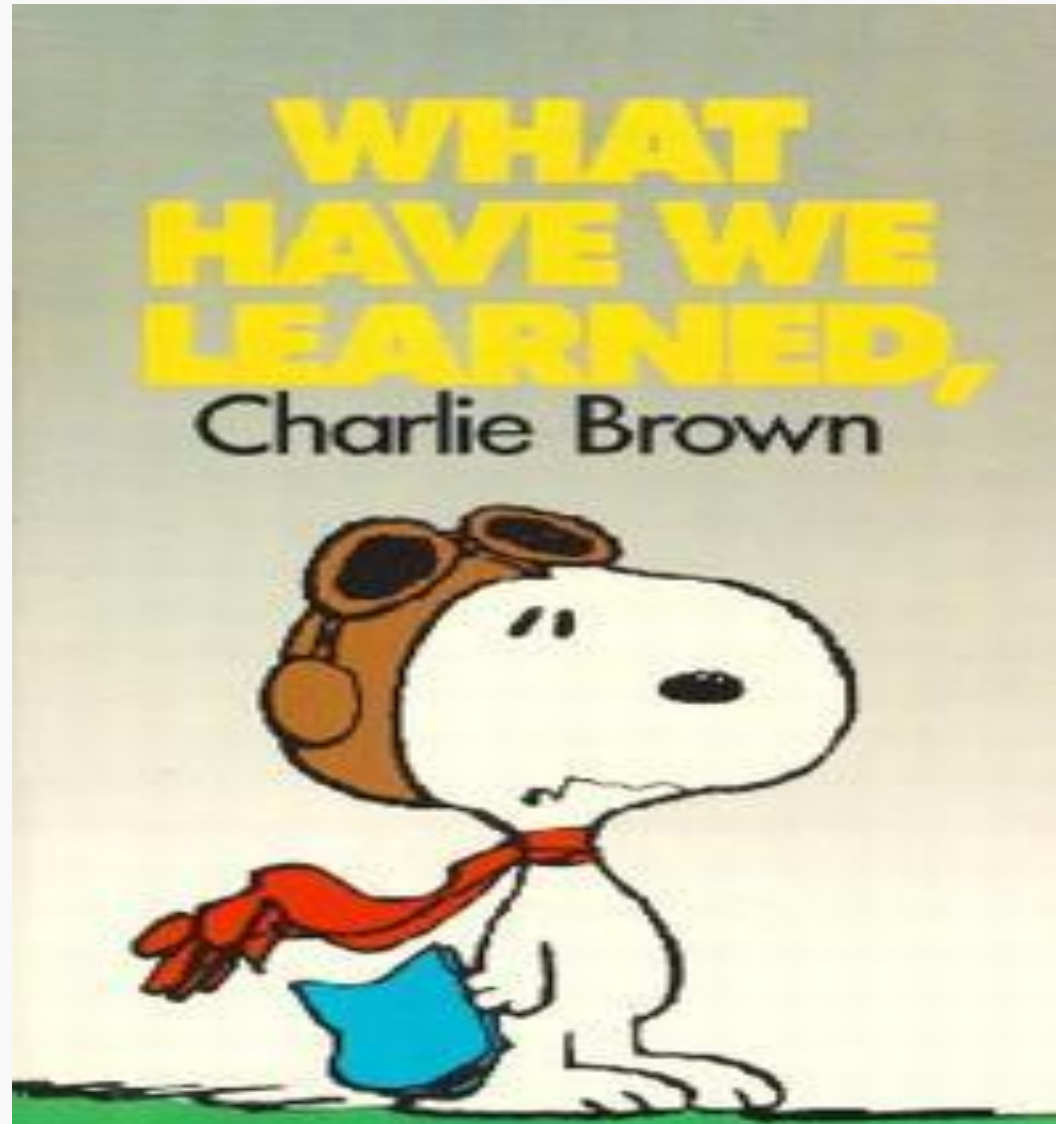


The languages of Education in multilingual India: Exploring effects on reading and maths

