

## Mother-Tongue as the Medium of Instruction in Elementary and Secondary Schools of Odisha

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### Abstract

Language is the tool of cognition & communication, as such, it has been crucial to the progress of human culture and civilization. India is a huge nation with a diverse population that uses many different languages. Everyone, regardless of ethnicity, religion, or location, is affected in some way by the language they speak. Words, gestures, & tone used together may represent a wide range of emotion, & language allows us communicate our emotions, wishes, as questions about world that is around us. The majority of the population of Odisha speaks Oriya, however there are a number of smaller communities where other languages are spoken. Around eighty-two percent of Odisha's population is fluent in the language. Thus, it is the state language of Odisha and one of two official languages of the neighboring state of Jharkhand. Because of its extensive literary tradition, Odia has been recognized as India's sixth classical language. The odias' native language is odia. Mother languages are so termed because an Oriya kid is first exposed to the language while sitting on his mother's lap. It's language the kid uses to imagine and plan their future in. Therefore, it is impossible to overstate the significance for the child's mother language in their education. Consequently, Oriya is used as medium of teaching from pre-school all the way through high school in Odisha.

**KEYWORDS** - Mother Tongue, Odia, Medium of Instruction

### I. INTRODUCTION

The importance of mother tongue in the educational process is gradually recognized throughout the country. Now almost all the school subjects except English are taught in Odia in our state. Of course, there are exceptions in English medium schools, central schools, Odisha Adarsh Vidyalayas, schools managed by linguistic minority groups etc. where the medium of instruction are other than Odia. But in all the state govt. managed or aided schools, instruction medium is mainly Odia.

English was instruction medium in every level of education during British rule. When we get our independence on the 15th August, 1947, the position took a turn. Our national leaders and educationists felt position of mother-tongue. Therefore in our constitution they made provision for the mother tongue to become instruction medium.

Article 350 (A) in constitution of India states "The state should make every effort to ensure that children from linguistic minority groups have access to high-quality primary school programmes that include teaching in mother language." It shows as policy of central & state governments is to safeguard develop and rich the different languages of the country. As an intelligent citizen of the country, each of us has also to try developing our mother-tongue.

### II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study usage of mother-tongue in classroom instruction from primary grade to secondary grade.

2. To study the need of mother-tongue in teaching learning process.

### **III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The majority of this paper's supporting evidence comes from secondary sources such as publications, the web, & author's own personal experience.

### **IV. ODISIA LANGUAGE IN THE SCHOOL EDUCATION IN ODISHA**

1835 was pivotal year in Indian education. The famous „Macaulay“s minute“ accelerated the growth of English education in India. The place of English was further strengthened when Lord William Bentinck issued a proclamation as: funds for education will be implemented in English education only. Macaulay“s policy was also endorsed by Lord Aukland in the year 1839. When this was the set of condition in Bengal presidency, the controversy over instruction medium continued for sometime in Bombay presidency. Three languages: mother tongue, Sanskrit and English, were assigned their proper places mother-tongue as instruction medium, Sanskrit as classical language & English like an modern foreign language. It was recommended by Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) that regional language, or "Mother tongue," be used as a means of instruction all through secondary school stage, with the caveat that special facility would have to be accessible to linguistic minorities.

“Emotional integration committee was of the view that usage of regional language like an media of instruction was very much essential so for as national integration was concerned. In 1962, the national integration council agreed with this position, saying that shifting to a different language in classroom was justified less with ethnic or political opinions than by purely academic goal of improving students' ability to learn. It was at proposal of secondary education commission that mother tongue was finally adopted as means of instruction in a number of states. In the Indian state of Odisha, Oriya language is widely used in the classroom. N.P.E 1986 has also accepted odia as instruction medium at all stages of education in odisha and mother-tongue MIL (Odia) has been made a compulsory subject up to secondary stage. Odia has also been accepted as the official language of the state, though much progress could not been made in that direction.

