



ROADMAP FOR MLE PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION NEP 2020 & NIPUN BHARAT

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Approach Paper



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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

First language (L1): This is the language that the child knows well, i.e. understands and speaks when she first joins ECE or primary school. This is often the mother tongue, or the language learnt first at home. We will use the terms *first language/strong language/home language* interchangeably. We will also use the abbreviated form L1 to denote this first language of the child. Examples of children's L1s include local/regional languages like Sambalpuri, Wagdi or Tulu or a state official language used as medium of instruction (MoI), e.g. Tamil, Gujarati or Odiya.

Second (L2) and third languages (L3): These are additional languages that are less familiar to the child when she first joins ECE/primary school. These are languages that the child is still learning to understand and speak.

- A **second language** can be the regional or state official language for a child who knows only a home or local language, e.g. Standard Hindi for a Gondi-speaking child in Chhattisgarh; Kannada for a Sholiga speaking child in Karnataka; Odiya for a child whose home language is Telugu in the districts of Malkangiri and Koraput in South Odisha bordering Andhra Pradesh; Hindi for a Bagheli-speaking child in Rewa district of Madhya Pradesh etc. Young children could have some or very limited exposure to the second language outside school, at home or in the marketplace.
- A **third language** is usually a language that is unfamiliar to the child and she has no understanding of the language when she joins the foundational stage. Children may also have limited exposure to this language outside of school. For most children in India, English would be a third language. A third Indian language taught at school under the three-language formula would also come under this category.

Medium of Instruction (MoI): MoI is the language that is officially used in textbooks and other teaching- learning materials and assessments. Some states and metros that are linguistically diverse provide several languages as MoIs. In a large number of schools, teachers actually use a different local/regional language which child can understand to explain textbook content and for interaction with students. For example, a teacher using Surjapuri language in Purnia district of Bihar while the MoI is standard Hindi.

Variants of a language: Most languages have variants, often called dialects, that are spoken in different parts of a state or across states. For example, Gondi has several variants across the states of Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh. There are at least three recognized variants of Gondi within Chhattisgarh as well. Tamil spoken in a particular area could be quite different from the written version used in textbooks.

Linguistic distance between languages: Stated simply, this means how different are two languages from one another. Can the speakers of one language understand speakers of the other? Are there many common words? If the languages are completely unrelated, like Hindi and

English, then they are linguistically very distant.

Dominant language: These are languages used for official purpose, including as MoI in education. This could be a regional or state language and an international language like English. Such a language is used for wider communication and also important for employment.

Non-dominant languages: These are the languages that are not used in any formal domain and not considered appropriate for use in education. They may be written or unwritten.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The new National Education Policy (NEP 2020), launched by the Government of India last year, has laid profound focus on inclusion of children's home/familiar languages at the foundational stage for achieving foundational literacy and numeracy. Moving further, the Ministry of Education recently launched the National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy (NIPUN Bharat), for ensuring that every child in the country attains foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN) by the end of Grade 3, by 2026-27. In order to achieve the FLN targets, the NIPUN Bharat guidelines have specifically highlighted the power of multilingualism and the need for use of children's home languages.

There is widespread consensus that bringing children's home languages into the formal teaching and learning process in primary grades is crucial for inclusive education and improving equitable student learning. The best approach is to use children's first (home) language as the medium of instruction for several years, while gradually introducing additional languages, viz. the state language (if that is not the children's first language) and English. Language contexts in the country, however, are complex and a variety of approaches are needed based on the sociolinguistic situation in a particular region. In a situation where children's home language cannot be used as a medium of instruction, it should be used extensively in the oral domain in a structured manner to support comprehension and learning of other languages and subjects. In addition, appropriate strategies for teaching and learning of second language should be used for teaching languages that are unfamiliar to children. Adequate time should be allowed for children to learn an unfamiliar language well before it is introduced as a medium of instruction.

Children need to learn the languages that are crucial for employability and economic mobility (including English) and learn them well. The most appropriate approach for improving student learning and ensuring that children learn identified languages well is to follow a multilingual approach that begins with their home languages and systematically add the less familiar languages including English. In the next five years, as mandated by the NEP 2020, there will be a strong focus on foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN) in early childhood education and grades 1 to 3 in primary school. We need to remember that the FLN Mission can only succeed if we help children learn through their strong languages in these foundational years.

Bringing children's languages into the ECE and primary school classroom in a formal manner is as much a policy issue as about beliefs and attitudes about the use of these local languages within the education system and among parents and communities. These attitudes will take time to change. Our effort should be to develop a consensus around the importance of multilingualism inside the classroom and the need for respecting non- dominant languages, cultures, and local knowledge. This awareness generation effort should also include stressing the key role of a familiar language in ensuring better learning of other languages including English as well as other subjects.

Inclusion of home/local languages is NOT about Mother tongue vs State language vs English. A multilingual approach supports learning all the languages well by beginning with a strong foundation of a familiar language, usually children’s mother tongue or home language.

Mother Tongue ++	Home Language + School Language + English
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Language Education in NEP 2020 Decoded (Section 4.11 & 4.12)

- Young children learn best through their mother tongue/home language.
- *Wherever possible*, children’s home language ¹should be used as the medium of instruction until Grade 5 in government and private schools.
- A bilingual approach of using both languages appropriately should be used to bridge the gap between children’s home languages and the MoI.
- Textbooks should be developed in children’s home languages. Where that is not possible, the classroom interaction should still be in the home language of children, *wherever possible*.
- To learn an unfamiliar language well (which could be the state’s official language or English), it need not be used as the medium of instruction from the very beginning.
- Children should learn to read and write in their mother tongue first.
- Reading and writing in languages that are less familiar or unfamiliar to children (these could be the standard form of state language or English), should only begin in Grade 3. Young children are able to acquire conversational skills in additional languages quite easily if they receive adequate exposure in a meaningful context. Therefore, natural oral exposure through stories, conversations and reading aloud from storybooks in these additional languages could begin in Grade 1 or even earlier. These languages should not be used as medium of instruction in early education.
- All languages should be taught using enjoyable and interactive methods with initial focus on development of oral language. and later reading and writing.

This paper has four parts.

Part I focuses on providing a conceptual understanding of principles of language education, including children’s home languages for instruction and multilingual education.

Part II outlines approaches and strategies for mother tongue instruction and bilingual/multilingual education in preschool and primary school.

Part III makes concrete suggestions for initiatives that state governments can take in the next few months to implement the NEP 2020 provisions around use of children’s home languages.²

Part IV suggests a concrete plan for states/UTs to prepare for the mother tongue instruction or multilingual education (MLE).

¹ The formulation in the NEP (4.11) that the medium of instruction until at least Grade 5 will be the home language/mother tongue/local language/regional language should be interpreted as providing a medium of instruction until Grade 5 in a language that is familiar to the child.

² Please review the glossary of terms used in this paper before reading further.

PART I

PRINCIPLES FOR INCLUDING CHILDREN'S HOME LANGUAGES THROUGH A MULTILINGUAL APPROACH

1. What is the role of language in learning?

Language is not everything in education, but without language, everything is nothing in education (Wolff, 2007)

When children learn language, they are not simply engaging in one type of learning among many; rather, they are learning the foundations of learning itself. (Halliday, 2009)



Almost all early learning happens through the use of language, whether it is children talking or interacting with the teacher, thinking, collaborating with other children, reading or writing (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Functions of language

2. What is the importance of learning through the strong language (L1) for children?

2.1 Better comprehension and learning

While this may seem obvious, there is also strong research evidence that shows using children's home language as MoI results in better understanding of the concepts and skills and better learning outcomes in all subjects. Across the world, there is a complete research-based consensus that children who study through a familiar language have higher academic achievement than those who are taught through a language that is unfamiliar to them³.

