

In today's scenario, it is quite a common phenomenon that the children are facing difficulty in developing their understanding of language and most teachers express this often. There are several stages in the language teaching process that I understood after teaching in class. One can find evidence of these processes in Krishna Kumar's book titled *The Child's Language and The Teacher*. The National Curriculum Framework (NCF, 2005) also advocates that school knowledge needs to be connected with the environment of children. When this is done and enough opportunities for thinking and reasoning are given, children start learning.

Generally speaking, when children enter class III, they already have a rich knowledge of their mother tongue along with the words and sentences that express their feelings. They can understand and speak about their needs very well. They are well acquainted with the methods of persuading their elders at home even though no one teaches them this vocabulary. Children learn all these things themselves by observing the environment, conversations and opportunities at home. They very well know how and when to convince elders just by looking at their facial expressions. They also know whether they should speak at a particular time or not and when they will be heard.

At home, they get opportunities to speak and repeat words and sentences frequently and in such an environment, they learn to use words, make sentences and speak on their own. Language is rule-governed and has its own ways. Children use them well. If they have a rich environment at home, they learn to speak and read the home language well. If an ambience of learning the language is created in the school and children are given a rich environment, then they develop the ability to read and write.

In the light of the NCF 2005, textbooks for classes I to XII have been developed in such a way that children can acquire the required knowledge with understanding rather than rote learning. At the same time, they can use their book knowledge to be in harmony with different circumstances of

society and thus carry out the important role of nation-building. The NCF 2005 suggests that the school life of children should be connected with their life outside, which will enable us to go a long way towards the child-centred system described in the National Education Policy (NEP,1986), after which came *Operation Blackboard*, in which the focus was on providing educational resources to children in primary schools and preparation of teachers, etc. For this, a three-foot-long black strip was put on a wall in classrooms as a blackboard for the children to draw and do their work.

I have adopted this method from class I to teach language. I use local words or pick up the names of fruits, trees, vegetables from the children's household, environment or context. The children are familiar with them. Then, I draw their pictures on the blackboard. Children see the picture, recognize it, and speak one or two sentences about them. They draw pictures and try to write names in their notebooks. When these words are repeated again and again, they learn to write. I continue with this process and the children start feeling comfortable with reading and drawing.

The journey goes on; sometimes I begin with names and at other times, with short poems. Children learn poetry with short and simple words quickly, for example, this poem of four lines:

*Maza aa gayaa khel mein,  
Bhalu bhaga rail mein,  
Hans kar bola achcha tata,  
Main kar aaun sair sapata.*

Children say rhyming words through this poem and memorise it easily. In this way, the ability to listen, speak and do activities can be developed through small poems. When I asked the names of the animals, the children told many names of domestic and wild animals. When I talked about these animals and asked a few related questions, only a couple of children could not answer, the others could say something or the other. For example: the tiger lives in the forest, the cow lives at home. When I asked them to write the name of an animal and write something about it, the children wrote

short sentences. They do commit a few mistakes with *matras*, but I do not stop them from writing. Even then children make mistakes while writing in a hurry.

### **Other activities**

Children are curious and are very keen to learn at this age. They want to write somewhere other than their notebooks. So, I did the following with them:

#### *Conversations related to context*

This experience is with children in class III. First, I talked to them on the basis of their context. I also made some pictures related to the context in the class. Those pictures were discussed with the children and the children shared their views openly. During the conversation, it was seen that when we talk about the things related to familiar contexts or events surrounding them, they talk freely.

#### *Poems and stories*

Children were asked to memorise short poems in classes I and II. Children love poems and memorise them very quickly. They keep humming and repeating these poems. I selected some stories, mainly from *Panchatantra*, *Folk Tales*, *Lalu aur Piloo*, *Stories of Gijubhai*, *Kajari Gaay* and the *Barkha* series. I noticed that after listening to a story, children start telling similar stories of their own. At this stage, the teacher has to be patient

in understanding the children. After discussing the stories, children are encouraged to draw or write something based on their experience. With this encouragement, children get a good start to writing.

#### *Pictures*

In order to create an attractive environment in the classroom, I draw the pictures of fruits and vegetables on the blackboard and when the children are asked to draw, they draw the picture of their choice first. This activity helps children recognise words and they start speaking about them and expressing their views. They share their likes and dislikes. The practice of drawing pictures also enhances children's handwriting and writing skills.

