

Curriculum Change in English Language Education in the State of Rajasthan The Dilemmas and Paradoxes*

RAMANUJAM MEGANATHAN**

Abstract

This paper presents experiences from the ongoing curricular revision in English Language Education in the Indian State of Rajasthan. While attempting to provide an insider perspective of the understanding of curriculum change and innovation by various stake holders of education, it seeks to answer some questions from the point of view of a curriculum and materials developer. The questions are: (i) How is the idea of syllabus as an operational construct perceived and understood by the syllabus designers and material developers?; (ii) How do the curriculum and syllabus developers and materials designers perceive what should be the methods of teaching-learning of English language?; (iii) How is the process of curriculum change bridge the knowledge gap between and among the various participants of curriculum change? The paper consists of five sections. In the first section the context and backdrop of the initiative of curriculum change is described bringing in the need and intensions of curriculum change. The second section raises the issue of 'what' and 'how' of syllabus design and the way people involved in curriculum and syllabus development perceived and responded to the change and how the post method condition (whether it exists or not) in the present context of English language education in India impacts the development of materials. The third section raises some questions about materials development for English language education. The fourth section presents the innovations attempted in the curriculum revision exercise. In the last section the paper discusses the lessons learnt from the processes of curriculum revision and materials development.

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** Professor, Department of Education in Languages, National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi 110 016.

THE STORY

The government of Rajasthan initiated the curricular revision involving practising teachers, teacher educators, academics from universities, national level institutions like the NCERT and state functionaries for curriculum implementation. This initiative was more or less similar to the one carried out the national level. At the national level, the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) which has the mandate of revising the school curriculum once in five years initiated the curricular revision in the year 2005. The National Curriculum Framework-2005 (NCERT, 2005) was brought out after a nationwide debate and discussion involving all stake holders and those concerned about the education of children in school. There were many committees formed to carry out the exercise and development of textbooks in all the subjects from classes I to XII. The committees include: National Steering Committee which consisted of members from all fields and twenty-one national focus groups on the various areas of school education. The twenty one areas were categorised into: (i) Curricular Areas; (ii) National Concerns; (iii) Systemic Issues, besides the syllabus and textbook development committees. The curricular revision exercise in the state of Rajasthan has had a difference. There is a steering committee consisting of members

from various fields, including NGOs working in the field of education. The Committee is headed by former head of the department of the Curriculum Group of NCERT and he was also the Director of SCERT, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala. There was no other committee like the focus groups for content or systemic areas.

It was assumed that the syllabus and materials development committees would bring in the ideas and arguments of the respective areas during the development of syllabus and materials. The first meeting for the exercise was held in May 2011 at the State Institute of Educational Research and Training (SIERT), Udaipur to discuss how to carry out the curriculum revision. The other states (neighbouring as well as comparable states in terms language, population or socio-economic indicators) which had initiated or completed the curricular revision were also consulted to understand how they undertook the curriculum revision to implement NCF-2005.

There was an urgency to revise the English language curriculum, particularly development of textbooks at the upper primary level. The reason for this was that the state had introduced the textbooks developed by NCERT for classes VI, VII and VIII, but found the materials extremely difficult and 'above the level by students'. Teachers also found it difficult to teach textbooks. The baseline study conducted at the

initial stage of this revision revealed that the proficiency level of students and teachers was very low. There were serious concerns expressed by teachers and parents that the books needed to be changed. The reason for the concern was that the state has been using the textbooks developed by the State Institute of Educational Research and Training (SIERT), Udaipur more than a decade. The books were first developed for classes III to VIII as the English language was introduced from class III. Later in the early 2000s English was introduced from class I. Some of the children who were in class VI during the 2009 or 2010 had started English from class III. The NCERT textbooks assume that the children start learning English language from class I. I (the author), being a member of faculty in language education in NCERT, New Delhi, was identified as the national level English language expert to be part of the curriculum and textbook development group in the state.

The ICICI foundation (a wing of ICICI Bank) which had entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the state of Rajasthan to work in the area of school and teacher education was a partner in the exercise. The collaboration between the state and the ICICI foundation emerged under the government of India's call for private public partnership (PPP) where the private sector/corporate companies are expected to spend their 10% profit for social welfare activities under

the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) scheme.

