International Conference on

Globalisation and Challenges for Education

Focus on Equity and Equality

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Prof. Karuna Chanana
Dr. Furquan Qumar
Dr. Sudesh Mukhopadhyay

Compiled by

Dr. Yazali Josephine

2003

29. Globalisation and Perpetuation of Inequality

Language Dynamics in Early Schooling

GANESHA SOMAYAJI*

Reflexivity and Locating the Self and the Local in the Global Consciousness

The type of the world order where we are living today is certainly not the one where our forefathers and parents lived, educated and worked. Though their worlds too had been hierarchical, the hierarchies of our world embody in them reproduced old hierarchies and newly produced hierarchies. I prefer to call this process perpetuation of inequality and in this paper I attempt to grasp it with reference to the dynamic relationship between language and early schooling in the backdrop of the globalisation process.

I will initiate grasping this through my own reflexivity following Bourdieu's (1977, 1988, 1990, and 1992) advice and sociological practice and also Mouzelis's (1995: 160-172) insightful analysis of his own life trajectory along the four forms of hierarchies conceptualised by Bourdieu, i.e., economic capital, political capital, social capital, and cultural capital. Such an approach, will go a long way in bridging a gap among the economic, political, and cultural discourses on conditions of contemporary globalisation on the one hand and the social reality of early schooling in particular.

The beginning points of my reflexive reconstruction are located at the end of the 19th Century and the beginning of the 20th Century when my maternal grandfather started his early schooling. He was living in a remote hamlet in South Coastal Karnataka by name Kodi Kanyan in the Udupi Taluk of erstwhile Dakshina Kannada District. He had to walk for six kms swimming across a backwater stream to attend a primary school, which is situated near the National High Way 17. The Government Primary School, that had one teacher and four classes, was the only school catering

* Reader in Sociology, Goa University, Goa-403 206

to the primary educational needs of the children of more than twelve villages. On the basis of his recollections, my grandfather was telling that 99% of the children were Brahmon boys. He and many other children of the village did not continue education beyond the 4th Standard. After the 4th standard some of them joined cultivation and others became priests. My grandfather's elder brother was the only graduate who had courage enough to go to Madras, which was the capital of the erstwhile Madras Presidency to which South Coastal Karnataka belonged during the colonial regime. After his arrival he became a teacher in a newly started High School in Kundapura, a nearby harbour town. In the village, in my grandfather's generation, only a handful had the knowledge of letters and those who knew were predominantly the Brahmon men. My maternal grandmother was an illiterate as other women of her generation were.

Another facility in early schooling was for only the *vaidika* category of Brahmon boys. The entire Brahmon community in the area had been traditionally classified as *vaidikas* and *grihastas*. The former are authorised by tradition to officiate the rituals and Vedic sacrifices and the latter can only be *kartr* or performers; the former are the spiritual leaders and *gurus* and the latter are the followers and the *shishyas*. There was *Shree Vani Vilasini Sanskrit Pathshala* (presently it is being managed by the trust that is also looking after the affairs of the Shri Gurunarasimha temple, the religious and secular headquarter of the Kota Brahmans, situated in Saligrama, Udupi District) where the vaidika boys learnt Veda, Vedanta, smritis, *sanskara prayoga* or training in the performance of rituals associated with life-cycle ceremonies.

Brahmans were the owner cultivators in the entire area and the members of all other *jati* categories worked either as agricultural labourers/ tenants or engaged in *jajmani* and jati specific occupations. By and large the owner cultivator Brahmans, especially the men had enough (from the standards of that point of time) amounts of all types of capital – economic, political, social, and economic.

The next generation, my parents and their peers, experienced certain transitions that weren't the part of my grand parents' early schooling experiences. My mother could complete her primary education in her own village. In the school (established in the year 1913 thanks to a private initiative), she recalls, majority of them were Brahmans and she, along with many of her girl-classmates, discontinued education and did not go to the Higher Primary and the High School that are situated away from the locality. By the time my mother's younger brothers started their schooling, the number of non-Brahman children and also the girls attending the schools increased. However, the dropout rates for the Brahman girls and

the non-Brahman children were on the higher side. A newly established High School (the Viveka High School, Kota came into existence in the year 1949 again owing to private initiatives and people's support) in the neighbouring village facilitated continuation of education.

The language used in the primary, higher primary and High Schools was Kannada, the 'mother tongue' of the people of the area. However, the Kannada used in the schools was the *shista* and *granthik* variety of Kannada, which was contingent on the consolidation of the Kannada public sphere in the 20th Century. The Brahmins were the pioneers in the formation of this public sphere as evident in the abundance of Sanskrit words in the standardised Kannada language.