Young children, at the foundational stage, learn mainly through talk—with each other and with

³ Students in Ethiopia who studied through a mother tongue medium of instruction had higher mean achievement scores in Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry and Physics in grade 8 compared with students who had not studied through mother tongue (MT) (Heugh et al, 2007). The mean scores were the highest for students who had studied through the MT medium for 8 years, followed by those who had MT as medium for 6 years. Those with only 4 years as MT medium scored lower, but still higher than those who studied only through a non-MT medium. Similar results were seen in a large longitudinal study in 15 States of USA (Thomas and Collier, 1997). The main finding was that the biggest predictor of long-term school success is the number of years of academic instruction in the children's first language. Smaller studies in India have shown similar results.

adults-- since learning is a social activity for them. It is only later that they become independent self-learners through reading and writing. At this stage, freedom to speak and extended talk in the classroom is the best way to learn. This is possible only if children's strong languages are promoted and used in the classroom.

Reading and writing float on a sea of talk. (Britton, 1970)

2.2 Supports learning of additional languages

Languages develop in an interrelated manner and developing a strong foundation in one language is helpful for learning additional languages. Children will learn better English if they have already developed strong oral language and literacy skills in a familiar language.

2.3 Promotes self-esteem and confidence that supports learning

Children's language, culture and identity are intricately linked. By using children's home languages, children develop a positive self-image and confidence. Such a positive enabling environment is crucial for learning in the early years.

When the message, implicit or explicit, communicated to children in the school is "Leave your language and culture at the schoolhouse door", children also leave a central part of who they are-their identities-at the schoolhouse door. When they feel this rejection, they are much less likely to participate actively and confidently in classroom instruction. It is not enough for teachers to passively accept children's linguistic and cultural diversity in the school. They must be proactive and take initiative to include their language in various ways in classroom transaction"

—Dr. Jim Cummins, renowned educationist, and language teaching expert

2.4 Makes classrooms more interactive and learner-centred



Several studies have shown that when their home languages are used, classrooms are more interactive and children are more actively engaged in the teaching-learning process. Learning can proceed from the known to the unknown.

Figure 2: Children actively listening to a story and participating in classroom discussions using a mix of their home language Wagdi and school language Hindi

2.5 Promotes creativity, expression, higher order thinking and reasoning

If teaching happens through a language that children do not understand, the focus has to necessarily be on rote memorization, copying and choral repetition. Children can express themselves freely and engage in higher- order thinking and reasoning tasks only in their strong language. Therefore, if we want primary stage classrooms to include higher order comprehension and expression, children’s L1s will need to be included formally in the teaching-learning process.

Double disadvantage faced by children who study through an unfamiliar language

Children studying through an unfamiliar language face a ‘double learning disadvantage’ since they must try and learn a new language and at the same time try and learn through that unfamiliar language (as MoI). Even to acquire foundational literacy in a second language is challenging because children not only need to learn to decode the script but also simultaneously develop vocabulary and a good oral understanding of that second language to be able to read with comprehension. The most ‘learning’ disadvantaged children in the country today are those that study in poorly taught ‘English-medium’ schools as they are likely to turn out to be ‘semilinguals’ who are not proficient in any language and depend only on rote memorization because their comprehension of English is highly inadequate to understand the curriculum at any point.

A language that is unfamiliar to children should not be used as a medium of instruction until they acquire basic proficiency in it.

2.6 Foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN):

Literacy is not just the ability to decode letters and words. One of the most important objectives of foundational literacy is to develop strong reading comprehension skills. As the equation below shows, reading comprehension requires good language comprehension in addition to the ability to decode and recognize words quickly. Children can learn to read and write best in early grades in a language they already speak and understand. Our effort at achieving FLN targets will succeed only if we include children’s home languages in teaching and learning to ensure good language comprehension.

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$$\text{Reading Comprehension} = \text{Language Comprehension} \times \text{Word Recognition}$$

3. What are some common myths about language learning?

3.1 Why teach mother tongue when children already know it?

Fact: Children can speak their home language fluently when they join school. However, in school, language is used in an abstract and decontextualized manner in textbooks and teaching which is quite different from the conversational use at home and at the ECE stage. Language is also used for a variety of academic purposes including thinking, reasoning and drawing inferences. Development of academic skills in any language requires 4 to 6 years of instruction, even if it is the child's first language.

3.2 Children have learnt a new language once they can speak it!

Fact: It is important to distinguish between a child being able to use conversational language and her ability to understand and work with the academic language and tasks required in the school texts. Often teachers say that the child knows the language which is the medium of instruction in early grades, while actually children may know just enough to be able to understand and speak in basic conversations. By grade 4, when texts in different subjects become dense with complex language structures, abstract concepts and unfamiliar vocabulary, these children are unable to comprehend and their only option is to rote memorize entire texts without much comprehension. Therefore, it is important to develop an unfamiliar language sufficiently over 5 to 7 years before it is used as MoL.

3.3 To learn English well, it is best to start teaching English early, say in preschool or Grade 1.

Fact: It is true that young children can acquire two or more languages when there is adequate exposure to these languages through natural and meaningful communication of the type that happens at home when they acquire their first language. However, natural exposure to English is not available in most children's immediate environments. In school, English is taught formally beginning with the alphabet and script. This is quite the opposite of the natural exposure required for acquiring a new language. There is no evidence to show that young children have a strong ability to learn additional or unfamiliar languages through formal instruction at school. In fact, there is evidence that older children, ages 10 and above, are better equipped to learn additional languages through formal teaching. Therefore, young children at the foundational stage should not be taught English formally. In early primary grades, children could be provided with exposure to oral English through simple and meaningful conversations, storytelling, songs and rhymes with support from their home language.

3.4 Learning through home language takes away valuable time from learning the state language

Fact: A commonly held mistaken belief is that languages occupy spaces in the brain individually like balloons and providing more instruction (or space in the brain) or increasing size of the balloon for L1 will reduce the space available for other languages like English. This 'balloon theory' has been proved completely wrong. Languages develop in an interrelated manner;

development of one supports the development of others (Figure 3). In fact, a strong foundation of one language in the early years is the best way to ensure that the child will learn other languages well. Also, the support of home language is crucial for learning additional languages, including English. Therefore, the approach should be one of multilingual education where two or more languages co-exist and are used at the same time with the stronger language supporting development of the less familiar language.