The people involved in the English language education curriculum revision

The English language curriculum revision began with the discussion in May 2011 with the general framework on how to go about and why the state of Rajasthan should have its own textbooks in English. This was followed by the development of curricular statements and designing the syllabus for elementary stage in English language education. The group involved in this venture consisted of a national level experts from NCERT, a freelancing ELT consultant (working for ICICI foundation), members of the faculty of SIERT, practising teachers and teacher educators working in the field. Besides, the above two national level experts were consulted for the finalisation of the syllabus (one has worked as professor at the premier institution for ELT, the English and Foreign Languages University, (EFLU) (formerly known as Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages located at Hyderabad and the other was a retired member of faculty from NCERT). The senior level administrative official (an Indian Administrative Service official) who heads the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan scheme in the state has been part of most of the discussion, particularly the first meeting and all the steering committee meetings (for which she

was the convener). The draft syllabus (developed based on the ideas of NCF – 2005, Position Paper on Teaching of English (NCERT, 2005) and the model syllabus (NCERT, 2005)) was discussed with the group and the views of teachers from various pockets of the state, and the problems and issues on English language education was deliberated upon to arrive at a consensus on the objectives, themes, processes of English language education at the elementary level (from classes I to VIII). The State Steering Committee discussed the syllabus and approved the same.

THE METHOD QUESTIONS

Major dilemmas and tensions which the members of the syllabus and textbook development groups felt were not new. What was interesting and is not clear is how the post method condition (Kumaravadivelu, 1994) is understood by curriculum and material developers who are mostly practising teachers and teacher educators. That is to say that the moving beyond methods or aiming at a process based methods has left the teachers and teacher educators in many a dilemma about processes/procedures of learning. So there were more apprehensions than comprehensions. Every single statement made in the draft syllabus was questioned with an intention that the children of the state would not be able to do 'this thing' or 'that thing'. People who know the context

very well (and believe(d) that was one of the reasons and merit to be in the process of curriculum revision exercise) endorsed 'labelling' learners as the ones who cannot learn English for there is no environment at home (even in school) to learn the English language. The opinions of the some of the members of the group are given below and these were said repeatedly to stress the need to make the English language course, particularly the materials 'very simple' and 'light'. This opinion made an impact both positively and negatively in the design of syllabus and materials as also in the development of training materials for teachers and the mode of training itself. Here are the opinions of most of the members.

"Most of the children who will study these textbooks are from very low economic background and they have no support from parents in learning the English language."

"Teachers themselves are not proficient in the English language. How do expect them to teach such a textbook like the one developed by NCERT?"

"Since our children do not know English even after undergoing five years of English in the primary school, our new textbooks should be very simple so that they can do everything with the support of the teacher who is not proficient in English language."

Moving beyond methods was in a way the consensus emerged during the discussions, though not clearly.

This 'eclectic way of conducting classroom activities' and developing materials to aim at eclectic method (Prabhu, 1987) as an ideal or convenient methodology, it was felt, would help the teacher use the materials (i.e. the textbook) well. The question which kept arising was how the teachers (most of them) who lack English language proficiency and are not English language graduates, and do not have the knowledge of language pedagogy can understand this. Eclecticism in English language methodology was not perceived or did not emerge as a rescue mechanism where the teacher lacks the knowledge of methodology (This I call 'deficiency point of view' for the teacher is deficient on his/her part in the knowledge of methods), but as a level where the teacher has a fair deal of knowledge about the existing methods or at least knowledge and ideas about the assumption about 'what is language? and how does learning take place?' and chooses the good ideas and strategies from the existing methods or evolving his/her method to maximise language learning. Adapting to eclecticism or teacher developed method/strategies as a convenient method has its own merits and demerits. Describing the situation that led to eclecticism as 'dissatisfaction with method', Kumaravadivelu (1993) argues that teachers who are trained in and even swear by particular method do not conform to its theoretical principles and classroom procedures.

Teachers who claim to follow the same method often use different classroom procedures that are not consistent with the adopted method, teachers who claim to follow different methods often use same classroom procedures, and over the time teachers develop and follow a carefully delineated task hierarchy, a weighted sequence of activities not necessarily associated with any established method. (p. 29-30)

But in the discussions during the syllabus and materials development the lack of knowledge about not only methods of language teaching and very understanding about language and learning was felt. The support for any methods or strategy suiting to the context (evolved by the teacher), though cannot be ignored as trivial or not sound, should also be seen from the point of view of the current theories or understanding of language and language learning. This was clear as some of us (in the group) were not able to come out of what is called 'wanting to teach the way one was taught'. The counter argument to this is given by Andy Hargreaves and Michael Fullan (1998) who advocate 'Refuse to teach the way you were taught'.

