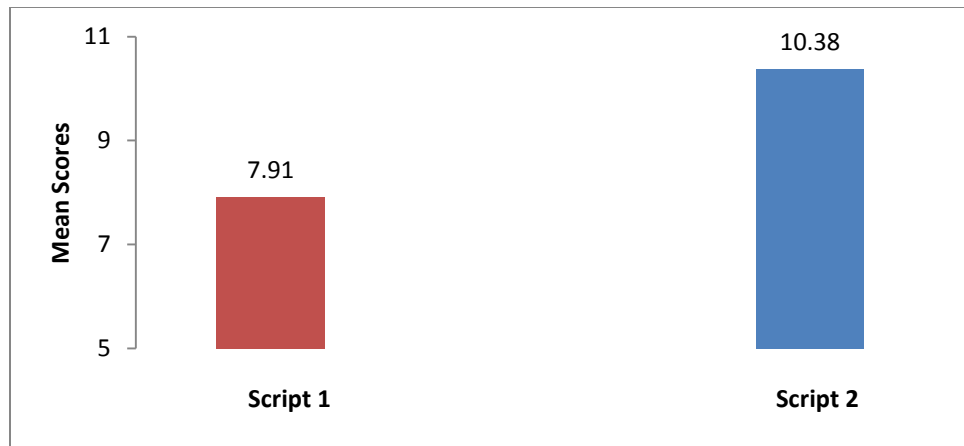
Score s	Text structure	Scores	Ideas
0	No evidence of any structural components of a time-sequenced text	0	No evidence or insufficient evidence
1	Minimal evidence of narrative structure, e.g. beginning or a middle with no orientation	1	Ideas are very few and very simple. Ideas appear unrelated
2	Contains beginning or a structure	2	Ideas are few, not elaborated or very predictable
3	Contains orientation and resolution	3	Ideas show some development or elaboration. All ideas relate coherently to a central storyline.
4	Coherent, controlled and complete narrative employing appropriate structure and including an effective ending.	4	Ideas are substantial & elaborated. Ideas effectively contribute to a storyline
		5	Ideas are elaborated with suitable examples
		6	Ideas are generated, selected and crafted to explore a recognizable theme. Ideas are skillfully used in the service of the storyline

Score	Cohesion	Score	Sentence structure
0	Symbols and drawings	0	No evidence of sentences
1	Links are missing or incorrect. Often confusing for the reader	1	Some correct formation of sentences (some meaning can be constructed)
2	Some links between sentences (simple connectives used e.g., but, so, and, then, when etc.) Most referring words are accurate	2	Most simple sentences are correct (meaning is clear)
3	Cohesive devices are used correctly to support reader understanding. (connectives like later, suddenly, earlier, because, finally etc. are used) Accurate use of referring words	3	Most simple & compound sentences correct Some complex sentences correct
4	A range of cohesive devices (consistent use) is used correctly and deliberately to enhance reading	4	All sentences correct but no variety
		5	All sentences correct & display variety in length, structure (clear meaning & sentences enhance meaning)
		6	Controlled & well developed sentences expressing precise meaning and are consistently effective

## RESULTS

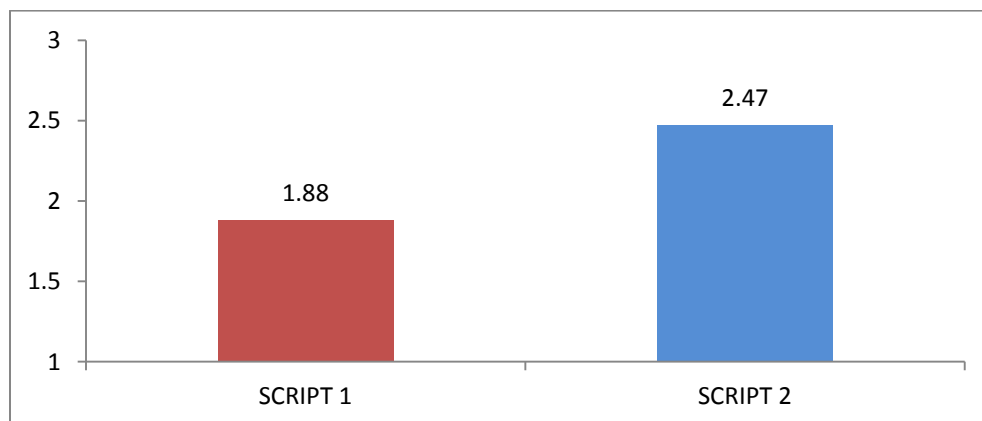
To see if there was any impact of teaching the learners with L1, the data was analyzed by calculating the mean score of the variables. And means analysis was done independently for coherence and cohesion. Let us see the results:

**Coherence:** For coherence, mean value was calculated of the total score (out of 20) for both scripts (script 1 & script 2). The result is shown in the following graph.



From the data presented in the above graph, it can be seen that there was a significant increase from script 1 to script 2.

Cohesion: To see if there was any change in cohesion, mean was calculated of the scores (which was given only for cohesion) and the result is shown in the following graph.



From the data shown in the above graph, it can be seen that there was a remarkable increase (from script 1 to script 2) in cohesion.

**FINDINGS:** The data analysis not only showed an increase in both coherence and cohesion, it also showed instances of using more (sometimes from zero to some) reference markers, i.e. linkers, using past tense form for narration, an attempt of writing in an organized way (following the framework of beginning – middle – end). It also showed examples of more use and right use of demonstrative pronouns. From the data analysis it was found that, there were mainly two

factors which had an impact on the learners' performance and they were use of L1 and group work. Use of L1 of the learners lowered their affective filter and made them more comfortable in expressing their thoughts. It was also observed that since they were asked first to write in Odia, they were no more afraid of the fact that they may make many errors. So, the story in their L1 became the base for developing the structure, outline, developing ideas etc. and helped them write in English with more ease. And the second important, group work motivated them to perform the task together and released them from the fear of making more mistakes than others. It was found that they were more comfortable in working in a group than working individually. Besides these two main factors, there were also some other factors which contributed in the better performance of the learners. Discussion generated in the class considering the class as one group helped the learners in sharing ideas among themselves. Story writing was found to be another effective technique because, in this context where the subjects were tribal learners, it connected them well with their linguistic culture (as story telling is a part of the tradition of all tribal language family). At this point, it is useful to discuss some of the following comments of the Scorers:

- There were more evidences of use of past tense in script 2.
- Script 2 is more coherent unlike script 1 which was abrupt.
- An attempt to elaborate on the topic can be seen in script 2 which was missing in script 1

**CONCLUSION:** So, from the above findings it can be concluded that scaffolding L2 writing with learners' L1 can be very effective to teach coherence and cohesion in writing. Writing in L1 also helps learners in shaping the ideas, following an outline and putting them together in an organized way. Use of L1 is also an effective tool in lowering the fear factor among the learners. It also motivates them to generate more ideas.

## **Evaluating a Textbook and Adapting it: a Model for the Language Teachers**

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It has been widely accepted that a textbook is an essential component of a classroom. So, to analyze a text book, to evaluate it, and finally to adapt it is one of the best ways to ensure that we meet with the educational objectives that have been set forth. It is also an another way to ensure that some amount of teaching-learning takes place in the classroom, learners find the activities/exercises interesting and we maximize the learners' participation by personalizing the materials in our contexts.