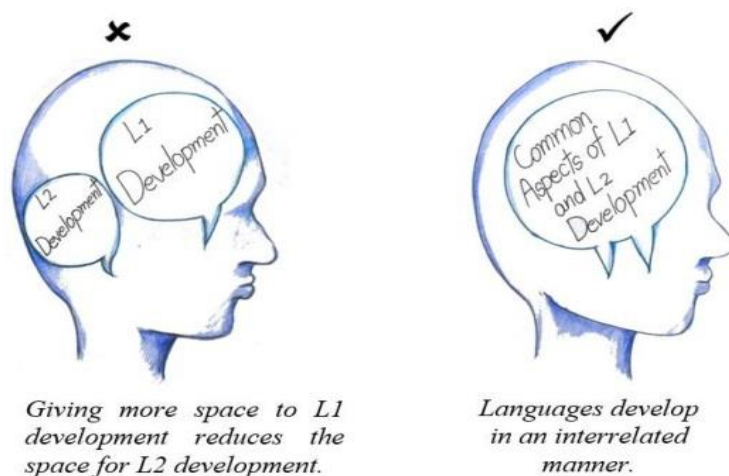


Figure 3: Myth and fact related to language development in brain

3.5 Languages need to be taught in an isolated manner to prevent interference or mixing.

Fact: It is artificial to keep languages isolated in the teaching-learning process. As we know, languages develop in an interrelated manner. The stronger languages can help scaffold the learning of less familiar languages. In a multilingual approach, children are encouraged to use languages in a mixed manner.

3.6 Children’s home languages are under-developed; some are not even written. How can they be used for formal teaching?

Fact: India is a multilingual country where most people speak two or more languages. However, languages do not have an equal status. Because of the hierarchical and unequal status, the non-dominant languages, e.g. languages spoken by tribal groups or regional languages like Bagheli and Sambalpuri have been neglected and not used in the formal domains of education or administration. The use of these non-dominant languages has been shrinking further and most are getting confined to informal domains and limited to use within the community.

Negative attitudes or bias about non-dominant languages: These languages are inferior! Need for multilingual awareness

The most important obstacle in introducing children’s home languages in classroom transaction are the beliefs and attitudes within the education system about non-dominant languages and their appropriateness for use in the formal teaching-learning process. Consensus building is needed on the issue of importance of multilingualism inside the

classroom and the need for respecting non-dominant languages, cultures and local knowledge, the role of children's strong language in learning and how developing competence in children's L1s would help in better learning of the state language and English.

However, many of them have rich oral traditions and literature! Because of official neglect, further development of these languages for use in education may not have happened. But it is certainly possible to develop the writing system for any language in any script and add new vocabulary as needed. Odisha has developed textbooks and materials in 21 tribal and link languages that have been introduced as mediums of instruction since 2005. In Chhattisgarh, Grade1 bilingual textbooks (local language and Hindi) have been introduced in 2020 in 16 languages. These languages have been written in the script of the state language, viz. Odiya and Devanagari respectively.

4. What are some of the best strategies to help children learn a second language?

4.1 Provide ample comprehensible exposure to L2

Learning an unfamiliar language requires many opportunities of listening to the language in a form that children can understand. The implication for an early classroom is that the language (L2) used by the teacher should be simple and supported by gestures, pictures, actions and use of words from the children's home languages. Using a familiar context that children can easily relate to is important for better comprehension of an unfamiliar language.

4.2 Focus on oral language development

The focus should initially be on developing a good understanding of L2 through interesting oral language activities like storytelling and reading aloud from a big book followed by conversation and using both L1 and L2 in a manner that helps children express themselves fluently.

4.3 Use of 'mixed language' is a natural stage of learning

When children are learning an unfamiliar language, they would naturally use a 'mixed language' and make errors in the use of the unfamiliar language. This should not be discouraged, but rather considered as a natural part of the learning process.

4.4 Focus on building vocabulary

For learning an unfamiliar language, it is important to develop a minimum vocabulary of commonly used words of that language at an early stage. This helps in building comprehension of oral and written language. To help children understand the language, objects from real life or flash cards with pictures can be used. Use of action songs and Total Physical Response activities

help to explicitly teach L2 vocabulary. L1 can be used strategically to support learning of L2.

4.5 Provide stress-free and safe environment

Language learning requires a stress-free environment; the way children learn their first language at home. The implication is that there should not be any pressure on early speaking and formal assessment of learning for L2. A positive and supportive classroom environment where children are motivated, have high self-esteem and low level of anxiety helps improve second language acquisition.

5. What are the key principles of a multilingual education approach suitable for our country?

We will read in Part II that language situations are varied and complex in most parts of India and the approaches to using and sequencing languages would be different in different sociolinguistic contexts. However, the following principles of multilingual education (MLE) would be valid for any approach or strategy used at the primary level.

- 5.1 Children’s home languages (L1) are used formally in the classroom** and are used as resources for learning additional languages and content in other subjects. The teacher would herself use, allow and encourage children to respond in their L1, use their L1s in group discussions, read-aloud or tell stories in both L1 and L2, explain difficult words and concepts using L1 etc.
- 5.2 Children learn new languages (L2) by using their strong or familiar language (L1) as scaffold.** The use of ‘mixed’ language is a powerful strategy in the process of learning unfamiliar languages.
- 5.3 An MLE classroom reflects tolerance and mutual respect for all children’s languages and cultures.** Only one language does not remain dominant.
- 5.4 A multilingual approach for teaching-learning should be used across the curriculum** where any difficult text or concept or higher order thinking and reasoning work is carried out using children’s L1.
- 5.5 A multilingual (and multicultural) approach helps to bring children’s cultures and experiences** into the classroom, which may not be represented in the textbooks in a planned manner.

PART II

APPROACHES AND STRATEGIES FOR MOTHER TONGUE INSTRUCTION AND BILINGUAL / MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION

1. Which children face a moderate to severe learning disadvantage in India?

Group	Description	Notes
1	Children belonging to Scheduled Tribes (ST) who speak their indigenous language at home, especially those living in remote, tribal dominated areas	Since their home language, or even the local language adopted by them, is usually quite different from the school MoI, this group is at a serious learning disadvantage. It is easy to identify primary schools (through UDISE) where almost all children belong to scheduled tribes.
2	Children residing in inter-state border areas who do not have adequate schools with their home language as the MoI	For example, Telugu-speaking children in Koraput district on the Odisha-Andhra Pradesh border.
3	Children who speak a regional language that is considered a 'dialect' of the standard language used as MOI at school and have low comprehension of the standard language when they join school	Many of these languages are quite different from the state language, and for all practical purposes, the school language is a second language for these children. For example, children who speak Bundeli in Southern Uttar Pradesh or Sambalpuri in Western Odisha.
4	Children of migrants who are living in a state that has a different official language and inter-state seasonal migration	For example, children of migrant workers in Kerala or Odiya-speaking migrants in Raipur in Chhattisgarh. The most disadvantaged are children who migrate seasonally along with their families to another state.
5	Children who study through English as MoI, but have no exposure to the language outside school. Methodology for teaching English is inappropriate for learning a new language.	This is a common situation in most low-fee charging private schools and government schools with English MoI, especially in low income and low literacy areas.

Table1: Children who face learning disadvantage due to language issues

Please fill in the following table as applicable to your state.

Note: Please give bullet point wise details in the blank cells.