I need to talk a bit more about how the existing methods in English language teaching or the assumptions about methods of English language teaching have created disparities in different school systems as well as within systems. This rift or cleavage in the methods of English language

teaching could be seen as how the diverse contexts are addressed to provide quality English language education with available resources. This in a way helps in making curriculum and material developers understand that materials will not and cannot advocate one particular way of teaching or methodology.

A closer look at the existing curricula, particularly the materials and the pedagogy they expect the teacher to follow reveals some interesting scenarios in the country (even within the system itself.). We can see crudely three methods are practiced (some systems say it explicitly and some do not make a mention about it). At the national level the Central Board of Secondary Education which directly adopts NCERT's syllabus and also develops its own syllabus and materials there are three methodological/pedagogical understanding based on which the materials have been developed. The textbooks of NCERT from classes IX and X advocate learning centered approach based on the principles of constructivist paradigm of learning. The CBSE textbooks for classes IX and X follow typical communicative approach while the Board's textbooks for classes XI and XII are based on functional-notional syllabus. The textbooks of many states attempt to follow a combination of structural and communicative approaches to language teaching. Most of the state syllabi talk about the need for developing communication skills

and negotiation skills and also formal grammar teaching. Since the syllabus states the methods in terms of strategies and classroom processes, it would be difficult to say that a particular method is being advocated. Textbooks are the only means for the teacher to know about the strategies the syllabus advocates. This is stated in preface, teachers' pages or through the rubrics. The irony of the situation is that the teachers who use the materials do not or need not necessarily have the knowledge of the methods they are supposed to follow. They continue to teach 'they were doing it so' or try to ape whatever has been told to them in training programmes. Most teachers believe that the textbook should be followed religiously. That is to say the textbook advocates/provides a methodology which is ideal and good for the learners. So follow the rubrics of the textbook and you will realise language learning. One may without much research conclude that the very understanding by teachers about methods of teaching-learning of English as a second language in India is problematic. This has given rise to convenient ways of adopting to eclecticism which does not yield much fruit. We need to develop an informed eclecticism in the teacher. This requires knowledge about existing methods, current assumptions about language and learning and a critical reflection on them. This will lead to developing an understanding of what Stern calls 'enlightened

eclectic method'. Stern (1992) brings out the problems "The weakness of the eclectic position is that it offers no criteria according to which we can determine which the best theory is, nor does it provide any principles by which to include or exclude features which form part of existing theories or practices. The choice is left to the individual's intuitive judgement and its, therefore, too broad and too vague to be satisfactory as a theory in its own right." (p.11)

The kind of eclecticism or the method which the practicing teachers and teacher educators assume was since the teacher is deficient both in terms of proficiency and pedagogy let eclecticism serve as a rescue mechanism. As Widdowson (1990) puts it rightly, "It is quite common to hear teachers say that they do not subscribe to any particular approach or method in their teaching but are 'eclectic'. They thereby avoid commitment to any current fad that comes up on the whirligig of fashion... If by eclecticism is meant the random and expedient use of whatever technique comes most readily to hand, then it has no merit whatever." (p.50)

But at the same time we should recognise that post method condition has empowered teachers to explore and expand the very idea of method in language teaching and thereby liberating language teaching from the clutches of west-centric designer methods. Kumaravadivelu (2003)

and Canagarajah (2002) bring out this point well when they say, 'post method pedagogy seeks to empower practicing teachers in their attempt to develop an appropriate pedagogy based on their local knowledge and local understanding. (Kumaravadivelu, 2003:549)'

'...it (post method pedagogy) liberates teachers and makes them truly creative in integrating experience, imagination, and knowledge to devise learning strategies with/for students. (Canagarajah, 2002:149)'

This dilemma of what should be the processes through which English language learning should be realised continued till the end of materials development. Once the materials were developed and the discussion on how to guide the teacher to use the materials to the maximum provided scope for looking at individual skills and tasks as opportunities for working with language and language use, the question of processes became clear.

Another interesting argument that came up many a times was how much theory (assumptions about language and learning) the syllabus should have in order to make material developers, trainers of teachers and the cutting edge teacher understand the 'what' should be taught (content) and 'how' should it be taught (the methods). There was a consensus that there was no need to state any theory in the syllabus directly. It

would not help the teachers or anyone who uses the syllabus for materials development and teaching purpose. This has made syllabus development much more difficult as to bring in the pedagogical understanding the new approach advocates. The ideas of NCF-2005 and emerging language pedagogies had to be brought into the new syllabus. In a way say it and not to say it. In other words the demand was not to quote from ELT pedagogues and theorists but tell the idea in what was described as 'simple' and 'common man's language' which any one can understand. So we had to summarise most of the ideas and give them as pointers.