### **V. IMPORTANCE OF MOTHER-TONGUE**

Gandhiji suggested that native tongue should replace English as the language of teaching in schools. The child's ability to comprehend, communicate, reason, and think may all benefit by exposure to the mother language. The child's innate ability to think creatively and write well may also flourish in his mother language. Therefore, it was a central goal of M.K. Gandhi's Basic Education to educate children via their native languages. In his educational philosophy Jewel of Utkal, Gopabandhu Das gave importance to the mother tongue. During those days, English was the medium of instruction even in the secondary school stage. Gopabandhu Das emphasized that through mother-tongue the child can assimilate facts well and can express his ideas and feelings in a better manner. As such, the medium of instruction in Satyabadi School was in mother-tongue (Odia) but not in English.

Children often pick up their first words and phrases in their mother's native dialect. The kid will develop into a contributing member of society if the mother language is taught with proper care. Children from linguistic minorities are guaranteed access to quality primary school education in their home language under Article 350 (A) of treaty under discussion. Several groups and individuals in the field of education have proposed

using the student's mother tongue as the primary instructional medium from an early age. Every subject has certain objectives to attain. Mother tongue also aims at attaining certain major objectives. The main objective of teaching mother-tongue is to develop the personality of the student which is also the main of education in general. But mother-tongue contributes more in this direction than any other subjects. University of Toronto professor Jim Cummins has emphasized the value of speaking one's native language in his writings. Cummins claims as studies have proved the significant impact a child's native language has on their growth and development. Children who learn two or more languages have a better grasp on how to make the most of linguistic diversity. Extensive studies have shown that a youngster who only learns one language does not acquire a sufficient grasp of that language. A child's ability to read and write in any language benefits from a strong foundation in his or her mother tongue.

#### **VI. FINDINGS**

The powers of feeling, memory, imagination and thought of the child are regulated and developed as he learns his mother tongue. Mother tongue makes possible the mental development of the child so teaching and learning of mother tongue is quite essential for the widening of mind and enrichment of knowledge. Now almost all the school subjects except English are taught media of mother-tongue is essential. So a perfect skill and competence in use of mother-tongue is essential for every child to acquire exact knowledge. It is only mother tongue that satisfies all the requirements of a good medium of instruction and that is why it's been recognized as instruction medium till secondary stage/ higher secondary stage in all the states and also in the colleges in many of the states of India. It is a common experience that a child gets a clear and exact understanding of the subject matters, facts, theories and principles of the subject concerned, if it is taught through his mother-tongue. Mother tongue helps in the development of many human qualities as well as an awareness of the ideals and values of the society in the child. Mother tongue is most appropriate medium for communication with the neighbors, community members, people of the particular region. This helps in developing of co-operation, understanding & fellow feeling amongst children. A child is able to acquire self education, as he can easily read and understand the books written in his mother tongue. This gives him immense pleasure well as provides a good leisure time activity. Mother tongue also helps the mind to carry on various mental operations. The child can recall and describe the memories of past, express the present attitude and feelings in a nice and judicious manner through his mother tongue, so a mastery over the mother tongue is essential for every child.

#### **VII. CONCLUSION**

A Good knowledge of mother-tongue is essential for every citizen for a successful survival of the democracy. Everybody of us should have a self pride and self-satisfaction for our mother tongue. Democracy needs that every citizen should express his opinion clearly and unmistakably. This only possible through the mother tongue. That is why Prof. Raghuvir has correctly mentioned "A democracy cannot function in an alien language". Being fluent in the mother tongue, which is also known as the native language, benefits the child in many ways. It connects him to his culture, ensures better cognitive development and aids in the learning of other languages. Mother tongue has a very powerful impact in the formation of the individual. Our first language the beautiful sounds which one hears and gets familiar with before being born while in the womb, has

such an important role in shaping our thoughts and emotions.

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