

Orissa - MLE status report

The objective of NMRC is to function as a national resource centre for dissemination and sharing of value added information on MLE and providing consultative help and guidance for planning, implementation and trouble shooting of MLE programs in different states in India in coordination with MHRD Resource team. As a resource centre, one of the key functions of NMRC is also to facilitate coordination between different MLE activities in the states and at the national level providing documentation and information resources, networking of various MLE interest groups, institutions and individuals, and establishing linkages to optimize effective utilization of expertise and materials for MLE programs.

In light of this objective, an NMRC team made a two day visit to Bhubaneshwar June 17, 2009 to June 19, 2009 in order to prepare a background report of MLE activity in Orissa.

During the visit, the team met the following functionaries:

1. Mr. Nikunj Bihari Dhal I.A.S - State Project Director,
2. Dr. Mahendra Mishra, State Tribal Co-ordinator. OPEPA
3. Mr. Shadrak Omol, UNICEF chief, Orissa,
4. Mr. Amarjeet Jena (Education Officer - UNICEF).

The report is based on the following documents and sources:

1. OPEPA website- www.opepa.in
2. A paper on Multilingual Education in Orissa: Issues and Intervention.
3. OPEPA paper on Guidelines for Opening of Pilot MLE schools.
4. Strategy Paper on Tribal Education in Orissa by Dr. Mahendra K. Mishra.
5. Report on third MLE material Production Workshop (OPEPA Training facility, 2006)
6. Vision 2020- Specialised paper on Education of Scheduled Tribe Children by Prof. K. K. Mohanty and Dr. M.N. Kundu)
7. Final report of the workshop on 'Training on Attitudinal Issues of Tribal Area Teachers' conducted by OPEPA.

8. Second half-yearly monitoring report on SSA prepared by Dr. P. M. Institute of Advanced Studies in Education, Samabalpur for the period (October 1, 2007- March 31, 2008).
9. Second half-yearly monitoring report on SSA prepared by Nabakrushna Choudhary Centre for Development Studies, for the period (October 1, 2007- March 31, 2008).
10. Report on National Seminar on Multilingual Education (February 9, 2008- February 11, 2009) organized by OPEPA, Department of School and Mass Education in collaboration with UNICEF.
11. Presentation on Community, Culture and Curriculum, Policy and Practice on Multilingual Education in Orissa by Dr. Mahendra K. Mishra in National Seminar on Critical Issues in Tribal Development (2008).
12. 'Multilingual Education in Orissa' by NCERT (2009)
13. Presentation on 'Government Initiatives for Quality Elementary Education in Orissa in the 'National Consultation Workshop (February 2005).

Policies and Objectives: The state of Orissa has an Education Act of 1969 to guide its educational programmes. However, the Orissa Education Act of 1969 and the subsequent amendments do not address the issue of 'medium of instruction' in education. The Department of School and Mass Education, in 2002 prepared Vision 2020 document which emphasised the importance of 'mother tongue' education for the tribal children.

“The syllabi of pre-primary and primary education of tribals should be different from those of the non tribal, and while designing it due importance must be given to their rational processes and logical thinking operative in tribal mind. At this stage the medium of instruction need be the mother tongue of tribals, which may be substituted by the regional and national language through a process of gradualism” (Vision 2020, p.6).

In the Vision 2020 document, there was a gradual acknowledgment that MLE programme was necessitated by the low tribal literacy, high rates of drop-outs and non-enrolment and low achievement of the tribal children. (Vision2020, 2003; National Seminar on Multilingual Education, 2006¹; Mishra, 2008). Then subsequently MLE was termed as an important strategy for increasing enrolment and retention of students in tribal areas of Orissa. The objective of MLE is in line with the broader national goal of 'equitable quality education'.

¹ The seminar was organized by OPEPA, School and Mass Education Department (Orissa) in collaboration with UNICEF in April 2006.

OVERVIEW OF MLE PROGRAMME IN ORISSA

History of MLE in Orissa: As per 2001 Census, the Scheduled Tribe (ST) population of the State of Orissa is 81 lakh. This constitutes 22.1 percent of the total population of the State and 9.7 per cent of the total tribal population of the country. The state holds 3rd and 11th rank among the Indian States in terms of ST population and the proportion of ST population to the total population of the State respectively. The State has a total of sixty two (62) Scheduled Tribes.

Before MLE was implemented in the state, same textbooks written in Oriya script were followed across the districts of Orissa. The primers in tribal language were first developed by DPEP in 1996. In 2005, a workshop on Multilingual Education with special focus on tribal children was held in Centre Institute for Indian Languages (CIIL), Mysore (October 25-27, 2005). Subsequently several pilot projects involving material production and training and aimed at promoting multilingualism in the classrooms were launched in Orissa, Andhra Pradesh and Assam.