The book I have chosen to evaluate and adapt is entitled "My English Book" which is published by School and Mass Education, Government of Odisha. It is prepared by Director of Teacher Education and state Council of Educational Research and Training, Bhubaneswar, Odisha. The target audience for this book is all the regional medium learners of class VI, Odisha. The book makes certain claims which are presented below.

- ✓ Learners friendly materials: learning is joyful and child-friendly
- ✓ No gender bias in any of the materials and themes that focus on environmental protection, secularism and child rights etc.
- ✓ Development of four basic language skills and vocabulary enrichment as language component
- ✓ Receptive skills are important because they provide foundation for productive skills

Firstly, the book will be analyzed using a checklist, secondly four lessons will be evaluated, and finally materials will be adapted based on the evaluation.

**Textbook Analysis****Book's Name: My English Book****THE EXTERNAL EVALUATION:**

- ✓ Intended audience: learners of 11-13 age
- ✓ Proficiency level: Class VI
- ✓ Context: EAP
- ✓ Presentation and organization of lessons: this book includes 16 lessons.
- ✓ Author's view: cognitivism; language is learnt through meaningful communication, commutative approach to language learning
- ✓ This book is a main EAP course book.
- ✓ There is no teacher book. However each activity is accompanied by a note to the teacher and, in addition, at the end of the book, there is a note to the teacher
- ✓ No word or index is included at end of the book.
- ✓ Plenty of pictures are given and most of them are integrated to the theme of reading passage and different activities.
- ✓ The layout and presentation are good in the book.
- ✓ This book is not culturally biased.
- ✓ The materials do not represent minority group and women in the negative way.
- ✓ There are no digital materials and tests given in the book.

**THE INTERNAL EVALUATION:**

- ✓ All the basic language skills and language components except reference skills are included in the book and treated in an integrated way.
- ✓ The materials provide enough opportunity for the learners to use the basic language skills.
- ✓ There is no listening text included in the text book. However, teacher is instructed to read the reading text and poem aloud to develop learners' listening skills

- ✓ The speaking materials do not include the nature of real interaction (e.g., use of gap fillers, authentic interaction and language etc). However, some of the speaking activities do demand learners' active participation.
- ✓ The tests are not included as part of the materials.
- ✓ Materials are suitable for auditory, kinesthetic and visual learners but no such claim is made in the textbook.
- ✓ Materials are intended to develop learners' competence in target language
- ✓ Materials are potential enough to make learners appreciate their own culture
- ✓ Bilingual instructions as scaffolding are limited to the materials that focus on developing learners' pronunciation.
- ✓ There is a gradual move from easy to complex topics/items
- ✓ There is adequate recycling and revision of vocabulary items but there is no adequate recycling and revision for grammar items.
- ✓ Materials hardly focus on form, meaning and use.
- ✓ Supports are given for the writing activity according to controlled and guided approach but there is no focus on process writing.
- ✓ Listening materials do not focus on comprehension.
- ✓ There is no key to the exercises.
- ✓ The book is durable and freely distributed to the learners.
- ✓ Listening and reading skills are given utmost importance with a view that provide foundation for speaking and writing skills
- ✓ This book is very motivating for both teachers and learners.

### **Justification of using the checklist:**

I have adapted the checklist prepared by McDonough and Shaw. This checklist has a comprehensive list of all most all the points that are required to analyze a textbook in my context. Moreover, the points are very clear, lucid and organized in a logical way. However, I have included some of the points which are not listed in the checklist taking my context into consideration.

### **Lesson Evaluation**

Lesson no:02

Name of the lesson: “Wolf! Wolf” (story)

The reading text is divided into two chunks: the first chunk is preceded by a pre-reading activity that sets the learners to think about some aspects that are discussed in the text and to enable the learners to activate their background knowledge, and followed by some comprehension questions which test whether the children are able to follow the story.

The second chunk is followed by some **comprehension** questions, some **key words** (glossary), some **comprehension** questions, **vocabulary, spelling, speaking, usage**(singular and plural forms) then final reading.

The story (reading text) is manipulated for both listening and speaking skills. Teacher first reads the text aloud to enhance learners’ listening skills then learners are instructed to read it silently so as to enhance their reading skills.

Lesson no: 03

Name of the lesson: WHEN I GROW UP (poem)

The poem is preceded by a pre-reading activity which demands the teacher to ask some questions related to the theme of the poem and then learners are asked to move to their other classmates to collect some data about what they want to be. The activity of moving and collecting data is very much relevant to the theme of the poem and I personally like it very much. The poem is followed by **getting the main idea** (appreciation of the poem), **reading in chorus, Reading, Knowing the key words**, (glossary), **comprehension, vocabulary, usage** (contracted forms), **reading and writing, speaking and final reading of the poem.**

The poem is manipulated for both appreciation and comprehension. Teacher reads it aloud first and learners are instructed to listen to the poem while enjoying the music of its lines. Then, learners are asked to read it silently for comprehension.

Lesson no: 04

Name of the lesson: RUSTOM CLEANS THE HOUSE (play)

The play is divided into two chunks so as to make the comprehension easy for the learners. The first chunk is preceded by a pre-reading activity which demands the teacher to ask several questions to the learners which are related to the theme of the play and it is an excellent idea of activating learners' background knowledge. There are some comprehension questions at the end of the first chunk of the play.

The second chunk of the play is followed by **comprehension, reading aloud, reading, knowing the key word** (glossary), **comprehension, vocabulary, writing, usage** (asking people to do something), **re writing, and writing and speaking**.

The play is manipulated for both listening and reading skills. Teacher is instructed to read the play aloud and then learners are instructed to read it silently. Learners are also given an opportunity to read it aloud.

Lesson no: 05

Name of the lesson: AKBAR MEETS BIRBAL (story)

The story is divided into three chunks to make the comprehension easy for the learners. The first chunk is preceded by a pre-reading activity which demands the teacher to ask questions to the learners which are related to the theme of the story. And is followed by **knowing the word** (glossary), and **comprehension**.

The second chunk is followed by **comprehension, knowing the key words** (glossary).

The third chunk is followed by **comprehension, true or false, speaking, usage** (contracted forms), **writing**, and **reading the story aloud**.

Teacher reads only two paragraphs aloud then learners read it silently. Bilingual instruction is given as scaffoldings to pronounce the word correctly in activity 11 **usage** (contracted forms).

It is strange to see that all the reading lessons serve both as reading and listening texts. Since the discourse of a reading and a listening text differs, it is not wise to make the same text serve for both the purposes. One of the characteristics of a listening text is to have authentic language.

Where as a reading text may not have that authenticity. Reading texts are rather formal in term of language used in it.

The way a lesson is divided into different sections is confusing not only for learners but also for teachers. For example, (Akbar meets Birbal, part-2 page no- 41) glossary is preceded by comprehension questions. Glossary helps the learners comprehend the text when they come across with unfamiliar words. So, there is no point in giving the glossary after giving comprehension questions. **Usage** is one of the parts of every lesson: it is neither an activity for grammar nor for speaking; learners notice the target item presented in it and finally it lands nowhere. For example, (usages, asking people to do something. Page no-35), the teacher explains how to ask people to do something and then learners are asked to rewrite some sentences given in the text. it could have been a good speaking activity.