Event conclusion

Jeanine Treffers-Daller (j.c.treffers-daller@reading.ac.uk)



Key messages

Terminology matters

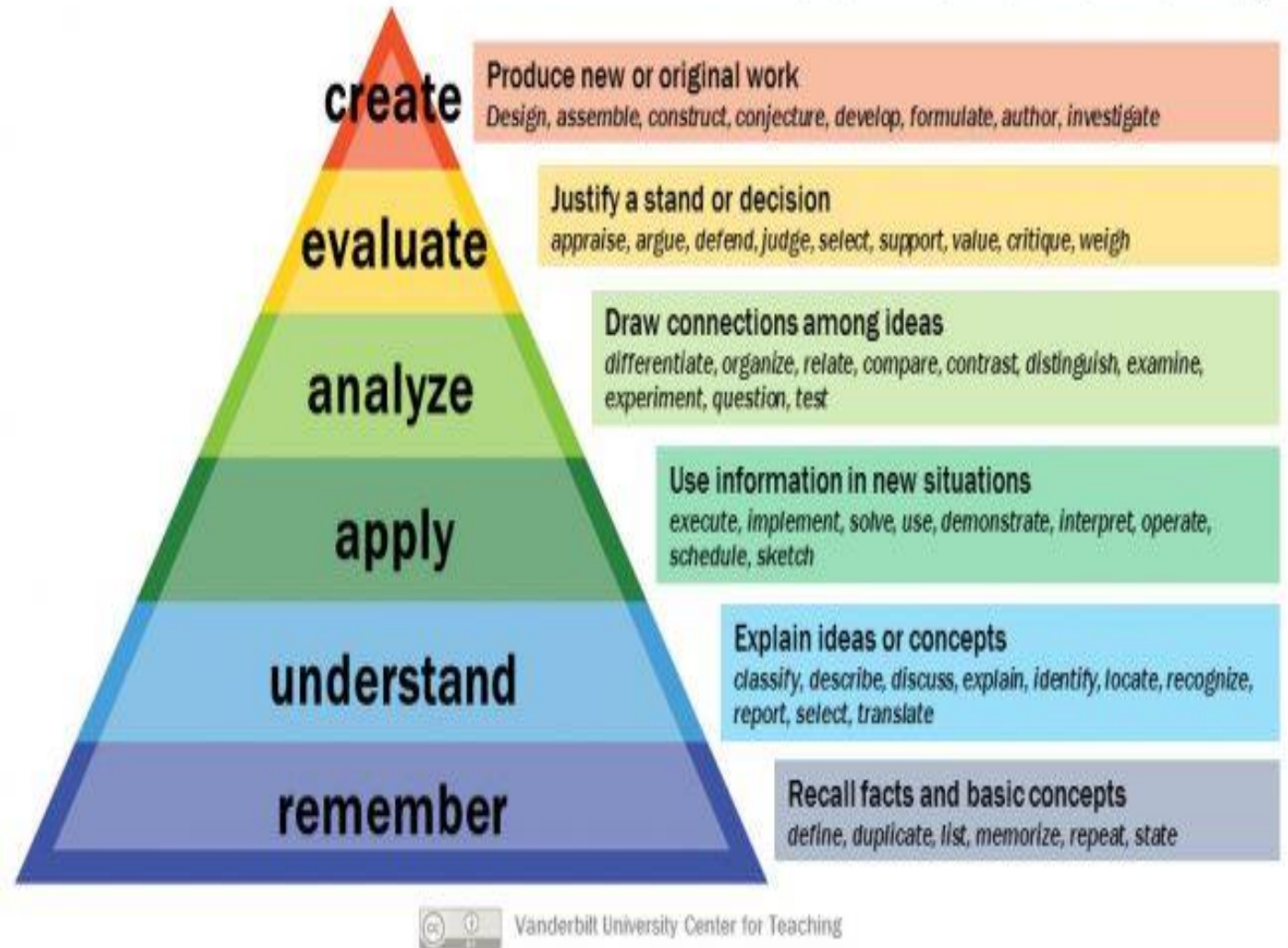
- Diversity of language practices in India
- Languages of the home, languages of the playground and languages of the market place (U.R. Ananthamurthy)
- Tribal languages, regional languages, English



