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INTRODUCTION

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CHAPTER : 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 IMPORTANCE OF LANGUAGE

Language is the key which opens all doors of human process. In every walk of life, man feels an utmost need of language. None can do without an adequate mastery over the language - oral as well as written. Language plays a vital role in studying any subject whether it be academic, technical, professional or vocational. The entire progress of a nation depends very much upon the general achievement in language, as it provides for an adequate and effective instrument of communication.

In school the aim is to provide the pupils with such learning experience as would be useful and directive to them in their future vocations. These experiences are achieved best only when there is a powerful vehicle of language, because most of the learning is based on listening, speaking, reading, writing and discussing. In school curriculum also language plays the most vital role. Bernstein (1970), has proved that those who are good in language are good in all other subjects and those who fail in language are likely to fail in all other subjects. He has further added that language is the foundation of the curriculum, because the subjects of the curriculum are taught through the medium of language. On the similar lines John (1969), shows importance of language in the following words: "Language is the instrument with which man forms thought and feeling, mood, aspiration, will and act, an instrument by whose means he influences and influenced, the ultimate and deepest foundation of human society."

1.2 IMPORTANCE OF MOTHER TONGUE

The teaching of mother tongue was the most neglected features in the Indian education. In the post-independent period the importance of mother tongue has been fully recognised. Those who are earnestly interested in education understand the vital position of the mother tongue in life. Mother tongue has taken its right place as a subject of study, medium of instruction. Gujarati is the mother tongue of people of Gujarat. It is important for a variety of reasons enumerated by Ryburn (1943), that mother tongue is the most important subject in the curriculum, and that therefore, its teacher is the most important teacher in the school; which will educate the universities to make passing in the mother tongue compulsory in the matriculation examination. So, the mother tongue is the basis of all work that is done in all classes where it is the medium of instruction. It is more than just one of the subjects in school. Sampson (1938), says, " It is the true then, that we can not have true education in our schools until the mother tongue is given its rightful place in the curriculum and in the life of the pupil also". Ballard (1961), says that " The mother tongue is important because: Thought and language are inextricably linked together. For if thought and inner speech are so closely inter woven that they grow and decay together, we can not cultivate one without cultivating the other. And training in the use of mother tongue - the tongue in which a child thinks and dreams becomes the first essential of schooling and the finest instrument of human culture". It is, therefore, of the greatest importance for pupils to get a firm grounding in their mother tongue and at the same time they are given a firm grounding in their mother tongue and at the same time they are given a firm grounding in their intellectual life. And the next importance of the mother tongue is that it is the medium by which thought both by speaking and writing is communicated. Stressing the importance of mother tongue, Ryburn (1943), further says: " Before a child can realize the fullness of life in all its aspects, and before he can use the powers that God has given him, he must be able to use his mother tongue, which is the tool that is absolutely essential in all kinds of

work. In other words, no child can grow up to be a good and useful citizen unless he has been properly educated in the use of his mother tongue, and in the appreciation of all that he can gain through a knowledge of his mother tongue. All the virtues that are necessary in good citizen, clear thinking, clear expression, sincerity of thought, feeling, action, fullness of emotional and creative life, all these things can properly cultivated and developed only if sufficient attention is paid to the foundation of emotional and intellectual life, the mother tongue". The author further emphasized that the mother tongue is at once a tool, a source of joy, happiness, knowledge, feeling and a means of using the highest powers that God has given us, where we come closet to Him, that is our creative powers.

Zakir Hussain (1938), observed the importance of mother tongue in following words: "It is a natural outlet for expression of child's aesthetic sense and appreciation".

A well designed school curriculum in the mother tongue will serve, two high objectives that have a bearing on the effectiveness of all programmes of education. One is that the course in the mother tongue, more than perhaps any other subject in the curriculum, could introduce the pupils to the joy of learning. Johnson said in the sixteen century, "A youth should not be made to hate study before he knows the causes to love it, or taste the bitterness before the sweet, but called on an allured, entered and praised: Yea, when he deserves it not." An introduction to the treasures of the mother tongue is the simplest lure that could eventually lead the young student to the rigorous of serious learning.

One of the main difference between mother tongue and other subjects being taught in the schools is that mother tongue schools is that mother tongue is concerned. The sources of mother tongue are manifold. It helps in the learning of all other subjects, while other subjects have consideration of their respective areas only. John (1969), cited an illustration that "Monteith college in Detroit, make composition in the mother tongue an indispensable skill in the pursuit of every subject in the curriculum."