THE MATERIALS QUESTIONS

With the above understanding on materials and processes of language learning-teaching, the materials development team plunged into developing materials. This group consists of teachers from government run schools at various stages of the state and teacher educators from District Institutes of Education and Training (DIET) and Colleges of Teacher Education (CTE). Since materials development is not a regular exercise most of the members of the group were new to materials development. Some of them have been part of materials development during the last curricular revision which took place seven years ago. The major task of the group was to develop expertise in materials

development (enable the novice or not so experienced teachers to develop expertise). This experience of 'learning to develop materials by developing materials' based on the understanding of new syllabus and the pedagogical shift from conventional methods to process based or learning centered approaches to language teaching-learning equipped material developers (with experience and without experience) to develop an understanding about (i) text, (ii) tasks, (iii) coherence, (iv) integrating assessment into materials itself, (v) guiding the teacher to use/exploit the materials to the maximum and moving beyond it. Materials have been developed through workshop mode where the group brought in their ideas along with texts of different types. Draft materials were finalised in six workshops. Two senior academics from universities were identified as reviewers. Here are some of the problems which the materials development team encountered and discussed to arrive at a consensus over a period of time.

A. The texts

The question of what should be a text in an English language textbook at the upper primary stage was addressed very differently by everyone in the group. Text from varied genres and varied lengths were pooled together. However, it was difficult for some of us to come out the conventional thinking of text i.e. a good piece of literary, descriptive or discursive text

which could be exploited well and has a moral in it. But majority believed that a text should interest learners and provide opportunity for learners to work with. Tomlinson's (1998:7-21) ideas on 'What should materials do?' would be very appropriate (please see appendix 1) While this argument went on, another question on the selection of the text which came up was the question of 'authentic text'. Everyone agreed and believed that authentic text should be chosen for materials but the difference was authentic texts are not simple in terms of vocabulary, language structure, etc. How far we can simplify the language and whether the author of the authentic text would agree for the gradation or modification. Most of members of the group believed that text should be simple because the existing textbooks (developed by NCERT) is very difficult for children as well as teachers and the texts in the books are all authentic texts. The dilemma was how far we can have authentic or simplified/graded texts. As a compromise we went for texts from varied genres and sources and are slightly modified or translations from Indian languages in simple language. This 'the text has to be in very simple language' argument was to stress the need for learners to know and understand every word of the text. It took some time for many in the group to recognise that the texts serve as language 'input text' through which the learner is familiarised with or

exposed to new language. Krashen's (1985) idea of 'input hypothesis' and how creating a print rich environment in the classroom makes children gradually learn from the exposure. The concepts like 'input hypothesis and $i+1$ ' (Krashen, 1985), 'interaction hypothesis (Long, 1985) and 'output hypothesis (Swain 1985) were actually introduced to material developers in order to develop a perspective on what purpose the texts serve in a textbook. This also clarified how reading has to be dealt with at this stage.

B. Authentic Tasks and Route

Initially the group was reluctant to recognise the importance of making it the tasks authentic as it was difficult to perceive 'authentic tasks' as tools for engagement with language and language use. As we progressed the group was able to develop an understanding of what a task is and how a task should provide opportunity for language use. This was well taken as some of us in the group with some expertise were able to develop one complete unit with all the components of language teaching-learning included. The language components are: Pre-reading, while-reading and post-reading, listening and speaking, grammar, writing, punctuations (not in all) and study skills. All these were to be connected and most of which are either rooted from the reading text or had coherence in terms of ideas and actions. This 'route', in a

way, helped the developers to design authentic tasks and understand the difference between an authentic and a shallow or trivial task. The shallow and trivial task, I mean, tasks which directly 'teach' one or some language item or very conventional way of developing exercises. The teacher and the learner should be able to feel that this route (through rubrics) takes them gradually, not in a structured manner from one tasks/activity to another. The group as material developers were able to understand the purpose of 'route' and that made the tasks authentic because the main/root text provides the language aspect to be exploited through tasks for the unit.