Description	Geographical Area(s)	Language(s) Spoken in the Area(s)
Language(s) which are considered as variants of the standard language used as the medium of instruction in schools		
Children's home language or local language is totally different from the medium of instruction used in schools		
Border areas of the state		
Seasonal migration from other states (please also specify the states from where people migrate to your state)		

Table2: Linguistic Survey Form 1 for States and UTs

2. How can language situations be identified and categorized for deciding on appropriate approaches?

2.1 Complex language contexts

Language contexts in India are complex and vary significantly within a state, a district and even a block. Some characteristics of variations in language situations include the following:

Children speak only their own home language: Some tribal communities could be living in a remote region, e.g. the Sora tribal group in Odisha and the Koyas in Andhra Pradesh, where children speak only their own home languages when they first join school. Home language influenced by other dominant languages: The home languages of many groups have been strongly influenced by the dominant languages of the region, e.g. Wagdi language in Dungarpur district bordering Gujarat is highly influenced by Gujarati. The local spoken language could also be influenced by two or more other languages. It is sometimes not feasible to attach specific language labels to the local language or identify linguistic boundaries where one speech pattern changes to another.

Use of contact language: In many regions, a lingua franca or contact language is used for wider communication between different ethnolinguistic groups. The contact language itself is often a hybrid of other languages. In Assam, Sadri is a language of wider communication among tea

garden Adivasi groups whose home languages maybe Mundari, Kudukh or Santhali.

Adoption of a local regional language: In several regions, people have stopped using their mother tongues and have adopted a local regional language, e.g. Adivasi groups in parts of Raigarh district of Chhattisgarh have adopted Chhattisgarhi as their home language.

Shifting speech patterns: There is a gradual shift taking place in speech patterns, with greater exposure to languages of wider communication (LWCs), which could be regional or state languages. Parents and other adults in a Gondi Adivasi area close to a town or a village with mixed population and high literacy would speak in Hindi with children at home while using Gondi with elders. There are some communities where multilingualism is the norm and children grow up speaking two or more languages.

2.2 Need for language mapping

An understanding of the language contexts of schools and classrooms is a prerequisite for developing appropriate strategies for inclusion of children’s first languages in the teaching-learning process. This requires simple sociolinguistic mapping to be conducted, especially in areas where it is known that children’s home languages are different from the standard language used at school. There is little data available about children’s language proficiencies when they first join school at the age of 5 or 6. Following is a sample linguistic survey form for a quick survey on languages in your state.

Short Language Survey			
Name of the State		Number of Districts	
Population		ST Population	
State Language		Medium of Instruction in Govt. Schools	
Other languages spoken in the state (comma separated list)			
Write names of at least 3 non-tribal languages with highest number of speakers (in decreasing order)			
Write names of at least 3 tribal languages with highest number of speakers (in decreasing order)			

Table3: Linguistic Survey Form 2 for States and UTs

Table 4 below lists some dimensions of the sociolinguistic mapping in the left column. On the right is a simplified typology of language situations.

Dimensions to determine Classroom Language Situation	Typology of Language Situation in Classrooms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home/First Language of children • Understanding of School language (MOI) • Language background of teacher • Language used in classroom for instruction • Two or more first languages in the same classroom 	<p>Type I: Students speak a regional language that has some similarity with the school language.</p> <p>Type II: Most students have a limited or no understanding of the school language at entry in grade I AND almost all students have the same MT (or first language) AND the teacher understands/speaks the children's language</p> <p>Type III: Most students have a limited understanding of the school language at entry in grade I AND almost all students have the same MT (or first language) AND the teacher does not understand/speak the children's language</p> <p>Type IV: Some/most students have a limited understanding of the school language AND students belong to 2 or more language groups. The teacher understands/speaks one of the children's languages</p>

Table 4: Typology of Classroom Language Situations: Simple Sociolinguistic Mapping

3. What are the different approaches for inclusion of children's home languages in a multilingual approach?

Considering the diverse linguistic situations in different regions in our country, a single approach for multilingual education will never suffice. Therefore, 4 broad approaches are outlined below.

3.1 Mother tongue-based multilingual education (MTB-MLE)

Appropriate for Language Situation Type II (Children of Group 1)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All children have the same home language • Children's L1 is very different from the L2 (completely unrelated languages) • Children have limited or no understanding of L2 when they join school • Limited or no exposure to L2 outside school • Low parental support and home literacy • Sense of group or ethnic identity that can lead to acceptance of use of L1 in education • L1 needs development for use in education • Teachers have the same language background as children

Description: Children’s L1 is used as MOI for the first 4 to 5 years of primary education. A high quality ECE programme implemented in children’s mother tongue for 2 to 3 years before Grade 1, would help children acquire good oral skills in L1 and would also ensure use of children’s L1 as the MoI for 6 to 7 years (2-3 years in ECE and 4-5 years in primary school).

In this approach, children learn literacy skills first in L1. The state language, which is L2 for the children, is introduced as a subject, orally first, say from Grade 2, followed by literacy in L2. A third language like English could be introduced as a subject in Grade 3, orally at first, followed by literacy in L3 in later grades. After children have developed some academic competence in L2, it could be used as MOI. A good model is to use both L1 and L2 as mediums of instruction for one or two years, e.g. L1 for EVS and L2 for Math or vice-versa. Later, as L2 becomes the only MOI, L1 and English would continue to be taught as subjects. L1 needs to find space in the classroom even when the official MOI shifts from L1 to L2 to explain difficult concepts, check for understanding and for higher-order thinking and expression by children.

It is crucial to ensure that

- (a) children achieve adequate proficiency in L2 before it is used as MOI, and
- (b) concepts and skills learnt in L1 are transferred to L2 through appropriate strategies.

This model of MTB-MLE is called an *additive approach* where additional languages are added to the curriculum without removing L1. Here L1 is retained as a subject (say until Grade 8) even after MOI shifts to L2. A *subtractive approach* would mean L1 is removed from the curriculum after L2 is introduced.

The most appropriate MTB-MLE approach is a *late-exit model* where the transition to L2 as MOI is planned after at least 5 years of primary school. By this time, children would acquire a good understanding of L2 including reading, writing and academic skills to be able to learn from the content of textbooks. An *early-exit model* is where the transition from L1 to L2 as MOI is planned only after 2 to 3 years of primary school. Early- exit programmes have the least benefit for children’s learning because they have not learnt adequate L2 to start learning through L2 as MOI. Also, concepts and skills in L1 have not been developed and stabilized adequately to transfer them to L2.

In India, MTB-MLE has been implemented in a consistent manner in only one state, viz. Odisha. The programme was initiated in 2005 and is being implemented in 1500 schools in 21 tribal and other local languages. You can read more about the Odisha MLE programme in the Case Study on pages 76-80 of the study, ‘Early Literacy and Multilingual Education in South Asia; and

watch a video about the programme here-



Requirements:

This is an intensive approach and requires strong policy and political support as well as community ownership for introducing non-dominant languages for formal teaching.

- Community mobilization is key to successful implementation MTB-MLE programmes. It could lay the foundation for strong school-community linkages.
- Additional vocabulary (if needed) and a writing system using the script of the state language can be developed, if the language has not been written.
- Development of textbooks and other teaching-learning materials for language and other subjects in L1 needs to be done by incorporating elements of local knowledge and culture.
- Availability of local teachers who are bilingual or trilingual (mother tongue, state language and English) is crucial for the success of this approach.
- Intensive work is needed for continuous teacher professional development including regular academic support to implement the first and second language teaching pedagogies.