The organization of the lesson and the instructions given in the text or activity are not clear and very confusing in nature. For example, (page no-36), activity no- 12 goes as **Writing and speaking**. None of the sub-skills of speaking is on focus here. In short, what the heading says is arbitrarily opposite to what it does. Some of the lessons are unnecessarily divided into different chunks. For instance, the second chunk of the reading lesson **Wolf! Wolf** contains only few lines. There is neither any other reason to divide it into chunks. So, it was unnecessary to divide and bring a break to such an interesting story.

### Reading skills

Note: Since all texts are used for both listening and reading skills, comprehension questions for reading are considered only those which learners are required to comprehend after reading the text silently. Other questions are considered as part of listening comprehension since teacher reads the text loudly while learners listen to her closing their books and answer. And same with the poem.

Name of the lesson	No. of reading comprehension questions	Form of questions	Sub-skills	Type of comprehension

Wolf! Wolf	5	True or false	Skimming, scanning	factual
When I grow up	11	Wh, true or false	Skimming, scanning	All most all questions are factual, few inferential, and lateral
Rustom cleans the house	8	Wh	Skimming, scanning	All questions are factual except the last one
Akbar meets Birbal	21	Wh, true or false	Skimming, scanning	All most all questions are factual, one inferential, and one personal response

All most all the comprehension questions for reading are factual and in the form of WH questions. Moreover, they only demand on scanning the text. However, there are adequate inputs given in the form of visual to make the comprehension accessible, easy and interesting.

**Listening Skills**

Name of the lesson	No. of comprehension questions	Form of questions	Sub-skills	Authentic language used or not	Type of comprehension	Do learners have a reason to listen to?	Cognitive load
Wolf! Wolf	06	WH	Listening for specific details, listening for general meaning	no	Local(5) and global(1)	yes	Very high as learners answers after the text is read (memory based)
When I grow up	03	WH	listening for general meaning	no	global	yes	Not very high (moderate)
Rustom cleans the house	10	WH	Listening for specific details, listening for general meaning	Yes, Up to some extent	Local(8) and global(2)	yes	Very high as learners answers after the text is read (memory based)
Akbar meets Birbal	X	X	X	X	X		X

There is not even a single while-listening activity. As the result, listening turns into a memory based activity. Learners will be able to comprehend only when they remember to each detail of the text being read to them. The listening text and real life listening do not even correspond.

## Writing Skills

	Wolf! Wolf	When I grow up	Rustom cleans the house	Akbar meets Birbal
Area of writing being practiced	X	X	organization	X
Sub-skills in focus	X	X	Organizational skills	X
Focus of the writing activity	X	X	Rearranging the jumbled sentences	X
Any given model for the learners to follow	X	X	no	X
Scope for using own vocabulary, content, idea etc.	X	X	no	X
Is the activity based on the lesson in the textbook	X	X	yes	X
Are instructions clear and sufficient	X	X	yes	X
Is the amount of writing specified	X	X	Yes(highly controlled)	X
Stages of planning learners to go through	X	X	Writing final draft	X
Input (verbal or visual)	X	X	verbal	X
Is the input appropriate and sufficient	x	x	yes	x

There is no writing activity in the lesson Wolf! Wolf. For the lesson, **When I grow up**, there is an activity under the heading **reading and writing**. But it is not a writing activity at all. Writing is used here as the modality for the production task of the exercise **Usage** (contracted forms). For the lesson, **Akbar meets Birbal**, there is also an exercise under the heading of **writing**, but it is not a writing activity or exercise too. This exercise seems to be a memory based vocabulary exercise under the term **writing**.

**Speaking skills**

	Wolf! Wolf	When I grow up	Rustom cleans the house	Akbar meets Birbal
Language function	No specific focus on function	Giving preference	X	No specific focus on function
Accuracy and fluency	accuracy	accuracy	X	accuracy
Controlled, guided or free	Highly controlled	Highly controlled	X	Highly controlled
Authentic language	No, dialogue sounds bookish	Up to some extent	X	Up to some extent
Language support given or not	controlled	controlled	X	controlled
Learners' involvement	Yes, but learners imitate only	Very limited, learners imitate only	X	Very limited learners imitate only
Meaningful context created or not	no	no	X	no
Contextualized to the them or not	yes	yes	X	yes
			Does not look like a speaking activity at all	

## Vocabulary

	Wolf! Wolf	When I grow up	Rustom cleans the house	Akbar meets Birbal
Aspect of word knowledge	Meaning (word detectives), form (spelling)	Meaning,(finding right word)	Meaning (word detectives)	No item for vocabulary in this lesson
Type of activity	Fill in the blanks	Sentence complication	Fill in the blanks	X
Cognitive load	less	appropriate	appropriate	X
Contextualized to the theme or not	yes	yes	yes	X
Stage of the activity (P, P, P)	production	production	production	X
Noticing to the target item before it is introduced	no	yes	no	X

Note: No item is given for grammar

### Some of the findings of my evaluation on the basis of which lessons will be adapted

Same text should not be used for both reading and listening unless the text is potential enough to land for both the skills.

The unit or the lesson should be well structured so as to avoid confusion and most importantly to meet with the objectives for which each section is set forth. Instructions should be clear enough to avoid confusion and to make the exercise/activity accessible to the learners. If there is a definition to be given for a specific item, it is better to give the definition as a part of your instruction. But it has to be contextualized using examples from the reading text.

Reading comprehension questions should focus not only on literal understanding of the text but also on all other types of comprehension. And questions should be framed using different form. The text should also include comprehensible language inputs and a theme familiar to the learners. If the theme is not familiar, a pre-reading activity, as given in all the four chapters being evaluated here, must be given that will prepare the learners to proceed the text and teacher will not find much difficulty to introduce the topic.

There should be a judicious balance between rules and usages while introducing a vocabulary item. So that learners will know how to use it in the context. Activities, which are potential to engage the learners and can create interest for the learning, must be given.

Each lesson should focus on four basic language skills and language components to maximize learning.

### **Adapting the materials**

Lesson no-02

Lesson name: "WOLF! WOLF"

**Activity to be adapted:** Activity 3 **Comprehension** (page no-13)

**Rationale:** These questions are set to check learners' comprehension in listening skills soon after the text is being read to them by their teacher. So, it is an act of checking learners' memory power. So, I want to make it a while-listening activity.

**Techniques I will be using to adapt:** Firstly I will reorder the activity by making it a while-listening task; secondly I will restructure the questions by making it a fill in the blanks exercise with two options and learners have to choose one. Finally, I will also restructure the instruction.

Adapted version of the activity:

Instruction- Fill in the blanks with the correct alternative while listening to the story being read by your teacher.

Exercise:

Abdul was a .....boy/girl. Abdul played a....trick/trice on the people of his village. The villagers felt .....angry/anger when Abdul played the same trick second time.

**Activity to be adapted:** activity 7 comprehension (page no-15)

**Rationale:** Reading comprehension should not be confined to only factual comprehension of the text. So, I will add two more questions to take the learners beyond the factual comprehension.

**Techniques I will be using to adapt:** I will expand the exercise by adding two questions that will focus beyond literal comprehension.

Adapted version of the activity:

Exercise:

- a. If you were Abdul, had u played the trick with the villagers? Justify your answer.
- b. Did the story teach you anything? Explain.

### **Lesson no-03**

Lesson name: WHEN I GROW UP

**Activity to be adapted:** activity 4 **Getting the main idea** (page no-21)

**Rationale:** it is a good idea to make learners appreciate a poem after they listen to it. So, I will bring some changes in the activity so as to make the young learners appreciate the poem its music, rhyme etc.

