

# Reports

## **Workshops on English Language Teaching in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh**

July 4 - September 27, 2013

*Partha Sarathi Misra*

The State Institute of Azim Premji Foundation, Bhopal conducted three English language workshops in Madhya Pradesh in the months of July and September 2013. Nivedita from Azim Premji University, Bangalore, and Pallavi, Sudhir and Bharti from the State Institute, Azim Premji Foundation, and Bhopal were facilitators at these workshops.

The first workshop held at Dewas from 4<sup>th</sup>–9<sup>th</sup> July 2013, was attended by twenty-seven secondary school teachers and two head teachers. At this workshop, all the sessions were woven around the themes of perspective and pedagogy, subject teaching versus language teaching, first and second language acquisition and the basics of reading and writing.

The second workshop, held at the Institute of Advanced Study in Education (IASE) Bhopal from 3<sup>rd</sup>–7<sup>th</sup> September 2013, was attended by 48 participants comprising three faculty members from the District Institutes of Education and Training (DIET) and 45 primary school teachers. The sessions at this workshop were also a blend of perspective and pedagogy and the nature of language, subject versus language teaching, first and second language acquisition, reading for meaning and communicative language teaching.

The same themes were repeated at the third workshop held at Khandwa from 24<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> September 2013, which was attended by 21 secondary school teachers.

All three workshops aimed at building the capacity of the participants who were expected

to be resource persons in English language teaching in the State of Madhya Pradesh in the near future.

(This report is based on inputs provided by Pallavi Chaturvedi, State Institute, APF, Bhopal.)

## **Workshop on Kannada Language Teaching in Yadgir, Karnataka**

August 28-29, 2013

A two-day workshop meant for members of the Kannada Co-development group of Azim Premji Foundation was held at the Azim Premji District Institute, Yadgir, Karnataka on the 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> of August, 2013. It was attended by members from the Karnataka State Institute, Bangalore; District Institute, Yadgir; and the Child Friendly School Initiative, Surpur, Karnataka. The objective of the workshop was to review the progress of the members involved in studying language in general and Kannada in particular, and to share their learning experiences with reference to language and language pedagogy related to the teaching and learning of Kannada.

On the first day of the workshop, the focus of the presentations and discussions was on

1. What is language?
2. Origin of language, and
3. Nature of language

Discussions centered around ‘Bow-bow theory’, whether thought came first or language

came first, development of knowledge through signs, language learning through repetition and reinforcement, the meaning of *moortha* and *amoortha*, and language death.

Gururaj presented a paper titled “NCF Position Paper on Teaching of Indian Languages”. It was followed by a lively discussion. Devraj’s paper on “The Structures of Letters in Kannada” added a valuable contribution to the deliberations of the workshop.

On the second day of the workshop, the participants embarked on the task of translating the NCF position paper on the teaching of Indian languages. It was further decided that Kalandar would write a paper on “The Nature of Language”, Hanumanth on “Language Learning”, Showrish and Gururaj on “The Constitutional Provisions and the Three Language Formula”, Shreedevi and Shambanna on “Other Language Issues in the School Curriculum”, and Janaki and Zabeer would write on “Multilingualism and Scholastic Achievement”.

The two-day workshop was indeed a rewarding experience for the participants as they could share their readings on language and language pedagogy as a collaborative endeavor, there by sharpening their understanding of the different theories and approaches towards language acquisition and language pedagogy.

(The report is based on the inputs provided by Roopa Koti, District Institute, APF, Yadgir, Karnataka.)

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## **Language and Language Teaching Workshop 2 in Jaipur, Rajasthan**

September 14-19, 2013

*Nandini V. Badadur and Rajni Dwivedi*

The second workshop of Language and Language teaching for fifty members of the Azim Premji Institutes focused on the development of reading skills.

### **Objectives**

1. To understand the concept of reading and the development of this capacity in children.
2. To understand how children acquire emergent capacities of reading from the environment.
3. To understand the role of the parents/ teachers in supporting an emergent and developing reader.
4. To understand the theories of reading and the pedagogical implications of the strategies of reading.

The workshop commenced with a discussion on the experiences of the first workshop on the nature of language and a re-examination of some questions. These questions were: What are the metalinguistic rules that a child hypothesizes and acquires? How does it help to understand this process? If children do not learn through imitation, how do they learn? If children already know so much about language before they enter school, is the teacher needed?

### **Emergent Literacy**

This session re-examined the literacy capability of children with a focus on the environment. The participants discussed the signs of literacy that children notice in their environment. They talked about rich and poor literacy environments: children who have a print-rich environment are often engulfed with a whole world of print that includes sign boards,