Dhir Jhingran

- When children learn language, they are not simply engaging in one type of learning among many; rather, they are learning the **foundations of learning itself.**

Bloom's Taxonomy



Jim Cummins

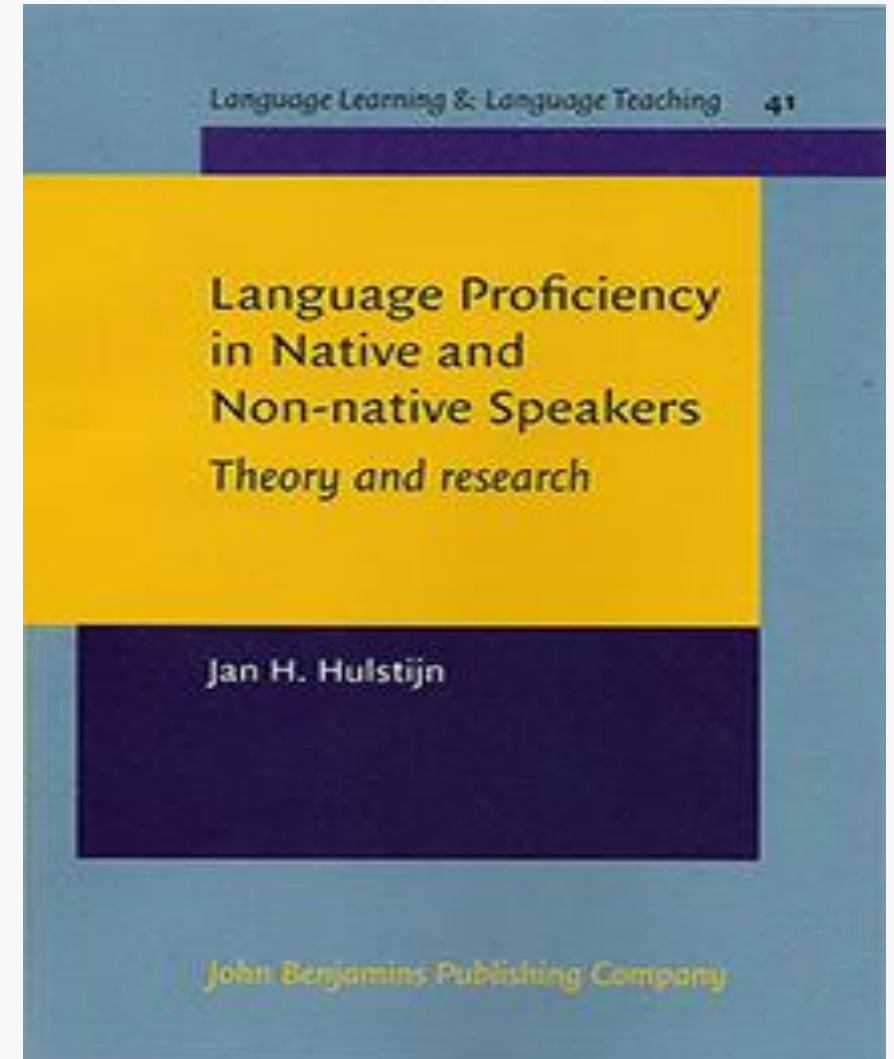
- Instruction should be cognitively challenging and require students to use higher-order thinking abilities rather than the low-level memorization and application skills that are tapped by typical worksheets or drill-and-practice computer programs (Cummins, 1999)

Jim Cummins: critical language awareness

- The development of critical language awareness should be fostered throughout the program by encouraging students to compare and contrast their languages (e.g. phonics conventions, grammar, etc.)
- and by providing students with extensive opportunities to carry out projects investigating their own **and their community's language use, practices, and assumptions** (e.g. in relation to the status of different varieties) (Cummins, 1999).