In light of low literacy rates among the tribes a National Conference was conducted by OPEPA in 2006 and the findings of the conference were adopted by the government as a programme. In July 2006, the Tribal Advisory Committee headed by the Chief Minister of Orissa provisionally declared the introducing of tribal languages as the medium of instruction in primary schools including Santali as the scheduled language (using Ol Chikki script). In 2006-2007, the state SSA initiated MLE programme in ten languages for a period of 5 years on a pilot basis which was based on the principles of NCF 2005 (Mishra, 2007). MLE was started in 185² schools in ten languages based on the 100 % monolingual situation (Guidelines for Opening of Pilot MLE schools, 2007). These languages are Santali, Saura, Koya, Munda, Kui, Kuvi, Oram, Kishan, Bonda and Juang. Cultural material was collected by the community members and tribal teachers and the curriculum development workshops were held. DIET faculties were identified for academic support. Teachers and language resource persons selected from the ten tribal communities were trained on MLE and national Curriculum Framework 2005 in the context of educating the tribal children.

“... based on the principles of NCF 2005 thematic approach was adopted for preparation of curriculum and instructional materials, and that the community teachers and the language resource persons from the respective languages were identified through a series of visioning workshop. They were then oriented on MLE approach”³ (Mishra, 2008).

² For the list of the schools refer Appendix 1

³ Quoted by Mahendra Mishra in ‘Strategy Paper on Tribal Education in Orissa’ (OPEPA).

Current Status: Currently MLE is being implemented in 10 languages in the state and in 2009 the model has been up scaled to grade III. Books in *Santhali* have been written in *Santhali* (Ol Chiki) script, and for other tribal languages Oriya script is used. The 10 tribal languages are *Adivasi Oriya, Banjara, Rajkoya (Gondi), Kolavar (Kolami), Konda, Koya, Kuvi* and *Sora (Savara)*.

The MLE districts in which MLE is being implemented are-

- Gajapati - Saura
- Kondhmal – Kui
- Keonjhar – Juang
- Malkangiri – Bonda, Koya
- Mayurbhanj – Munda, Santali
- Rayagada – Kuvi, Saura
- Sambalpur – Kishan
- Sundergarh – Oram, Munda

The number of schools which be added to the existing number of schools in 2008-2009 is 265 making the total number of MLE schools in Orissa 450. (Source: Presentation by N.B. Dhal and M.K. Mishra, ‘Multilingual Education and Other Initiatives in Orissa’).

Curriculum Development

The following Workshops were conducted in Orissa for preparation of Curriculum and Instructional materials during 2006-07 (Multilingual Education in Orissa-Issues and intervention, 2007; p.8)

1. A state level Seminar on Education of Tribal Children (April 2006): Issues and Interventions. In this seminar a cross-section of stakeholders participated and it was in this seminar that Multilingual Education will be adopted in Orissa considering the educational needs of tribal children of Orissa
2. First MLE Workshop on preparation of curriculum and identifying the themes as per National Curriculum Framework 2005 syllabus (July - August, 2006).
3. Second MLE workshop (September 2006): preparation of Instructional materials in ten languages.
4. Third MLE workshop (November 2006): Preparation of Instructional materials

5. Fourth MLE workshop (February 2007): preparation of Teacher Training Manual and Master Training Manual for the Resource persons.
6. Fifth MLE workshop (April, 2007): Preparation of math book for Class I children
7. Sixth MLE workshop (May 2007), Monitoring workshop for field Functionaries

Curriculum Plan

Each academic year is divided in to three terms:

Term –I April to July

Term –II August to November

Term –III December to March

Each term is divided in to ten weeks. Each week represents one theme. There are 30 theme webs for thirty days and two major theme webs for a week. Each theme includes language and mathematics. Language theme and EVS theme web which also covers health/physical education, moral education, games and sports and songs and dance⁴.

Themes are taken from the local context and used for teaching of Language, Math and EVS and involve use of Big book and small books. The five steps to read Big book are

- i. Teacher reads
- ii. teacher & 1 student read
- iii. teacher & all students reads
- iv. 1 student reads
- v. all students read.

The use of Big and small big have given in the table below.

Class	Books	Semester I	Semester II	Semester III

⁴ Refer to the presentation 'Multilingual Education and other initiatives in Orissa' (Singh and Mishra, 2008) by for detailed illustrations on theme webs.