**Techniques I will be using to adapt:** I will expand the exercise by adding more questions and asking learners to participate in group/pair discussion. I will also restructure the instruction. I will then personalize and individualize the theme of the poem by giving learners a chance to interpret the poem, analyze the poem own their own way. Finally, I will restructure the heading by deleting it and adding a new heading to it.

Activity:

Focus question before the poem is read to the learners: What does the poem describe?

Instruction: Listen to your teacher when she reads the poem aloud

**Getting the main idea** will be replaced by **Let's appreciate the poem.**

Questions under **let's appreciate the poem**:

- A. Does any line of the poem rhyme with other line? If yes, what are the words that rhyme?
- B. List the people from different profession you appreciate them. Give reason.
- C. Have you ever read a poem similar to this poem?

Now teacher divides the class into different groups and each group will try to interpret a stanza after discussing among themselves. Teacher helps them to carry the discussion.

#### **Lesson no-04**

Lesson name: RUSTOM CLEANS THE HOUSE

**Activity to be adapted:** Usage (asking people to do something. Page no- 35)

**Rationale:** As the heading suggests **usage**, we generally understand that usage becomes meaningful when they are brought into a context and ample opportunity is given to the learners to practice the target item in real life context. But this activity does not allow the learners to practice this language function (asking people to do something) in real life context. So, I will create a context where learners will get an opportunity to use the target item.

**Techniques I will be using to adapt:** I will extend the activity by creating context where learners will get an opportunity to use the target item.

Activity:

Given below in the box are some verbs. Use the verbs where necessary or you can use your own verbs, and work with your partner. One of you asks him/her to do and he/she does what you ask him to do.

Go	bring	pluck	talk
request	kick	hold	Come back
Swim	wear	help	request
Ask	run	kick	move

- A. Bringing a flower from school garden
- B. Asking your friend to help you for your homework
- C. Playing football
- D. Catching fish

Example: one of you may start: stand up, ask the teacher to allow to go outside, go the garden.....

Lesson no-05

Lesson name: AKBAR MEETS BIRBAL

**Activity to be adapted:** (Speaking Page no- 43)

**Rationale:** The speaking activity does not demand learners' active participation. It is wise to focus on both form and function and to integrate them in a speaking activity. Learners should be encouraged to produce language rather than imitating the dialogue. So, I will focus on both form and function and will integrate them in this activity creating a context where learners will get an opportunity to speak and produce language.

**Techniques I will be using to adapt:**

I will expand the activity by incorporating how to show preferences and make a suggestion. Then I will personalize the activity to the learners. I will also delete the dialogue given in the activity.

Activity:

*Let's Speak***Showing preference and making suggestion**

Read the conversation between old Gopal and the carpenter. Notice the phrase in **bold** type

Akbar: **Why don't you** look right there through my kitchen window? See that farm over there? That's my wife's place. And you see that creek running right down there? That creek, it wasn't there last week. My wife did that to spite me. She took a plough up there, and she dug a big old furrow from the upper pond and flooded it. Well, **I want you to do** one better. Since she wants us divided that way, **I suggest** you go out there and build me a fence - a big, tall fence - so I won't even have to see her place anymore!

Birbal: Well, **I would like to do** this job for you since I have come here looking for a job.

The phrases in **bold** type are used to make a suggestion or to show a preference. Discuss with your partner to bring out more examples which could be used to do so. Copy and complete the table below and compare your ideas with your other classmates.

Making a suggestion	Showing a preference

Look at how suggestion and preference phrases are followed by infinitive, 'to' + infinitive or gerund forms of the verbs.

Why don't you +V?

Would you like + to +V?

What/How about + V+ing?

Let's + V

I'd rather + V

What do you think about + V+ing?

I suggest you+V

I would like +to+V

I suggest+ V+ing

I'd prefer+to+V

Work with your partner. For each of the following examples, one of you makes a suggestion and the other gives a preference and a reason. Try to use a variety of the phrases from the language box above.

Remember: Usually when we show a preference for something, we also give a reason. For example: Well, I would like to do this job for you **since I have come here looking for a job.**

**Example:**

Seema: Why don't you buy that pair of shorts?

Papu: No, I don't think so, Seema. I'd prefer to save my money for the Diwali.

- A. Going to Swimming
- B. Playing football
- C. Eating Odiya food in a hotel
- D. Attending Changu dance
- E. Catching fish

**Conclusion**

All other activities almost follow the same pattern. So, they may be adapted the way these activities have been adapted. For example, all the comprehension questions for listening skills are memory based and reading section largely focuses on factual understanding of the text and we can adapt all the listening activities by making them while-listening activities and we can also incorporate some questions that focus on personal response, inferential, critical understanding of the reading text.

## **Learn through Riddles with Fun: Riddles for the English Classroom**

### **A Book Review by**

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### **Riddles for the English Classroom**

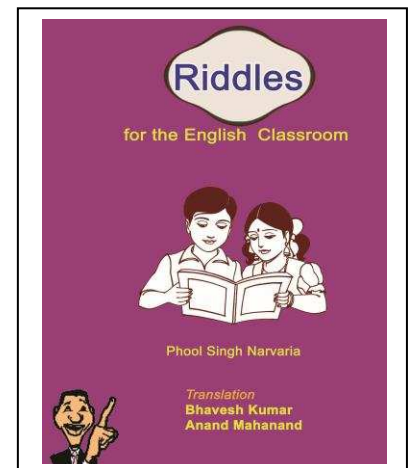
Author: Dr Phool Singh Narvaria

Translators : Bhavesh Kumar and Anand Mahanand

Published by : Pagemaker Publication, Bhubaneswar, 2014

Price : Rs. 60 / \$ 3

ISBN: 978-81-920052-8-7



Let's solve the following riddle!

Green was when young

But turned red in old

Just a small size girl

But does many things bold.

(Narvaria 2014, P.13)

Have you ever pondered the pleasure and excitement of solving a riddle? Would you like to explore a book on riddles for the English classroom, for the development of language skills and

higher order thinking skills? Then, Riddles for the English Classroom by Bhavesh Kumar and Anand Mahanand is one of the interesting and the most exciting books to be referred to.

The translated book is a unique collection of fifty-seven riddles by Dr. Phool Singh Narvaria, who is an experienced teacher educator from Gwalior, India and documented numerous folk forms to use in the language classroom. All the riddles have been wonderfully translated from original Hindi to English by Anand Mahanand, a faculty from the EFL University, Hyderabad and Bhavesh Kumar, a research scholar of the same university.

Consisting of twenty pages, Riddles for the English Classroom bears an appealing cover page, a forward nicely written by Prof G. Rajagopal, a succinct preface to the book by the translators, interesting and challenging fifty-seven riddles and a significant blurb. All the riddles have been presented in a unique pattern, where the original riddle in Hindi is provided first, followed by the English translation. Each riddle is accompanied with a picture against it, which helps the readers to guess and solve the riddles. Through this learners are sensitised to their socio-cultural milieu and learn languages by drawing knowledge from these sources.

### **Creating Interests**

Riddles are an integral part of every indigenous community's speech and people generally use riddles for their daily communication. There is a need to use real life speeches and forms of communication like riddles in the classroom for the enhancement of language learning and teaching. Further, there is absolutely no iota of doubt that learning should be a pleasurable journey. Riddles appeal to the students "...because they offer an opportunity to experiment with language in unexpected and unusual ways" (Buchoff, 1996). Almost all the riddles of the book are interesting and challenging. Here is an example:

Ek bahadur aisa veer

Gaane gakar mare teer.