Basic Language Cognition/Higher Language Cognition

Professor Jan
Hulstijn
(University of
Amsterdam)



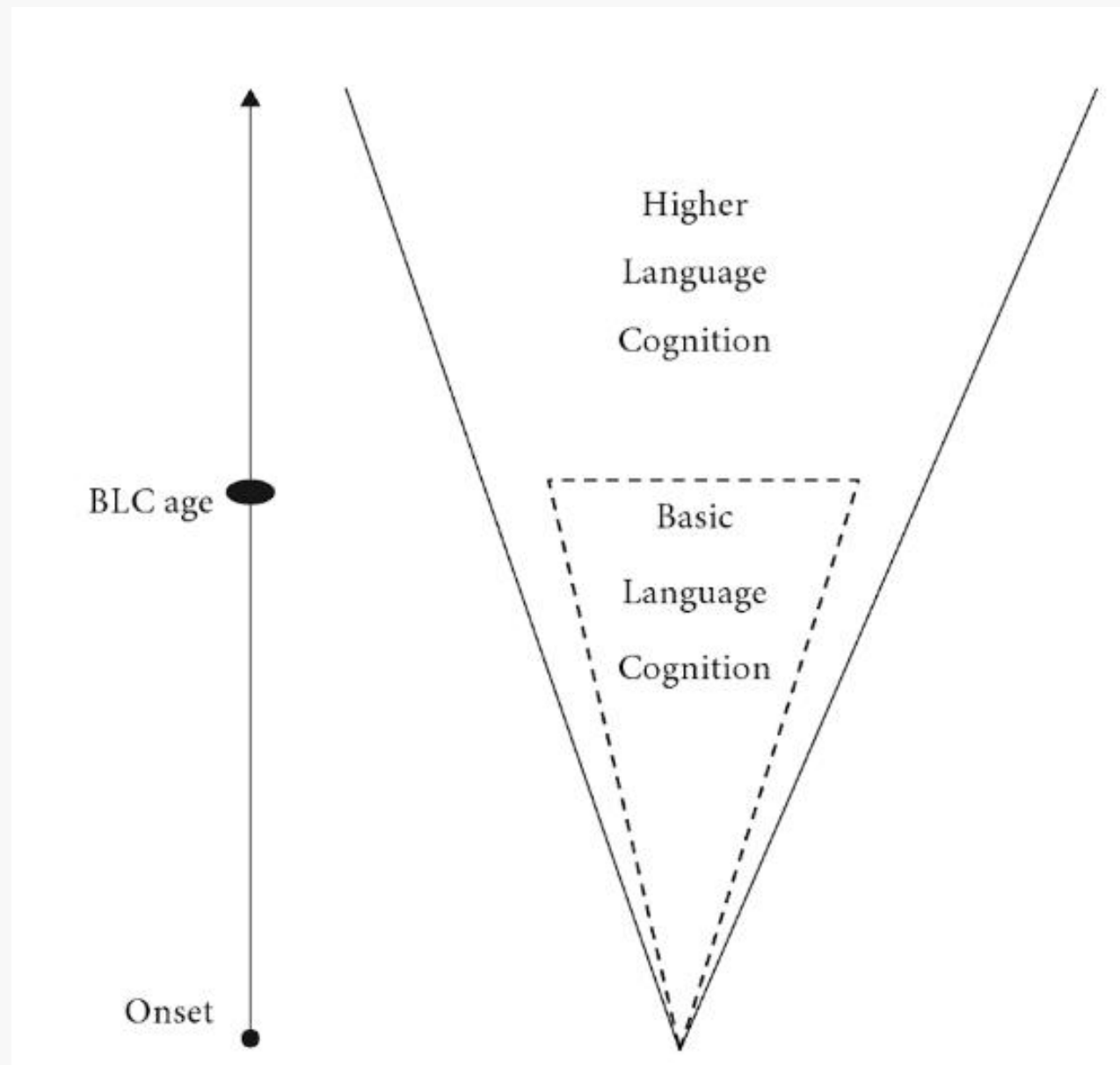
Basic language Cognition:

most frequent vocabulary items and most frequent grammar rules ; speech – not written language

Higher Language

Cognition: low frequency words, less common grammar rules; written language.

Hulstijn (2015)



Issues to be looked at

- How can we develop creativity/critical awareness?
 - Experiential learning
 - Life skills may support learning. Can these skills be practised in school contexts?

- Learning through stories/narratives

- Maths through stories:

<http://www.mathsthroughstories.org/>

Currently, there are over **500** stories on our database of recommendations that can be used to teach **44** mathematical concepts for learners from aged 3 to 18

NUMBERS
(Counting and Place Value)

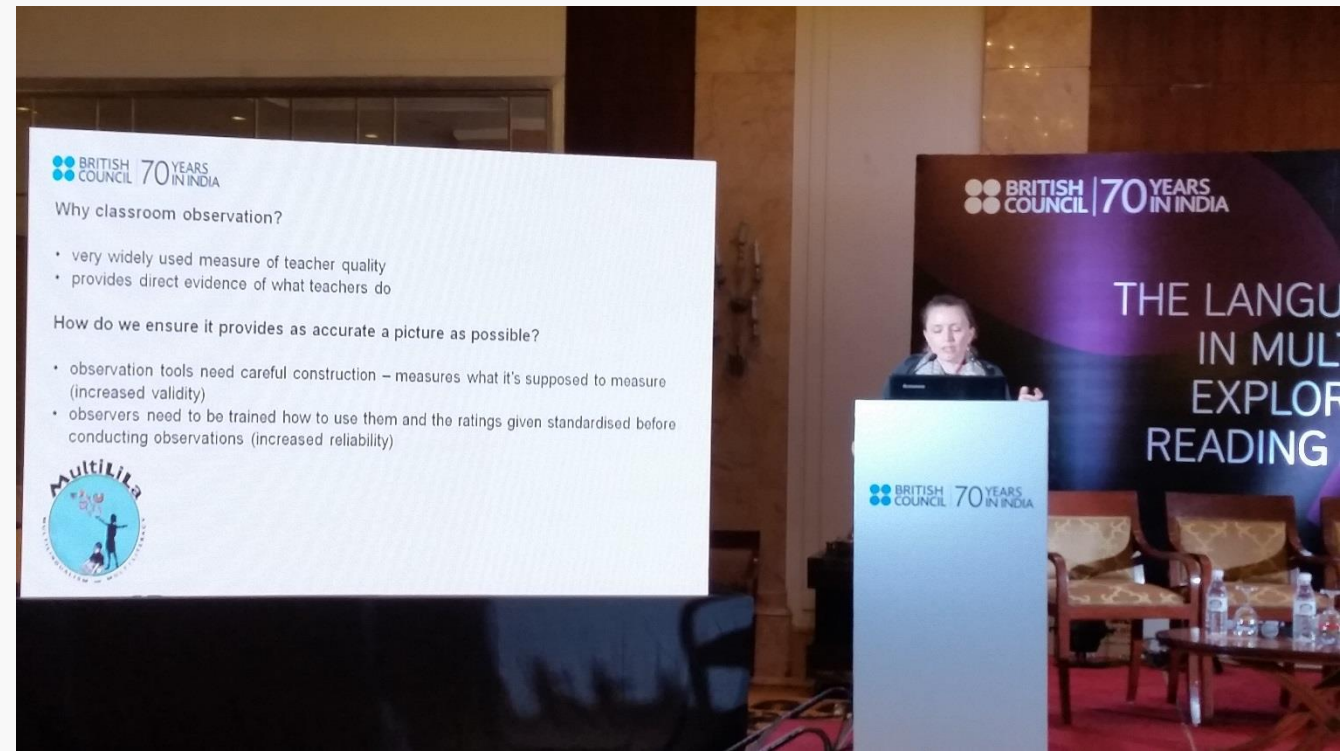
- NUMBER RECOGNITION
- ONE-TO-ONE CORRESPONDENCE
- COUNTING FORWARDS TO AND BACKWARDS FROM 10/20