3.2 Children’s unfamiliar language used as MoI with extensive and strategic use of L1 in the oral domain



Figure 4: Children doing role play on their favourite story using a mix of L1 and L2

Appropriate for Language Situation Type I & II (Children of Groups 1 & 3)

- Almost all children's L1 has some similarity with L2 (they could be related languages or a variant or even a mix of L2 and local languages, e.g. Awadhi or Bhojpuri and Hindi)
- Children have limited understanding of the standard form of L2 when they join school
- Limited exposure to L2 outside school
- Low parental support and home literacy
- L1 is not considered appropriate for formal use in education and cannot be used as MoI at once
- Teachers know children's L1

Description: An unfamiliar language is used as MOI (e.g. Hindi in an area where the home language is Bundeli) from Grade 1. Children would have had a chance to develop their home language during 2 to 3 years of ECE. There is extensive and strategic oral use of children's L1 throughout primary education. L1 is used for understanding new concepts, all higher-order thinking and reasoning tasks and for oral expression in the initial grades. Effective strategies for teaching and learning of a second language are used in the initial grades including explicit teaching of L2 vocabulary and using L1 for scaffolding learning of L2. There is appropriate and balanced use of L1 and L2 in the classroom. There cannot be any formula for the extent of use of L1 and L2 at any given time; the teacher will have to be guided by the children's level of understanding and ability to speak in L2 to decide how the use of these languages can be adjusted. 'Mixing' of languages for fluent expression is considered a part of the learning process.

Key Strategies in this MLE Model

1. Using children's home language across curriculum throughout primary education in the oral domain

- Use children's home language extensively in the initial grades (at least initial 2 grades) across subjects for explaining any difficult concept or new information, higher order thinking, reasoning, analysis, creative expression and meaning making.
- Even after these foundational grades, the formal and strategic use of children's home or familiar language must continue until grade 8 as a scaffold to deal with any difficult concept or higher order task.
- In addition, decoding in early grades should be taught with plenty of support from the home/mother language, in terms of using lots of contextual L1 words along with level appropriate and simple L2 words. Practise of using L1 words/phrases ensures meaning-making and comprehension for children while also learning the mechanics of decoding.

Some concrete tips!

- ✓ In the initial few months when children join school, use only children's language for all kinds of informal and formal interactions to help children develop a strong emotional connection and

comfort with the school.

- ✓ Also, make it a point to start children's schooling experience with plenty of local stories, poems, songs, riddles in their home language. Do not start with the textbooks at once.
- ✓ First, phonemic awareness must be developed in children's mother language well. Then simple L2 words can also be included. Once students have a fair grasp on phonemic awareness in both L1 and L2, then only one should proceed to decoding in L2.
- ✓ Simultaneously, some interesting and fun activities can be done in the initial months with children to help them develop a word bank in school language.

2. Balanced and mixed use of children's home language and school language

- Encourage mixed use of children's home language and school language by both teachers and children, for optimal comprehension, meaning making, fluent expression and effective communication during all classroom transactions.
- Mixing of the languages, should also be allowed/encouraged in written tasks too for optimal expression of thoughts, at least in the first two years of schooling.
- Be sure to use the mix of children's home and school languages as per children's level of language proficiency at any given time; because there cannot be any formula for the extent of use of children's home language and school language at any given time. The teacher needs to be strongly guided by the children's level of understanding and ability to speak in school language, to decide how the use of these languages can be adjusted.

Some examples of mixed language use in classrooms:

- ✓ Teacher and/or children use L2 words in L1 sentence
- ✓ Teacher and/or children use L1 words in L2 sentence
- ✓ Children speak in L1 and teacher responds in L2
- ✓ Children speak in L2 and teacher responds in L1
- ✓ Teacher speaks in L2 and children respond in L1
- ✓ Teacher speaks in L1 and children respond in L2
- ✓ Teacher and/or children say different sentences in different languages, naturally and interchangeably
- ✓ Teacher and/or children make a new word by combining two languages

3. Provide ample support to help children acquire school language in time

- Begin with oral development of the school language. Do not straight away jump into decoding, reading or writing in the language. A strong oral comprehension and grasp of the language helps greatly in developing reading and writing with comprehension in that language.
- In the initial few months, focus on explicit teaching of L2 vocabulary with the help of interesting, fun and simple L2 poems, action songs, stories and TPR (total physical response) activities. It is of utmost importance that children have the basic vocabulary of a language before formal instruction begins in that language.
- Give lots of input and exposure to children for the second/school language acquisition. All the school language input needs to be pitched at children's level and must be simple,

meaningful and comprehensible for them. Children need to be given purposeful, joyful and meaningful opportunities to use the school language in a fearless environment.

- Create an anxiety free and fear free environment for children to feel comfortable in using the second/school language. Children need to be in a motivated and anxiety free space in order to acquire a language naturally. Frequent error corrections related to grammar, pronunciation etc. must be avoided. In the early stages, the focus should be on comprehension and communication rather than the form. It is okay if children respond only in their home language in the initial few months. Gradually, as per children's developing proficiency in the school language, use of mixed language can be encouraged by children.

Some Concrete Tips!

- ✓ For making L2 comprehensible for children, various techniques can be used, like: using simple L2 words and sentences, using lots of pictures and real objects to explain the content, using body language and gestures to explain, speaking slowly and clearly etc. Using children's home language to support the comprehension of L2 is one of the most important strategies, and must be employed by everyone.
- ✓ Simple and fun oral language activities like these can be employed for second language development: discussion on children's experiences, stories, poems, songs, riddles, role-plays, etc. Of course, taking the adequate and strategic support of children's home language as per children's level would be needed.
- ✓ In order to give rich exposure to an unfamiliar school language, textbooks cannot be enough. In the foundational years, some high quality oral literacy TLM like big books, poem posters, simple story books etc. must be used well to help children acquire school language in an enjoyable manner.

4. Student's culture and local contexts must be strongly included, affirmed and reflected in all pedagogic practices and curricular domains.

- Teaching learning materials, including textbooks, workbooks, story books, poem posters etc., need to be highly culturally responsive. Children's life and contexts must be adequately represented in the academic content, language use and pedagogic processes. For example, in a big book developed by Language and Learning Foundation for the Wagdi speaking children of Dungarpur, Rajasthan, local practices of sitting on the floor and eating *laddoos*, *jalebis*, and *laapsi* during weddings are reflected in the big book '*Geeta Jaane Gai.*'

Requirements

- Quality preschool/ECE programmes should be implemented that support oral development of L1.
- Teachers should have bilingual proficiency in both L1 and L2, and also English.
- Students' L1 should be valued and encouraged by the teacher.
- Students' culture and local contexts should be affirmed and linked to the classroom work.
- Appropriate strategies for teaching L2 should be used, especially to help in meaning-

making.

- Assessments of learning should take into account delayed L2 learning. This should be factored in while defining expected learning outcomes for each grade. Given the right conditions, such students should be able to achieve expected grade level L2 and English skills by the end of the primary stage.