C. Listening and Speaking

Most of the existing textbooks do not find space for the two skills, listening and speaking. Even if they have some activities or tasks for promoting these two areas, they are few and not authentic. The new textbook series titled as Sunbeam (SIERT, 2012) have listening and speaking activities as integrated and authentic tasks. The texts for listening tasks are given at the end which the teacher will read out loud or as required. This is because most (almost all) of the schools will not have any facilities like tape record player or CD player. Integration of listening and speaking activities, it was found in the pilot trialling, was well taken both by

teachers and learners because it did not pose any problem or threat to both the teacher and the learner as it does not warrant any special effort or arrangement. But we need to recognise the problem that the dependence of teacher's voice and pronunciation for listening activities may not be very fruitful as the teachers, as mentioned above, lack English language proficiency.

INNOVATIONS

The textbook was able to accommodate the demands of the teachers and other actors involved in the curricula and syllabus design, materials development and also the popular demand that the textbooks should provide scope for developing communication skills in English. It is not fair to claim that the books have achieved everything as they are introduced. It would take at least one year to understand the effect of the book and teachers are the best source to know about the usefulness of the book. The base line survey conducted on students as well as teachers in English language proficiency and perception about materials revealed many things. They were related to the type of texts, tasks, proficiency level of both teachers and learners, assessment strategies and so on. Here are some of the innovations the materials attempted to do and realised in making it happen.

- **Coherence within one unit and**

among the units (the whole textbook). Coherence within a unit was created by providing a 'route' as discussed above; Coherence among the units i.e. the whole book was made possible in terms of themes, coverage of language items (vocabulary, grammatical items, etc.) not in structured manner, but following the principle of 'familiar to unfamiliar'.

- **Bringing in the aspects of language learning which have been neglected so far.** This has been discussed in the previous section. The book has found space for listening and speaking.
- **Connecting the life of children outside school with the classroom.** This is one of the guiding principles of National Curriculum Framework-2005. The text and activities in the book draw real life contexts, situations and events so that children can connect with their day-to-day life. The pre-reading activities and tasks have been designed in such a way that children use their previous knowledge to work with ideas and language and then move forward. The Vygotskyian view of social construction of knowledge (1985) is aimed through linking the life and practices with children and also the popular festivals, places and folktales and stories of the state.
- **Teachers' Page.** One major concern expressed by almost everyone during the process of syllabus and textbook development was how to guide the teacher to use the textbook effectively. Most teachers will have only the textbook, nothing else. Though one training programme has been organised for every teacher following the cascade model, teacher will be left alone when they start teaching the textbooks. It was suggested that the each textbook will have some pages allotted to teacher as guidelines. If the class six textbook has ten lessons, there will be six to eight pages have been allocated as 'Teacher's Page' for each three units. The teachers' pages tell the teacher the purpose of the unit and how to go about and also how to do Comprehensive and Continuous Assessment. During the pilot trialling it was found to be very welcoming by teachers.
- **Emphasis on reading** is supported through not only selection of texts that interest children and varied forms like cartoons stories, authentic translation from Indian language, but also through tasks which pave way for reading and re-reading of texts.