The mother tongue is the most important subject as it the medium through which all other subjects are taught and often success in other subjects rests on proficiency in the mother tongue. Bhatia (1959), expresses his view: "The mother tongue should be taught in schools in close relation with all other subjects in the curriculum. No doubt different subjects are taught by teachers but since proficiency in the mother tongue which is generally is, and ought to be, the medium of instruction and examination, affects proficiency in other subjects, responsibility for it should to some extent be shared by all teachers."

In fact every teacher should be a teacher of the mother tongue and teachers of other subjects should frequently meet to discuss generally the progress of the class in written and oral expression. There may be some pupils whose knowledge of the content is good but who are not able to score high because of the poor expression.

The mother tongue occupies a unique position in the school curriculum. It is unique because it is fundamental on it depends the efficiency of every other subjects, on it depends the efficiency of the total result of education. Macauney (1954), observed "It is not a mere subject by itself; it is the foundation of every subject. A student who does not think and express himself clearly can not become good in History or Science or Geography. Hence the pupils are hampered in all school subjects because of their weaknesses in the mother tongue."

1.3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND REGARDING MOTHER TONGUE IN INDIA

Before it is tried to understand, analyse and diagnose the problem of the language Gujarati - the mother tongue in the state of Gujarat, it is most appropriate to know the background of the existing position of the mother tongue and how it has developed its various characteristics steps.

As a result of the victory in the two battles : The battle of Plassey (1757), and battle of Buxar (1764), the whole Bengal went in the hands of the British (East India Company) and later on they gradually established their sway over the whole country.

The East India Company was primarily interested in amassing wealth and had no interest in education of people. But a few of the Englishmen in the service of the company forced it to assume the responsibility of education. The main reason behind it was that the officers needed co-operation of Indians to run the administration.

The charter act of 1813 made a provision for the education of the Indians and thus from 1813 education passed in to the hands of the government and it became an essential part of the administrative scheme.

The question of medium of instruction created conflict between the two groups : orientalist and occidentalists. The first group thought it was proper to impart education through the medium of Indian languages. The group wanted to make English the medium of instruction for they believed it to be more suitable and useful. Thus, the conflict between the two groups went on continuously and ended in Macaulay's Minute.

Lord Macaulay landed in India on 10th June, 1834 as a member of the Governor General's council, just at the time when the oriental - occidental controversy was at its hottest. Lord Macaulay was a scholar of a very high caliber. He had come from England as a messenger of new ideas. The Government entrusted him with the work of elucidating the statute pertaining to education in the charter Act of 1813. He submitted his minute on 2nd February, 1835 to the Governor General Lord William Bentick, who approved the minute in toto. He suggested English only as the medium of instruction. Bentick also put the argument that English could become the language of trade and commerce. Hence it was of immense value to make English the medium of education in India. Macaulay had said in his advocacy of English. Bentick also believed that western culture could be easily propagated in India through the English medium and Indians forgetting their own culture would become

English in their ways and thought. Bentick talked of creating a class of persons who would be : Indians in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect.

In 1853 the company received new charter which brought about significant changes in the constitution and general administration. The directors of the company thought of adopting a permanent education policy. For the successful operation of the future plan it was necessary to reconsider the events of the past and hence the parliament appointed Charles wood, the chairman of the enquiry committee to enquire in to and assess the progress of education in India till 1853. The Despatch tried to solve the problem of medium of instruction in the following way: We look cheerful to the English language and to vernacular languages of India as the diffusion of European knowledge, and it is our desire to see them cultivated to gather in all schools in India of a sufficiently high class to maintain a school master possessing requisite qualifications.

But before any further action could be taken on the terms of the Despatch the company ceased to be a political power in 1858 and the British Government of India directly came under the crown. In wood's Despatch emphasis had been laid on the mother tongue in the field of secondary education but along with the consolidation of British sovereignty the English language also become stronger in its roots and remained the medium of education.

The matriculation examination, which was held for the first time in 1859, started dominating the entire process of secondary Education and hence English was continued to be used as medium of instruction throughout the high school stage.

The Calcutta University also in 1962 made English compulsory to answer questions of all subjects. To facilitate this the teaching of English was started in several middle schools because in colleges the medium of instruction was English in vogue. The Indian Education Commission (1882), had also recommended the adoption of the English medium

in secondary education due to which mother tongue remained neglected. As a result of this English assumed all possible importance and the aim of the schools came to be the teaching of English. So learning, in this period, through a foreign medium compelled the students to concentrate on cramming instead of mastering the subject matter.

Lord Curzon (1902), observed that English should not be adopted as a medium till the students had acquired the ability to understand a subject through primary education and mastered the mother tongue, the teaching of English should not be taken up. The study of mother tongue was necessary along with that of English, the study of mother tongue should continue for the whole period of secondary instruction. If the educational classes neglect the cultivation of their own languages there will assuredly sink to the level of mere colloquial dialect and no progress will be possible in giving effect to the principle affirmed in the Despatch of 1854, that European knowledge should gradually be brought by means of Indians vernaculars within the reach of all classes of the people. According to Lord Curzon's instructions the Indian languages were given preference as media of education. This was really much more than what the Indian Education commission of 1882 had suggested.

Lord Curzon's view was further supported by the Calcutta university commission (1917-1919). It made the following suggestions regarding the use of mother tongue as the medium:

- Intermediate colleges should be established and they should be either connected with some particular high schools or they should function independently.
- In intermediate colleges the medium of instruction should be the mother tongue.

Thus the Calcutta university commission (1917-1919), recommended the adoption of mother tongue as the medium of instruction, which further became stronger with the advent of Montague Chelmsford Reforms (1919), under which education came to be treated as "Transferred" subject and was placed in charge of Indian Ministers. Subsequently there

was a change of major importance in the situation when the Bombay university allowed candidates the option to answer questions in History and Classical Languages through the mother tongue. This reform had its repercussions on schools, which gradually began to switch over to the regional languages as the media of instruction in certain subjects.

In 1921, Mahatma Gandhi appeared on the political scene of India. Gandhiji was the first Indian educationist to tell the Britishers that English should not hold any importance in the scheme of national education and it should neither be adopted as a medium nor as the main subject in the syllabus. Gandhiji further said, "Neglect of mother tongue is a national suicide". He further added that all these are for me signs of slavery and degradation. No country can, in fact, make any progress by regarding any foreign language as supreme, and as such mother tongues should be given a precedence. Till then the boys studied English with a view to securing good jobs and girls raising their value in the matrimonial market. It was, therefore, thought that the Indians might read English but not to the neglect of mother tongue.

Then Gandhiji prepared a scheme of education suitable for Indian conditions. To discuss this scheme, he held a conference of the educationists and provincial education ministers at Wardha on 22nd and 23rd October, 1937. The conference accepted the scheme gladly, and a committee under the chairmanship of Zakir Hussain was appointed to go in to the details. The committee in its report made many suggestions out of which following one is related to the present study, 'Education should be imparted through the mother tongue'. At this time, in 1936-37 the Bombay university introduced a new matriculation scheme providing for adoption to answer question papers through the mother tongue in a large number of subjects.

The last report during the British regime was given by Sir Sargent. Sir John Sargent was asked in 1944 by the Central Advisory Board of Education to submit a comprehensive report on post-war educational development. It gave very bold recommendations during the

British regime. It recommended regarding the mother tongue that: In all the high schools, the medium of instruction should be the mother tongue of pupils. English should be a compulsory subject.

Thus, although English ceased to be the medium of instruction in secondary schools, it continued to occupy the position of a major school subject, and greater attention continued to be paid to it, as its knowledge was considered essential in almost every branch of the public service and in other walks of life.

In 1947, on the 15th day of August India achieved freedom and at this time education was imparted practically in all the secondary schools through the medium of the mother tongue. So, the mother tongue acquired double status in 1947, as a subject of study and as the medium of instruction. At present the regional languages have the same place in education as was previously occupied by English in the secondary education and higher education. The constitution of free India came in to existence on 26th January, 1950 and Gujarati has been accepted as a regional language and the mother tongue of the majority of the people of the Gujarat state.

After this the problem cropped up as to which language should be made the national language of India and which one should be adopted as medium of instruction in school. With regard to this problem after independence, specific steps were taken in this direction and Secondary Education Commission was appointed.

Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) was appointed with Mudaliar, A. L., vice-chancellor of Madras University as Chairman. This commission occupies a prominent place in the history of post-independent era in secondary education.

Regarding the teaching of languages, the commission suggested that during their secondary education period the students should study at least three languages, a mother tongue, or regional languages by way of medium of instruction, the national language and one foreign language.

1.4 THREE LANGUAGE FORMULA

The Central Advisory Board of Education, the policy making body of India, did not agree with the language proposal of Mudaliar commission. So, in 1956, it examined at length the complex problem of the teaching of languages in relation to the needs of the country and the requirements of the constitution. It devised a formula known as the 'Three Language Formula' which was some what simplified and approved by the conference of Chief Ministers held in 1961.

According to this formula, every student in a secondary school has to study the following three languages.

1. a. Mother tongue, or
 - b. Regional Language, or
 - c. A composite course of mother tongue and regional language, or
 - d. A composite course of mother tongue and a classical language, or
 - e. A composite course of regional language and a classical language.
2. English or Modern European Language.
3. a. Hindi (for Non-Hindi areas), or
 - b. Another Modern Indian language (for Hindi speaking Areas).

In effect, the formula established equality, with regard to the study of languages between the Hindi and the non Hindi areas by recommending that the third language, Hindi, which pupils in the Non-Hindi areas have to learn, another Indian language (besides Hindi and English) should be studied by pupils in the Hindi areas.

The Education Commission (1964-66), did not agree to the existing three language formula. It evolved a new modified or gratitude three language formula to include,

- The mother tongue or regional language

- The official language of the union or the associate official language of the union so long as it exists; and
- A modern 'Indian or foreign language'.

1.4.1 THREE LANGUAGE FORMULA AND THE GUJARAT STATE

It would be worth while to recollect the views expressed by the Government of Gujarat while presenting the memorandum on education to the Education Commission (1964-66).

Gujarat state has accepted the three language formula since 1948. According to that formula, the first place is given to the mother tongue or regional language. Then comes the link language or Hindi, which is to be studied by all the pupils as the second language. Last comes English which is to be studied as the third language and is intended mainly for comprehension rather than expression. The existing position in Gujarat is thus in full conformity with the three language formula.

The views of the Gujarat state regarding the teaching of languages may be summarized as follows:

- The three language formula should be accepted in full to gather with all its implications.
- It should be clearly realised and accepted without reservation that English is to be learnt and to be taught only as a third language, and not as a first or second language, unless the mother tongue of the child concerned happens to be English.

The mother tongue is only natural medium of instruction at all stages of education. In the Gujarat state, Gujarati is taught as mother tongue in primary and secondary schools. The mother tongue - Gujarati is also the medium of instruction up to graduate level in most of the universities of Gujarat.

1.5 GUJARATI LANGUAGE : ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT

Gujarati, a modern Indian language, is about a thousand year old. The vocabulary and structure are mainly based on Sanskrit. In course of centuries it has incorporated and assimilated many words from sister dialect (Sanskrit). Foreign influences on its vocabulary have been considered. Desai (1967), stated that, "Many Words of Arabic, Persian and Turkish origin was first through speech and later through writing, especially during the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries. Words of Dutch, French and Portuguese origin had also flowed in to Gujarati through contacts with Europeans in seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. During the British rule of nearly three hundred years, numerous English words came in to Gujarati language and currents this processes is still-going on. The effect of all these foreign influences may be clearly observed on its vocabulary, grammar and syntax". The author further added that there was practically no Gujarati prose in written form nor much variety of poetic style till the end of eighteenth century. Durgaram Mehta (1809-1891), and Narmad (1833-1886), started writing Gujarati prose, but in the hands of Navalram Pandya (1836-1888), and Manilal Drivedi (1858-1888), Gujarati prose attained a higher literacy level. Balwant Ray Thakor (1869-1952), introduced sonnet form and Blank verse in his writing of poems. Kant (1868-1923), introduced Khand Kavya. Jahaveri (1914), stated that "The Gujarati language is the mother tongue of ten millions people in western Indian. It comes in rank after Hindi, Punjabi, Bengali and Marathi".

The origin of Gujarati language is traced to Sanskrit - later on Puranic Sanskrit as distinguished from the language of the Vedas, which is called Maha Sanskrit. The Gautam Buddha, who preferred to preach to nations in the spoken tongue, the Pali language was recognised as the spoken tongue of Northern India. In the centuries following the Christian Era, the Pali became gradually replaced by the Prakrits, the spoken dialects of the people. The heroines of Kalidas were speaking Prakrit and Dushyant makes love in Sanskrit. Some

says Gujarati comes through sauraseni which was prevalent near Mathura, from where it passed on to west, i.e. to the shores of the Indus and to Marwad and Gujarat and thus related to Punjabi, Sindhi and Marwad. Others think that it is closely related to Maharasti group. Any how one thing is certain that in its earliest form where it begins to resemble the present dialect, it is met with in what it called Apabhramsa. The Apabrahmsa form of language has been specially recognised in his Grammar by Hemachardracharya". Author further added that, "Truly speaking Gujarati characters are borrowed from Sanskrit or rather are Sanskrit themselves with a slight modification, the most outstanding being that the top line of each letter is done away with in Gujarati. Thus the Gujarati is easy and does not present many obstacles to the student. As a conversational language, it is concise, simple and well adapted for social and domestic intercourse. Though not very copious, it is flowing and forceful. There fore, investigator is interested in the area of Gujarati language teaching and proposed the present study.

In Baroda city responsibility of primary education has been shared by different organisations, namely Private Aided, Private Unaided, Baroda Municipal Corporation managed schools, Central Schools, School following CBSE syllabus. This study has been focused on status of Gujarati language teaching in upper primary schools of Municipal School Board.

1.6 PRIMARY EDUCATION IN THE SCHOOLS MANAGED BY MUNICIPAL SCHOOL BOARD

The attempt of free compulsory and Universal primary education is not new for Baroda. This was first tried by Maharaja Sayaji Rao Gaekwad III of Baroda state in 1906. Sir Sayaji Rao was a firm believer in universal education. Maharaja expanded primary education on voluntary basis from 1881 to 1892. As an experimental measure he introduced compulsory education in Amareli Taluka (1906) which was most backward

area of the Baroda state. The honour of first introducing compulsory education goes to this ruler. Baroda compulsory primary education Act was first passed in 1906. The state of Gujarat came in to existence on 1st May 1960. Prior to this date Gujarat formed a division of the Bombay state.

The Municipal School Board was formed on 9th November 1953. With a goal of providing primary education to the children of Baroda in general and the children from the lower strata of the society in particular. The Municipal School Board (M.S.B) has been striving to achieve this goal by providing primary education through Gujarati, Marathi, Hindi and Sindhi language as the medium of instruction in its schools. It consists of fifteen members in which twelve members are elected and three nominated members by the government of Gujarat.

The Municipal School Board Baroda runs 134 primary Schools. Out of which 108 are Gujarati medium, twelve are Marathi medium, ten are Hindi Medium, three Sindhi Medium and 1 deaf and dumb, Total 1454 primary teachers are employed in these schools. Total numbers of students are 61,733. These schools consist of Kumarshala, Kanyashala and Mishrashala.

The Municipal Schools of Baroda managed by Administrative officer (AO) Assistant Administrative officer (AAO) and supervisors to maintain the quality of education.

The chairman and deputy chairman of Municipal School Board are visiting the schools occasionally and give guidance to the principal for smooth running of the schools.

In order to achieve the educational goals, various activities has been planned for imbining in children, a flavour of patriotism, pride for country to achieve mental and spiritual growth, various activities such as flag hosting, march past, sports, scout guide, dance, drama, action songs, Balmela and celebration of different festivals.

With a view to make the teachers aware of the modern educational trends and to have a permanent impact of educational work among children, Minimum Levels of Learning (MLLs) has been implemented in 134 Municipal Primary Schools, mainly to enhance the of quality education at primary level.

In spite of such efforts, the teachers of the schools have to play a dual role of a teacher and a parent as the parent, of most of the students of these schools are either illiterate or have a very little educational awareness. As a result of this, teachers role in and outside the school assume a greater importance. On the other hand, the students who are admitted to the schools run by Municipal School Board have also to perform different roles. At home, they are asked by their parents to help them in their work, to take care of their younger brother or sister and sometimes even they are send to work.

In this chapter, the discussion on importance of language, mother tongue, origin and development mother tongue, origin and development of Gujarati language, administrative structure of Municipal School Board and its activity at primary level also have been discussed.

In the chapter to follow, a detailed discussion on the studies available in the area of language teaching have been reported, with a view to drawing the implications for the present piece of research work.