**Translation-** As brave as gallant a warrior around

Pierces arrows with humming sound

(Answer : Machhar/ Mosquito)

(Narvaria, 2014, p.5)

**Developing Literary Skills**

Riddles are not only for creating interests among the readers as they do enhance cognitive and literary skills of the users. The book *“Riddles for the English Classroom”* provides a wonderful platform to improve listening, speaking, reading and writing skills of the learners. After going through the riddles of the book, students can be encouraged to recollect their favourite riddles and explain logically how the riddles are their favourite ones. Further, students can be encouraged to create new riddles and/or write stories based on riddles. In this ways, teachers can exploit any riddle from the book to enhance literary skills and higher order thinking skills.

**Suiting the needs of Indian multilingual classroom**

Riddles for the English Classroom is a unique book which will serve better for the Indian multilingual classrooms. Each riddle is given in Hindi transliteration and then, translated into English. As a reader is expected to read the riddles in his/her mother tongue first and read the translation later, this would not only help in learning English through reading the translation but would support for guessing and solving the riddles. Further, all the riddles have been taken from the cultural background of the Indian readers, which make the riddles familiar and interesting, but challenging. Here is an example:

Baap bado beta bado

Nati barho amol,

Pai panti bhaav

Do kaudi ko mol

Translation :

Father is costly, so is son

And costlier becomes grandson

But cheaper becomes their next generation

(Answer: Doodh, dahi, ghee, chhachh/ Milk, curd, ghee, butter-milk)

(Narvaria 2014, p. 9)

Navaria (2014) has made a significant contribution by providing indigenous riddles to cater to the needs of Indian learners. The translators of the riddles could have included exercises and activities of the riddles, which would have helped the teachers to use the riddles in the classroom better. However, the translators are very clear in their approach of not doing so as they clearly mention in the preface of the book as “We have not included exercises as we felt that would reduce the pleasure part of the genre. Also riddles are themselves activities and can lead to practice in communication and language use”.

I strongly recommend that Riddles for the English Classroom should be used in the classroom as well as outside the classroom. It can generate hearty laugh to any age group, especially for the children. Irrespective of finding the answer (i.e. red chilly) to the first riddle mentioned in the beginning of the review you must have gone through an engaging cognitive exercise. Thus, it will be an enriching and enjoyable experience to go through the book.

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**Bridging Cultures through Dialogue:  
A Conversation<sup>3</sup> with Professor P. C. Kar**

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Professor P.C. Kar is one of the pioneers of American studies in India. He is himself a renowned scholar in the field of American studies. His doctoral research was on Saul Bellow from U.S.A. He was Deputy Director of the American Studies Research Centre, Hyderabad during 1982-86, and Chair, Department of English at Baroda during 1995-2000. He visited Universities of Chicago, Texas at Austin, and California at Berkeley under a Fulbright postdoctoral fellowship. He was a Fellow at the School of Criticism and Theory at Dartmouth College, USA in 1986. Besides editing several scholarly books, he has published papers on American literature, critical theories and new literatures in English. He is one of the editors of the Journal of Contemporary Thought, Baroda. He is an institution builder and pioneer of interdisciplinary studies. Retired as Professor of English from M.S. University of Baroda, currently, he is the Director, **Balvant Parekh Centre** for General Semantics and Other Human Sciences. **Balvant Parekh Centre** for General Semantics and Other Human Sciences, **Baroda**. He has been awarded the Nicolás Guillén award for his “extraordinary contribution to the *study of the humanities in India*”. The award committee has acknowledged that his work has “*impact across the globe*” and acknowledged his contribution for cultivation of dialogue across the Global South. We met Professor Kar at EFL University, Hyderabad last November and had the following conversation with him.

**Q.1. Congratulations Prof. P.C. Kar on being the only Indian to have won the Nicolás Guillén award<sup>4</sup>. With the receipt of this award you are now in league with Gabriel García Márquez, Ramabai Espinet and Prof. Gordon Rohlehr. The citation reads that you award is in recognition to your “extraordinary contribution to the study of the humanities in**

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<sup>3</sup> The interview with Prof. P.C. Kar took place at the EMMRC studios located in the The English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad. The conversation happened alongside the international conference “Unveiling a Secret Agreement: Revisiting the Contours of English Studies” which was organized by the Department of English Literature in November 2012.

<sup>4</sup> The Nicolas Guillen Philosophical Literature Prize is awarded at the international annual meetings of the Caribbean Philosophical Association. The prize is awarded to those whose contribute to Caribbean thought.

**India". The award committee has acknowledged that your work has "impact across the globe". The members of the Caribbean Philosophical Association (CPA) have credited you for "cultivation of dialogue across the Global South". The institutions that you have developed such as the Centre for Contemporary Theory, the Journal of Contemporary Thought, and the annual Forum in Contemporary Theory conferences have also found a special mention in Trinidad.**

A.1. I feel quite happy to have received this award. It was my pleasure that I could go to the Caribbean islands for the first time in my life to receive this award in person. It was a thrilling experience because I am in league with these great distinguished scholars and writers. And as



you said it is the first time that this award has been given to an Indian. So I am very proud that something of that kind has happened. It is not actually recognition of my work, but the recognition of the kind of facility that we have provided for the young scholars in the country to create a kind of ambience for promoting studies of the humanities, particularly

in the Global South. For that reason, I am very happy that they have finally recognized globally the kind of role we have been playing for several years to promote the cultivation of this kind of dialogue. For that reason the award is very special for me, because as I have said it is global recognition of our project.

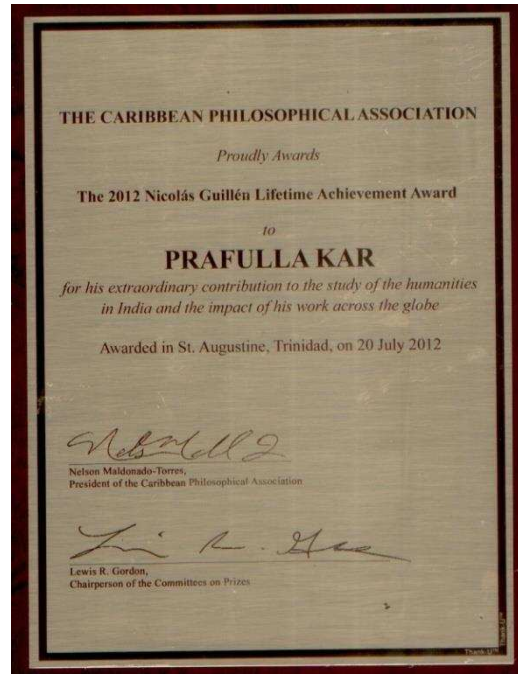
**Q.2. How does it feel to have been honoured in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago by the Caribbean Philosophical Association in July 2012? They seem to have beaten institutions in India in honouring your contributions to the humanities.**

A.2. It is not a question of us not being recognized in this country. But we have created a kind of networking around the globe for some many years. For the last 15-16 years we have been working with many people, many scholars all over the globe. They have been coming to our national conferences every year. They have been contributing to our journals. They recognized that something has been done. So nationally we are known, but perhaps we are known more internationally than nationally. We are less known locally, little more known nationally, but perhaps more known internationally. That always happens.