What is English medium instruction?

- **English as a medium of instruction: different meanings in different contexts**
 - Hyderabad > Delhi
- **English should not be the medium of instruction in the first years of primary schools**
 - Use the children's home languages as medium of instruction
 - English can be taught as subject

Multilingual practices

- What multilingual practices are found in classrooms?
- Translanguaging, code-switching
- Switching between home, regional languages and English
- Amy Lightfoot's plenary



- Through questionnaires/interviews getting “real answers” may be difficult
- Teachers may avoid telling the truth about the languages s/he uses in the classroom
- Need to use different methods (teacher questionnaires/children cognitive tests, classroom observations)
 - Teacher quality/direct evidence
 - Observers need to be trained.
- More evidence needed about what teachers and learners do in the classroom

Amy Lightfoot

- Most common activities in the classroom:
 - Listening most common activity
 - Individual speaking more happening in the maths lesson than in language lesson
 - Choral response/repeating third most common activity
- Pair work and group work very low.
- Development of learner's creativity, imagination and critical thinking least well developed.
- Teachers: use more Telugu only in Maths. More mixing in language classes
- Children's mixing patterns differ from those of teachers.
- What is the quality of this translanguaging?

Amy Lightfoot

- Try to better understand translanguaging
 - What are the different ways to practice translanguaging?
 - Which of these practices facilitate learning?
- Raise self-awareness among teachers/head teachers
- Textbooks are in English only. No language support in textbooks
- Can video observations be used?