3.3 Working with multiple home languages by using the classroom's multilingualism as a resource

Appropriate for Language Situation Type IV

- Children of different home language backgrounds (L1s) in the same class
- There is a 'lingua franca' or contact language which children understand to some extent at entry to Grade 1 **OR** there is no contact language or young children do not understand/speak it in Grade 1
- Teachers know one or two L1s and/or a lingua franca used in the area

Description: The classroom is necessarily multilingual since children's home languages along with the L2 (MOI) and English- all have to be used. The teacher must provide space for children to use their home languages, at least in the oral domain in the initial grades to support thinking, reasoning and expression. Certain strategies that can be used in such classrooms include:

- Translation from one language to another
- Comparing and contrasting languages by the teacher
- Using teaching assistants from children's L1 backgrounds to support the teacher for Grade 1
- Translanguaging in the classroom

Translanguaging is the practice of using more than one language in a flexible manner to help express ourselves better. Children can be encouraged to communicate with meaning without thinking about the fact that they have used more than one language in their speech. Translanguaging is used as a pedagogy not just for scaffolding learning of L2, but a way of teaching-learning that promotes languages being used together and not in separate compartments for best communicative expression. It can include a variety of strategies including (a) teacher asks an open ended question in L2 and children respond in their L1 (b) children read a text in L2 and discuss about it in L1 (c) teacher and children read a text in L2 and children first write in a language they are more comfortable in before translating it to the school language (d) children translate words and sentences from one language to another (e) teacher compares and contrasts languages to help children activate and use their metalinguistic skills to learn the new language(s) and (f) teacher and children use a combination of L1 and L2 that helps in fluent expression of meaning.

Some of these strategies are more useful when children are slightly older (say 8-10 years) because at this stage they could ‘think about languages’ and compare and contrast patterns in different languages. It is not easy to use these strategies with young children in early grades. There are few programs that demonstrate use of multiple home languages as a resource to help develop multilingual competence, including strong foundational literacy skills in the school MoI. Much more work needs to be done to try out these strategies in different Indian contexts.

Requirements:

- The teacher must have considerable patience, positive attitude towards multilingualism and a learning orientation to
- support an organic process of using multiple home languages along with the L2.
- The classroom environment should reflect mutual respect and tolerance for different cultures and languages within the classroom.
- When there is a lingua franca or common language in the area for inter-group communication, and children have some understanding of it when they join school, it can be used as the MOI (if there is community support for its use) or used as a link language to help children understand each other and support learning of L2.

3.4 Strategies for inter-state border areas and migrant workers settled in a different linguistic region

Appropriate for Language Situation Type III (Children of Group 2)

- Children’s language is recognized language used as MoI in other parts of the state or country but not in schools in this area
- Almost all children have the same L1
- There is exposure to L2 outside school
- Teachers with children’s L1 background may not be available

Description: Children’s L1 could be used as MoI for the entire primary stage. If the community has a strong sense of identity and values their language and culture, they could demand L1 medium schools at upper primary and secondary level too. However, in most cases, the demand would be for children to transition to the state official language by the end of primary school. If L1 is introduced only at primary level, a late-exit transition to L2 can be planned. Children should learn enough L2 by that time so that it could be used as MoI from the upper primary level. For grades 4-5, both L1 and L2 can be used as MoI for different subjects. English can be taught as a subject beginning Grade 3. However, this approach is not required if the migrant community has adopted the regional language and children understand the language when they join school.

Requirements:

- Community should demand for using their language as MOI in the primary school.
- Teachers should be available who can teach using children’s L1 as MOI (e.g. Marathi

speaking teachers in some border areas in Madhya Pradesh). If that is not the case, the state government should recruit teachers of that language background for the specific areas.

- Textbooks and other teaching-learning materials in students' L1 should be developed. TLM development and teacher training can be supported by the education department and training institutions of the adjoining state.

Language issues for children who migrate seasonally

Seasonal migration for work where families migrate to another state for a few months in a year is widespread in our country. This happens for sowing and harvesting for agriculture, work in brick kilns, sugarcane harvesting etc. Such children are the most vulnerable on account of poor nutrition, health, safety and various forms of exploitation. They also miss out on several months of education while in the destination area. Even if enrolled in a school in the destination area, there is a severe learning crisis since they do not understand the language used as MoI at school. Some initiatives in different states attempt to prevent children from going along with their parents and provide seasonal hostels in the source areas to help continue their education. However, this is happening only at a small scale.

Schools in destination areas where a clear pattern of migration is followed each year could be provided with teachers from the state of origin of the migration as well as textbooks and teaching-learning materials.

Providing education in the children's home languages in inter-state border areas as well as for migrant workers requires inter-state coordination for identifying the need and providing L1 teachers and materials.

4. How do we address aspirations of parents for their children to learn English?

A multilingual approach promotes developing language and literacy proficiency in two or more languages, including English. English is often called the 'language of power' and in the 21st century with increasing opportunities for those who can speak/read/write in English, it is important that schools prepare children to learn good English.

The challenges in improving English learning at the primary and upper primary level include inadequate teacher proficiency in English, lack of preparation in teaching of English as a second language, lack of appropriate graded reading materials for teachers and children and very early introduction, when children are not ready, to formal teaching of English.

Components of an effective teaching-learning strategy for English include the following:

- Natural exposure through simple communication and meaningful use of very simple English in oral form, starting from Grade 1 or 2 itself
- Beginning of formal teaching-learning of English from Grade 3, while maintaining

emphasis on oral language development

- Using appropriate second language teaching strategies including explicit teaching of basic vocabulary, using simple language that children can understand, employing graded reading materials that are easy for children to read and understand, treating errors as a part of the learning process and encouraging 'mixed language' use etc.
- Using children's strong languages or L1 to scaffold learning of English
- Identifying clear learning milestones, especially for oral English development in primary grades

This will require a strong initiative for improving teaching and learning of English in the country, including a huge programme for teacher professional development. This must be undertaken on a priority basis.

PART III

SUGGESTIONS FOR STATE LEVEL POLICY AND IMPLEMENTATION INITIATIVES IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS TO INCLUDE CHILDREN'S HOME LANGUAGES IN ACCORDANCE WITH NEP 2020

1. What can be some initial policy initiatives?

1.1 Formally recognize the need for inclusion of children's home languages (especially the non-dominant languages) in the curriculum and teaching-learning process at the foundational and preparatory stages of education (ages 3 to 11 years)

This initial recognition will go a long way in supporting different initiatives and approaches for introducing children's home languages in a variety of ways in ECE and primary education. This could be followed by development of a policy that emphasizes a multilingual approach in primary and upper primary education for all situations, i.e. development of multilingual capabilities in children through (a) respect and use of children's mother tongues in teaching and learning, and (b) effective learning of additional languages through formal school instruction.

1.2 Home languages should be the medium of teaching and learning in early childhood education Sometimes the preschool curriculum does not state this explicitly. While preschool teachers/workers are usually local and use the children's language, the teaching-learning materials and training are usually in the dominant, unfamiliar language, *leading them to believe that they should use that language for teaching*. More explicit guidelines and instructions could support L1 use in ECE classrooms.

1.3 Define early language and literacy outcomes in a multilingual formulation

In early grades, when the home and school languages are quite different, it is important to formulate language outcomes to include outcomes in more than one language, including children's home languages. The expectation that children would achieve defined foundational literacy outcomes in their second language could be delayed beyond grade 3 depending on the language situation.

1.4 Planning for the FLN Programme should take into account use of children's home languages Strategies for foundational literacy developed for FLN must include emphasis on beginning with children's home languages and a strong focus on oral language development in the home and school language; as well as appropriate methods for teaching second language.

1.5 English should not be used as MoI at least until grade 3 or later

English should be taught as a subject for several years before introducing it as MoI. Even as a subject, the initial focus in early grades should be on oral acquisition through exposure to spoken English, before being taught as a formal subject from Grade 3. This should be applicable to private schools too. It will be difficult to implement this without generating widespread consensus on the issue. Several states are setting up/converting some schools to become English medium schools and giving them special status. This will be detrimental to the objectives of

achieving equity and improving learning. The teaching-learning of English needs to be strengthened as suggested in the next section.

1.6 Teacher deployment and recruitment for specific languages

Home language-based approaches need teachers with bilingual/multilingual proficiency, including fluency in children's languages. Teachers with a specific language background could be redeployed from other areas. Also, selection of new teachers should take into account the need for teachers of specific language backgrounds. This would need 'language quotas' for identified languages in the state-level teacher recruitment process.

Some marginalized ethnic and linguistic groups may not have school or college graduates who fulfil the minimum qualification for selection as a teacher. The government could support youth in these areas to acquire the required qualification and groom them over a few years to become teachers in local schools. This will be a strong message of empowerment for that community.

1.7 Focus on multilingual education in teacher professional development



Figure 5: A teacher sharing his thoughts about benefits of multilingual education, SCERT, Raipur, Chhattisgarh

Both pre-service and in-service teacher professional development programmes need to prioritize development of positive attitudes towards diversity, children's languages and cultures, importance of using children's home languages and strategies for bilingual/multilingual education. This will require extensive preparation of teacher educators in teacher education institutions like SCERTs, DIETs and State Resource Groups, as also pointed in the NIPUN Bharat guidelines.

2. What are some short-term implementation priorities?

2.1 Linguistic mapping to identify language situations for designing appropriate interventions

One of the key steps suggested for the financial year 2021-2022 in the NIPUN Bharat guidelines

is mapping of the local linguistic situation in each State/UT – “Map the languages spoken locally with the teachers who speak that language, to enable more effective delivery of the learning interventions”.

1. **Name of the school:**
2. **Cluster:**
3. **Block:**
4. **District:**
5. **Head master’s name:**
6. **Your name (teacher filling the form):**
7. **Your mobile number (teacher filling the form):**
8. **Total number of students in the class:**
9. **Students’ home language 1:**
10. **Number of students who speak home language 1:**
11. **Students’ home language 2:**
12. **Number of students who speak home language 2:**
13. **Students’ home language 3:**
14. **Number of students who speak home language 3:**
15. **Students’ level of understanding the Mol:**
16. **Students’ level of speaking the Mol:**
17. **Level of teacher’s understanding students’ home language 1:**
18. **Level of teacher’s speaking students’ home language 1:**
19. **Level of teacher’s understanding students’ home language 2:**
20. **Level of teacher’s speaking students’ home language 2:**
21. **Level of teacher’s understanding students’ home language 3:**
22. **Level of teacher’s speaking students’ home language 3:**

Note:

- *A simple google form can be created for such linguistic survey.*
- *Drop down options can be given for items 2, 3, 4, 9, 11, 13 to streamline the responses.*
- *Numerical scale from 1 to 5, where 1 depicts ‘very limited’ and 5 depicts ‘very good’, can be given for items 15 to 22.*

Figure 6: Sample of a linguistic survey form that can be used across states and UTs for generating socio-linguistic data and insights

Such linguistic mapping provides data that could form the basis for making decisions about the approach to introducing home languages. It is important to use simple instruments for language mapping that can be used at scale for understanding young children’s language competence at the time of entry to school, and other identified variables. Initially, areas which are commonly identified as having a home-school language gap can be taken up for simple linguistic mapping. Schools in such areas can be asked to fill up a survey form as shown in the figure 6.

2.2 Encourage and support design and implementation of comprehensive multilingual education (MLE) programmes

It is important to implement comprehensive MLE programmes in different language situations. Some demonstration programmes can be taken up including the following:

- (a) **Mother-tongue-based MLE programmes:** In a remote Adivasi area, for example, the Rathwi language in Chhota Udaipur district in Gujarat, Children's L1 could be introduced as MoI for the first 4-5 years of primary school. During this period, children gradually learn the state's official language (L2). By grades 4 or 5, the transfer of medium of instruction (MoI) to that L2 can take place. In such situations, there could be a need for developing the language and writing systems (if needed) for the L1s to be used as MoIs, curriculum and textbook development, continuous teacher professional development, regular academic support, establishing school-community linkages and ensuring availability of bilingual teachers. The Odisha MLE program for 21 tribal languages offers significant learning for the rest of the country. Some programmes can first be piloted and expanded in a phased manner.
- (b) **L2 remains MOI with extensive and strategic use of L1:** These projects would be easier to design and implement at scale. They will require strong multilingual awareness, children's materials in L1, training and academic support to teachers to help them systematically use children's languages, and effective strategies for learning the unfamiliar second language.
- (c) **Children of two or more first languages in the same classroom:** There is a need to design and implement pilot projects for school situations where two or more home languages are represented in the same classroom as there is little experience available in the country or elsewhere.

Community mobilization and engagement

Community mobilization is essential in the preparatory phase of a programme and can be done through dialogue with parents, traditional community leaders, representatives of sociocultural and linguistic associations, and public representatives from the local community. It takes time to convince the community that the approach can result in better learning for their children in all subjects, including a dominant language. Such mobilization happens more easily when the community already has a strong sense of identity and pride in their culture and language.

2.3 Publishing children's literature in home languages and bilingually with other languages

The lack of good, developmentally appropriate children's reading materials and books in non-dominant home languages as well as other languages is a big constraint in primary schools. It is crucial to address the lack of quality reading materials. Governments could promote and incentivize the private sector to publish many more high-quality children's storybooks in non-dominant languages or bilingually. Also, local language materials must reflect local cultures and children's contexts, and not merely be translated from other languages.

2.4 Creating multilingual awareness in the education system

Short courses could be developed for block and cluster level resource persons and educational administrators that help address beliefs and attitudes about local languages, cultures and basic concepts of multilingual education. These can be implemented in a blended mode with an online component. Similar awareness generation courses or training programmes can be implemented for teachers. Ministry of Education (MoE) could take a lead in developing basic awareness courses on the use of home languages. MoE could also arrange for sharing of research evidence and best practices about bilingual and multilingual education initiatives from within and outside India, and facilitate cross-state learning.

2.5 Begin with use of local languages in the oral domain

Wherever teachers know the local language, they could be oriented on simple strategies for using the children's home language in all oral work and for scaffolding learning of the school language. This will increase children's participation and gradual understanding of the second language. This could be the first step in introducing children's home languages formally in the teaching-learning process.

2.6 Creating State Resource Groups and multilingual education units at SCERT

Initial orientation programmes can be organized for these resource persons on multilingual education. They could then take up planning and design of programmes under different MLE models.

2.7 Strengthening the teaching-learning of English as a subject at primary level

There are high parental aspirations for children to learn good English. Improving the teaching and learning of English, especially spoken English in primary grades, would help in the need for negotiating a delayed introduction of English as MoI. This will require improving teachers' own competence in English as well as skills for teaching English, using a range of second language teaching strategies with scaffolding from children's familiar languages. This is a huge need and states could work with technical agencies to take up programmes for improving teaching of English on a priority. *(Refer to Part I, section 4 and Part II, section 4)*

Part – IV

Plan to Prepare for the Mother Tongue Instruction or Multilingual Education (MLE)

Effective planning and quality implementation are key to achieving the desired outcomes of the FLN mission. In this part, a broad plan for States and UTs is outlined for the preparation of mother tongue instruction as suggested in the NEP-2020.

This plan is primarily targeted for the MLE model where children’s home language (L1) is used extensively and strategically in the oral domain, while the state language (L2) remains the medium of instruction. You can adapt this plan as per the needs of your state.

S. No.	Activities	Month-1	Month-2	Month-3	Month-4	Month-5	Month-6	Month-7	Month-8	Month-9	Month-10	Month-11	Month-12	Month 13-15	Month 16-18
Preparatory Activities															
1.	Awareness campaign about Multilingual Education														
2.	Formation of Core State Resource Group (SRG) and District Resource Groups (DRGs) on MLE and their orientation														
3.	Development of detailed state/UT specific plan for implementation of MLE under FLN														
4.	Preparation of 3 to 5 years of plan for MLE under FLN														
5.	Develop annual plan budget for year 1														
6.	Conducting simple linguistic surveys in targeted areas														
7.	Based on linguistic surveys, development of appropriate action plan(s)														

8.	Identifying pockets for MTB-MLE and starting demonstration projects in those pockets/few schools																	
9.	Preparation of (a) extensive MLE guidelines and strategies for model schools or areas with most severe language disadvantage (b) simple MLE guidelines and strategies for all schools																	
10.	Development of intensive school monitoring mechanism for FLN with a MLE perspective																	
Capacity Building																		
11.	Rigorous orientation through courses and workshops of Core SRG and DRGs about MLE in blended mode – the importance of MLE for success of FLN, key concepts of MLE, pedagogy, strategies, assessment etc.																	
12.	Rigorous orientation of Teacher Education institutes about MLE and its need for realization of the FLN Mission																	
13.	Face to face or blended training of block, cluster and other education administrators for strong on-site support on MLE																	
14.	Implementing short or medium term courses on MLE for																	

	teachers and education administrators																
15.	Adding MLE perspective to the Pre-Service Teacher Training courses in DIETs																
Material Development																	
16.	Revision of learning outcomes of the state curriculum in light of MLE																
17.	Developing comprehensive guidelines for material development in local languages																
18.	Forming a strong team for material development in local languages																
19.	Doing detailed planning and preparation for material development in local languages (identifying themes and materials; designing frameworks etc)																
20.	Doing primary and secondary research for documentation of local oral language resources and community knowledge resources																
21.	Review, selection and adaptation of local language literary resources for ECE and class-I, II in tune with curricular objectives and state learning outcomes																
22.	Finalization, printing and distribution of																

	TLM in children's local languages																
23.	Developing guidelines for adequate use of TLM in local languages; and doing teacher trainings																
Implementation																	
24.	Recruitment and/or deployment of teachers as per findings of the linguistic survey																
25.	Distribution of MLE primers / teacher guides / handbooks / TLMs in schools																
26.	Time to time refresher training and orientation on MLE (for FLN) in online and/or blended mode																
27.	Constant monitoring and review of schools from MLE perspective for successful implementation of FLN mission																
28.	Regular meetings at District/ Block/ Cluster level for sharing of experiences and knowledge																
29.	School-Community linkages activities – Establishment of community museums, literary resources language documentation, documentation of village history, community <i>melas</i>																
Documentation																	

30.	Detailed process documentation of various MLE initiatives, successes and challenges at the state/UT level																
31.	Compilation of good MLE practices and case studies																
32.	Sharing of learnings with other states/UTs and educational organizations																
Development of MLE Policy for the State																	
33.	Formulation of State Policy on teacher recruitment /deployment in view of multilingual situations																

Conclusion

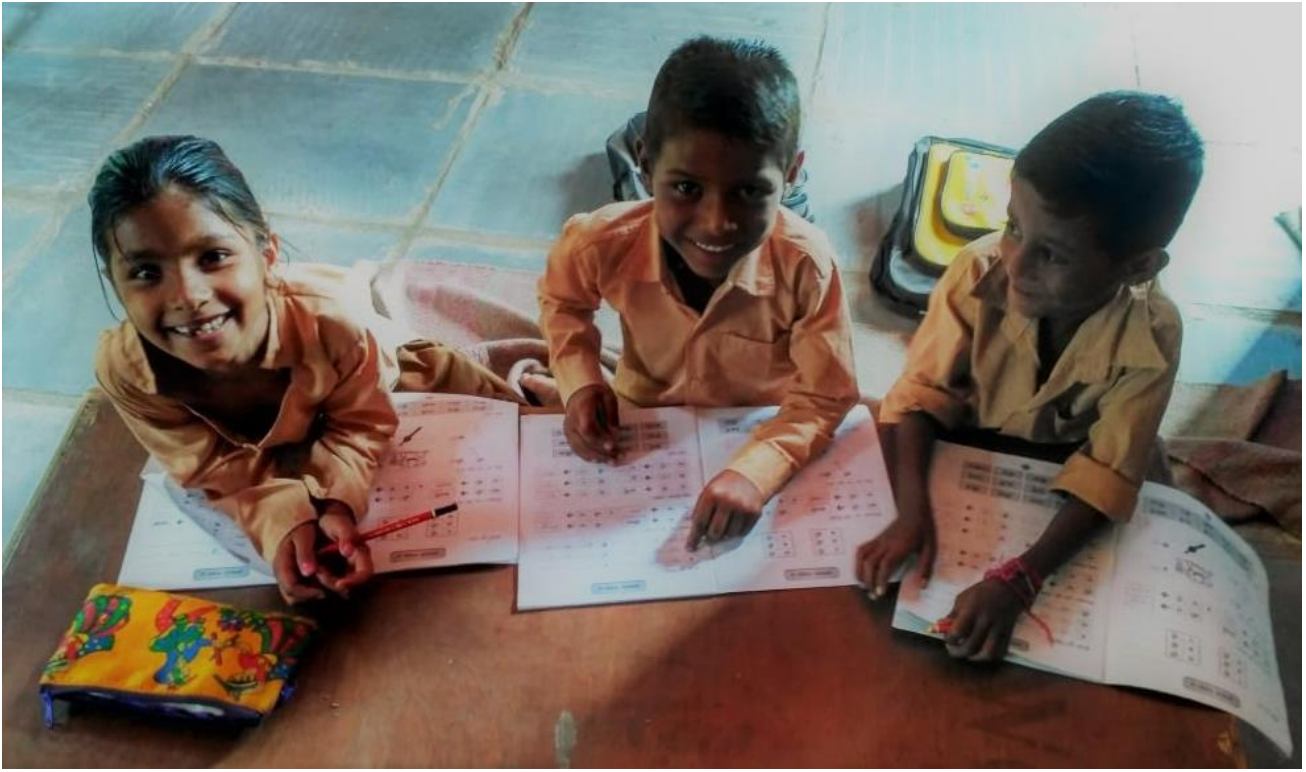


Figure 7: Children happily engaged in reading and writing in a multilingual classroom in Dungarpur, Rajasthan

If India wants to materialise the vision of Foundational Literacy and Numeracy enshrined in the NEP 2020 and significantly improve student learning in an equitable manner, this shift to including children’s local or home languages will have to be made. A thorough understanding of the language situation and multilingual education will surely go a long way in developing context specific ‘language used for instruction’ approaches, aligned with the spirit of multilingual education (MLE) highlighted in the NEP 2020 and the NIPUN Bharat mission. Multilingual education is the key to ensuring strong comprehension and better learning outcomes for a significant number of children who are faced with a language disadvantage in the learning process.