**Q.3. Prof. Kar you have contributed significantly to various fields: first through your stay in American universities and at the American Studies Research Centre (ASRC) to American Studies, then through the Forum on Contemporary Theory (FCT) to Cultural Studies and South Asian Studies. Now you are an important part of the Caribbean Philosophical Association. You have become a vital link in the ‘Global South dialogue project’. How equipped do you think are the scholars in the departments of humanities in India to actively participate in such a dialogue?**

A.3. Students and the research scholars from the Indian universities are taking part in the global dialogue, through the kind of project that we have launched that is the south-south dialogue. Intellectually they are of high calibre. There is no doubt about their capabilities. But what is the problem in the country? The problem is that we have not been able to create a kind of atmosphere which facilitates this kind of dialogue. Universities have not done that. That is the reason the Forum Contemporary Theory which cuts across disciplinary boundaries and institutional boundaries strives to create that kind of atmosphere where people meet from time to time and discuss ideas locally, nationally and globally. Those ideas circulate.

As you have said I started it here in Hyderabad when I was working for the American Studies Research Centre. That was perhaps the beginning of my interest in the Global South project. In order to be more focussed about what you have been doing for the Global South project, you have to be a more expansive in your outlook. My interest in American Studies gave me that familiarity, gave me the opportunity to have that expansive vision. Gradually you narrow down the vision to a specific area after getting a broad exposure. So American Studies helped me a lot. I am not saying that I was instrumental for some kind of paradigm shift in American Studies. But I was a part of that shift because when I was here in the eighties it was the time that American Studies was picking up in India. Whether I was instrumental or not in the shift? I can't say that I



played an important role in that shift. It was the right moment; the moment was opportune to start something new, because there was a lot of support intellectually from all over the world. So we tried to move on. The American Studies certainly helped me a lot in thinking about the Global South and eventually coming back. You have to go beyond in order to return to your homeland. Certainly that perspective has been very helpful to me. That is why we are where we are now.

**Q.4. As a Professor of English for over four decades you have witnessed several points of crises within English studies in India. Several young scholars today would like to know what the discipline did to overcome the major challenges it faced.**

A.4. That is what we have been doing (discussing) today in the conference that has been convened to talk about the various challenges that the discipline of English Studies has thrown up before us and how we have been trying to tackle those challenges. You know the challenges for English Studies have come from both outside and also from inside the discipline. From outside several forces were operating to bring in new fields of enquiry into the discipline. American literature came, then Australian literature then Canadian literature and African literature. All these are new entrants to English studies. But English is a very resilient discipline. It is very open ended, resilient and hospitable to new courses. So there was no major crisis that English Studies suffered because of this expansion. We somehow managed to bring all these forces into the discipline, disciplinary framework and managed to be at home with all those fields. Later on the challenge came in when theory impinged upon the discipline as a big force.

Was it post 1969?

It came mostly in the seventies, the late seventies. Particularly when Derrida's influence was felt in most English departments and that brought some amount of discomfort to those who were brought up on the old tradition of New Criticism. It was revolutionary. Derrida's entrenchment into English Studies was of a radical kind. It was revolutionary idea. That is why the crisis "How to accommodate theory into the domain of literary studies?" came. Theory was not a tool that could be used to explicate a text. Theory was theory per se. Theory was an end in itself; it was not the means to an end. Deconstruction which Derrida promoted in a big way certainly created a big crisis. That crisis was not a negative crisis. It was kind of difficult for English departments to accommodate this new field of study. English departments did accommodate it. Because of that the departments became so expansive and it received inputs from departments of philosophy,

sociology, cinema studies, popular culture, gender studies and several other new fields of enquiry. English studies became very, very expansive. If you look at it another way there was a dilution of English Studies in the process. So we have to cope with the expansion, proliferation, and dilution. When proliferation takes place there is bound to be some dilution. That is the state of affairs today. It is an identity crisis. English Studies is facing an identity crisis. How do we cope with that problem? We are in that [a similar] state today.

So are you suggesting that we have returned to a state of crisis which can also be used as an advantage or an opportunity?

Crisis always gives an opportunity to rethink and crisis can be a turning point. If you do not face a crisis you will continue to remain in the status quo. Crisis is not as harmful as [maintaining the] status quo, the chalta hai attitude or okay things are going on as usual [attitude]. Crisis makes you think that perhaps we have to think of different things. Perhaps it is time to change, perhaps it is time to turn back or it is time to look forward to. So that is why crisis gives you an opportunity and status quo does not give you an opportunity. That is why various fields of enquiry that came into the English department shattered the discipline and that shattering was important. The discipline was shattered from without. These are the forces coming from across the Atlantic into the United States, England and various parts of the world. They created some kind of very interesting discomfort. You need to face some moments of discomfort to know that you need to change. There is a love and hate relationship with the incursion into the discipline from these forces.

**Q.5. Today societies in the South are faced with a challenge of evaluating literatures across the world on their own terms. In a scenario where intellectuals in Africa, India, Australia, and Asia are developing unique perspectives it seems difficult to develop a theoretical framework that is acceptable to all these diverse groups. So what kind of collaborations do you envisage between scholars in these regions to foster a ‘Global South dialogue project’?**

A.5. When we conceived the project of a ‘Global South Dialogue’ the idea was not to produce a unified theory that could accommodate all these countries aspirations. There is a commonality of interests that you could perceive. Perhaps you could feel the commonality in the subterranean level of our consciousness. That is we know that we are closer to the African countries than to the European countries. The affinities, the emotional affinities between our country and the

countries of the Global South certainly are greater than the emotional affinity that we have with the countries in Europe or with the United States.

It is not that we have to define the Global South as a homogenous kind of thing [entity]. The kind of asymmetrical relationship that the colonialism and the hegemonic nations established between themselves and the other countries did not facilitate the dialogue between cultures. We [The Southern societies] were always at the receiving end. The ideas originated there [West] and they were transmitted to these countries. We were consumers of those ideas. We were not producing those ideas. So it was a relationship between the consumer [kind of countries] and the producer kind of countries. Some were at the giving end and we were at the receiving end. Dialogue can take place only when there are two equal partners. If one is above the other psychologically or physically you cannot have a dialogue. The West-East dialogue, it was called the Western-Eastern dialogue, now it is called the North-South dialogue, was based on an asymmetrical relationship, a hierarchic relationship. So we are the masters and these were the slaves. The whole idea came from Hegel—the kind of colonial master and the bondsman. This is something that we have produced and you have to consume the goods whether you like them or not. We want to change that mindset to the ideas that are produced in Africa can also be used in India and vice-versa. So we can give something to them and they can give something to us. With this kind of mutuality of interest and interaction the dialogue will be more productive. The give and take will be mutual. It is not that we are the givers and someone is the receiver. [The psychology needs to be changed]. The South-South dialogue envisions that the dialogue between the countries with whom we have emotional relationships, effective relationships because of the conditions in which we live. There were lots of such dialogues in the past. Lots of people went from here to Africa for trade and commerce and the dialogue was there. Somehow during the period of colonialism the dialogue was suspended. We have to revive the dialogue. That is the basis [aim] of the global dialogue project.

Our theory group through our conferences is trying to rectify the imbalance. We are not discarding the dialogue with the west, but any dialogue that has to be undertaken with the West that has to be undertaken only in relation to our relationship with other countries of the Global South. In that context the dialogue becomes a vibrant dialogue. Otherwise it is a kind of usual dialogue.