Break away sessions: resources

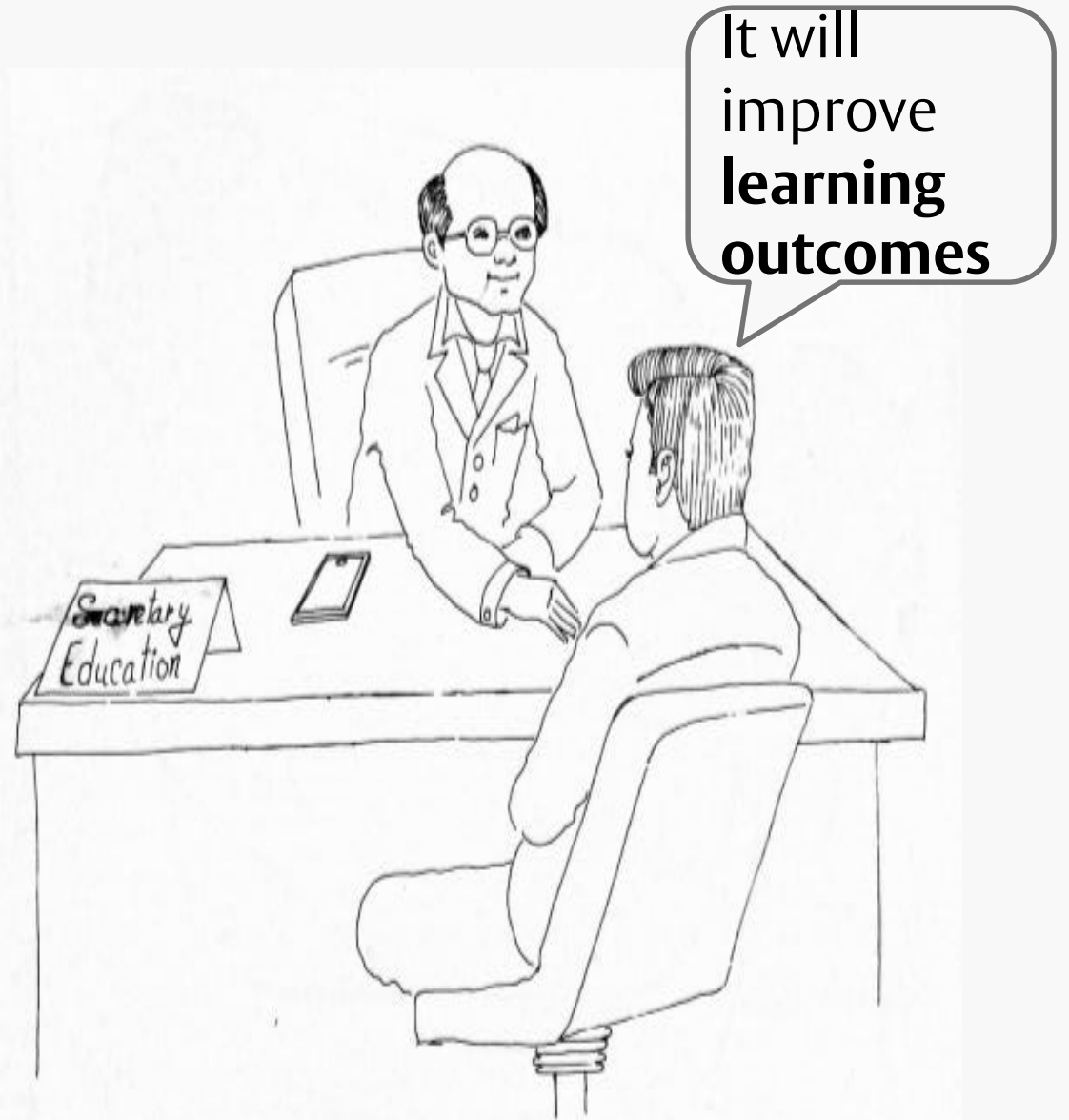
- Resources for teachers which enable them to more effectively implement multilingual education practices
 - Dr Padmini Boruah and Jemima Hughes
- Teacher himself/herself key resource; books, electronic resources, technology, parents, other stakeholders
- Learning can also take place if there are very few resources (e.g. Pratham's work in villages throughout India -Rukmini Banerji)

Lessons for the UK

- In India teachers and educational policy makers are highly engaged in raising learning outcomes for multilingual learners
- In the UK: teachers are very engaged; educational policy makers are not.
- How can we engage policy makers?
- Breakaway session: Bringing policy initiatives and teaching practices together (Dr Amol Padwad)

What can be good entry points with state governments?

From Dhir
Jhingran's plenary



Ganesh Devy

- How can we preserve linguistic diversity in India?
- 300 languages died out already
- Languages of power/knowledge
- How can we support those speaking tribal languages, also in education?
 - Employ teachers who know tribal languages (Dr Nicolas, Joint Director Tribal Welfare Department, Government of Telangana)
 - Resources for tribal languages?

The Banyan tree



Promoting 21st century skills involves:

From the British Council website:

Developing an awareness of and proficiency involves:

- critical thinking and problem solving
- collaboration and communication
- creativity and imagination
- citizenship
- digital literacy
- student leadership and personal development.
- <https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/overview/promoting-21st-century-skills>





The Multilila team
says THANK YOU
to all those who
contributed to the
conference

- Many thanks to Amy Lightfoot, Debanjan Chakrabarti, Mansi Thakral and colleagues from the British Council for facilitating this conference
- We all wish the British Council:

