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"Globalization" and the English Imperative: A Study of Language Ideologies and Literacy
Practices at an Orphanage and Village School in Suburban New Delhi

by

Usree Bhattacharya

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Education

in the

Graduate Division

of the

University of California, Berkeley

Committee in Charge:

Prof. Laura Sterponi, Chair
Prof. Claire Kramsch
Prof. Robin Lakoff

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"Globalization" and the English Imperative: A Study of Language Ideologies and Literacy
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Abstract

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Doctor of Philosophy in Education
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This dissertation is a study of English language and literacy in the multilingual Indian context, unfolding along two analytic planes: the first examines institutional discourses about English learning across India and how they are motivated and informed by the dominant theme of "globalization," and the second investigates how local language ideologies and literacy practices correspond to these discourses. An ethnographic case study, it spans across four years. The setting is a microcosm of India's own complex multilingualism. The focal children speak Bengali or Bihari as a first language; Hindi as a second language; attend an English-medium village school; and participate daily in Sanskrit prayers. Within this context, I show how the institutional discursive framing of English as a prerequisite for socio-economic mobility, helps produce, reproduce, and exacerbate inequalities within the world's second largest educational system. The notion of globalization, further, is deeply woven into these discourses. I begin by showing that while top-level discourses about English accept globalization as *doxa*, little attention is paid to its differential intervention along socio-economic lines. My study complicates the commonly liberatory rhetoric of globalization by illuminating how such discourses employ multiple strategies to mobilize institutional voices in order to control and restrict access to linguistic, symbolic and economic capital. Further, fine-grained analyses of the children's linguistic practices and interview data reveal how local language ideologies counter, resist, and contest these discourses and voice enduring anxieties about English. Because these discourses have fueled the proliferation of private English-medium schools in India, catering mostly to the poor, the classroom forms another locus of investigation. Its analysis entails the close examination of literacy practices, curricula, and pedagogy at the children's school. The study reveals that factors such as multigrade classrooms; teacher-centered pedagogy; level-inappropriate textbooks; emphasis on rote memorization; and the difficulty of teaching and learning in a language in which neither the instructor nor the student has proficiency result in limited and superficial English acquisition and also limit children's access to educational content. In light of my findings, I argue that such English-medium schools not only widen the English-vernacular gap, they also reinforce the role of English in elite formation. The significance of my study lies in underscoring the ways in which institutional notions around English and globalization flatten out difference and enact erasure of local voices, with serious consequences for educational equity. This is not merely an Indian story; the role of English in an era of globalization is *the* high-stakes language politics story of our time.

1

For Ma, Baba, and Jonathan.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CHAPTER I

Setting the Stage

It is 7:20 am on a chilly, foggy morning on February 8, 2010 as I approach the *ashram* (a Hindu religious commune). I walk past a group of middle-aged men huddling near a bonfire, smoking *beedis* (Indian cigarettes) and sipping steaming *chai* (milky black tea) from small translucent glasses. Nearby, two underweight cows with branded rumps, a cawing murder of crows, and a mangy street dog rummage through a garbage heap by the side of the road. A teenage *rickshawwallah* (rickshaw owner) leans against a brightly painted rickshaw, alert for potential passengers. Cars, motorbikes, and two-wheelers whiz by on the road facing the *ashram*, and there is a cacophony of horns in the hectic hustle for space. I step on the stone slabs across an open sewer that functions as a moat around the *ashram* (a Hindu religious commune). The slabs groan under my weight, and I fear, not for the first time, that I will fall into the sewer. I then walk past the half-open gate, with a Harrison lock dangling from the latch, and am greeted by a familiar English sign: "HOME FOR THE DESTITUTE." A couple of children in the *ashram* yard are wiping down buff-colored chairs that got drenched in last night's unanticipated downpour. I notice that to the side of the banana tree in the yard is what looks like a five-foot tall menhir wrapped in gold-spangled red *chunnis* (scarves). One of the focal children informs me that it is last year's Saraswati *murti* (the idol of Goddess Saraswati)*,* which will later be immersed in the holy Yamuna river. It is Saraswati *Pujo* (ritual worship of Saraswati) today, held every year on the day of *Basant Panchami* per the Bengali calendar, an annual celebration of Saraswati, Goddess of Learning.

I take off my trusty Bata shoes and enter the temple area, where the priest is vigorously sweeping the floor with a *jhadu* (a small household broom). The temple area is partitioned into two by a short grill railing. One section is the altar area, where the gods and goddesses are kept; the second is the area where children and devotees sit in prayer and meditation, facing the altar. The priest neatly places several coarse woolen blankets to cover the floor of the second section. I hear the thump of boys' footfalls and yells as they run around upstairs. The altar area has been exquisitely decorated for the festive day. Goddess Kali, whose temple it is, is at the center, her charcoal grey skin glinting under the light. She is wearing a glamorous gold *sari* and an intricate pink silk stole, and a gold crown sits atop her black, curly hair. Her narrow tongue protrudes from her mouth in shock and embarrassment, and her lips are painted a deep red. Her forehead has been dotted with *chandan* (sandalwood) paste, and her open palms are stained with red. She wears gold *filigree* bangles on all four wrists, and on two of them she also wears the *shankha pola* (a duo of conch shell and red lac bangles that signify married life on Bengali women). Around her neck Kali wears a necklace of human heads and a garland of orange and yellow marigolds. She stands astride a supine Shiva, with only his knotted, matted hair and white shoulders visible. Near the Kali *murti*, a small brass Gopal idol sits on an opulent gold throne. Resplendent in glittering attire with a full skirt, he wears a crown embellished with a delicate peacock feather on his head.

The Saraswati *murti* is placed on a wooden chair draped with bright red *chunnis*. All of the *murti* is visible except for the face, which is deliberately hidden from view with a Hindi newspaper. The number 558 is clearly visible on the *murti's* blue base. Her skin is porcelain white, contrasting sharply with the red decorative *alta* (dye) stain outlining her feet and palms. She grips an ochre *veena* (an Indian string instrument) with her left hand, with red

sacral threads tied around her wrists. She is wearing a white silk *sari* with a thin gold border, and an ornate gold and orange cummerbund adorns her waist. Her jet black hair tumbles down in soft waves. A slender-necked swan, her *bahon* (conveyance), peeks out from behind her. Maharaj, the head priest, walks up to her and places a garland of carnations around her neck. Kishore[1], one of the focal children, places a small *matka* (an Indian amphora) decorated with a red *swastika* in front of the *murti*, fills it with *Ganga jal* (holy water from the Ganges), mango leaves, ties a *gamccha* (an Indian cotton towel) around a coconut which he places on top of the *matka*, and then quietly slips away upstairs.

Soon after, the children descend downstairs, heading to the yard, clad in their starched white cotton *dhotis* (traditional Indian male garment) and matching woolen shawls. Maharaj's *tiki* (the long tuft of hair on the back of shaven head maintained by Hindu priests) is tied back loosely with a rubber band. He wears the same attire as the children, but with a *poite* (sacred thread) that cuts diagonally across his *banyaan* (cotton vest). Kneeling before Saraswati, he rifles through a blue plastic bag overflowing with fresh-cut flowers, and sets aside some orange marigolds on a ceremonial copper plate engraved with the *Om* symbol. He stands up and dusts off Saraswati with a cotton cloth, and gingerly places a garland of carnations around her long neck. Her face suddenly reveals itself, almost as if by magic, as the veil of newspapers floats to the floor. She has a round face, big doe-like eyes, a narrow nose, and plump lips. She wears a glittery gold crown encrusted with faux pink gems. The *ashram* is filling up with people from the neighborhood; the men in *dhotis* or pants, the women in *saris* or *salwar kameezes* (Indian attire). The Bengali women among them are wearing traditional red-bordered white *saris* reserved for religious events. Through a slit in the temple door, I catch a brief glimpse of children playing hopscotch in the yard. Kishore arrives at the altar area and pours mustard oil into a *diya* (brass oil lamp) after straightening out the cotton wick with his fingers. He then places an intricate wooden book-holder, on which two elephants with intertwined trunks are expertly crafted into the wood, by Maharaj's *asan* (prayer mat). It is now 8:30 am, and the sun is slowly peeking out from behind the pregnant rain clouds. Maharaj places flowers at the feet of each of the *murtis* in the temple. He then affixes a ceremonial copper bowl to a round wooden stand. He whispers to Kishore in Bengali to bring in the children. Kishore rushes out to the yard and herds the children into the temple. They file in silently and sit down near me.

Dozens of *aggarbattis* (incense sticks) are lit, and the fragrance of sandalwood diffuses across the temple. Maharaj kneels in front of Saraswati, softly chanting *mantras* in Sanskrit, and offers *paan* (betel) leaves and flowers to her. He kneels, touches his forehead to the ground, and then sits up with his eyes closed in silent meditation. More devotees arrive from the neighborhood, and I hear the faint tintinnabulation of a *ghanti* (bell). The priest continues to chant *mantras*, his bony fingers forming fluid, rapid *mudras* (Hindu ritual hand gestures). Kishore brings over two steel plates piled high with sliced winter fruits and several steel glasses of water from the kitchen and places them in front of the *murtis*. Maharaj continues to meditate, now with a single marigold perched on his head. He slowly opens his eyes, and pours water from a conch shell filled with *Ganga jal*, *bael* leaves, and flowers, and pours the water into the large copper vessel. I strain to hear the *mantras*, but, to my frustration, only catch the occasional *Om*. I scribble my frustration in my fieldnotes. With the boys looking on in silence, Maharaj burns a bright green *bael* leaf over a *diya*, and then extinguishes the flame with it. He then asks Kamlesh for a *gamchha* (thin Indian cotton towel), which Kamlesh

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1. Names of the participants and locations have been changed to protect subjects' identities.

brings from the back room. Maharaj offers it to Saraswati. Then he lights the *dhuno* (a powdery mix of camphor, incense, and coconut husk, placed in a small earthen pot). Smoke rises in a thick fog, and several of the children begin to cough. My eyes begin to water from the smoke. Maharaj gives orders to Kishore in Bengali, who then turns to the children and yells out in Hindi, "*Oye, kitab leke ao*!" (Hey, bring your books!). The children run upstairs, gathering their *dhotis* at the pleats, and return with textbooks and notebooks, which they hand over to Maharaj. The books are placed in a straight, tall stack in front of Saraswati, on a raised, square stool draped with a red *chunni*. On top of the stack is an earthen *doat* (inkpot). The *doat* contains a mixture of *abir* (dye), Mica, and milk, and dipped diagonally in the *doat* is a *kalam* (wooden stylus). The *doat* and *kalam* symbolize literacy, in appeasement of Saraswati, while the books and writing implements are offered to receive blessings for children's learning. Saraswati *Pujo* is the first occasion when many Bengali children first learn to write, and as I watch the ritual I recall old black and white photos of me putting chalk to slate as a little girl during Saraswati *Pujo*. A cloud of smoke now blankets the temple as the ritual continues. Kishore fans the *dhuno* with a rolled up newspaper, and tongues of fire leap out toward the ceiling. Maharaj dips a marigold in *Ganga jal*, and sprinkles the holy water in the direction of the Saraswati *murti*. The chanting continues. Kishore helps the priest pull the *khadi* (spun cotton) curtains, so that the altar area is blocked from view as the Gods and Goddesses eat. Through a small opening I catch the priest hanging a *bael* leaf garland on a painting, and then hear the tinny sound of utensils being moved around. The children and devotees chat in soft whispers, while car and truck horns blare not far away.

Kishore pulls aside the curtains, and the culminating ritual of *anjali* (sacred offering) begins. The sequence of offerings is as follows: the *pancha pradeep* (a brass lamp burner with five cavities for wicks and one to hold camphor) to represent the sun; the *kophur* (camphor) to represent fire; marigolds to represent flowers that blossom in nature; *gamchha* to represent clothing; and a fly whisk to represent the wind. Women's ululation rings out through the temple, and two older female devotees blow conch shells. Gopal, another focal child, rhythmically pulls on the thick rope tied to the big temple bell, and one can also hear the Maharaj's ringing of the *ghanti*. The *pradeep* and the *kophur* are passed around for attendees to take blessings from; and, like everyone else, I put my palms up to the flames and touch the warmth to my forehead thrice. The ritual draws to a close; it is 1:20 pm. Maharaj lies down on his stomach in a *sashtang pranam*: arms outstretched, his body a straight line, his forehead gently kissing the floor. The boys, devotees, and I kneel on the carpeted floor and touch our foreheads to the ground. We rise up, and a line begins to form for the *bhog* (sacred feast). Today it comprises a traditional Bengali ceremonial meal: *papad* (thin deep-fried lentil cakes), *tomator chutney* (tomato chutney), *khichuri* (a rice and lentil dish), *charchori* (cooked vegetable medley), *mishti* (Bengali sweets), and *payes* (a milk and rice based dessert). We sit down on rattan mats spread out in the yard, and eat food ladled into our hand-sewn *shal pata* (shal leaf) plates from tin buckets. After the feast, we wash our hands by the outdoor tap. The festivities draw to a close, and the *ashram* starts to clear out. The children prepare for an afternoon nap. I head back home, promising to return that evening. Gopal, one of the focal children, clings to the gate as I wave goodbye. He yells out, "Bye, *didi*!" (Bye, elder sister!).