*For instance there was the project “Creolizing Rousseau”<sup>5</sup> which was undertaken by the CPA. Yet the instincts to create Pan-African, Pan-Caribbean, or Pan-Indian ideology still remain. However, only the Global South kind of projects seems to provide scope to read Gandhi and Fanon together.*

That is true. Why did not Fanon like Césaire’s idea of Negritude? Because it was an exclusivist ideology. Fanon says that the spirit of nationalism lies in internationalism. One has to keep oneself aware of the dangers of chauvinism. Nationalism can lead to jingoism, chauvinism and that is horrible. How we negotiate between nationalism and internationalism is the problem. The Global South project is interested in not defining pan-Africanism as a specific unit or a pan-Asianism. It would be a return to the old ideas of chauvinistic ideologies. That will become very provincial. So these are harmful ideas. So you need to build bridges between nations, even among the Europeans. The Global South project does not exclude the Europeans. But if you are to look at the Europeans, you need to look at the Europeans from a different perspective. That perspective emerges from your own homeland and then you stretch your glance and see that there are linkages everywhere. You see threads of connections around the globe. That will not come on their terms but will come from your point of view. That is why Fernand Barudel’s idea of ‘vantage point’ is very important. The point from where you speak is important. That is why the Global South is reworking the dialogue the process of the dialogue. The project is not an insular project, where people are talking of their own literature. It is not nativism. You have to understand that the Global South dialogue is not exclusivist. That is why Fanon said that he does not like negritude, because it is promoting the notion that the Negroes are homogenous entity. He asked how you can think of the blacks without the experience of slavery. The idea of slavery was linked to the idea of western economy. Some people think that it is slavery that produced the notion of modernity in some sense because of the music, because of the idea of culture that developed. It was assimilation of many processes that produced the notion of European modernity. These are the ideas that are very important. These ideas are coming from the others. It will be a fascinating idea to talk about Global South because of these various ramifications when we talk about cultural dialogue.

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<sup>5</sup> The project was initiated by the Caribbean Philosophical Association. For more information about the project refer to The CLR James Journal: A Review of Caribbean Ideas Special Issue: Creolizing Rousseau, Volume 15, Number 1, Spring 2009.

**Q.6. Prof. Kar the Forum on Contemporary Theory has been at the forefront of the Global South dialogue project. You have personally contributed towards this “Shifting of the Geography of Reason to the South”<sup>6</sup>. The forum plays a crucial role in creating dialogue between various departments of humanities in India. How is the diversity of the cultural context of these departments reflected in the ‘Global South dialogue project’?**

A.6. The Forum for Contemporary Theory started in Baroda in 1989. In a very informal way a group of scholars from MS. University Baroda met and wanted to create a forum where we could discuss ideas of interdisciplinary exchange. Slowly it became bigger and bigger and now we have become a kind of global forum where many scholars from abroad come every year for annual conferences. We have very, very productive exchange of ideas. Because of this the forum became a very attractive idea for people from abroad who thought that the forum is creating opportunities for younger people to meet and discuss their ideas. Conferences are held every year by the forum alone along with other institutions. The difference between the conferences organized by the Forum and those organized by other institutions is that here is a forum which brings lots of young people in their twenties and thirties to the conference. They come on their own paying substantial amount of fee and then stay together with the older scholars. That is why the exchange of ideas takes place in a better way. New ideas are generated. Fresh ideas are generated. The ideas are not circulated just amongst the senior scholars. In conferences of other institutions they invite their people, friends, relatives and they talk among themselves. The ideas are circulated only amongst a few.

In the Forum we find new people attending the conferences every year. They respond to the call for papers, submit their abstracts and sometimes these papers are published and that is the kind of encouragement that the forum offers. The forum also conducts a four week program for young researchers called “Theory and Praxis” course. Off late we have shifted attention from the western oriented theory to the theory of the Global South. Lots of scholars who have done work on the Global South have been coming to teach in the program. It is a small change that has been taking place. I can see it year after year when students come from various universities, spend a month or so, interact with the faculty, and go back and send us mailing saying that “we benefited from the course”. We know that there is a change. I am not saying that the Forum has made an

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<sup>6</sup> The project is an initiative of the Caribbean Philosophical Association. The annual meetings of the CPA focus on the theme. In July 2011 Prof. P.C. Kar delivered the plenary address titled “Gandhi and Fanon: On Nationalism and Decolonization”.

evolutionary change. But in a small way something is happening. Some transformation is taking place. That is why the Forum is an empowering institution in some way. We are trying to empower the younger people who will never get the opportunity to attend international conferences. That is our satisfaction.

*Apart from conferences and the 'Theory Praxis' courses, the Forum also publishes a journal of international repute and newsletters which also contribute significantly.*

Very much. One feeds into another. If you have a major conference and there are papers published they must find a place for expression. We also bring out a volume after each conference, in which select papers are published. We make sure that the voices that are heard in the corridors of the conference are not lost. We tap those voices. One leads to the other. The journal brings the conference and the conference brings the journal. It is a kind of process that has been going on. If you have a conference where people go and present papers, and forget what happened it does not have any permanency in print. That is why the journal is very important. The journal comes out, the conference volume comes out and certain papers are published in the newsletter. The whole thing is a total concept. One cannot do without the other, as one leads to the other in a very logical way. Otherwise you speak and those papers are forgotten the next day. At least some papers are published and gain visibility. We encourage dialogue through publications and through social gathering during lunch, dinner where young and old scholars meet and exchange the ideas. That is liberating for younger people. I remember when Girish Karnad came to give the inaugural speech in 2005 conference in Mangalore he stayed in the same building where our young scholars were also there. They were so happy to meet Girish Karnad, the great actor and the great writer during the lunch and dinner. We do not separate the young and the old. We put them together in the same place. We do not put the big people in five star hotels and the young people in youth hostels. They have to stay together, eat together so that there is an opportunity to exchange ideas. For those senior scholars who are seeking comfort go elsewhere. The Forum is here to facilitate the exchange of ideas. These arrangements help in continuing the dialogue.

**Q.7. It is very apparent that currently there is a crisis in English Studies. It seems that discipline needs to undergo a transformation. Alternatives are available to English or literary studies program. What are that changes a department of English studies need to**

**make? What are the projects that it should conceive? What are the steps that researchers need to take to effectively participate in the Global South Dialogue?**

A.7. This is a very good question but is a very difficult one. It cannot be decided from a single perspective. There is no one perspective which can be applied across all English departments. As I have said in my lecture yesterday English Studies is facing a crisis today. It is because English has become too liberal as a discipline. We have to define our identity in some way. There is a lack of definition and people do not know what is English Studies about.

The English is only a metaphor. We are not talking about only the literature produced in England. We are concerned with literary studies and both canonical literature and non-canonical literature have to be read, have to be interpreted, have to be understood. We have to devise skills in the classroom on how to read the texts and so on and so forth. The ideas of other disciplines coming into English department is a good thing because it destabilizes the canon from within. But as they say there is always a line that one should not go beyond. The English department, the English Studies, the literary studies should not be swallowed by the studies which are coming in from outside. That is why I suggested let English Studies and Cultural Studies become two big disciplines<sup>7</sup>. If English or Literary Studies and Cultural Studies are equal partners there will be a more productive dialogue between them than putting Cultural Studies within the rubric of English Studies where neither the English Studies nor Literary Studies will flourish. It is high time you make such an arrangement. Culture is certainly a special domain and under culture lots of things can be placed. In the department of Cultural Studies you can go beyond the study of popular culture. In the Cultural Studies department you can study high culture, literature, architecture and even weaving. You can do many interesting things. Literary Studies can deal with both popular literature as well as canonical literature. This kind of alliance between two equal partners perhaps is more useful than putting one with the other or into the other.

In the university<sup>8</sup> that we are sitting, within the School of literature there are departments of Literary Studies, Commonwealth Literature, American and Caribbean Literature, Literary

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<sup>7</sup> Prof. P.C. Kar in his plenary address "From a Crisis to the Crossroads: English Studies Then and Now" addressed this issue at length and argued on the necessity of creating separate departments of Literary studies and Cultural Studies

<sup>8</sup> The Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages (CIEFL) which was established in 1957, was transformed into the English and Foreign Languages University (EFLU) IN 2007. CIEFL had one school the School of Critical Humanities which included departments of Literary Studies, Cultural Studies, and European Studies. The EFLU till

Theory. In the School of Interdisciplinary Studies there are departments of Comparative Literature, Cultural Studies. There are also the departments of Media Studies and Film Studies and so on. It is probably a good thing at one level to have some many departments. But is such a structure capable of enriching the researchers and enable them actively participate in the South-South dialogue.

University is a big thing. Why are the small departments introduced? It was not because there was an intellectual need for these departments, but there was a technical need. When CIEFL became a university, it had to justify why it needed more teaching positions. To get more teaching posts you need to show more departments. But to me some of the departments seem to be superfluous, they could be combined later. But this university is in a growing phase. It was an institute and now it is a university.

But South-South dialogue can take place within the departmental structures. You do not need to have a department of South-South dialogue. Even within the Caribbean and the American literature, the American literature is interesting because the American literature does not have a specific identity of its own. That is because a chunk of American literature comes from the Black literature. A chunk of American literature comes from the Asian literature. So the South-South dialogue is already a part of American literature. There is the Spanish American literature. So, American literature is not created by the hegemonic white American alone. You can see the Black President [Obama] has been re-elected in America. How is it possible? Only 39% of white Americans voted for him. Most of the votes came from the diasporic people who came in from the Global South, from India, countries in Asia and Africa. They are actually contributing lot for the dialogue. In his introductory speech to the conference Dr. Prakash Kona mentioned James Baldwin's idea of rewriting the history of the United States. The Black novelist James Baldwin said that it will be a better to write the history of the United States from the blacks' point of view. It will be a different history. You have been hearing about the American history from the White point of view. But if you write from the black's point of view it will be a different history. The relationship between the black and white will have a different complexion than what it is

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2013 instead had the School of Literary studies and School of Interdisciplinary Studies. The School of Literary Studies in addition to the Department of English Literature introduced Department of English Literature from Commonwealth Countries, Department of American and Caribbean literature, and Department of Literary Theory. In a vindication of Prof PC Kar's answer, the university reconfigured the school. Since January 2013 the School has only two departments—the Department of English Literature and the department of Indian and New Literatures.

today because it is coming from a hegemonic region. So that is what the South-South dialogue has to be within the university framework.

**Q.8. You are one of the pioneers who introduced Indian Literatures in Translation in the English Department Syllabus. Could share your experience with the experiment?**

A.8. During my tenure at MS University of Baroda as Head of the English Department, we had brought about some significant curricular reform. One such reform was to introduce a compulsory course for MA students on the topic "Politics, Ideology and the Teaching of English." As part and continuation of that program we also introduced Indian writers in English translation as part of our increased emphasis on comparatism involving textual and cultural transaction through translation of texts. This also entailed study of translation theory. Since then translation of regional texts into English has been part of the English curriculum at MSU. In the new context of postcolonialism translation studies have become more relevant now as the study of the vernacular text accords a new dimension to postcolonial studies.

Dr. Anand Mahanand has been on the faculty of the English and Foreign languages University Hyderabad. He writes and translates in Odia and English. His publications include Representations of Tribal in Fiction, Tribal Literature in India, English through Folktales and English for Academic and Professional Skills. He has two collections of Poems in Odia titled Maa Maatira Gita and Mastaka Mani.

Joe Christopher is a PhD participant at the Department of English Literature of Commonwealth Countries, at the English and Foreign languages University Hyderabad. His interests include theory, and public culture.

**A Series of Lectures on Multilingual Education by Dr Mahendra K. Mishra at EFL  
University, Hyderabad**

Sadananda Meher,

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The School of English Language Education of EFL University, Hyderabad witnessed a series of lectures and a workshop by Dr Mahendra Kumar Mishra, the eminent expert in the field of Multilingual Education.. All three sessions dealt with multilingualism but issues addressed were different in each session. The sessions focused on the importance of using learners' mother tongue, culture and background as useful resources and possible ways of using those resources fruitfully in the second language classroom were discussed and demonstrated.

The first talk on 21 April addressed the general issues in multilingual education at large. Here Dr Mishra beautifully discussed the pan Indian classical Sishachara and showed its classification into Deshachara (regional customs involving constitutional language), Lokachara (sub-regional customs involving community languages) and Kulachara (home language). Having shown the different levels of language use in Indian contexts, he argued that multilingual education is not confined only to the tribal contexts. Then elaborating on his extensive research in Odisha, he emphasized on the importance of language and background knowledge of children in education. A healthy discussion and question-answer session followed the presentation where Dr Anand Mahanand and many Ph.D scholars were the discussants. Prof. Paul Gunashekar, Prof. K.C. Baral, and Prof. Julu Sen attended the talk. The talk was immensely useful for the contemporary batch of Ph.D scholars and other scholars who are interested in the area.



The discussion narrowed down to teaching of English in the second talk “English in the Contexts of Multilingual Education”, in the post-lunch session on the same day. In this session, Dr Mishra discussed the Indian school system and analysed rural-urban divide in terms of medium of instruction. He highlighted the craze of English as medium in urban setup and on the other hand talked about the very little scope for English language education available for learners in rural setup. Apart from this, he also presented a brief history of Bilingual education in India with focus on Odisha. He mentioned during his talk that English is language of colonization; still it is the language of liberalization. He concluded the second talk with a statement that respecting each other’s language is similar to respecting each other’s culture. Saying all these, he stressed that every backward community and tribal community needs English for its liberalization and development but it has to be provided to them without denying their own language and culture. The after-presentation discussion was well carried out by Dr Anand Mahanand and other research scholars of the university.



The following day witnessed a workshop: “Developing Multilingual Materials”, where research scholars participated in the classroom and developed materials for teaching. Here, Dr Mishra skillfully demonstrated the ways of accommodating multiple languages in the classroom. A story in English was dealt-with using four different languages like Telugu, Malayalam, Odia and Nagamese. After that, the ways of using local stories and folktales to develop materials to teach different language skills were also discussed and demonstrated. The workshop stimulated the discussion of different complex linguistic situations in different Indian regions and schools.

Experienced participants discussed the problems they faced during their teaching and those problems were promptly addressed.

All three sessions were well appreciated by the participants and practical experiences were brought in during every talk.

Finally, with his empirical experiences, Dr Mishra emphasized that the approach of teaching, the curriculum, the teacher's attitudes, and policy makers' attitude need a change and added that multilingualism is the need of the hour in Indian education system.

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