Class I	Big book (for teachers)	30	30	30
	1 small book (replica of big book)	30	30	30
	1 small book (based on the theme of Big book)	30	30	30
Class II	Big book (for teachers)	7	7	7
	1 small book (replica of big book)	7	7	7
	1 small book (based on the theme of Big book)	7	7	7
Class III	Big book (for teachers)	5	5	5
	1 small book (replica of big book)	5	5	5
	1 small book (based on the theme of Big book)	5	5	5

Mishra (2007) has elaborated two strategies for learning which are followed in the MLE schools in Orissa.

I. Two mega strategies:

- i. Skill based development: Confidence and competence through practice with engagement.
- ii. Meaning based contextualised learning emphasising creativity and rooted in learner's background and culture.

II. Two Track Strategies

Track I CALPS

TRACK II BICS

(Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency Skill)

(Basic Interpersonal Communication Skill)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correctness and accuracy • New knowledge to be imbibed • Use of Alphabet charts, alphabet books | <p>Meaning and communication</p> <p>Experience of the child to be explored</p> <p>Use of Big book, small book, listening story, experience story, EVS (nature study), games and sports, songs, tales, riddles etc.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number chart, number book, math book | |

There is a difference in when and how L2 and L3 is introduced in both Orissa and Andhra Pradesh's existing MLE models

Implementation

- **Materials prepared:**

- i. Alphabet charts and books
- ii. Number charts and books
- iii. Theme based Big and small books
- iv. Textbooks for class I to class III in tribal languages
- v. Picture Dictionaries from Mother tongue to Oriya (for both students and teachers)
- vi. Grammar books and dictionaries have also been developed by Tribal Welfare Department
- vii. Teacher training manuals

- **Teachers training:**

The different teacher training programmes and workshops conducted by OPEPA for successful implementation of MLE programme in Orissa are:

Workshop on Training on Attitudinal Issues of Teachers in Tribal Areas (Rupantar): The purpose of this workshop was to make “the teachers rethink their traditional teaching practices and styles, question their personal beliefs and assumptions which they initially had, to remove some of these prejudices and think of ways of making themselves more endearing to the tribal children and their culture” (Final report of the workshop on training on Attitudinal issues in teachers in tribal regions, p. 4). The guiding belief was that this change in attitude would reflect in enrolment, retention and greater achievement.

- **Community participation:**

- i. The first major participation of the community has been in ‘curriculum construction’. The cultural themes in MLE textbooks have been selected in consultation with representatives of the community. The validation of the knowledge represented in the books has also been ensured by taking the prepared material to the community for their feedback and validation.
- ii. District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) has played an important role in strengthening community participation in both MLE and non-MLE schools through community mobilisation, community construction, formation of Village Education Committee (VEC) and Mother Teacher Associations (MTAs) and their training. DPEP has promoted use of School Improvement Grant (SIG) and Teaching-Learning Material (TLM) grant through community (Mishra, 2008).
- iii. National Program for Education of Girls at Elementary Level (NPEGEL) for girls has also played in encouraging participation of the women members of the community in functioning of schools.
- iv. ‘Srujan’ is a community based child centered, teacher' supportive, culturally appropriate program for retention and achievement of the tribal child (Singh and Mishra, 2008). Events like ‘story telling’, songs, dance, art and craft, quizzes and debates are part of Srujan. The community participation is by way of involvement of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI) and ‘Jati Mahasabha’.

- **Monitoring and Evaluation:**

Steps have been identified for the purpose of monitoring and evaluating the effective implementation of MLE in the state (Mishra, 2008; Singh and Mishra, 2008). The steps involve capacity building of the Block Resource Coordinators (BRC)/ Cluster Resource Coordinator) CRCs and headmasters to understand the concept of MLE and the process of implementation, monthly academic sharing meeting of MLE teachers and getting the community to take responsibility to provide support to school (VECs and MTAs).

Evaluation studies have been conducted on the various programmes of SSA, Orissa however the role of mother tongue in education as a medium of instruction or a subject has not yet been examined. For e.g., Monitoring report on the SSA in Bolangir, Bargarh and Sambalpur (period between October 1, 2007 to March 31, 2008) by Dr. P. M. Institute of Advanced Studies in Education, Sambalpur, and Monitoring report on the SSA in Gajapati, Rayagada, Mayurbanjh and Keojhar in 2008 (period between October 1, 2007 to March 31, 2008) by Nabakrushna Choudhury Centre for Development Studies (sponsored by Dept. of Elementary Education and

Literacy, MHRD, India) focus on SSA programmes such as progress in physical infrastructural development, distribution of free textbooks etc. however the functioning of MLE schools in Sambalpur (one of the districts where MLE schools have been started) has not been evaluated.