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The intricately decorated, lime green edifice of the community *masjid* (mosque) greets me as I arrive at Madhupur village, around 8:30 am on February 14, 2011. A group of men, wearing white *kurta pajamas* (traditional male attire) and skullcaps, chat outside the doorway of the

masjid. A Hindu temple, two doors away, blares Hindi *bhajans* (devotional music) from a megaphone. A young lady, clad in a *sari* and with a *gajra* (jasmine hair garland) in her liberally oiled hair, emerges from the temple carrying a coconut and some flowers. It is early in the morning, and the tire, electronic, and mobile phone shops as well as the general stores and pharmacies that line the perimeter of the village are shuttered. I enter the narrow alley, taking the dirt path that will lead me to Subhash Chandra Bose (SCB) Public School (private schools in India are referred to as "public" schools). A little boy is using a metal bucket filled with pump water for his bath, as his mother washes a pile of clothes nearby. As I take a first left, I marvel at the silver *shisha* (mirror-work) embellished pillars for sale in the yard of the village artisan. A calf and its mother slowly chew grass under a shed draped with blue tarp in the yard. Further down the alley, I glance through the open doors of packed buildings. In many of these places, I have heard from residents, entire families live in one room, sharing bathrooms with dozens of people. Colorful clothes are draped over balcony grills, and thick electricity cables zigzag across the sky. The lone water pump in this part of the village is dry, and a street dog tries to lick the mouth of the pump and then scampers away. A faint, unpleasant smell rises from the open drains circling the village. At the final turn before SCB, there is a sign painted onto the wall of an apartment building advertising a nearby co-educational, *Hindi-Angrezi Madhyam* (English-Hindi medium) school. A few steps later, I find myself at SCB, the school's name prominently displayed in a metallic arc that frames the alley. I enter through the narrow gate, and proceed to the principal's office. The *Gayatri Mantra* (a Vedic verse in Sanskrit) has been stenciled in scarlet lettering just above the doorway, and to its right, in English, is the saying: "NO PAIN, NO GAIN." I sit down in the principal's office, waiting to be invited upstairs. There are framed pictures of Indian freedom fighters and philosophers on the walls, including that of Subhash Chandra Bose, Vivekananda, and Mahatma Gandhi. On the principal's desk, there are three attendance registers, and a series of Webster publications on the wooden desk: a thesaurus, dictionary, pronunciation guide, and usage guide. Next to the English usage guide are two overlapping, framed pictures of Saraswati, with a *yantra* (a spiritual image made of a chart filled with patterned fingerprints dipped in vermillion paste), which, I discovered later, had been made by the teachers. On one of the walls is a 2011 calendar, a Ganesh clock, and student art in the form of a green egg carton decorated with sequins and mistletoes. I hear quick footsteps as *Bade* (Hindi, "older") sir[2], the principal, arrives. He greets me with a friendly nod and escorts me upstairs to the classrooms, past a sign that says "Way to school."

Upstairs, the children are chatting and laughing loudly as they get ready for morning assembly. They are dressed in red checked shirts with striped ties and grey pants or skirts. Thick school bags are piled high on students' desks. The sun is streaming in through the grilled windows opening up to the roof, and there is a slight, cool breeze. I settle in the second room (with the sixth and seventh graders), and from my vantage point I can see what is going on in both the neighboring classrooms as well. Akhilesh sir, the science teacher with many years of training in the *National Cadet Corps* and in charge of morning assembly, bellows out: "Classes! Attention!" while pacing the length of the school, making sure students are standing still. Other teachers and the principal walk up and down the aisles of different classrooms. Prayers take place in the following sequence: "*Tvamev mata,*" a Sanskrit prayer; *Gayatri Mantra*, also in Sanskrit; "We shall overcome," an English song; the school pledge in English; and then the national anthem, in Bengali. On Tuesdays and Saturdays, the

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[2] In the school, male teachers are typically referred to with their first names followed by "sir" (*Bade* sir being the only exception). Female teachers are referred to with their first names followed by "ma'am."

Hanuman Chalisa (a devotional hymn dedicated to Hanuman, a deity), in Awadhi, is added to the prayer sequence. During transitions the children are briefly allowed to "Stand at ease," when Akhilesh sir permits them. During the course of the prayers, several children are loudly admonished for chatting or slouching. Today, the prayers end with the national anthem, and at the end, the children yell out in unison: "*Jaya Hind*!" (Victory to India!). Next, the principal gives a lecture, in Hindi, about the importance of treating elders well, effortlessly weaving in *shlokas* from the *Vedas* for added authority. After the lecture, he writes the Om symbol (ॐ) on the blackboard across different classes, and instructs students to stare at it, without blinking, until tears begin to flow. He tells them it is very good for their concentration. The children do as they are told.

Prayers over, I park myself in the same classroom: I sit down on a plastic chair at the back, next to two focal children. The room is tightly packed with small wooden desks and benches. The teacher for this period is *Bade* sir, the principal. He instructs the sixth graders to copy last Saturday's work into a fair notebook. Then, he turns to the seventh grade, telling them to get out their English materials. He waves the English reader in the air, with a cover of a smiling, young Caucasian boy with reddish locks tumbling past his ears. He begins with a "lesson reading," where he reads out the text, stopping frequently to offer the translated gist of the story in Hindi. It is an amusing story, and the children laugh at appropriate moments. From a few classrooms away, I hear the sound of choral recitation of a Hindi poem. The sixth graders silently copy from one notebook to another, looking up at *Bade* sir every now and then as his voice rises and falls animatedly during the narration. Once the lesson reading is complete, he writes out answers to the questions posed in the first exercise on the blackboard. He turns to the sixth grade and tells them to now memorize the question answers from the thirteenth lesson in their Hindi book. Returning his attention to the seventh class, he skips over two questions, and then offers answers to the true/false exercises in rapid-fire delivery. There is a composition exercise, and *Bade* sir writes out a short paragraph in response. The seventh class students faithfully copy down the paragraph. Once this is done, *Bade* sir assigns a memorizing task to both classes. The aroma of *muli paranthas* (fried radish flatbread) diffuses through classrooms, probably originating in a tenant's kitchen downstairs. I am suddenly hungry.

The tiffin bell goes off at 11:30 am. The focal children slam their books shut, stuff them into their bags, and pull out their tiffin boxes. *Bade* sir invites me to his office, and offers some tea and a local knockoff version of Parle-G glucose biscuits. He gestures at some English textbooks a publisher's representative dropped off for him to consider for the next academic year, and states that he is not sure how he feels about them. I quickly flip through the books, making note of their strongly communicative emphasis. He mentions his frustration with the current crop of textbooks, and adds that there is tremendous pressure from parents for their children to learn English. As I dunk a glucose biscuit in my tea, I ask him to tell me more about parents' expectations for their children's schooling. He tells me that by and large the parents have not received any schooling and do not know English, but want and expect their children to acquire English "overnight." They want better lives for their children, he says, but they do not understand how hard it is to learn English, especially, he points out, since the parents do not know any. We are interrupted by a loud fight that breaks out in the corridor, and *Bade* sir leaves to bring peace. He returns a few minutes later, just as the bell rings, and the focal children, milling around in front of the principal's office, head upstairs. I tell *Bade* sir I am leaving, having come only for the first part of the day. I do *namaste*, grab my bright red *jhola* (bag), and head out. I make my way through the alley and

notice that the village that was just emerging from sleep in the morning is now bustling as the marketplace has come to life. I walk away from the village to the accompaniment of the loud strains of Krishna *bhajans* blaring out of the temple's megaphone.

<p style="text-align:center">****</p>

THE ETHNOGRAPHIC CONTEXT

I offer readers a glimpse into a typical day of festivity at the *ashram* and a typical day at SCB School, in order to bring to life part of the rich ethnographic context in which this dissertation took shape. The study was conducted at two sites, involving home and school contexts: the *anathashram* (orphanage) where the focal children lived, and an English-medium village school where the focal children studied. My first encounter with the *anathashram* was on a visit to see my family in Noida in December 2007. Since then, I had been volunteering at the *anathashram*, during winter and summer breaks from my graduate studies, and had come to know the children and administrators well. I spent dozens of hours every trip tutoring the children in English, teaching them computer skills, telling them stories, and participating in the celebration of Hindu rituals and festivals. I first visited the village school in winter 2008, and returned to the site during every successive annual visit to India. During those visits, I had multiple conversations with the principal and two of the teachers, and informally observed several English periods in three different classrooms (across six grade levels).

Noida, the city where this work unfolded, is a sprawling satellite town of New Delhi, the Indian capital. It is one of the cities comprising the National Capital Region (a conurbation of New Delhi and several urban agglomerations). An ethnically, culturally, linguistically, and socially heterogeneous city, it has about 700,000 inhabitants. While the languages of state administration, business, and schooling are English and/or Hindi, many inhabitants speak other languages at home (e.g., Punjabi, Urdu, Bengali).

The *Anathashram*

The *anathashram* was situated in an *ashram* in a quiet residential area in Noida. The priest/administrator, two assistants, and the Board of Directors (appointed by *ashram* headquarters in the eastern state of West Bengal) managed the *ashram*. There was a large temple of Goddess Kali within the *ashram*; an upraised office area that overlooked the temple area and the front entrance. In any given year, the anathashram was home to a revolving population of between 15 to 25 children. The children lived on two different floors: an upstairs dorm for the younger children (up to eleven years of age) and a basement where the older children (eleven and older) stayed. In addition, there were two bedrooms upstairs for administrators and/or visitors. The priest's living quarters and a computer lab (crowded with several donated computers) were adjacent to the front office hall. There was a compact TV room where the children would watch Hindi cartoons or cricket matches (when given permission). The kitchen could be accessed only from outside, and also served as the dining area. The food was typical Bengali fare, with *bhat* (cooked rice), *dal*, *shobji* (Indian vegetable stir fry), and, occasionally, *machh* (fish) or *murgi* (chicken). The five focal children's ages ranged between nine and thirteen, and they received room, board, and/or education free of charge or at subsidized costs. The five focal children were selected on the basis of several, pre-decided criteria, including that they: had to have been residing at the orphanage for a

<p style="text-align:center">6</p>

minimum of six months prior to the start of data collection, were five or older, and had rural backgrounds. The children spoke Bengali or Bihari as their mother tongue, and Hindi as a second or third language. Monday through Saturday, the *anathashram* schedule entailed morning prayers, school, lunch, playtime, evening prayers, evening study period, dinner, and, finally, bedtime. On Sundays, in addition to schoolwork, the children did their weekly chores and spent time drawing and painting. Although they lived in what was labeled an *anathashram*, they were not all entirely parentless. Some of the children had two living parents, and the rest had single parents, guardians, or access to family networks. The children's parents or guardians were all migrant workers, having arrived from rural parts of West Bengal, Bihar, or Nepal to the North Delhi region a few years ago. Their fathers or male legal guardians were mostly employed as daily-wage workers, *chowkidars* (foot patrol security men) or as *halwais* (roadside stall cooks), and a majority of their mothers or female guardians were employed as *kaamwalis* (domestic servants) in *kothis* (big homes). Parents and legal guardians spoke to the children and visited, finances permitting, on Sundays, and some came over for festive occasions, such as Saraswati *Pujo*.

Figure 1. This photograph is taken during Saraswati Pujo, with Maharaj turned toward Saraswati (on the right of the image) in order to offer flowers, at the *anathashram*.

Figure 2. Kishore, a focal child, studies on a plastic desk in the downstairs basement at the *anathashram.*

Figure 3. Children sit on rugs during evening prayers at the *anathashram.*

Figure 4. Prateek, a focal child, studies on his bed in the upstairs bedroom.

SCB School

The nearby school in which the children studied was SCB School, located in Madhupur Village. Madhupur was home to approximately 3,500 inhabitants, a mostly floating population of migrant workers. Over the years, the village had built up some notoriety as a result of a series of high-profile crimes that occurred there, although it continued to see an influx of migrant workers from different states as a result of its location and the local demand for workers. The principal of SCB acquired the property from his in-laws and started the school in the multi-story building, renting out the ground floor to tenants, and using the first and second floors for the school. The co-educational private institution had approximately 250 students, and all students attended school in mandatory school uniforms (which changed from season to season). School was in session Monday through Saturday, and every day began with an extended morning assembly. All the teachers were in their thirties and forties, and had grown up in nearby towns and villages. They had been educated in Hindi-medium schools, and held post-graduate degrees in various disciplines from regional universities. The school itself was made up of a series of rooms connected with half-walls, with each classroom and teacher serving two different grade levels. Each classroom was crammed with small desks, sometimes two children to a desk. The second floor had two rooms, where the classes for the highest grades were held, and the roof doubled up as a space for teaching and conducting morning assembly. School was in session from 8:00 am through 1:00 pm, Monday through Saturday. The principal's office was on the ground floor, and a tiny room attached to it had two rarely used computers. The school was located near several other private and government schools, all of them tapping into the burgeoning demand created by the village residents. While the area was primarily residential, narrow alleys led out to the main market area filled with stalls and shops selling bootleg DVDs, casual Indian dresses and "Western wear," groceries, tires, medicines, electrical goods, and beauty supplies. The local *masjid* (mosque) sounded out the call to prayer five times a day, while *bhajans* (Hindu devotional songs) played over megaphones in the several Hindu temples that dotted the village. Despite high levels of crime and the difficult, hand-to-

mouth existence of many of its impoverished residents, Madhupur was a bustling village, busy and full of life.

Figure 5. The street leading up to SCB School, at Madhupur Village.

Figure 6. Bade Sir writes out answers to questions on the blackboard during an English lesson at SCB School.

Figure 7. Gopal, a focal child, at his desk at SCB School.

Figure 8. Bade sir teaches sixth and seventh grades here; Arjun, a focal child, is visible on the left of the photograph.

RESEARCHER POSITIONALITY

My positionality within these two communities was multidimensional and complex. I was born and raised in a middle-class Bengali home in the southern part of New Delhi, on a well-known engineering campus. While I shared a similar linguistic landscape to the one inhabited by my focal children, my socio-cultural universe, although a mere thirteen miles away, was starkly dissimilar. My stable family life and educated, well-off parents provided me a life of privilege. Although my sense of place is deeply rooted in the Delhi area, there are other geographic spaces that are strongly inscribed on my being.

Most days I walked into the *anathashram* and village school in a cotton *kameez* (Indian tunic) and *churidar* (Indian slacks), wrapped in one of my mother's hand-embroidered Kashmiri shawls during the winter, and toting a Bisleri water bottle and a *jhola* (Indian bag). There was bright *sindoor* (vermillion placed in the hair parting, worn by married Hindu women) in my hair, the brightly colored *shankha pola* on my wrists. I spoke in Bengali to the *anathashram* administrators; in Hindi and Bengali to the children; and in Hindi to the principal and teachers. And yet, as much as I looked, dressed, and spoke like a local, my life in America also informed participants' perceptions of me. I spoke English and came from privileged spaces that could only be bridged with these local sites through deep reflection, introspection, and questioning. In the two sites, several aspects of my identity came into play: I was a New Delhi native; I was an Indian; a resident of the US; I had family in Noida; I was married; I was married to an American; I was in my thirties; I was a woman; I was *didi* (elder sister); I was a researcher; I was a researcher interested in languages; I was a product of the Indian K-12 system; and part of American academia. Sometimes these aspects overlapped; other times, they were oppositional and difficult to reconcile. At any given point of time, therefore, my role was complex, and I was multiply positioned and multiply oriented to and by members I interacted with in these communities. Ultimately, this raised a variety of challenges, and forced me to reflect extensively on the ways in which my own history, language ideologies, and literacies are inscribed on these pages. I cannot uproot this project from what makes me a stranger in my own home, or at home in a stranger's. All I can offer is the promise of deep, abiding reflection that penetrates every word, that reflects on knowledge as I make it, as I make it my own and offer it to others.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

The description of Saraswati *Pujo* earlier shows unmistakable traces of my presence and implication within the ethnographic context. Beyond that, of course, it also offers a glimpse into the *anathashram* at a moment when the focal children and the community—in which I was immersed—were brought together in an annual celebration of the Goddess of Learning. It shows the focal children's ceremonial engagement and participation in the public veneration of literacy, one that is interpenetrated by symbolic, ritualistic, and socio-cultural meaning. The ritual illuminates and anticipates a variety of issues of significance within this investigation, particularly those that concern language, ideology, and literacy. For example, the context reveals itself to be richly multilingual, with various languages mapping out different domains of use. Sanskrit is diffused in the priest's mumbled Vedic *mantras*; Bengali in the urgent authority figures' imperatives; and Hindi in children's peer interactions. There is little trace of English: it is found fixed, inscribed in text, on the *anathashram* signboard and in the closed books offered up for blessings to Saraswati. This looks ahead to the circumscribed and constrained circulation of English that is tackled throughout the investigation. The ritual also offers us a window into ideologies about languages in this context. The priest's whispered and indistinguishable recitation of chants, for example, hints at local beliefs that it is the sounds of Sanskrit (the *Dev Vani*, or the speech of God) rather than the comprehension of its vocabulary that matters. Meaning, in this instance, is not a core component of the linguistic exercise. Interestingly, this parallels in some ways my findings about the focal children's acquisition of English at the village school they attend and at the *anathashram*, as we shall see later on. Literacy, of course, forms the cornerstone of this celebration. From extended prayers in honor of Saraswati to the *doat* and *kalam* placed on the stack of books, literacy manifests itself in a variety of forms during the *Pujo*. In addition to

being an invocation and a description of a ritual celebration, Saraswati *Pujo*, the starting point for this study, thus anticipates some of the questions that frame this investigation.

The portrayal of a typical day of observation at SCB School also touches upon important themes around language, ideology, and literacy arising in this investigation. The prayers recited and sung during the morning assembly as well as the English lesson, e.g., offer glimpses into the complex intermingling of languages at the site. In addition, ideologies around English surface, e.g., in the cover picture of the Caucasian child on the English textbook being used, as well as in *Bade* sir's comment on parents' desires for a better life for their children through the acquisition of English. While these parents do not know English, as *Bade* sir informed me, they feel strongly that English is crucial for socio-economic mobility. In addition, their desires are also laced with urgency, since, as *Bade* sir notes, they want their children to learn English "overnight." This is the primary reason that their children are enrolled in a school identified as English-medium, even though government schools are, overall, a significantly cheaper option for the poor. *Bade* sir's frustration with the children's poor access to English outside the home also points to specific obstacles faced in English learning by children from lower socio-economic strata. The description of the day's events, further, also provides a snapshot of core pedagogical and literacy practices, such as memorization, recitation, and translation, which I unpack in detail in Chapter IV. These two descriptions, thus, set up the core framework of this investigation.

This dissertation is a study of English language and literacy in the multilingual Indian context, unfolding along two analytic planes: the first examines institutional discourses about English learning across India and how they are motivated and informed by the dominant theme of "globalization," and the second investigates how local language ideologies and literacy practices correspond to these discourses. An ethnographic discourse-analytic case study, it spans across four years. The setting is a microcosm of India's own complex multilingualism. The focal children speak Bengali or Bihari as a first language; Hindi as a second language; attend an English-medium village school; and participate daily in Sanskrit prayers. Within this context, I show how the institutional discursive framing of English as a prerequisite for socio-economic mobility, ultimately helps produce, reproduce, and exacerbate inequalities within the world's second largest educational system. The notion of globalization, this study reveals, is deeply woven into these discourses. I begin by showing that while top-level discourses about English accept globalization as *doxa* (Bourdieu, 1981), little attention is paid to its differential intervention along socio-economic lines. My study complicates the commonly liberatory rhetoric of globalization by illuminating how such discourses employ multiple strategies to mobilize institutional voices (e.g., of the courts, policymaking agencies, and the media), in order to control and restrict access to linguistic, symbolic and economic capital. Further, fine-grained analyses of the children's linguistic practices and interview data reveal how local language ideologies counter, resist, and contest these discourses and voice enduring anxieties about English. Because these discourses have fueled the proliferation of private English-medium schools in India, catering mostly to the poor, the classroom forms another locus of investigation. Its analysis entails the close examination of literacy practices, curricula, and pedagogy at the children's school. The study reveals that factors such as poor infrastructure; multigrade classrooms; teacher-centered pedagogy; level-inappropriate textbooks; emphasis on rote memorization; and the difficulty of teaching and learning in a language in which neither the instructor nor the student has proficiency result in limited English acquisition and also restrict children's access to educational content. In light of my findings, I argue that such English-medium schools not only widen the English-vernacular gap, they also reinforce the role of English in elite

formation. The significance of my study lies in underscoring the ways in which institutional notions around English and globalization flatten out difference and enact erasure of local voices, with serious consequences for educational equity. This is not merely an Indian story; the role of English in an era of globalization is *the* high-stakes language politics story of our time, determining educational and employment opportunities for millions across the developing world.

A PREVIEW OF THE PROJECT

After setting the stage in this introductory chapter, this study tackles the first data analysis chapter, which is Chapter II. I examine a variety of institutional discourses, emanating from *centering institutions* (Silverstein, 1998), about English learning. The chapter sheds light on the ways in which the idea of globalization informs and influences these discourses. I demonstrate how these discourses strategically employ the *"global"* indexed by the construct globalization to imaginatively unmoor globalization processes from the localized, particular, and spatially delimited contexts of their articulation. My analysis contextualizes these discourses in order to elucidate how they mask internal (linguistic and other) differences by privileging a selective and partial view, with important consequences for educational equity. The chapter begins with a brief contextualization of the tangled, heterogeneous space that is present day India. I then provide the conceptual framework for exploring the constructs of discourse and globalization. The literature review begins by engaging with theories of discourse, concentrating on the social implication of discourses, as well as the ways in which power is negotiated through them. The notion of language ideologies, which provides insight into beliefs about languages as they manifest in discourse, offers a valuable analytical lens in this investigation. The section on globalization provides an overview of influential theoretical strands, and also focuses on scholarship that attends to the reductive dimensions of globalization theory. Then, I survey theories about English as a global language. The data comprised a range of written and oral texts drawn from institutions that function as focal nodes of authority responsible for enacting and enforcing *doxa* at different levels of society. For the analysis, I employ a language ideological perspective to demonstrate how ideas about the reach, circulation, and importance of English are conceived, fashioned, and normativized within Indian institutions, and intertwined with notions about globalization. Emergent themes arising from the analysis include the discursive construction of English: as a global language; as an economic imperative; as *not* a colonial or foreign language; as ideologized in the same way across India; and as being superior to Indian vernaculars. In the conclusion, I offer implications for this kind of discursive framing for language-in-education policies and educational equity.

The next chapter provides a counter-narrative to the institutional discourses described in Chapter II from within the local *anathashram* context. It zooms in to the micro-level and investigates beliefs about English among the focal children at the *anathashram*. That is, it brings to the surface the ideas children hold about English and its use. The conceptual framework I employ is again that of language ideology, which offers a powerful analytical perspective for examining beliefs about languages, their socio-cultural implication, as well as the role of power in making sense of ideology. The literature review I conduct surveys existing literature on language ideologies at the macro- and micro- level within India. The beliefs in this analysis are excavated through the close linguistic analysis of four extracts of data in Bengali and Hindi. The data comprised two *chutkule* (funny anecdotes) told by focal children and two extracts from interviews with the focal children. I analyze these texts and

then investigate them thematically in order to illuminate language ideologies that configure English as foreign, urban, complex, and imbued with a particular kind of direction and mobility. The language ideologies that are brought to light complicate, contest, and resist the language ideologies manifested within Indian institutional discourses, as demonstrated in the previous chapter. The anxieties, concerns, and ambivalences mined through the analysis of language ideologies here reflect enduring concerns with English, its learning, its culture valence, and its speakers. Beyond underscoring the disconnect between local and broader language ideologies, this chapter helps trouble institutional discourses that frame the relationship between English and globalization within India in simplistic and reductive ways.

Chapter IV, the final data analysis chapter, unpacks the politics of the linguistic mediation of instruction through the exploration of school and home literacy practices. In this chapter, I explore different literacy practices influencing the negotiation of the instructional medium, their impact on language learning, and their wider language policy and planning implications. The chapter begins with a review of relevant literature, which examines scholarship engaging with the complex issues related to medium of instruction within the Indian educational context. In the following section, I use a language policy and planning conceptual lens to analyze the teaching context, pedagogical and textbook approaches, and learning practices. Emergent themes arising from the analysis include the multigrade teaching context, translation-dependent language teaching, low emphasis on communicative skills, poor relevance of content to the children's lives, heavy reliance on memorization, and teaching to the test. The analysis reveals how English-medium instruction in a typical small, private Indian school catering to poor children leads to restricted acquisition of English, in ways that also constrain students' ability to access educational content across subject areas. The findings suggest that poor children who enroll in these types of schools precisely *because of* the schools' self-identification as English-medium institutions end up doubly disadvantaged, because it restricts their acquisition of both language and content.

Finally, I revisit the broad arc of my argument in the concluding chapter. This chapter ties the different strands of argumentation together, exploring how broader institutional discourses about English tapping into the narrative of "globalization" correspond to local language ideologies and literacy practices. I then reflect on the constructs of centering institutions, ideological erasure, globalization, and medium of instruction, which form core theoretical constructs that help frame this study. In addition, the concluding chapter offers practical recommendations for pedagogy as well as policy. In addition, it reflects on methodologies employed in this investigation as well as the crucial question of researcher positionality. I then review limitations of the study, as and then map out future directions.

CHAPTER II

The English Imperative and Globalization: The Indian Case

The impact of economic globalization has changed the role of English in India. Contemporary India seems to have separated the English language from the English rulers, and the country has shed its colonial complexes towards English. The nation has come to terms with English, and Indians have understood that, with globalization, English has become an economic necessity, and that they have the 'English advantage' over many other countries like China, Japan, and Germany. (Krishnaswamy & Krishnaswamy, 2006, p. vi)

"Like the phenomenon of modernity itself, English possesses a double-edged sword in India — possessing the potential for a liberatory future while at present creating and abetting the production and reproduction of a hierarchical world" (Mishra, 2000, p. 384).

"…[W]e can argue about what globalisation is till the cows come home - but that globalisation exists is beyond question, with English its accompanist. The accompanist is, of course, indispensable to the performance" (Hanson, 1997).

INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores select Indian institutional discourses about the learning of English. These discourses, I show, pivot around notions of "globalization,"[3] or what Giddens (1990) described as "the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa" (p. 64). Within this framing, two aspects emerge as prominent. Firstly, Hanson's (1997) statement above, "that globalisation exists is beyond question," echoes a key belief manifested in such discourses. The construct globalization broadly circulates as *doxa*, defined as the "acceptance of the established order situated outside the reach of critique" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 247)(see also Bourdieu, 1981, 1990; Chopra, 2003). Secondly, a close scrutiny of these discourses reveals that it is primarily the homogenizing force of globalization that is spotlighted, whereas scant attention is paid to its differential intervention along socio-cultural, economic, and—most crucially for this analysis—linguistic lines. The discursive glossing over of a starkly unequal Indian terrain lies at the heart of this project. I show how certain discourses strategically invoke the *"global"* to imaginatively unmoor globalization processes from their localized, particular, and spatially delimited contexts of articulation. My analysis *places* these discourses, because, as Hall (1997) has noted:

> It is when a discourse forgets that it is placed that it tries to speak for everybody else. That is exactly what happens when Englishness claims to be a world identity, to which everything else is an insignificant ethnicity. That is the moment when it mistakes itself for a universal language. But, in fact, it comes from a place, out of a specific history, out of a specific set of power relationships. It speaks within a tradition. Discourse, in that sense, is always placed…the margins could not speak up

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[3] The quotation marks here are meant to trouble and problematize the conceptual space indexed by the terms "global," "globalization," "globalizing," etc. While only the first occurrence of the term is placed in quotation marks, they are assumed to be problematic constructs throughout this analysis.

without first grounding themselves somewhere. (p. 185)

This project therefore prioritizes the placing of discourses, in order to elucidate how they mask internal (linguistic and other) differences by privileging a selective and partial view with, as I argue, important consequences for educational equity.

This inquiry begins with a brief contextualization of the tangled, heterogeneous space that is present day India. I next provide the conceptual framework for exploring the constructs of discourse and globalization. The literature review begins by engaging with theories of discourse, concentrating on the social implication of discourses, as well as the ways in which power is negotiated through them. Then, I review the notion of language ideologies, which offers insight into people's beliefs about languages as they are manifested in discourse. The section on globalization overviews influential theoretical strands, and also focuses on scholarship that attends to the reductive dimensions of globalization theory relevant to this analysis. I next provide an overview of theories about English as a global language. The methodological section describes what data were collected and how, and details the analytic procedures. The data comprised a range of select, representative written and oral texts drawn from important *centering institutions* (Silverstein, 1998; Blommaert, 2005), which are focal nodes of authority responsible for enacting and enforcing *doxa* at different levels of society. For the analysis, I employ a language ideological theoretical perspective to demonstrate how globalization is conceived, fashioned, and normativized at the Indian institutional level, specifically as related to ideas about the reach, circulation, and importance of English. Emergent themes arising from the analysis include the discursive construction of English: as a global language; as an economic imperative; as no longer perceived as a colonial or foreign language; as ideologized in the same way across India; and as superior to Indian vernaculars. In the conclusion, I offer implications for this kind of discursive framing for language-in-education policies and educational equity.

Globalizing India

The term globalization came into prominence in India after the landmark economic reforms of the 1990s, and has gained extensive purchase in political, social, cultural, academic, and economic discourses since. An important aspect of the circulation of the term is that it has been the positive, liberatory rhetoric of globalization that has been the most salient (see, e.g., Brar, 2008; Somayaji & Somayaji, 2006). As Chopra (2003) noted:

> [t]he actions and rhetoric of numerous Indian state and non-state agencies seem to endorse globalization and liberalization as desirable transformative forces that will ultimately provide not only economic rewards, such as increased global competitiveness of Indian companies and healthier foreign exchange reserves, but also significant social benefits such as more job opportunities, higher salaries, greater consumer choice and a better quality of life. (p. 421)

Literary scholar Alok Rai echoed this sentiment, labeling it the "euphoric embrace of globalization" (McDonald, 2011). Deb (2012) has also argued that Indian globalization discourses manifest "an uncomplicated, almost cultish faith in India as a success story." Contrary to the optimistic framing of globalization, however, the impact of what are constructed as globalization processes in India has been largely mixed.

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According to the provisional count of the Census of India (2011), the population of India is 1.2 billion with 69% (Government of India, 2011a) of Indians living in rural areas (Government of India, 2011b). An emerging economy, India has witnessed exponential growth in the previous two decades, but the distribution of the benefits accrued have been far from equitable (Bhanumurthy & Mitra, 2010; Kohli, 2012; Kumar, 2004). In a differentiated socio-economic universe, while elites lead privileged lives comparable to those in developed countries, a majority of Indians continue to struggle for basic needs. The World Bank (2013), e.g., estimated that 32.7% of Indians live on less than $1.25 a day, and 68.7% live on less than $2 a day, while the *National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganised Sector* (2007) claimed that 77% of Indians live on Rs. 20 ($ 0.34[4]) a day. Additionally, while claims proliferate about the rise of the Indian middle class as a result of globalization, Ganguly-Scrase & Scrase (2008) have argued against them. Instead, they contended, "for many families, their lives have been made more difficult due to rising prices, inflation, increasing debt, increasing competition for jobs and housing, and a marked decline in overall living standards" (p. 3). How *has* globalization affected the lives of Indians? According to Kumar (2004), one's socio-economic positioning largely determines the answer. While this highly differentiated experience of globalization for Indians is important to consider, it is often subsumed by globalization discourses.

English is an integral part of these discourses. A colonial inheritance, it is widely viewed as offering spatio-economic mobility within India (LaDousa, 2005; Kumar, 1993; Ramanathan, 1999). The overall literacy rate stands at 74% varying substantially along gender, socio-economic, caste, religious, rural/urban lines, among others (Government of India, 2011c). As the National Knowledge Commission (2009) has remarked, however, English is "beyond the reach" of the majority of Indians and is characterized by "highly unequal access" (p. 27). Mishra (2000) pointed out that the restricted and socio-economically stratified nature of English dissemination is akin to the historically limited circulation of Persian and Sanskrit. English, he claimed, "has for the most part played the role of an ideology of keeping the vernacular masses in a perpetually subordinate place" (p. 385). The number of Indians with English skills is low, primarily because in the past, English schooling has been unavailable or forbiddingly expensive for the average Indian. The Seventh All-India School Education Survey (N.C.E.R.T., 2007) found, e.g., that only a minority of Indian children are able to access English at early levels: conducted with a data reference date of September 30, 2002, it was revealed that only 12.98% schools at the primary (elementary) level, 18.25% schools at the upper primary level, 25.84% schools at the secondary level, and 33.59% schools at the higher secondary offered English-medium instruction. Furthermore, there is only partial consensus on how many Indians "speak" English (the criteria for determining who "speaks" English, of course, vary), but there is broad agreement that they form a small minority: The National Knowledge Commission (2009) claimed that 1% of Indians use English as a second language; English studies scholar Hohenthal (2003) put the total number of English speakers at 4% of the population; linguist Crystal (2003) claimed 20% of Indians use English as second language; English literature scholar Mishra (2000) claimed only 5% can speak it; and the India Human Development Survey (2005) found that 4% of Indians can speak English fluently, and 16% can speak it a little. Who participates in the "global citizenship" within Indian society, then, as it is conceived in popular discourse? A mere "3% of Indians (10% of urban ones) with high incomes (above $2150 a year), college degrees, English-language skills, and global connections" have managed to join the ranks of

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[4] The calculation is based on the conversion rate in July 2013.

this category (Derné, 2005, p.36). What I want to emphasize here, again, is that globalization processes have impacted India in unequal, imbalanced, and complex ways.

These disparities also occur along technological lines, a point important to raise here since they are often interlinked with English ideologies and globalization discourses. Bhagwati (2004) has contended that technology is one of the most crucial axes along which globalization unfolds. However, access to technology is overwhelmingly skewed in favor of the developed world[5]: a mere 6% of the world's "global citizens" have access to the Internet, and a majority of them (a staggering 85%) are located in developed countries (Subba Rao, 2005). The numbers in India are even more sobering. Households with computers or laptops accounted for 9.4% of the Indian population in 2011, and those with access to the Internet stood at 3.1% of the total population (Government of India, 2011d). Furthermore, sharp digital divides exist along state, urban/rural, educational level, and economic lines (Subba Rao, 2005). While the affordances of mobile technologies—and the possibility of their mediating Internet access—receive much attention, only just over half of Indians have access to cellphones (Census of India, 2011). Regardless of these more modest numbers, most national discourses assert that information and communication technologies (ICTs) are paving the way for the globalization of India (Subba Rao, 2005). Universal Internet access, in particular, has been tied to poverty reduction, an important national concern. Kenny (2002), however, has warned that there are problems with this position: First, Internet users require digital literacy competencies that may not be easily acquired in such contexts, and, second, there is the additional hurdle posed by the mediation of the Internet mostly via English, a minority language. Furthermore, Dossani, Misra, and Jhaveri (2005) have warned that ICTs have not only *not* created a less divided society, there is real danger that the growing digital divide is creating a more divided one, particularly in rural India. The role of technology in globalizing India thus merits closer scrutiny, and must be connected to infrastructural and linguistic constraints, among others.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Language ideologies form the lens through which this study unveils beliefs about languages as manifested in discourses. They constitute a methodological tool, as the review of relevant theories will show, that engages crucial questions of power. I will explore these questions from the perspective of theories around discourse with particular attention to notions around globalization.

Placing Discourses

Although widely diffused in scholarship (Widdowson, 1995), as a concept, discourse remains slippery and challenging to define. Various disciplinary orientations have resulted in theorizations around the term in co-extensive and contradictory ways (Abu-Lughod & Lutz, 1990; Bloor & Bloor, 2007; Fairclough, 1992; Lakoff, 2001). The construct has spanned a range of meanings, from "a historical monument, *lieu de mémoire*, a policy, a political strategy, narratives in a restricted or broad sense of the term, text, talk, a speech, topic-related conversations, to language per se" (Wodak, 2009, pp. 2-3). Within what is a richly interdisciplinary field of research, Schiffrin, Tannen, and Hamilton (2001) outlined three

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[5] The category "developed" draws on relevant scholarship, but is to be understood here as problematic (see Bhattacharya, 2011).

major approaches[6] to defining discourse. The first approach includes definitions that construct discourse as that which is bigger than a sentence (e.g., Stubbs, 1983). The second involves those that configure discourse as "language use" (e.g., Fasold, 1990), and the third considers discourses to span all "social practice that includes nonlinguistic and nonspecific instances of language" (p. 1)(e.g., Fairclough, 1992; Wodak, 1996). The wide array of definitions, it should be noted, also encompass a variety of methodological techniques (Coupland & Jaworski, 2006; Jaworski & Pritchard, 2005).

