

Children Overcome Learning Disadvantages through Mother-Tongue Based Multi-Lingual Education Programme

Authors : Binay Pattanayak

Abstract : More than 9 out of every 10 children in Jharkhand struggle to understand the texts and teachers in public schools. The medium of learning in the schools is Hindi, which is very different in structure and vocabulary than those in children's home languages. Hence around 3 out of 10 children enrolled in early grades drop out in these schools. The state realized the cause of children's high dropout in 2013-14 when the M-TALL, the language research shared the findings of a state-wide socio-linguistic study. The study findings suggested that there was a great need for initiating a mother-tongue based multilingual education (MTB-MLE) programme for the state in early grades starting from pre-school level. Accordingly, M-TALL in partnership with department of education designed two learning packages: Bhasha Puliya pre-school education programme for 3-6-year-old children for their school readiness with bilingual picture dictionaries in 9 tribal and regional languages. This was followed by a plan for MTB-MLE programme for early primary grades. For this textbooks in five tribal and two regional languages were developed under the guidance of the author. These books were printed and circulated in the 1000 schools of the state for each child. Teachers and community members were trained for facilitating culturally sensitive mother-tongue based learning activities in and around the schools. The mother-tongue based approach of learning has worked very effectively in enabling them to acquire the basic literacy and numeracy skills in own mother-tongues. Using this basic early grade reading skills, these children are able to learn Hindi and English systematically. Community resource groups were constituted in each school for promoting storytelling, singing, painting, dancing, acting, riddles, humor, sanitation, health, nutrition, protection, etc. and were trained. School academic calendar was designed in each school to enable the community resource persons to visit the school as per the learning plan to assist children and teacher in facilitating rich cultural activities in mother-tongue. This enables children to take part in plethora of learning activities and acquire desired knowledge, skills and interest in mother-tongues. Also in this process, it is attempted to promote 21st Century learning skills by enabling children to apply their new knowledge and skills to look at their local issues and address those in a collective manner through team work, innovations and leadership.

Keywords : community resource groups, learning, MTB-MLE, multilingual, socio-linguistic survey

Conference Title : ICLLT 2018 : International Conference on Language Learning and Teaching

Conference Location : Dublin, Ireland

Conference Dates : January 30-31, 2018