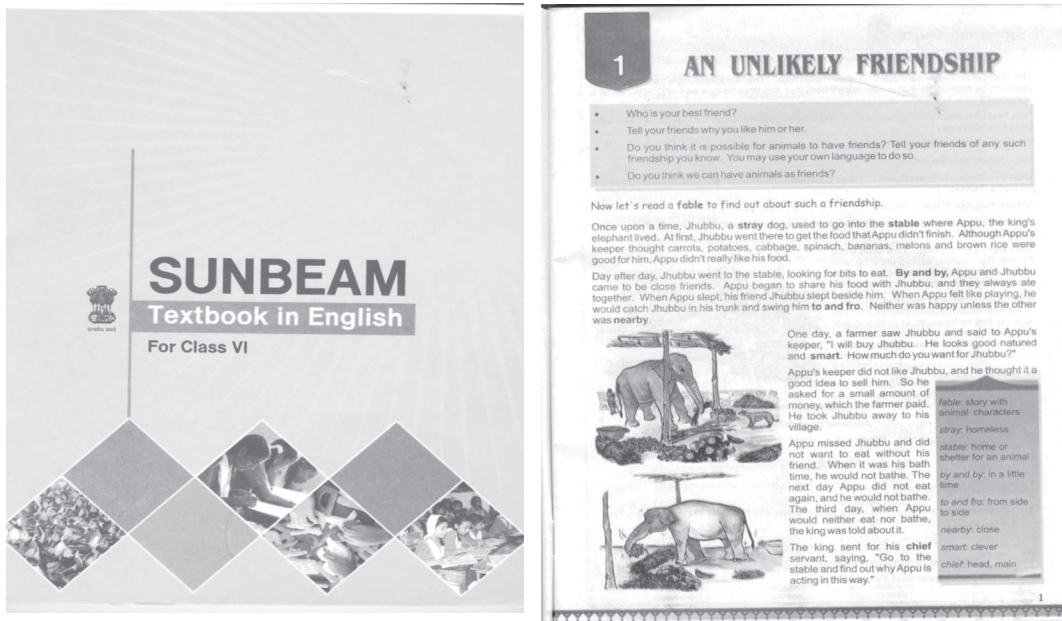


Figure 1 Textbook in English Class VI

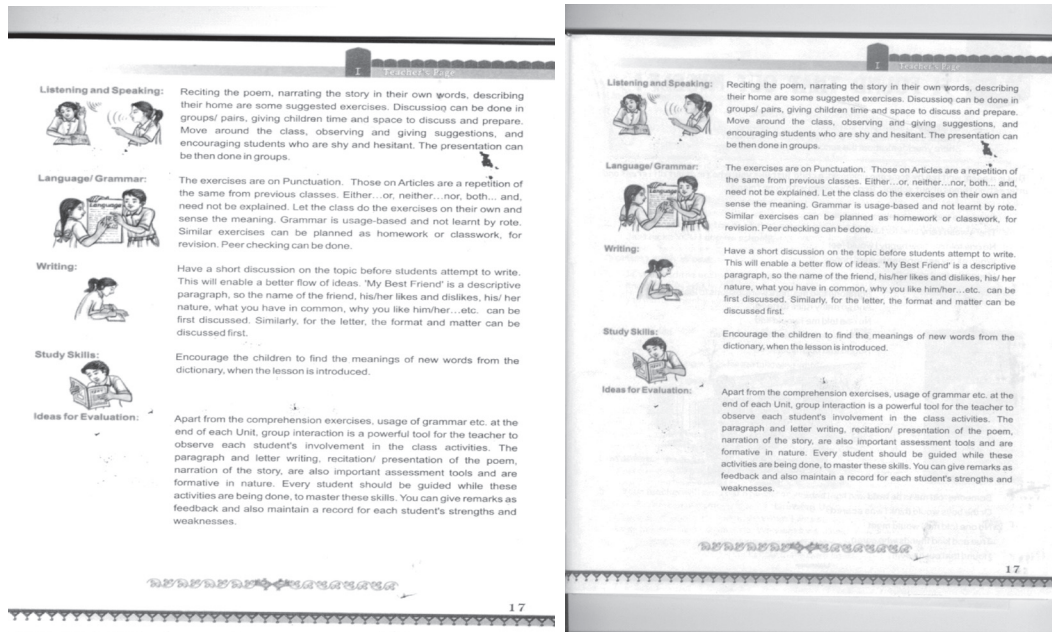


Figure 2 Teacher's Page of Class VI Textbook

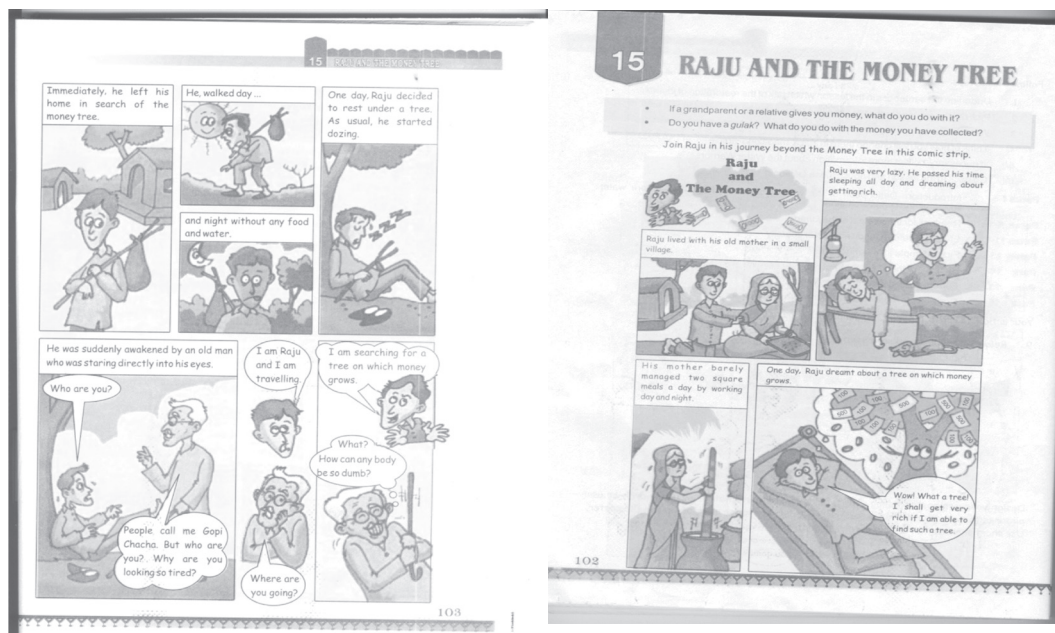


Figure 3 Variety of Texts: Cartoon as Reading Input

- **Pedagogical Grammar.** It was difficult to convince everyone that explicit teaching of grammar would not help much in supporting the learner acquire the language. It was agreed one or two language item(s) found in the reading text would be taken to familiarise and draw the attention of learner to the grammatical aspect/function of the language. The identified grammatical item is familiarised through further tasks in contexts and the 'why' and 'how' are inferred through grammar in action followed by 'consciousness raising' strategy.
- **Development of expertise in materials development through the exercise of developing**

materials. The group was able to see that they gained expertise in materials development during the course of the exercise. This is because the group consisted of practising teachers to university academics. The coming together of people with particular interest and working together with a clear goal helps in learning about and producing materials which would serve a purpose. Brian Tomlinson's (1995) point to develop effective materials is of much relevance in today's context. We need to find ways of bringing together researchers, teachers, writers and publishers so as to pool resources and to take advantage of different areas

What materials should do? (Tomlinson, B. 1998:7-21)

1. Materials should achieve impact.
2. Materials should help learners to feel at ease.
3. Materials should help learner to develop confidence.
4. What is being taught should be perceived by learners as relevant and useful?
5. Materials should require and facilitate learner self-investment.
6. Learners must be ready to acquire the points being taught.
7. Materials should expose the learners to language in authentic use.
8. The learners' attention should be drawn to linguistics features of the input.
9. Materials should provide the learners with opportunities to use the target language to achieve communicative purposes.
10. Materials should take into account that the positive effects of instruction are usually delayed.
11. Materials should take into account that learners differ in learning styles.
12. Materials should take into account that learners differ in effective attitudes.
13. Materials should permit a silent period at the beginning of instruction.
14. Materials should maximize learning potential by encouraging intellectual, aesthetic and emotional involvement which stimulates both right and left brain activities.
15. Materials should not rely too much on controlled practice.
16. Materials should provide opportunities for outcome feedback.

of expertise in order to produce materials of greater value to learners of languages. (p15)

One major challenge was to integrate assessment into the classroom processes. The new scheme of continuous and comprehensive evaluation is being implemented in the state as envisaged by NCF- 2005. Teachers' pages guide the teacher for ways and means of assessing learning as it happens in the classroom.

LESSONS LEARNT

- (i) **Knowledge Gap in understanding 'What is language and learning?'** 'How language learning takes place?' 'Learner as constructor of knowledge' in the participants at every level was felt in the exercise of curriculum and syllabus design, and materials development. This is not to say people should not have their own understanding on

the above questions or aspects of language and learning and that will lead to uniformity. The whole exercise was attempted to have an informed understanding suiting to local context of what best should work in the state of Rajasthan. This informed understanding was supported by critical reflections taking objective views while the understanding was also questioned by just assumptions and beliefs not sound, not evidence based. This 'knowledge gap' within the material developers led to difference from selection of texts to devising assessment strategies in the textbook. One another problem was because of the knowledge gap in the basic assumptions about language and learning by non-language educators, pedagogues and experts in other subject experts (who were there as members of steering committee or syllabus committee) the selection of texts were questioned from the point of view of language difficulty (as assumed by them), themes, gender and other perspectives. This helped in being sensitive to issues related to gender, caste and special needs of the group. This goes on to say that material developers need to be very sensitive to other issues keeping the constitutional values in mind. This knowledge gap could be bridged by developing a clear

guideline (through a workshop) for materials development. This exercise should involve the prospective material developers and others (curriculum planners, implementers, other subject material developers to make them understand the role of language and trainers).

- (ii) **Materials development as a professional activity:** Materials development has not been recognised as a continuous professional activity for which a teacher has to have training and develop expertise as every teacher is a material developer for his/her classroom and/or for other purposes. One group of 15–20 teachers and teacher educators developing material for one occasion and take it up again when the system demands is not going to support much materials development as an area of knowledge. This has also an impact on making the teachers understand the role of materials in language teaching. We felt that the group should have been exposed to the recent ideas and developments in materials development in English as a second language. There is a need to promote materials development as an area of knowledge or theory through short term or long term courses for pre-service as well as in-service teachers, and others interested in the area.

(iii) **Selection of Material developers.**

Now the practice is anyone can develop materials and those known as good teachers or teacher educators and present their perspective well in meetings and workshops is considered as good in material development. In the absence of any mechanism or professional activity as material development at any level (except some courses in master in a few universities in India), it would be difficult to create professional material developers. So selection of material developers needs to be through well thought of mechanism. This is not the practice. We need to find ways to select material developers based on their experience and work in material development.

(iv) **Dominance of Textbook in English Language Teaching.**

While textbook remains the sole source of English language teaching-learning in majority of school/classroom settings, teachers depend completely on the prescribed textbooks and learners have no other choice to follow their teachers. Material developers have a compulsion to understand this reality and develop the textbook as all comprehensive and less burdening instruments for language learning. This makes the very exercise much demanding and problem solving like. Textbook is only

a launching pad for providing language learning opportunities, i.e. it is the beginning, not an end. Material development exercises in countries like India need to understand and strike a balance. In other words we need to think of how open the minds of teachers are to move beyond the textbook for creating opportunities for language use.

(v) **Diffusion of Curriculum.**

Curricular statements and syllabus remains in the realm of only experts, the members of steering committee, material developers, and to some extent with researchers. Teachers and even teacher educators do not have much opportunity to see the syllabus. The very intention of the syllabus gets diluted when the teachers do not have access to the material itself. Though first key resource persons training discussed the ideas of the syllabus and stage wise objectives of language learning and the processes, the transmission loss makes the outreach of the syllabus as an operational document is limited. It is necessary to create awareness about the curriculum revision among all stake holders of school education, including parents and very importantly teachers. The print and other media could be used for the purpose by asking opinions and suggestions from anyone

interested in and concerned about education of children in school and by holding debates on various aspects on education.

- (vi) **Curriculum Shedding.** Loss of ideas during the process of curriculum, syllabus and materials development from the national level to the state and within the state from syllabus and materials development to the cutting edge teacher has been noticed. This phenomenon could be stated as 'curriculum shedding' from the top to bottom or from centre to periphery. This loss during the process of curriculum diffusion makes the intentions of the curriculum, particularly the materials, lose the perspectives and understanding based on which they have been developed. Thus 'top down' approach to curriculum development and implementation even with a relatively bigger state like Rajasthan involving cutting edge teachers and practitioners also has 'outreach' and 'curriculum spread' problems. This creates gap from 'intended curriculum' through 'implemented curriculum' to 'evaluated curriculum' as people involved in the first stage or those trained on the new curriculum and materials will not be there in each stage to follow the curriculum implementation by the classroom teacher. Mere training to teach the materials

reduces the broader perspective of curriculum.

- (vii) **Alignment of various participating institutions and systems.** There is a need to bring in organisations and people working in the field of language education and curriculum development work together with an over arching agenda. This needs institutional mechanism that would bind together for the purpose the curriculum revision and change, putting aside the differences of all sorts and realise the agenda of curriculum change. This needs contribution and sacrifice from each institution (like the NCERT, SCERT, SSA and RMSA, NGOs involved and school systems) working to realise the curriculum revision as a professional activity.

CONCLUSION

Curriculum change is an activity aimed at social change through schooling. The responsibility of institutions and individuals involved is immense that the synergy between and among them contributes in achieving the maximum in terms of development of curricular guidelines, syllabus and more importantly materials development. There is an urgent necessity to pay attention to the area of materials development as a professional activity and the integrating materials development as part of professional development. Materials in English language

education in India play a very vital role because textbooks remain the only source of language teaching-learning. The curriculum revision exercise in the state of Rajasthan recognises the above issues and has attempted to follow a professional

approach by adopting a mechanism involving people and institutions from national level to the cutting-edge teacher. However, it may have its own impact as the processes of development and implementation still requires introspection.

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