National and state level seminars and conferences organized by OPEPA in collaboration with other state government departments and organizations like UNICEF have played an important role in reflecting on MLE implementation in the state, developing further plans and in advocacy of MLE at the state and national level.

A national conference of tribal education with special focus on multilingual education was organised by SSA in collaboration with UNICEF in 2008⁵. Experts on MLE from different parts of the globe took part as resource persons. Besides the MLE teachers from the community, community leaders, District Institute for Education and Training (DIET) faculties, and many eminent persons took part in the seminar. Assessment the activities taken up so far and sharing it with the experts and thinkers to improve in out venture was a major purpose. The purpose was also to converge with a wider range in the country where the similar situation co-exists. Issues like ‘Why MLE’?, ‘Linguistic Human Rights’ were discussed and experiences of different states shared.

PROBLEMS

Based on documents, discussions with OPEPA officials and school observation, following problems have been identified.

- i. Inadequate number of mother tongue teachers in some of the identical languages
- ii. Delay in developing appropriate textbooks, TLM, addressing teacher training, capacity building of monitoring staff etc.
- iii. An appropriate model has not been developed in districts like Koraput where ‘multi language’ classroom situation exists.

Mishra and Singh (2008) have identified the following challenges in implementation of MLE in Orissa.

- i. Supervisors and inspectors are critical, apathetic and don’t understand the purpose and meaning of MLE
- ii. 1: 40 PTR is a challenge to MLE schools since the schools are in tribal areas with less number of children in primary classes
- iii. It is in remote areas having at least two teachers in five classes

⁵ Refer Final report on the ‘National Seminar on Multilingual Education held in February 2008 for detailed discussion if the issues addressed.

- iv. Teachers lack skill and knowledge to handle multi grade /multilingual classroom
(Source:

RECOMMENDATIONS/SUGGESTIONS:

- Organizing training workshops for tribal teachers that focus on both conceptual understanding of MLE (e.g., theoretical concepts like BICS and CALPS, Track I and Track II) and also the strategies to be used in MLE classrooms.
- Orissa being one of the early states in India to have started the MLE programme can help other states like Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand by sharing the MLE material developed by them for the tribal groups which are common to these states.
- More evaluation studies may also be recommended as they would help in identifying any gaps that may exist in the current implementation.
- More activities to ensure community participation for sustained support.
- The MLE programme in the state may also be interpreted as early exit programme whereas the international research is quite clear in suggestion that late exit programmes are more beneficial.

References

- OPEPA website- www.opepa.in
- A paper on Multilingual Education in Orissa: Issues and Intervention.
- OPEPA paper on Guidelines for Opening of Pilot MLE schools.
- Mishra M. K. (nd). *Strategy Paper on Tribal Education in Orissa*
- Presentation on ‘Multilingual Education and other Initiatives in Orissa’ by N.B. Dhal and M. K. Mishra
- OPEPA Training Facility (2006). *Report on third MLE material Production Workshop.*
- Mohanty, K. K., & Kundu, M. N. (nd) *Vision 2020- Specialised paper on Education of Scheduled Tribe Children.* Department of School and Mass Education.

- OPEPA (nd). *Final report of the workshop on 'Training on Attitudinal Issues of Tribal Area Teachers.*
- Report on National Seminar on Multilingual Education (February 9, 2008- February 11, 2009) organized by OPEPA, Department of School and Mass Education in collaboration with UNICEF.
- Presentation on Community, Culture and Curriculum, Policy and Practice on Multilingual Education in Orissa by Dr. Mahendra K. Mishra in National Seminar on Critical Issues in Tribal Development (2008).
- NCERT (2009). *Multilingual Education in Orissa*

Annexure 1

List of Pilot schools (Singh and Mishra, 2008)

- ▶ Saora 30 schools (20 gajapati+10 Gunupur)
- ▶ Munda 20 schools(10Sundargarh+10 Mayurbhanj)
- ▶ Santal 20 schools (Mayurbhanj)
- ▶ Koya 20 schools (Malkangiri)
- ▶ Bonda 5 schools (Khairput 5 schools in Malkangiri)
- ▶ Juang 10 schoolsBanslap andHCPur in Keonjhar)
- ▶ Oroam 20 schools(Sundargarh)
- ▶ Kishan 20 schools (Sambalpur)
- ▶ Kui 20 schools (Kondhmal)
- ▶ Kuvi 20 schools (Rayagada)