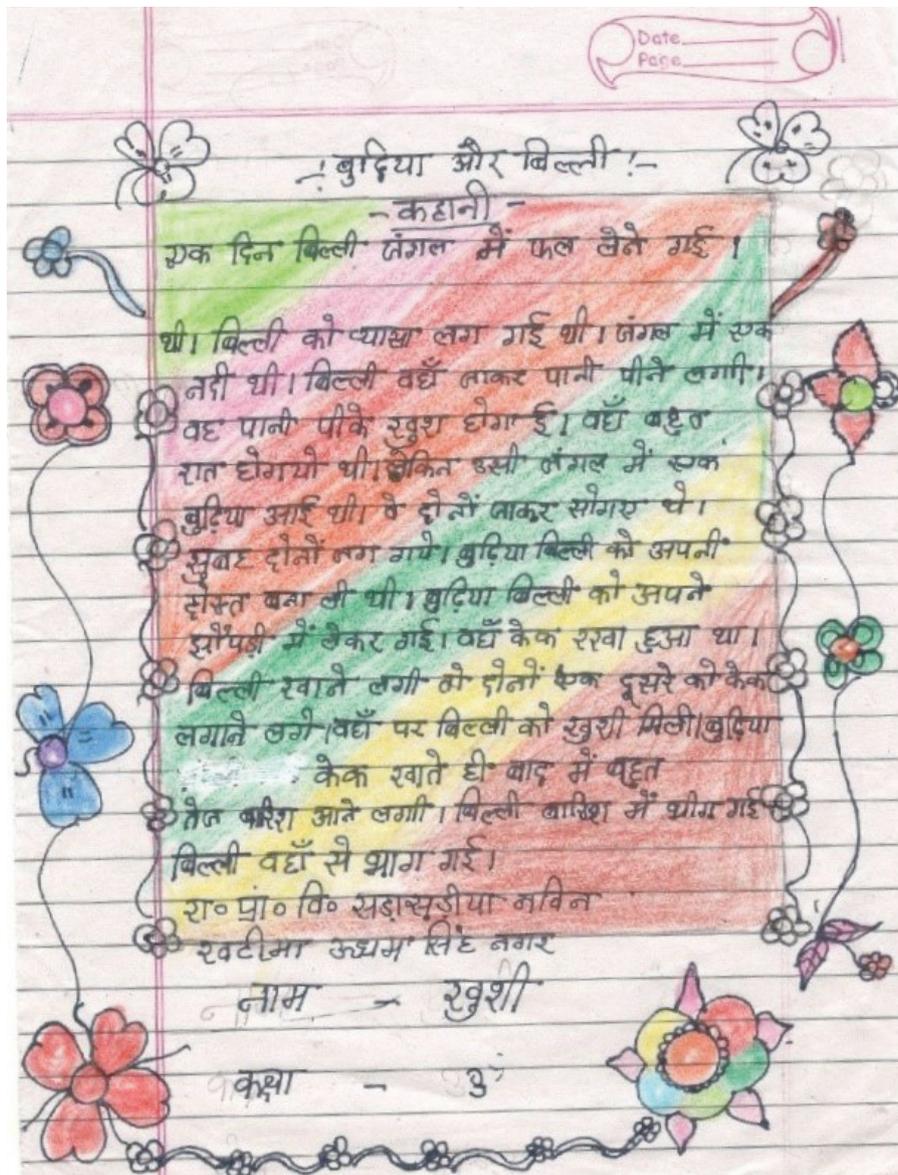
#### *Children's literature*

The fourth stage is children's literature which has special importance in learning to read and write. I have used it extensively in my teaching. I gave a lot of opportunities to children to read. Books from *Barkha* series match the children's levels and help them in learning. Children of class III of my school are living examples of this. They read more books from *Barkha* series that have short stories. There is a repetition of names and words, so children learn fast.



## Story creation

While working on story creation, I have found that reading children's literature not only creates interest in reading but also develops liking for writing. Children try to create a new story, based on what they have read and their own experiences. They combine both and come up with a new story.



Today I am proud to say that the results of the efforts that I have put in to teach children for the last two years is in front of me in a meaningful way. Children not only make their own sentences and write on a topic; they can also write an original short story. Apart from this, they also do the exercises from the textbook well.

When asked to write their thoughts on a story, many children wrote beautiful stories. The speciality of this exercise was that the children were also assessing themselves. They were laughing while listening to each other's stories and were also putting forth their points of view. When I taught

the lesson *Kab Aun* in the class III textbook titled *Rimjhim*, children asked many questions and after deliberations, they could very easily make up other titles for the lesson. All the children came up with different titles. The children have very sharp thinking power. One child said that the title of the lesson was *Dukandar aur Seth*, the second one said it may be *Murkh Seth*, while other children felt that it could be *Jaisi karni vaisi bharni*, *Jaise ko taisa*. Whether they understood the objective of the lesson or not, they were able to practice the lesson and the activities very well and were ready to move forward by building on their experience.

## Objectives of language teaching

Language is not only a medium of communication, it also helps in thinking, understanding and expressing oneself. According to me, some of the points of teaching language are to:

- Share thoughts
- Make the school environment comfortable
- Create a sense of belonging and diligence
- Expand knowledge by connecting mother tongue with regional language
- Create opportunities to express oneself
- Listen to children
- Develop the habit of reading with comprehension
- Promote knowledge, based on references and images available in the environment and to be able to infer
- Teach by connecting school knowledge with external knowledge

- Be able to relate one's experience with poetry and story
- Be able to feel free to express one's ideas and relate the story to one's environment and experience
- Develop linguistic skills
- Nurture the habit of self-study and self-writing
- Boost confidence
- Understand the subject matter and write well
- Develop a sense of aesthetics, imagination and creativity

As a teacher, it is my duty to enhance the knowledge that children already have. In order to enrich the language, develop the ability to reason, express, analyse, imagine and so on, I need to constantly develop my personality and myself. The teacher has an important role to play in the development of children, but along with that the support of the parents is also necessary.

## References

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NCERT, Rimjhim, Class III.



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