Comparing my own achievements in the school, which was once attended by my mother and maternal uncles, with non-Brahman classmates, I now recall that all of my non-Brahmin classmates dropped out from the school by the time we reached the 8th standard. Now I ask a question to myself: Whether the medium in which I learnt was a true 'mother tongue' for all of us? Or was it just a cultural capital of a few of us who fully utilised it while others did not posses it? The medium in which we had primary education has been related to the emergence of 'Kannada public sphere' in the context of new globalisation characteristic of modernity. Ever since the beginning of formal education on the imperial lines, acquiring a command over English was an important component of learning. For a few of us, only English was to be studied afresh, because we had the knowledge of the 'mother tongue' even before we went to the school.

An important point to be noted is that all of the teachers were Brahmins. The social background of teachers has not undergone any substantial change over the decades. The dialectal variety of Kannada used by our teachers in the school was not much different from our language of the Home. However, the non-Brahmins had to first acquaint them selves with the teachers' dialectal variety and by that time we had already overtaken them. They would encounter English and be threatened when they reach the 5th standard. Failing mainly in English, the non-Brahmins used to drop out. Although there may be certain other economic and cultural reasons, from the viewpoint of the life of the non-Brahmin children and those Brahmin children whose parents didn't have the background of formal education, early schooling was a source of total mystery and not an enlightening experience.

Now more than twenty-five years have passed since I left the portals of my Primary School. I migrated to various places to complete my education and now settled in Goa, experiencing motilities of multiple types such as geographical, occupational, social and cultural. A new generation

of my child's age-group has entered the phase of early schooling. If I had encountered the Kannada public sphere and had to come to grips with the hegemonic dominance of English, my daughter is now experiencing the Konkani public sphere and the hegemonic dominance of English. The world order at the time of my completion of primary education, beginning from my maternal grandfather's early schooling experiences, had a steady experience of modernity almost for a century. If we name that time-span as 'early modernity' in India, the present moment, that is the sum total of the Indian experiences for the last twenty-five years, can be analytically conceived as 'late modernity' in India that shares some features of post-modernity as well.

While the spread of early modernity from Europe to nation-states such as India and subsequent responses of various regional cultures had been a long drawn process; one notices a dramatic increase in the momentum of the spread of 'late modernity'. We can consider this phase of late modernity as an accompaniment of heightened globalisation.

I am now part of two locales, the village where I was born and brought up, and the place where I am presently working. The former is located in the Udupi District of Karnataka State and the latter is the part of Goa State. They constitute my lived-in-socio-cultural worlds, and what is happening in the domain of early schooling in these two locales at this heightened globalising moment will be addressed in the following discussion. I have divided the presentation into a few sections: 1. Heightened globalisation: the process and the discourse, 2. Globalisation and formation of language sphere in the locales under consideration: a comparison, 3. Globalisation and language dynamics in early schooling: reproduction, production and perpetuation of inequalities 4. Whither language policy in early schooling?

Heightened Globalisation: The Process and the Discourse

The points that differentiate the then world order (of early modernity) with that of the today's are many: They may be analytically grouped under such transitions as de-colonisation, economic liberalisation, educational expansion, cybernetic revolution, new transport and communication, emergence of a new virtual culture, and in a nutshell the close linkage between the local and the global. Globalisation discourse addressing the globalisation process, in recent times has taken three major strands – world polity theory, which Giddens (2001) calls theory of international relations, world system theory and world culture theory. Though the insights of all these theories are useful in understanding the questions of inequality and possibility of equity and equality in education, the last theory will be specially taken up for analysis of my observations.

The first theory focuses on the development of the nation-state system, analysing its origins in Europe and its subsequent worldwide spread. Nation-states are treated as actors, engaging with one another in the international arena. Initially sovereign nation-states emerge as separate entities and later on they move towards one 'world-state' (Giddens 2001: 246). This process is under way through the proliferation of intergovernmental organisations and increased inter nation-state interdependency. This development influences the growth and enactment of world culture. Meyer *et. al.* (1997) posit that since at least the middle of the nineteenth century, a rationalised world institutional and cultural order has crystallised that consists of universally applicable models that shape states, organisations, and individual identities.

Giving the critique of this approach, Giddens (2001) remarks that though this view is not altogether wrong it covers only one dimension of globalisation – the international coordination of states. What is missing in this approach is the social dimension. Actually, the nation-states are not the real actors, the actors are the people in the government who hold centralised administrative power and are equipped with various types of capital. There are also social relations that crosscut state divisions, for example between the migratory and diasporic individuals, that cannot be explained with this approach. Giving importance to internationalisation of political system, this approach misses to note the 'micro-politics' in the various local settings.

As the stance of world-system theory differs so much from international relations theory that Giddens (2001: 247) finds two discourses at arms distance from one another. In various of his works, Wallerstein (1974a, 1974b, 1989, 1995, 1998, 2000) develops world-system theory and notes that pre-modern world economies are different from the world capitalist economy that has emerged with the modern era. He analyses global inequalities through tripartite partition of the world system: the core, the semi-periphery, and the periphery. In his analysis it is the globalising capitalist economy that is the centre of attention and not the nation-states.

> "Globalisation is the process, completed in the twentieth century, by which the capitalist world-system spreads across the actual globe. Since that world-system has maintained some of its main features over several centuries, globalisation does not constitute a new phenomenon. At the turn of the twenty-first century, the capitalist world economy is in crisis; therefore, according to the theory's leading proponent, the current 'ideological celebration of so-called globalisation is in reality the swan song of our historical system'" (Wallerstein 1998: 32).

In Wallerstein's opinion, the present state of heightened globalisation is a carefully designed ideological process in perpetuating inequality and it may not materialise. Clearly, Walerstein has taken to task the economic mantra of 'globalisation and liberalisation'.

While the world polity theory of globalisation focuses on the differential political capital of the nation-states and the globalisation of world politics, the world-system theory focuses on the attempts of the capitalistic economic cores to dominate the world-system. The first analyses the global dimension of the macro-political capital, and the second addresses the macro-economic capital. Even in Giddens' analysis of the dimensions of globalisation (world capitalist economy, nation-state system, world military order, and international division of labour) in the contemporary late modern era, these two macro aspects of capital are focussed. What is missing is how globalisation impinges on the 'local' and how the 'local' responds.

To fulfil my objective of understanding the emergent language dynamics in the context of heightened globalisation in the two locales, it is important to grasp the consciousness of the global in the local. For us globalisation is important as far as it influences the life worlds of children, parents, teachers, and policy makers. In our discussion, the globalising world culture thesis is very useful. As we are concerned with achieving equity and equality, we can combine the cultural globalisation thesis with that of Bourdieu's conceptualisation of capitals. The introductory remarks have made it clear that inequalities are ubiquitous. However, now we are conscious of our ethical responsibility of constructing a new social order characterised by equity and equality. Our discerning of how inequality is being perpetuated is the first step towards writing Utopias or alternative desired futures. Let me first elaborate Robertson's elucidation of cultural dimension of globalisation, which he has been doing for the last ten years (1991, 1992, 1995a, 2001a, 2001b). We will pick up from him a few problematics that relate to our discussion.

1. What is globalisation? Globalisation refers to "the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole" (Robertson 1992: 8). In thought and action, it makes the world a single place. What it means to live in this place, and how it must be ordered, become universal questions. The question that we are addressing 'how to achieve equity and equality' is one such universal question, which is as much a part of globalisation as the process of economic globalisation is.

2. When did globalisation trends begin? Globalisation is a very long-term process. It has only taken a particular, discernible form during the past five centuries or so (Robertson 2001b: 461) when the world order

experienced transition from tradition to modernity. In India this transition is clearly discernible in the transformations that have been taking place since the last Century.

3. Does global change involve increasing homogeneity or increasing heterogeneity, or a mixture of both? Though globalisation by definition is a universalising and homogenising process, the actual experiences of the peoples and communities of globalisation differ from one another. Thus globalisation is not an all-encompassing process of homogenisation but a complex mixture of homogenisation and heterogenisation. (2001b: 462). It has multiple implications for various categories of people who stand in unequal relationship with one another.

4. What is the relation between the local and the global? Usually the local and the global are conceptualised as standing opposite to each other. Most part of the globalisation discourse has been a lament over the globalisation of the local or the communal or the quotidian. In other words the dominance of some macro-sociological reality over the micro-sociological reality, which is produced and reproduced in the every-day-life. Robertson, quoting Meyer *et. al.* (1997) considers these characterisations as misleading, for " [m]uch of what is thought of as being personal or as pertaining to the individual life cycle is in fact sustained by a global culture and transmitted mainly through the educational institutions of contemporary societies". And secondly, globalisation is as much about the people as anything else. Quoting Sassen (1999), Robertson argues that even the biographies and interactions of migrants are equally crucial features of globalisation. This argument goes well with the issues raised by me in the introduction. When we are sensitive to the micro-sociological dimension of globalisation "we can very easily produce a multitude of examples of the local in the global and the global in the local" (2001b: 466). Thus the relation of the global to the local cannot be one of dichotomy as many 'economistic interpretations of globalisation' postulate.

5. How does modernity relate to globalisation and globality? According to Giddens (1990 and 2001), globalisation has been the consequence of modernity, for "[m]odernity is inherently globalising" (2001: 245). Though Robertson (2001: 466) considers this view of Giddens unsatisfactory, for it considers a process (globalisation) as a consequence of a condition (modernity), the view is helpful in understanding the contents of globalisation especially with reference to our discussion in which the question is how English is contributing to the formation of new hierarchies in Goa and Udupi. Singh (2000) in two of his seminal essays on globalisation and local cultures gives a comprehensive analysis of this problematic from Indian perspective. More specifically, his views on

the consolidation of communitarian identity consciousness in the backdrop of growing global consciousness are very useful in chalking out programmes for achieving equity and equality.

I will consider heightened globalisation, the ongoing process that relates in complex ways the local to the global, as the context-forming background in which language dynamics in early schooling unfurls.

Globalisation and Formation of Language Sphere in the Locales under Consideration: A Comparision

Both Goa and the Udupi District of South Coastal Karnataka experienced colonisation, which was a major component of globalisation soon after the emergence of European modernity. For Goa, it is a prolonged colonial domination for about 451 years under the Portuguese and for Udupi it is the British colonisation for around two hundred years. Again the independence of Udupi and formation of the Indian nation-state and the liberation of Goa are characterised by de-colonisation as a major globalising trend in the middle of the 20th century. In both these locales the language to be used in primary education has been influenced by the post-colonial identity struggles where language related dominance and contestations surfaced with unprecedented vigour.

Goa was liberated on the 19th of December 1961 and it attained full-fledged statehood on the 30th of May 1987 with Konkani as the official language and Marathi as an associate language. According to the 2001 Census, Goa's total population is 13,43,998 spread across an area of 3,702 sq.km. A look into the linguistic distribution of households in Goa shows that like any other state of the country, Goa is multilingual (see Table 1).

In Goa, ever since liberation two linguistic camps are vying with each other to establish their dominance over others: The Konkani protagonists, popularly known as *konkanivadis* and Marathi protagonists, described as *marathivadis*. Whereas in Karnataka there is one dominant language group with its internal contradictions and a few other minority language lobbies, in Goa there are two equally powerful language groups contesting each other. Thus, in Goa language dominance and contestations are double pronged. Though the speakers of the minority languages such as Gujarati, Kannada, and Malayalam have established their organisations, they have not yet become strong enough to participate in contestations. Moreover, the speakers of these languages are migrants whose interests in coming to Goa are more economic than anything else. Their orientation to their language and regional cultures is dominated by nostalgia. They are considered as 'outsiders' by both the *Marathivadis* and *Konkanivadis* who believe that Goa is their legitimate motherland and they have an *essentially* Goan culture. But as regards the question, what is the essential

culture of Goa, there are sharp disagreements. Public articulation of the disagreements leads to the emergence and continuation of a culture of dominance and contestations. The dividing line is made sharper and sharper by the language based organisations. Some of them are listed in Table 2.

These organisations through their organisational activities propagate Konkani/Marathi as the 'mother tongue' of the majority of the 'Goans' and insist on the State to continue funding 'Konkani/Marathi schools.

Table 1: Languages Spoken in the Households of Goa (1981 Census)

Language	*No. of People*	*Language*	*No. of Households*
Konkani	6.00,004	Marathi	2,65,803
Bengali	800	Gujarati	3,164
Hindi	20,498	Kannada	33,473
Sanskrit	03	Tamil	3,861
Telugu	5,501	Urdu	29
Kashmiri	10	Malayalam	7,562
Oriya	97	Punjabi	1,229
Arabic	11	Bhili	57
Kodagu	36	Dogri	65
English	6,367	Nepali	450
Tibetan	2	Tulu	316
Khasi	4	Kharia	2

Source: Gandhe (1987)

Table 2: Konkani and Marathi Language Organisations in Goa

Konkanivadi Organisations/Institutions	*Marathivadi Organisations/Institutions*
Konkani Bhasha Mandal	Gomantak Marathi Academi
Konkani Projecho Avaj	Gomantak Sahitya Sevak Mandal
Asmitai Pratishtan	Gomantak Vidyaniketan
All India Konkani Parishad	Marathi Raja Bhasha Prastapan Samiti
Konkani Lekhak Sangh	Marathi Mandals
Konkani Seva Kendras	Marathi Prajatik Sahityak Mandal
Konkani (Goa) Hitrakshana Manch	
Fr. Stephen's Konkani Kendra	

The Udupi district of South Coastal Karnataka, the second locale, was carved out of the erstwhile Dakshina Kannada district of Karnataka State on 25 August 1997. With an area of 3,575 sq. kms. the district's population according to the 2001 Census stood at 11,09,494. This district too is multilingual with Kannadá and Tulu as dominant 'mother tongues'. Tulu has never been a medium of instruction notwithstanding its antiquity

and recent attempts at standardisation. The languages, which are prominent in the field of early education, are Kannada and English. An authentic depiction of the language sphere of the Udupi District will be complete only when we relate it to the language issues applicable to the whole of Karnataka where the 'mother tongue' of the majority has been accepted as the language of the State and the medium of instruction in the Government Primary Schools.

On the 1st of November 1956 Karnataka State was formed after merging Kannada speaking regions of the erstwhile princely states of Mysore and Hyderabad and the Presidencies of Madras and Bombay. According to the Census of India 2001, Karnataka has a population of 5,27,33,958 people. It has an area of 1,91,791 sq.km. The 1961 Census records 166 'mother tongues' in Karnataka. Karnataka, thus, is a classic example of a multilingual state.

The linguistic map of Karnataka State is gradually changing from one decade to another. Some minority language populations have been continuously increasing in their number, while others have been decreasing, and some others have been in the process of vanishing from the linguistic map of the State (see Table 3).

The formation of *Kannadavada* (Kannada ideology) during the 20th century culminated in the birth of Karnataka but it continues to undergo metamorphosis even after this event. There are certain counter ideologies too. Even Kannada ideology is not a unified set of ideas and practices. There are internal differences too and there are contestations among the protagonists of different versions of Kannada ideology. Language related dominance and contestations influence and are influenced by the metamorphosis of language ideologies.

The language based organisations play a major role in giving shape to these ideologies. Some of them are: Kannada Yvajana Sabha, Kannada Jagrita Parishat, Kannada Paksha, Kannada Chaluvali Paksha, Kannada Kriya Samiti, Sahitigala Kannadigara Balaga, Karnataka Pragati Ranga and Kannada Shakti Kendra (Govinda Raju 1999). The literary organisations like Kannada Sahitya Parishat, the departments of Kannada Studies of various Universities in Karnataka, and Hampi Kannada University, the Kannada and Samskriti Department of the Government of Karnataka, the Kannada Kaavalu Samiti established by the Government of Karanataka, and Kannada Sahitya Sammelanas are also active in making their contributions to Kannada ideology. Since the emergence of Karnataka as a state, the speakers of two minority languages, Tulu (predominantly in the Udupi and Dakshina Kannada Districts) and Kodava, are developing their separate self-identity vis-à-vis the Kannada identity of Karnataka. They have formed language-based organisations to counter the

dominance of Kannada ideology. Thus the situation of language dominance and contestations in Karnataka is multi-pronged.

Table 3: Languages in Karnataka

Mother tongue (Percentage of Speakers to the Total Population	*1961*	*1971*	*1981*	*1991*	*Increase/ Decrease*
Kannada	65.17	65.94	65.69	66.2	+1.03
Urdu	8.64	9.00	9.53	9.96	+1.32
Hindi	0.35	0.44	1.78	1.96	+1.61
Malayalam	1.30	1.41	1.60	1.68	+0.38
Tamil	3.64	3.36	3.76	3.84	+0.20
Telugu	8.68	8.17	8.12	7.39	-1.29
Marathi	4.55	4.05	3.77	3.64	-0.91
Konkani	2.08	1.96	1.74	1.57	-0.51
Tulu	3.61	3.56	3.30	3.06	-0.55
Kodava	0.33	0.24		0.21	-0.12
Lambani/Banjari		1.16			
Yerava Soliga		0.04			

Source : http://www.languaginindia.com/sep2001/linkageedu.html

In both these locales, the communitarian attempts at imagining and strengthening identities (Anderson 1991) can be considered as local attempts to combat the processes of in-migration, which is an important characteristic of globality. We can also consider such attempts as being supported by the globalising processes of democratisation, nation building and communication. In India the local cultural identities need to be identified in relation to regional and national cultural identity. As Singh (2000: 88) observes: “The regional culture is based on ingredients which, despite sharing common attributes with the local cultures, have their focus upon cultural traits of much wider following and commitment. Historically, language has formed an important factor in India around which regional cultural identity has been articulated”.

On the basis of the above discussion we can discern that language dynamics in early schooling that takes in the locality (the home, neighbourhood, school and the village or settlement) has connections to socio-cultural processes that take place at regional, national and global levels.

Globalisation and Language Dynamics in Early Schooling: Reproduction, Production and Perpetuation of Inequalities

Throughout India, the scenario of early schooling is one that is marked by many hopes, planned actions, contradictions, and challenges. This scenario has direct implications for the agencies of four sets of people in

order of immediacy — the children, the parents, the teachers, and the educational policy makers. One of the challenges faced by the policy makers is how to create just social order where all will be converted into equals who in turn will compete for the achievement of opportunities and halt the process of hierarchisation in socio-cultural and economic domains. The roots of this challenge can be traced to a shared civilisational goal, as enshrined in the Constitution: Eradication of inequality and establishment of equity and equality. The challenge in front of the parents and the children is to compete and successfully climb the social ladder. The challenge is all the more clear in the current world order of heightened globalisation.

After a careful analysis of the evolution of language policy in education in India, since the early 19th century, Krishna (1991: 76) finds that there have been two distinct developments in the field of education in India, 1. the continuing dominance of English as the medium of access to higher education in science, technology and the professions, to prestige employment and to a privileged social class, and 2. the quite remarkable development of regional languages as media of early education. Recognising rightly that "[a]fter Independence the peak of English dominance remained unchallenged", Krishna also notes the role of regional languages of states in the expansion of formal schooling and providing opportunities of vertical mobility for hitherto under privileged sections of Indian society. She is also sensitive to recognise the mushrooming of English medium schools, however, feeling that they catered to infinitely smaller number. Her observation is a point of departure for me to comment on the impact of globalising of mobility aspirations connected to schooling, especially too early schooling in the English medium. I feel that, at this juncture of globalisation, the nature of the production and reproduction of inequality is linked to the type of schools the parents select for their wards.

There are two contradictory processes that are operative in the formation of aspirations, policies and language choices in the early schooling: 1. support to the development and standardisation of local/regional languages and their formal socialisation in schools and the rationalisation for which is derived in the symbolic domain of imagined authentic identity, and 2. pragmatic concerns in the material domain which drive people to arrange for the thorough socialisation of children in the English language. The first process marking the language policy in early schooling contains political bargain as Jayaram (1993) remarks in relation to some other aspect of education. Whereas English unleashes centripetal forces of universalisation or homogenisation, an important feature of globalisation, regional languages (Kannada and other minority languages

in Karnataka and Konkani and Marathi in Goa) consolidate the centrifugal forces of parochialisation or heterogenisation. The positions of the persons in the social hierarchies decide how these forces are negotiated. In fact, these forces are found everywhere in the world (Gonzalez 2001).

In order to know the nature and extent of production and reproduction of inequality in early schooling in the two locales one need only find out the social background of children attending English medium and vernacular medium schools. In Goa, all the Government Funded Schools have to impart learning in vernacular/regional/Indian languages such as Konkani, Marathi, and Kannada up to at least the fourth standard.

At present in Goa there are three types of schools, 1. the English medium schools run by the private managements, 2. private aided schools that conduct classes in Konkani medium up to the 4th standard and then switch on to English medium 3. the Government schools that impart instructions in Konkani, Marathi and Kannada. However, in consonance with the Three Language Formula, English is taught in all schools in Goa. Many of them, especially the schools managed by the Christian Missionaries, start teaching English from the beginning. It is very pertinent to note here how the language policy in early schooling, influenced by the ideology of 'mother tongue' education, latently contributes to a great divide, as Seth (1995: 187-214) conceives the divide between the metropolitan and the vernacular India. The language policies of States and Union Territories in India, hitherto driven by the communitarian identity politics, need to be remodelled so as to bridge this gap. A first step towards this is to make clear that currently there is a tendency to mix the symbolic and communicational function of language with pragmatic material concerns. I will give the example of the language policies of Goa after Liberation and the people's responses to them.

The politics of 'mother tongue' played a major role in shaping Goa's early schooling scenario. It is very much evident in the recommendations of the 'B.N. Jha Committee' appointed by the Government of India, soon after liberation, to review the educational system in Goa and to make recommendations for its integration with the one prevailing in the rest of India. The recommendations were: 1. the medium of instruction at the primary level should be the mother tongue, 2. a minimum of 20 students was required to open a school division in a particular medium, 3. Konkani language, if chosen, had to be in *Devnagari* script, 4. primary education had to be made free and compulsory for all children between the age of six and eleven. As a consequence of the implementation of this report, Goa experienced a colossal expansion in primary education. One need only look at the increase in the number of primary schools. At the time of Liberation, Goa had only 176 primary schools. However in the year 1980-

81, the number of schools rose to 1,218. In this year the medium of instruction in the government primary schools was Marathi in 726 schools, English and Konkani in 38 schools, Marathi, English and Konkani in 29 schools, Marathi and English in 45 schools and in the case of non-government primary schools the medium of instruction was English in 35 out of 48 schools. In the year 1986, out of 1,537 primary schools in Goa, only 15 used Konkani, while 984 were conducted in Marathi and the remaining 538 were being conducted mainly in English and other languages (Botelho 2002: 73).

Konkani language was given the official language status in Goa on the 4th of February 1987. Subsequently Konkani was included in the Eight Schedule of the Indian Constitution. Thus Goa became a linguistic state and started experiencing the opposite pulls of identity and mobility, as other Indian states have been experiencing since 1956. In Karnataka, for example, as analysed by Annamalai (2001: 152-167), the Kannada Identity politics has grown so powerful that it led to the making of Kannada the dominant language and contributed to the production of a new language hierarchy. In Karnataka the state government runs and gives grant-in-aid to mainly Kannada medium schools and a few other medium schools such as Marathi and Urdu. Not only that the learning of Kannada is compulsory in all schools, but also the knowledge of Kannada is essential to seek government jobs. However, the educated and upwardly mobile parents put their children in the English medium schools thus contributing to the perpetuation of various forms of hierarchies. To get a glimpse of this process, I will provide an example of the success story of an English medium school in the Udupi district and its impact on Kannada medium schools a little later. Such English medium schools are mushrooming.

In Goa, even during the colonial period, the private enterprise in English medium schools was present. Varde (1977: 91) states that in 1950 in the 17 English medium private primary schools 6,413 children were studying (quoted in Botelho 2002: 72). The post-liberation democratic governments started giving assistance to private entrepreneurs opening and managing English medium schools along with those who opened schools with 'vernacular mediums'. The situation converted to be one of conflict with the 10th All India Konkani Writer's Conference, held in Pednem, on the 17 and 18 February, 1990, passed a resolution that the Government should take steps to impart pre-primary and primary education in the 'mother tongue'. As the Konkanivadi's believed that Goans' mother tongue is Konkani, grants should be given only to Konkani medium schools and no grants should be given to private schools that have been harming children by thrusting on them primary education in alien

languages, especially English. The then government, to take political mileage out of the issue, accepted the resolution to spend taxpayers' money only on free education in the 'mother tongue' but only with a change in the definition of the mother tongue. The government decided to provide financial aid to only those schools that conduct their classes from class I to IV in Konkani, the official language of Goa and Marathi, its second/associate official language. A few Kannada medium schools continue to get grant, for Kannada is a minority language. As over 40 per cent of children in primary schools studied in English medium in 1989-90 (Botelho 2002: 76), there was virulent agitation opposing this move of the government. The management of the Catholic schools in Goa and the parents and children were most affected. The controversy came to an end when the Archbishop issued a circular stating their decision that Konkani would be the medium of instruction at the primary and pre-primary level, starting from June 1991 in the Church run schools (*Ibid.* 79).

The last ten years have seen the continuation of the language policy and structure of early schooling in Goa. On careful observation of the implementation of this policy and parents' responses to early schooling in the backdrop of heightened globalisation, one can identify a hierarchy in the field of early schooling. At the top are those children who are studying in highly ranked English medium schools. Sharada Mandir, Panaji and Vidya Mandir, Margao are examples. Next come the children who study in government-aided schools that teach in Konkani medium up to the fourth standard and then dramatically shift to English from the fifth standard. My daughter is studying in such a school. I decided to send my daughter to a Konkani medium school because the Principal of the school told, and I too believe, that they teach 'good English' too in their school. The third class of the students is studying in 100 per cent regional language medium (the 'mother tongues') schools run either by the government or ideologically committed educationists. Thus, in Goa, the language hierarchy in early schooling is comprised three classes. These classes may be divided into sub-classes. However for want of space I will not include them here.

In the Udupi District of Karnataka, which represents in some degrees the rest of India, the new educational hierarchy is made up of two classes. The first and the 'privileged' class of the children are studying in English medium schools throughout their career and the others who study in the vernacular 'mother tongue' medium. In Udupi not only that the number of English medium schools is increasing but also the student enrolment.

Udupi has experienced tremendous expansion in primary education since the attainment of the status of linguistic state by Karnataka. Virtually each village in Udupi has a primary school. As the number of students is

on the decline, the burgeoning English medium schools catering to the mobility aspirations of the people of all social classes and *jatis* pose a serious threat to the continuation of many Kannada medium schools. This issue was brought to my notice by the Head Masters of Eight Kannada medium schools in my locality when I discussed with them the implications of growing number of English medium schools in the district.

Establishing an English medium school is like establishing an enterprise, an innovative endeavour in economic, social and cultural sense. It contains globalising economic concerns, globalising network of social relations and globalising world culture. In support of this observation, I can quote the mammoth growth of The Little Rock Indian School (LRIS), situated on a highland, near Brahmavar in the Udupi taluk away from the din and bustle of the city, yet catering to the metropolitan culture. When I was enrolled for my B.A. in the S.M.S. College, Brahmavar in the year 1982, the LRIS was just established in a rented premises having only two rooms. Quick glance at the history and motto of LRIS as found in its official website is a testimony to my observation.

> "Little Rock launched its chequered career in 1982, when it started the Kindergarten classes with just 72 students on roll. Adding one class each year Little Rock has up to Class XII. With a little over 2,800 students and around 150 teachers, it is one of the largest English medium schools in the State, with a rare teacher student ratio of 1:19.Eight batches of class X students and six batches of class XII were presented for the final examinations conducted by the Central Board of Secondary Education, Delhi. The School has not only secured excellent results consistently, but nearly all the students scored over 60 per cent marks. A large number of students passed with A1 grade in individual subjects, A1 grade being the highest score at the national level. Besides, a few students in each batch have received the coveted Merit Certificates for having come into the topmost 0.1 per cent at the national level in the respective subjects. The school maintains a high standard of education, without adopting methods like excessive homework, dictation of notes, rote-memorisation, extra tuition, punishment system etc" (http://www.little-rock.org).

Last year the central government bestowed upon the LRIS, the Computer Literacy Excellence Award. Parents of my locality, who are sending their children to this school, are well aware of the amount of capital the children accumulate in this school to participate in the contemporary 'social practice' that is global in scope. Because the school owns more than twenty busses, the entire Udupi District is the catchment area for the school. Following LRIS's footsteps, four more such schools

have come up in the district. These are apart from the English medium primary schools that do not own buses and are situated in the towns.

It is very clear from the foregoing discussion that the globalisation of the hegemonic dominance of English is prevalent in both the locales wherein my life world is located. The dichotomy between the English versus the vernacular language education is at the centre of the discourse on perpetuation of inequality. In this situation, the relevant questions to probe further to know more about the conditions of inequality and process of hierarchisation are: demographic profile and geographic distribution of various mediums of schools, social background of the students who are enrolled in these schools, the social composition of the management and the teachers. The ideological makeup of these various categories of agents influencing their language choices need to be understood in detail.

Wither Language Policy in Early Schooling?

I began this exposition by reflexively reconstructing the early schooling experiences of my close relatives and myself. These experiences are linked to transitions and transformations that are taking place in my localities, regions, the Indian nation-state and the world at large. I have also noted that the nature of our participation in these processes depends by and large on the amount of different types of capital we possess.

It is pertinent to note that in this globalising world order the knowledge of English and education in that language has been conceived by increasing number of people as important for experiencing vertical mobility. The idea that English will make us powerful in all realms of life (economic, political, social and cultural) is acquiring universal currency. Equally strong in the locales and regions in India is a struggle to preserve the local and regional identity through education in vernacular languages. They consider this as politico-economically relevant as it facilitates all sections of society to acquire education. This politically sensitive issue has almost hijacked the language policy of state governments of the Indian nation-state. As a result, a great divide has taken place in the realm of early schooling. On the one hand there are government aided and government managed primary schools having the regional languages as medium of instruction and on the other, there are English medium schools managed by the private entrepreneurs.

A clear dilemma is discernible here in the language policies of the state: It is an ideological dilemma – equality and welfare versus competition and achievement. In order to facilitate even the members on the last rung of society to experience vertical mobility, vernacular education in early schooling has been totally sponsored by the government. Pressurised also by the ideologues of 'free enterprise' and also succumbing to

globalising pressures of English, state governments have been giving permission to establish English medium schools indiscriminately. These policies are contributing to the perpetuation of inequality. Any revisions of the language policies in early schooling need to take into account the intended and unintended consequences of these policies to the people who experience inequalities in various domains of life.

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