      Regardless of differing approaches, the dialectical relations between society and discourses have remained of focal interest in the theoretical treatment of discourse. Fairclough (1989), e.g., defined discourse as "language as social practice" (p. 17). Wodak (2001) conceptualized discourse as concurrent, consecutive and interconnected linguistic acts that unfold across "social fields of action" (p. 66). In her perspective, discourses are pliable, open, and capable of being sub-divided, reproduced, and regenerated as a result of inter-discursive and inter-textual interactions. Beyond signifying and mirroring social constructs and relations, discourses have also been theorized as being constitutive of them (Foucault, 1978). Also situated within a socio-cultural framework, Blommaert's (2005) approach to discourse took a sharply semiotic bent. He defined discourse as any type of "meaningful symbolic behavior" (p. 2) situated within the socio-cultural and historical evolution of its usage. His conceptualization of discourse was engineered to be a subversive move, meant to push against the "safety of particularism" (p. 237). As he noted, further:

> When we see discourse in more general terms, as (any form of) meaningful semiotic conduct, then we find ourselves facing the task of analyzing more things in more ways. This takes away the comfort of clarity that comes with sticking within well-defined boundaries. But it offers opportunities as well: opportunities to treat different sets of data; opportunities to combine eclectically insights from every available approach to language in society, semiosis, or social conduct. (pp. 236-237)

It is this conceptualization of discourse that I utilize in this chapter. It allows me to bring a variety of institutional discourses (such as the discourses of the courts, media, policymaking) under one analytic umbrella. Blommaert's (2005) theorization of discourse affords the multiplication of interpretive possibilities by stretching the boundaries of the analytic space, thereby allowing for a more multi-aspectual consideration of the context under examination. I also employ the concept of centering institutions (Silverstein, 1998) to yoke together discourses from different institutions. Centering institutions form nodes of authority that are responsible for enacting and enforcing *doxa* at different levels of society (Blommaert, 2005; Silverstein, 1998). The "centering" entails "either perceptions or real processes of homogenisation and uniformisation: orienting towards such a centre involves the (real or perceived) reduction of difference and the creation of recognizably 'normative' meaning" (Blommaert, 2005, p. 75). Taken together, Blommaert's (2005) and Silverstein's (1998) notions form a pivotal part of this analytic framework: Blommaert's (2005) semiotic approach to discourse allows for a multi-dimensional examination of an ensemble of institutional discourses, and Silverstein's (1998) concept of centering institutions focuses the analytic lens on the institutional discursive mediation of authority and power.

      The production, negotiation, regulation, and contestation of power are enduring concerns in the study of discourse, and are central to the analysis I undertake in this chapter.

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[6] The three approaches are not necessarily distinct from one another.

As Foucault (1972) has noted, the relationship between power and discourse is multifaceted, complex, and unpredictable. Discourse, he further noted, may both be an apparatus through which power is mediated, as well as a consequence. Furthermore, for Foucault (1978), power and knowledge are linked together in discourse. Thus, discourse may be both a site of resistance, and the semiotic space where strategies for resistance are birthed. Therefore, discourses diffuse, give rise to, strengthen, and destabilize power.

Another important aspect of this analysis is the excavation of institutional beliefs about English entwined in Indian globalization discourses. In order to unpack these beliefs, I employ the analytical concept of language ideologies. Language ideologies are, simply put, commonsense ways of thinking about languages (see Irvine, 1989; Irvine & Gal, 2000; Kroskrity, 2000; Rumsey, 1990; Silverstein, 1979, Woolard & Schieffelin, 1994; Woolard 1998). They reflect the ways in which group members make sense of differences within and across languages, "and map those understandings onto people, events, and activities that are significant to them" (Irvine & Gal, 2000, p. 35). In this manner, language differences become signifiers of differences at other socio-cultural levels. Language ideologies are necessarily socio-culturally situated and contextualized, and crucial for the formation of social and cultural identities (Kroskrity, 2004; Silverstein, 1992; Wortham, 2008). That is, they can only be understood in the context of their socio-cultural circulation, and are also linked in important ways to members' sense of self and others. They are also characterized as beliefs a) that privilege interests of particular socio-cultural groups, b) are plural in count, and c) that mediate the dialectical relationship between members' socio-cultural lifeworlds and discursive experiences (Kroskrity, 2000). Language ideologies are especially significant where regional and national ideologies stand at variance, and locals must negotiate competing beliefs about languages (Moore, 2008), a point that is particularly salient in multilingual India. In addition to using language ideologies to highlight ways of thinking about English in Indian globalization discourses, I utilize the concept of *ideological erasure* drawn from language ideological research. Ideological erasure is defined as "the process in which ideology, in simplifying the sociolinguistic field, renders some persons or activities (or sociolinguistic phenomena) invisible" (Irvine & Gal, 2000, p. 38). I argue here that the centering force of institutions, manifested in the characterization the circulation of English, enact ideological erasure by rendering invisible differential access to English.

Locating Globalization

Heller (2008) has contended that the multiple phenomena which are theoretically subsumed under the construct globalization "probably have as much to do with a «discourse-of» as they have to do with empirically observable changes in the political-economic conditions of our lives" (p. 513). Broadly speaking, scholarship on globalization comprises two focal strands: one investigating concerns related to the phenomenon of globalization, and the other examining the construct of globalization itself (Robinson, 2008). Within multiple, complex theoretical orientations, Held, McGrew, Goldblatt, and Perraton (1999) delineated three distinct, important schools of thought in globalization theory. These included the *hyperglobalizers*, who conceptualize globalization as the materialization of a new global marketplace that has become the most important economic and political entity; the *sceptics*, who consider globalization to be a myth and assert that this is actually a time of great regionalization; and, finally, the *transformationalists*, who concur with *hyperglobalists* but find the nation state to be of continuing organizational importance. According to Eriksen (2007), conceptualizations of globalization have occurred along these axes: *dis-embedding* (i.e., the

recaliberation of distance due to technological and economic transformations), *acceleration* (i.e., the rapid development of transport and communication systems), *standardization* (i.e., the rise of standards that are shared across vast geographical spaces), *interconnectedness* (i.e., greater "networkedness" of society), *movement* (i.e., the increased movement of people for the purpose of travel, tourism, migration), *mixing* (i.e., increased cross-cultural contact), *vulnerability* (i.e., the growing blurring of boundaries), and *re-embedding* (i.e., reaction to dis-embedding mechanisms).

As with discourse, conflicting, shifting, and overlapping definitions of globalization have arisen from different disciplinary spaces (Eriksen, 2007; Robinson, 2008). Strange (1996), e.g., noted, with no little frustration, that globalization can "refer to anything from the Internet to a hamburger" (p. xiii). Robinson (2008) observed that while there is divergence in theorizations of globalization, some commonalities may nevertheless be identified. These include the broader agreement that: there are important socio-cultural consequences for the rapid pace of change across the world in the last few decades; the world is increasingly interlinked, and there is a heightened awareness about it; the consequences of globalization are pervasive; and that varying aspects of globalization are interconnected (e.g., Harvey, 1989; Giddens, 1990; Held et al., 1999; McGrew, 2008; Robertson 1992; Tomlinson, 1999; Waters, 1995).

Some scholars have raised the issue that much of the broader discourses about globalization have concentrated on its positive aspects (Stromquist & Monkman, 2000). Risse (2007) outlined three problems with such discourses: that their defining characteristic is universality; that they suggest that everyone is interlinked in a largely unheirarchical manner; and that the processes of globalization seem to be without actual dominant agents/actors (see also, Fairclough, 2006). Krishnaswamy (2002) expressed similar concerns:

> for all its attention to diversity, hybridity, and multiplicity, globalization is a brazenly positivistic (rather than deconstructive or hermeneutical) narrative with utopian desires and universalistic ambitions that seeks to reconcile the local and the global by simultaneously focusing on both the heterogeneous and the homogeneous, the particular and the universal. (p. 113)

The utopian aspirations of these discourses result in the evasion of the question of how globalization is differentially experienced. Importantly, as Watson (2004) has warned, "[t]he fact that residents of Moscow, Beijing, and New Delhi occasionally eat at McDonald's, watch Hollywood films, and wear (knockoffs of) Nike sneakers does not make them 'global'" (p. 169). In a similar vein, Veseth's (2005) work attacks *globaloney*, or "rhetoric that tries to simplify it [globalization] in order to sell a particular viewpoint or political agenda" (p. 3). These works offer a useful cautioning in the employment of the construct of globalization, although, as we will see, it is not often heeded.

The implication, articulation, and rise of English within globalization processes have received much scholarly attention. According to Sonntag (2003), e.g., the phenomenon of global English "is part of the cause, the process, and the product of globalization" (p. xii). Saxena and Omoniyi (2010) labeled English the "life force" of globalization. Crystal (2003) argued that English is a global language because it performs a special role in *all* countries. The globalization of English, he argued, had much to do with it being "in the right place at the right time" (p. 110). A markedly different position was articulated by Phillipson (1992), who approached the concept of English as a global language through the lens of *linguistic imperialism*. He has repeatedly argued that the notion of global English has been circulated by

22

powerful groups with vested interests (Phillipson, 1992, 2008, 2009). "Global English," according to him, is part of "special pleading, the beguiling rhetoric that promotes the project of establishing English worldwide" (Phillipson, 2009, p. 85). Pennycook (1995, 2001) has echoed some of Phillipson's reservations, and asserted that the widespread or global reach of English is a result of the calculated actions of state and private institutions of English-dominant countries. Elsewhere, he has examined the issue of global English in terms of *transcultural flows*, focusing on the take up, appropriation, and hybridization of English in its role mediating cultural forms (Pennycook, 2007)(see also, Appadurai, 1996; Block, 2005; Blommaert, 2010; Heller, 1999; Jacquemet, 2005; Mufwene, 2005). The *World Englishes* paradigm has also contributed to the development of scholarly work around the notions of globalization and English. The paradigm explores English in its manifestations as a pluricentric, cross-cultural phenomenon (Kachru, 2008). This formulation contests the simplistic, reductive narrative of English in its "global" avatar (see also, Bolton, 2004; Brutt-Griffler, 2002; Kachru & Smith, 1985; Kachru, 1992). While this is a comparatively new and emerging area of research, scholarship around English as a global language continues to grow and offer insights into the complex circulation of English in an ever-shifting landscape.

METHODOLOGY

Data Corpus

The data for this chapter is a subset of that collected for the larger dissertation project over a four-year period (2007-2011) at an *anathashram* (orphanage) in suburban New Delhi and a nearby private English-medium school. In this analysis, I conceive of media reports, government policies, and interviews as reflecting a particular, influential, and coherent strain of *public discourse* (Lin, 1997), drawn from centering institutions, about English. In the Indian context, media discourses both reflect and shape discourses about national and local policies: educational issues, in particular, receive significant attention, which provided me with ample material in exploring broader national discourses. Over 200 English-based newspaper articles, 20 language policy documents, and 2 interviews with national policymakers informed this analysis. Media reports spanned June 1, 2009 through January 1, 2013. The largest corpus of data comprised of online and print articles drawn from two of the country's largest circulation English newspapers. The first was the *Times of India* (*TOI*), the world's highest circulation English-language newspaper, with an average readership of 7.7 million per issue, and the second is the *Hindustan Times* (*HT*), with readership of 3.79 million readers (Indian Readership Survey, 2013). In addition, 20 articles from *The Hindu*, India's third-largest English-language daily, with a readership of 2.26 million, were also analyzed (Indian Readership Survey, 2013). I also explored 10 articles from a national Hindi daily, *Navbharat Times*, with a circulation of 2.58 million (Indian Readership Survey, 2013). I focused on these newspapers because they are widely read and have been historically important venues for reporting on educational issues and policymaking. Furthermore, I analyzed articles from popular news websites *IBN Live* (11 articles), *Zee News* (4 articles), *Daijiworld* (2 articles), *Outlook* (3 articles), *India Today* (14 articles), and *Tehelka* (3 articles).

I also consulted documents from two highly influential educational policy advisory bodies to the Indian government, the National Council of Educational Research and Training (N.C.E.R.T.) and the National Knowledge Commission. The N.C.E.R.T., established by the government of India in 1961, advises both state and federal levels of

government on issues related to K-12 schooling and policymaking. The documents consulted included N.C.E.R.T.'s focus group position papers on *Teaching of Indian Language*; *Teaching of English*; *Educational Technology*; *Early Childhood Education*; *Curriculum, Syllabus and Textbooks*; and *Teacher Education for Curriculum Renewal.* I also consulted reports and recommendations from the National Knowledge Commission, a committee that advises the Indian Prime Minister. These included, for example, the *National Knowledge Commission Final Report 2006-2009*, and the *Recommendations of the Working Group on Language* (2006). Both these advisory bodies have historically exerted great influence in policymaking at both the national and local levels. Furthermore, the focal students, in the broader ethnographic project of which this analysis is a sub-part, use textbooks that are modeled on N.C.E.R.T. curriculum (in my own K-12 studies in private New Delhi schools, all textbooks were designed per the N.C.E.R.T. curriculum). Finally, for this chapter, I also took into account structured and semi-structured interviews that I conducted with two professors (policymakers) at the Department of Languages at N.C.E.R.T., over a single two-hour period in late summer 2011. The questions I asked were focused on notions of English education, social equality, and globalization. All interviews were conducted in Hindi, with some code-switching with English. I also took down notes during the interviews and later transcribed (and translated) the interviews from audio-recordings.

Analytic Procedure

Analytic codes were devised prior to the start of data collection and refined in the course of data collection. The following codes were used to organize the data:
1. English Education (sub-codes: English learning, English teaching, English-medium)
2. Globalization

Primary Source	Number of sources used	Analytic code: *English Education*	Analytic code: *Globalization*
The Times of India	134	91	73
The Hindustan Times	83	67	54
The Hindu	20	14	9
Nabharat Times	10	7	4
N.C.E.R.T. documents	20	22	13
IBN Live	11	14	9
Zee News	4	4	3
Daijiworld	2	2	2
Outlook	3	4	2
India Today	14	12	6
Tehelka	3	3	2
Interviews with stakeholders	2	14	11

Table 1. Occurrence of codes across primary sources.

Different codes were assigned to the various texts, depending on pre-decided coding criteria. The table above notes every occurrence of these codes across the data corpus. From these texts, I selected representative text samples illuminating English language ideologies. As is clearly visible from Table 1, ideas around globalization often accompanied discourses and ideologies around English. Selected texts were analyzed in detail, and the analyses illuminated emerging themes, which structure the discussion section.

One final methodological point is to be noted here before transitioning to the analysis. My personal background, as: an Indian who studied in the Indian K-12 system at a private English-medium school (under the N.C.E.R.T. curriculum); a US academic; and as someone who enjoys the kinds of multiple opportunities engendered by processes referred to as globalization have influenced the nature of the data collected and analysis conducted, and provided an additional source of reflection on the data.

DATA ANALYSIS

In this analysis, I argue that centering institutions function through discourses arising from courts, policymaking agencies, and the media; and, through the force of *doxa*, they naturalize and normativize in individual and collective (national) imaginations specific notions around English and its relationship to globalization.

Courts: On July 21, 2009, the Supreme Court of India quashed a Karnataka[7] government directive requiring that the medium of instruction in all (state-run and private) primary[8] schools be Kannada, the official and administrative language of the state (Press Trust of India, 2009a). In its decision, the Bench claimed that without English, students "are unable to get even clerical posts" (Press Trust of India, 2009a). Further, the Chief Justice noted, "It is very easy to say that children should be taught in mother tongues, but the question is how to survive in this world" (Press Trust of India, 2009b). The Bench further warned that without English skills, urban/rural inequalities would be further exacerbated, since "students from villages…[could not] compete with their peers in urban areas" (Press Trust of India, 2009a). In fact, as the Chief Justice put it: "The best way out of this controversy would be to make all choices available but let the parents decide. Today private schools are charging Rs 30000-40000 but still parents are crazy to get their children admitted to English schools" (Press Trust of India, 2009b). The fact that the Court's dismissed as "easy to say" the state government's argument that, according to research, mother-tongue instruction offered greater benefits for young learners reflects that its priorities lie elsewhere. Instead, the option of English-medium learning was framed as more important. The verdict—described as "sane words of practical wisdom" by prominent Indian journalist John B. Monteiro (2012)—closely mirrors influential national discourses about English learning in India, as this analysis will reveal.

National policy: The apex court's *weltanschauung* is echoed by the opening statement of the *National Focus Group Position Paper* prepared by the N.C.E.R.T., entitled "The Teaching of English" (N.C.E.R.T., 2006). At the very outset, the document identified English as "a global language in a multilingual country," and asserted:

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[7] A southern Indian state with 61 million inhabitants (Census of India, 2011).
[8] Here, primary refers to grades one through four.

English is in India today a symbol of people's aspirations for quality in education and a fuller participation in national and international life. Its colonial origins now forgotten or irrelevant, its initial role in independent India, tailored to higher education (as a "library language", a "window on the world"), now felt to be insufficiently inclusive socially and linguistically, the current status of English stems from its overwhelming presence on the world stage and the reflection of this in the national arena…The visible impact of this presence of English is that it is today being demanded by *everyone* at the very *initial* stage of schooling. [emphases in original]

Several of the claims made here are problematic, including: the idea of English as a global language; the notion that English is emblematic of a "fuller participation" in domestic and international life; and that the colonial heritage of English is "forgotten or irrelevant." These are complex claims, and I will problematize these later.

Interview with stakeholders. Below is an extract from an interview with Prof. Hari of N.C.E.R.T., on the role of English in Indian education. The text contains code-switching between Hindi and English, and the Hindi is translated by the author and represented in italics:

English is like *lingua franca*, [introduced] from the 1ˢᵗ class onwards. It is not a foreign language; *it is our own language, in society our people study it.* The knowledge *of* English *is for knowing the world. It is a* global phenomenon; *it is for bringing people together*…[N.C.E.R.T.] books are not made with elites in mind. *The children's world expands with the language they learn, with* Internet, TV. Globalization attracts *everyone, everyone has* mobiles…*but it varies in the level or extent.*

Prof. Hari makes several interesting moves here. English, e.g., is configured "like *lingua franca*," and it is claimed that Indian school children study it from the very start of schooling. The "ownership" of English is also notable, particularly in its articulation in Hindi. Furthermore, English is constructed as a global language and said to enable knowledge about the world. Furthermore, note that the statement that students' world grows "with the language they learn, with Internet, TV" invokes a particularly privileged space. And while he offered a caveat at the end, it was more as a side note than an important qualification. These discursive moves will be unpacked in detail later.

The media: Resonating and reaffirming many of these discourses is the national media. Urdu scholar Azeezull Baig, e.g., is quoted in Outlook magazine calling English the "language of globalisation" ("English, Language of Globalisation, Edging out Urdu," 2010). In a *TOI* article, Prof. Yasmeen Lukmani of University of Mumbai, stated: "There is a huge amount of English in the country now. Everybody knows a fair amount of English" (Chhapia, 2011). The article was written in connection with an Educational Testing Service (E.T.S.) study that showed Indians fared better than "native English speakers" in the Test Of English as a Foreign Language (T.O.E.F.L.). A 2011 *HT* editorial entitled "A very native accent," covering the same E.T.S. study, noted: "Indians have…co-opted a foreign tongue [English] as their own." It continued, one can "assume that residents of the Indian subcontinent have never considered the white man's language to be a burden at all." This

last part of the statement invoked Rudyard Kipling's controversial poem, *The White Man's Burden*, drawing on British imperial history (see Brantlinger, 2007), a point I return to later.

Influential journalist and commentator Vir Sanghvi (2011) noted, along similar lines, in an *HT* blog post, that while Indians used to configure English "as the language of the colonial oppressors…[b]y the dawn of the 21st century, however, the primitive anti-English position was dead". He continued:

> …we took the line that English was our ace in the hole. It was India's competitive advantage in the globalised world economy…Today, the old anti-English agitations are relics of the past. English remains the language of the elite and as more and more people enter the middle class, they teach their children to speak English. In contrast, no non-native Hindi speaker makes any effort to force his children to learn Hindi on the grounds that a mastery of the language is the key to success in the modern world.

English is thus described as an asset for India, while anti-English movements are considered "relics." While he conceded that English continues to be an elite language, in the linguistic landscape illustrated by Sanghvi (2011), all (globalizing) roads lead to English.

Another 2010 editorial from *HT*, "Speaking the right language," also reaffirmed these views. The editorial praised Union Minister Kapil Sibal's decision to add Mandarin to the Central Board of Secondary Education curriculum. After stating that "most Indians… seem to identify far more with more distant lands like the US" [than China], the editorial asserted: "[t]he average Indian connects far more with things English than anything in the neighbourhood." Another two sentences from the editorial clarifies these perspectives still further:

> India has been the beneficiary of having had English as a universal language, despite the efforts of many leaders to impose vernacular languages on us. States like West Bengal have suffered hugely because of this insular approach. It makes sense in a globalised world to enable our people to learn as many international languages as possible.

The description of English as a "universal language" and an "international language" is akin to the moves outlined earlier. Additionally, vernacular languages are characterized as impositions. Set in sharp contrast with the benefits accrued by English are the attempts by politicians to foist local languages on "us," a strategy labeled as "insular."

This brief sampling of texts reveals how a chorus of voices in the media, thus, links English and globalization in totalizing ways that ignore internal diversities.

DISCUSSION

Themes: Analysis of the data revealed a variety of discursive patterns, which I discuss here along thematic lines. The themes highlight a range of discursive strands crafting a particular view of the circulation of English in India.

The globality of English.

One of the most prominent discursive patterns to emerge in the analysis was the unproblematic framing of English as a "global" language. The document The Teaching of English (N.C.E.R.T.**,** 2006), e.g., began by labeling English as "a global language in a multilingual country." In addition to discursively offsetting English against the Indian vernaculars, it affirmed English's "global" nature without any qualifications. It further contended that English signified Indians' desires for "a fuller participation in national and international life," but, again, did not elaborate what that participation entailed, for whom, and under what conditions. It also implied that it was the importance of English on the "world stage" and its domestic manifestation that imbued value to English within India. However, there was, again, no unpacking of that relationship or questioning of what that involved. Therefore, while India and the world are found to be implicated in each other in the document, the contours of that implication do not face any examination.

Prof. Hari also commented on the global nature of English. He asserted, e.g., that English opened up the possibility to "know the world." Several important questions arise here. What (kind of) "knowing" is being indexed here? In what ways is it made (only) possible through English? Note that he labeled English a "global phenomenon," one able to unite people. The children's world, he further claimed, expanded with the learning of English. While this clearly echoes colonial discourses (see Viswanathan, 1989), it is unclear whether he does so in a conscious manner. A possibility that arises here is that colonial discourses about English have been appropriated and recast as globalization imperatives to provide a continuing and crucial rationale for English in India.

Sanghvi (2011) also emphasized the link between English and globalization: he credited English with giving Indians an edge in a "globalised world economy." The mastery of English, he further claimed, was "key to success in the modern world." What remained unquestioned was, which Indians are being invoked in this "globalised world economy" and the "modern world"? Moreover, what are the parameters of success and to whom do they apply? The *HT* editorial, "Speaking the right language" (2010) also connected the learning of English to globalization. After labeling English a "universal language," the editorial noted that "[i]t [made] sense in a globalised world to enable our people to learn as many international languages as possible." Again, this invites several questions. How is globality constructed? Which groups are indexed as part of these "global" or "universal" contexts? Who does "our people" index? What makes a language "international"? Who has access to learning different "international" languages in India? These questions are important to consider. It is clear that while the notion of English as a global language is pervasive, there is little, if any, problematization of what exactly that signifies.

English as economic imperative.

Another recurrent pattern was the framing of English as an economic imperative. The Supreme Court verdict, e.g., framed the learning of English as a fundamentally economic issue. In its decision, the Bench asserted that without English, students "are unable to get even clerical posts" (Press Trust of India, 2009a). Note that while "clerical posts" are invoked as basic jobs for Indians, rural agriculture still accounts for half of all employment opportunities in India (CRISIL, 2010). Which workforce was thus being indexed here? That is, who was being imagined in it? The comment, in fact, demonstrates a class-based, urban-centric perspective on Indians' employment opportunities. Furthermore,

28

note that for the Chief Justice, learning English is linked to children's very survival. His comment merits closer scrutiny. What are, e.g., the implications of the country's chief justice configuring an elite, minority language as key to survival for Indian children? Moreover, he averred that parents were willing to spend large sums of money (Rs 30000-40000, or $517-$690) for their children's admission into English-medium schools. The Chief Justice's perspective of the ordinary parent is thus remarkably skewed, since, as noted earlier, more than three quarters of Indians are reported to subsist on Rs. 20 (or $0.34) a day.

Prof. Hari's comments reflected similar perspectives. When he claimed that English is introduced in schools from the first grade, he was referring to a sub-group of Indian children who experience English-medium schooling from the very beginning, as the Seventh All-India School Education Survey (N.C.E.R.T., 2007) showed (millions of Indian children, moreover, do not or cannot attend school at all: see Sancheti & Sudhir, 2009). And while he contended that "everyone has mobiles" and spoke of the educational possibilities of the Internet, these are still only accessible to certain classes of Indians; therefore, this positions him clearly within elite worldviews. The economic imperative is also salient in Sanghvi's (2011) post: he called English "India's competitive advantage in the globalised world economy." While admitting that it remained a "language of the elite," he affirmed that those in the growing middle class now "teach their children to speak English." The following questions are important to consider, in light of these perspectives: How do Indians differentially experience and participate in the globalized world economy? How is English acquisition organized across different socio-economic levels? The *HT* editorial, "Speaking the right language" (2010), reaffirmed Sanghvi's (2011) views. It linked West Bengal's ailing economy to the pro-vernacular approach adopted by a previous government. English is thus consistently fashioned as an economic imperative, though these discourses ignore questions such as in what ways, for whom, and how.

English as a colonial/foreign language.

Several references to the colonial and foreign inheritance of English emerged within these discourses. The Teaching of English report (N.C.E.R.T., 2006), e.g., contended that the "colonial origins [of English are] now forgotten or irrelevant." Sanghvi (2011) similarly noted that in the new millennium, Indians have moved away from the "primitive" position linking English to the former colonizers. The use of the word "primitive," of course, also invokes old colonial discourses. That "primitive" position, he claimed, was now "dead," arrayed among "relics of the past." This perspective on English renders invisible (i.e., ideologically erases) several anti-English movements of recent times that have resulted from unease with English's colonial associations (see, e.g, Ramanathan, 2005a; Sonntag, 2003), and runs counter to my own findings in Chapter II.

Beyond losing its colonial stain, English has, according to these discourses, also shed its foreignness. Prof. Hari, e.g., asserted that English was "not a foreign language; it is our own language." The *HT* editorial, "A very native accent" (2011) echoed this belief, averring that Indians "have co-opted" English (note also the resonance of colonial discourse in the use of the word "native" in the title). Despite the purported "co-option", we see that there are barely hidden tensions: English is described as a "foreign tongue" and "the white man's," and in addition, the editorial taps into British imperial history evoked by Kipling's poem. There is thus clearly an interesting paradox at work here; English is simultaneously described

as one's own and the "white man's language." This brings to the surface latent anxieties that lurk in these discourses.

One possible explanation for the rejection of English's colonial origins and foreignness is that it is a result of elites' defensiveness and discomfort with the colonial legacy of English, since it also implicates them in the production and reproduction of their privileged positions within Indian social structures. By marking English as "Indian" and by unmooring it from imperial history, elites' access to English can be cast as less problematic than it has been historically. In this manner, access to and knowledge of English can be constructed as less a signpost to existing bastions of power than to the possibility of socio-economic mobility in an era of globalization.

Speaking for Others.

These discourses also manifested a totalizing vision of Indians. To begin with, Indian parents, as a group, are positioned as strongly pro-English in a globalizing era. The Chief Justice, e.g., commented that even though private schools charge exorbitantly high fees, "parents are crazy" to admit their children to English-medium schools. As I remarked earlier, while the English-medium "craze" manifests widely, the fees cited by the Chief Justice are beyond the ability for most Indian parents to pay. There is difference between desire and ability, a point that remains unnoted. The Teaching of English report (N.C.E.R.T., 2006) also noted that English "is today being demanded by *everyone* at the very *initial* stage of schooling." Prof. Hari also noted that it is taught "from the first class onwards." However, as the Seventh All-India School Education Survey (N.C.E.R.T., 2007) found, only a minority of Indian children are able to access English at early levels. In addition, Sanghvi (2011) asserted that as a greater number of Indians entered the middle class, they imparted English to their children, and that "no non-native Hindi speaker makes any effort to force his children to learn Hindi on the grounds that a mastery of the language is the key to success in the modern world." These statements require unpacking. The middle class, for example, is a rather broad category, denoting people across a very wide socio-economic spectrum. It is thus important to consider: who in the middle class acquires English? Is there equal instruction and access to English across the middle class? How is mastery of English defined? How is success defined? These statements taken together reveal language ideologies that are predicated upon a particularized, elitist, and homogenizing view of Indian parents.

These discourses also rendered invisible the acute disparities that are characteristic of broader Indian society. The Chief Justice, e.g., claimed that English learning was a question of children's survival in the world. This is a problematic move because it is not merely English that guarantees success. Success is predicated on access to and knowledge of particular kinds of English, acquired through particular kinds of education, facilitated by specific schooling opportunities. It is not a simple question of "learning English."

The Teaching of English report (N.C.E.R.T., 2006) also engaged in a similar discursive exercise. Within India, e.g., English is referred to as signifying "people's aspirations" for superior education and greater involvement on the domestic and international stage. Further, it noted that *"everyone"* (italics in original) desired English, from the very start of schooling. The Teaching of English report (N.C.E.R.T., 2006) thus implicates *everyone* in the quest for English. Prof. Hari also offered similar views. He claimed that English "is our own language, in society our people study it." The "our own" and "our

people" is unclear, since only a minority study or know the language. Moreover, the "level or extent," of globalization, introduced as a caveat, remains unpacked, and we are afforded little sense of the vast differences characteristic of Indian society. Furthermore, his statement that children's universes expand through language learning and the internet ignored the wide disparity in access to English and the Internet across socio-economic divides. Consider also Prof. Lukmani's statements quoted earlier, that everybody knows some English; this, as we have seen, is untrue. Here again we witness the crafting of an India where English is portrayed as having far wider circulation than it actually does. Those who are not English speakers are negated, or ideologically erased, from the imagination of the Indian nation.

The *HT* editorial "A very native accent" also participates in ideological erasure, claiming that "Indians have…co-opted a foreign tongue [English] as their own". Clearly, the Indians who can claim to have co-opted English would be a minority. What is also remarkable there is the presentation of T.O.E.F.L. takers, a small, privileged circle of Indian students aspiring to study abroad, as being representative of "Indians" or the unmarked "residents of the Indian subcontinent," an even broader category. The following questions arise: What kind of co-option? By whom? Who is being imagined in the community comprising "residents of the Indian sub-continent"?

Sanghvi's (2011) post also raises related questions. He wrote, e.g., "we took the line that English was our ace in the hole": who is the "we" being indexed here? Who comprises the "our"? While he does mention the elites and middle classes, there is no mention of the lower socio-economic classes, their desires, their different realities. What of them? Finally, let us return to the *HT* editorial, "Speaking the right language." The claims that "most Indians… seem to identify far more with more distant lands like the US," and that "[t]he average Indian connects far more with things English than anything in the neighbourhood" cast aside many Indians' shared historical, cultural, and linguistic ties with countries such as Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka. The conception of the "average Indian" that emerges from these discourses is thus, again, a particular, privileged, and elitist one.

The vernacular.

These discourses also revealed an ill-concealed dismissal or disdain of vernacular languages. The Chief Justice, e.g., argued that English was important for children's very survival, while blocking an initiative that required the use of Kannada in elementary schooling. This highlights the ideology that vernacular languages are not sufficient for survival and that English is all-important for schooling. Sanghvi's (2011) assertion about the importance of English for the middle classes as well as his confident dismissal of the role of Hindi for them bespeaks disdain for the vernacular languages, specifically Hindi. It is interesting to note here that not only does Sanghvi (2011) perpetuate homogenizing views of Indians' language ideologies, he also ignores the important issue of Hindi's hegemonic sway within India. The *HT* editorial, "Speaking the right language," aligned with Sansghvi's (2011) perspectives. There, English was upheld as a "universal language," and the state imposition of vernacular languages configured as an "insular" move. Furthermore, it claimed, in a globalized world, people should "learn as many international languages as possible." It is not clear what role is then assigned to Indian vernaculars and their speakers. How are, additionally, local forms of multilingualism to be valued? What kinds of assets do they offer, and what is their socio-cultural and economic valence in globalizing India? These questions need to be asked given India's complex linguistic context.

The discourses examined above thus reflect language ideologies that simultaneously promote English and undermine local languages in the context of a globalizing India. A point that bears further examination is how these discourses employ, recast, and appropriate colonial language ideologies about the superiority of English and the inferiority or primitiveness of vernacular languages (see, e.g., Macaulay, 1972). These perceptions and ideologies need to be closely and urgently examined given the complexity and breadth of India's linguistic heritage, and India's evolving landscape.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The central project of this chapter was to excavate institutional discourses about English learning in India. The analysis revealed that there was a "homogenization," "unformisation," and an "orienting towards…a centre" (Blommaert, 2005, p.75) in the construction of the circulation of English learning, as well as in the related construction of globalization. The centering force of institutions, as predicted, veered toward homogeny and uniformity. This homogenization, I showed, was accomplished through the enactment of ideological erasure of difference (Irvine & Gal, 2000) in the imagination of the community of English speakers in India and the globalized Indian citizen. This resulted in the discursive modification and homogenization, instead of representation (see Spolsky & Shohamy, 2000), of beliefs about English and its learning. Because these centering institutions are influential in the nation, their role in the discursive reinforcement of systems of power need to be highlighted, analyzed, and problematized.

What are some of the specific consequences of this kind of discursive fashioning? First, these discourses mask marked socio-economic inequalities that define India today. The possibilities, desires, and struggles for all Indians become falsely unitized through these discourses. This enables the discursive illusion of a more homogenous, equal society than there exists. Second, these discourses claim that the acquisition of English means equal opportunities for all. However, learning English alone—especially the kind of "scholastic" English many Indian children acquire (see Chapter IV)—does not provide an equal platform for all children. Such discourses, therefore, render invisible the many other factors that are essential for "success" in India. These discourses also render invisible the differential access to English and quality schooling. The focus is thus shifted to the possibilities arising from and desire for English and English education, rather than on literacy and the quality of education available or accessible across different socio-economic strata. Not all English-medium schooling, e.g., is the same; the quality of English education varies widely across the socio-economic spectrum. Importantly, these kinds of discourses help fuel the growth of the private English-medium education industry, which exacerbates existing educational inequities (see Chapter IV). Third, these discourses silence anti-colonial resentments by constructing them as irrelevant or in the past, again enacting ideological erasure. Anti-colonial anxieties and tensions, related to the understanding of both globalization forces as neo-imperialistic and English as a colonial inheritance, continue to exist today. However, because of the language ideological frames employed, these anxieties are buried or rendered invisible. This particular aspect, one that denies the charged residual memories of the Indian colonial past, needs to face further scrutiny, especially because they run counter to some Indians' memories and beliefs. Fourth, these discourses evince problematic ideologies about vernacular languages. Unfortunately, while only a minority of Indians speak English, almost all higher education is conducted in it (Annamalai, 2005). This is one of the more pressing

problems of Indian higher education, and these kinds of discourses allow for the production and perpetuation of inequalities. Instead of encouraging investment in vernacular schooling at various levels, such discourses make an elite higher educational system even more exclusive. For these reasons, these discourses must be problematized and contested in scholarship, in the hope that India's children may soon achieve a "fuller participation" in society.

CHAPTER III

Situating English in Local Language Ideologies

"[A] definition of language is always, implicitly or explicitly, a definition of human beings in the world" (Williams, 1977, 21).

INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, I examined a variety of oral and written texts in order to illuminate language ideologies about English typical to some key macro-institutional discourses within India. I showed how these discourses circulated particular beliefs about English, in ways that: 1) ideologically erased difference in the imagination of the national community of English speakers and learners; 2) depicted English learning and dissemination that was at odds with on-the-ground realities; and 3) ignored the crucial role of English in elite formation and the production and perpetuation of educational inequalities. Furthermore, the chapter shed light on how in such discourses, globalization served as a principal rationale and incentive for learning English, in ways that manifested only a particular, privileged, and partial worldview. This chapter provides a counter-narrative to those discourses in the local context. It zooms in to the micro-level and investigates beliefs about English among the focal children at an *anathashram* (orphanage). It brings to the surface the ideas children hold about English and its role in their lives. These beliefs are excavated through the close linguistic analysis of four extracts of data. The data comprise two *chutkule* (funny anecdotes) told by focal children and two extracts from interviews with the focal children. The analysis, using the language ideological perspective, unearths ideologies that stand in variance to those manifested in Indian macro-institutional discourses. Beyond underscoring the discursive disconnect between local and broader language ideologies, this chapter troubles reductive and simplistic institutional conceptualizations about the circulation of English within India.

I begin this chapter with a brief literature review that theoretically situates the project. The analytical lens I employ in this chapter is that of language ideology, which offers a powerful perspective for examining beliefs about languages, their socio-cultural implication, as well as the role of power in making sense of these ideologies. I then analyze four different texts and illuminate language ideologies that configure English as foreign, urban, complex, and with a particular kind of mobility. The ideologies that are brought to light complicate, contest, and resist the language ideologies manifested in the institutional level.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter excavates focal children's beliefs about languages, in particular those around English. In order to unpack these beliefs, I employ the concept of language ideologies. An influential definition of language ideologies was offered by Silverstein (1979), who configured them as "sets of beliefs about language articulated by users as a rationalization or justification of perceived language structure and use" (p. 193). To put it differently, it entails members' views rationalizing their own or others' language (use). Language ideologies may alternatively be understood as commonsense ways of thinking about languages (see Irvine, 1989; Irvine & Gal, 2000; Kroskrity, 2000; Rumsey, 1990; Silverstein, 1979, Woolard & Schieffelin, 1994; Woolard 1998). As Blackledge (2008) has noted, they involve "the values,

practices and beliefs associated with language use by speakers, and the discourse that constructs values and beliefs at state, institutional, national and global levels" (p. 29). The analytical concept springs primarily from the *Ethnography of Speaking* (Hymes, 1962) tradition, which itself arose from anthropological inquiry (Irvine, n.d.). While the concept has existed in a variety of forms in different disciplines, it was just around twenty years ago that the systematic approach to language ideologies began to emerge (Woolard & Schieffelin, 1994). And while the study of "language ideology," "linguistic ideology" and "ideology of language" among scholars entails a similar analytical terrain, the differences in beliefs about what counts as data in such investigations influences the selection of methodology and the analysis.

The concept of language ideologies offers a fecund analytical perspective in making sense of how beliefs about language are socially implicated (Woolard, 1992). Language ideologies "envision and enact connections between aspects of languages and other arenas of social life," and elucidate how these linkages are institutionally produced and socially realized (Gal, 1998, p. 323)(see also, Heath, 1989). Beyond this, they are also media through which the dialectical relationship between members' socio-cultural lifeworlds and discursive experiences are manifested (Kroskrity, 2000). Language ideologies are necessarily socio-culturally situated and contextualized, and crucial for the formation of social and cultural identities (Kroskrity, 2004; Silverstein, 1992; Wortham, 2008). That is, they can only be understood in the context of their socio-cultural circulation, and are also linked in important ways to members' sense of self and others. They also reflect the ways in which group members make sense of differences within and across languages, "and map those understandings onto people, events, and activities that are significant to them" (Irvine & Gal, 2000, p. 35). In this manner, language differences become indices of difference at socio-cultural levels. Importantly, as Schieffelin & Doucet (1994) pointed out, language ideologies are sites where notions about "'self/other' or 'us/them'" (p. 177) can form. In addition to indexing difference without, they also manifest internal differences (Hill, 1998; Kroskrity, 2000). They are "multiple because of the plurality of meaningful social divisions (class, gender, clan, elites, generations, and so on)...that have the potential to produce divergent perspectives expressed as indices of group membership" (Kroskrity, 2004, p. 503). Furthermore, they are especially significant where regional and national ideologies stand at variance, and locals must negotiate competing beliefs about languages (Moore, 2008), a point that is particularly salient within the complex, multilingual socio-cultural matrix of India. Beyond being signifiers of difference, language ideologies are also sites that encode ideas about what is appropriate to articulate in language. As Mertz (1998) noted, in the course of linguistic interactions, cultural members "draw on and create ideologies about language, thereby developing linguistic worldviews or epistemologies that guide them in deciding how to speak and what to say" (p. 151)(see also, Woolard & Schieffelin, 1994). In this manner, McGroarty (2010) offered, language ideologies manifest and reflect "idealized evaluations and judgments of appropriate language forms and functions" (p. 3). Language ideologies thus fulfill one of the fundamental roles of language, "providing contextual cues about who speaks, in what mode, on which topic, and under what circumstances" (Blommaert, 2006, p. 512).

The term ideology is a historically charged concept, and taps into notions around power, authority, and control as implicated in social space (Eagleton, 2007; Irvine, 1989; Woolard, 1998). Scholars utilize the concept of language ideology influenced by the historical trajectory of the term ideology, and demonstrate "a commitment to address the relevance of power relations to the nature of cultural forms and to ask how essential meanings about

language are socially produced as effective and powerful" (Woolard and Schieffelin, 1994, p. 58). An important consideration in discussions of power, of course, is how such ideologies are formed. Blommaert (1999) asserted that they are created by "a variety of institutional, semi-institutional and everyday practices: campaigns, regimentation in social reproduction systems such as schools, administration, army, advertisement, publications (the media, literature, art, music) and so on" (p. 10). An example of work that has explored the intersection of language ideology and power is Kroskrity (2004), who demonstrated through his work with the Arizona Tewa the ways in which language ideologies may be constructed in the interests of specific groups, particularly that of elites. These ideologies, he showed, were normativized through group members' complicity in a variety of ways. This is not, however, to provide a coherent picture of ideologies; as stressed earlier, language ideologies are internally plural and diverse. They are better imagined as ideological *positionings* (Irvine, n.d.), and "rarely monolithic, nor always stable" (Gal, 1998, p. 320). Language ideologies can "simultaneously distort or misrepresent, and shape or reflect" language use, activity, and practice, and as a concept offers critical insight into how power is processed via "ideological reflection and refraction" (Mertz, 1998, p. 151). Language ideologies, therefore, are crucial for two core reasons, as Gal (1998) outlined:

> Clearly, their logic and relation to other ideas warrant attention, just as do ideas in any cultural domain. But because they participate in the semiotic processes through which ideas become naturalized, essentialized, universalized, or commensensical, ideas about language are implicated in the process by which any cultural ideas gain the discursive authority to become dominant. (p. 322)

In the analysis I conduct below, I bring to the surface language ideologies present in children's narrative of *chutkule* and interview extracts. While the *chutkule* and interview exchanges belong to two different discourse genres, they are examined together as an analytic unit representing local discourse, illuminating language ideologies about English (see, e.g., Lee, 2010). The *chutkule* and interview extracts function as "semiotic processes" that shed light on the pervasive ideologies about English at play in the *anathashram*. In addition to elucidating local beliefs about English, they also illuminate ideas about Indian vernacular languages. The ideologies reflected by children's voices, I demonstrate, contests the language ideologies previously uncovered in institutional discourses.

This illustrates the internal diversity of language ideologies, and also hones in on an important site of resistance to institutional language ideologies: the "local" discursive context. Before turning to the methods section, one final note. In the course of this investigation, I have reflected deeply on my own language ideologies and the ways in which they have framed, informed, and shaped the collection and analysis of data. I grew up 13 miles away in a similar linguistic landscape to that inhabited by the focal children; my socio-economic world, however, was starkly different. As a result, while I speak many of the same tongues, I bring in shared and divergent beliefs about English and the Indian vernaculars. My linguistic and socio-cultural history has thus acted as an additional source of reflection on the data.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Despite India's richly multilingual context and the varying attitudes toward languages held by its citizens, the number of qualitative educational studies devoted to Indians' beliefs about

languages is surprisingly small. Among recent research around the topic of English and the vernaculars figure the works of Groff (2010); LaDousa (2005); Mohanty, Panda, & Pal (2010); Ramanathan (2005a, 2005b), and Vaish (2008a, 2008b). Vaish (2008a), to take one example, explored "language attitudes" of socio-economically disadvantaged female high school students in New Delhi. In that work, she offered that the younger generation of Indians "no longer see[s] English through a postcolonial lens. Rather their attitudes are shaped by the globalising economy which impacts their lifestyle choices and personality" (p. 198). Ramanathan (2005b) teased out two different nationalistic ideologies about English shaping vernacular-medium language teachers' pedagogical practices within a college setting in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. Her analysis elucidated how instructors employed different aspects of these ideologies pedagogically in resistance to the hegemony of English. While the number of studies has yet to catch up with the complexity and scale of language ideological concerns in India, the trends in contemporary scholarship have largely taken shape around the debate highlighted by the accounts of Vaish (2008a) and Ramanathan (2005b) cited above, namely, the place of vernaculars alongside English.

Ideologies around English and Hindi, the two principal hegemonic languages in the Indian context, receive significant attention in this scholarship as well as in the wider literature on Indian education. Vaish (2008a), e.g, found that Hindi is largely "associated with being Indian and Hindu," whereas English is imbued with an international flavor (p. 214). This idea resonates with Kachru's (1986) earlier work which spoke of English's perceived "neutrality" within the Indian context, averring that it was not associated with any religious or ethnic faction"[9] (p. 9). Vanishree (2011) reiterated this point, noting that in areas where there is resistance to Hindi, English has sometimes been portrayed as the "culturally neutral" language, or as the language of democratic promise. The notion of English rising above the boundaries that confine the vernaculars appears often in the wider literature on people's beliefs about languages. LaDousa (2005), e.g., asserted that "English, unlike Hindi, is not associated with any particular region but, rather, with urban, educated, upper-class people" (p. 482). Chand (2011) pointed out how the strong North/South linguistic divide fuels particular beliefs about speakers of English, and how the divisions within the North also entail language hierarchies. In the educational context, Ramanathan's (2005b) work, e.g., illuminated the stigmatization of Hindi-medium background students because of prevailing attitudes towards Indian vernaculars and those who receive instruction mediated through them.

Two other critical aspects that often emerge in the broader literature touching on language ideologies in India are, on the one hand, the association of English with the language of the elites and, on the other hand, its importance for the Indian workforce. Kachru (1986), e.g., asserted, "English is associated with a small and elite group" (p. 9). Further, he noted, "it has been perceived as the language of power and opportunity, free of the limitations that the ambitious attribute to the native languages" (p. 9). Another prevailing belief about English is that it is critical for better employment opportunities (see, e.g., Faust & Nagar, 2001; Mallikarjun, 2001; Sheorey, 1999; Vaish, 2008a). Thus, although limited in its circulation, English aptitude is highly coveted. In India, socio-economically disadvantaged communities in particular have been making increasing demands for English because of their recognition of its role as a gatekeeper to higher education and higher-paying jobs (see, Hornberger & Vaish, 2009; Kam, Kumar, Jain, Mathur, & Canny, 2009; Ramanathan, 2005a; Vaish (2008a). Vaish (2008a) has noted, e.g., "English has the power to leverage [the poor]

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[9] It should be kept in mind that English has, however, been associated with Christianity in the Indian context.

out of the disadvantaged class into elite professional and social classes" (p. 214). Both aspects of English, then, converge to make it appear indispensable for social mobility. Within the backdrop of English's importance within India's educational and economic systems, this chapter will home in on local resistances, conflicts, and tensions with English's past, present, and future.

METHOD

Context

The anathashram: The *anathashram* was situated in an *ashram* (a Hindu religious commune) in a quiet residential area in Noida, in the northern Indian state of Uttar Pradesh. The head priest/administrator, two assistants, and the Board of Directors (appointed by *ashram* headquarters in the eastern state of West Bengal) managed the *ashram*. In any given year, the *anathashram* was home to a revolving population of between 15 to 25 children, generally between the ages of five and fourteen. The five focal children selected were between nine and twelve years of age. They received room, board, and/or education free of charge or at subsidized costs. The children spoke Bengali or Bihari as their mother tongue, and Hindi as a second or third language. The five focal children were selected on the basis of several, pre-decided criteria, including that they: had to have been residing at the orphanage for a minimum of six months prior to the start of data collection, were five or older, and had rural backgrounds (i.e., that they had spent part of their lives in rural India, and had immediate family in rural areas). The decision to focus on five children was motivated by a desire to arrive at a "thick description" (Geertz, 1973) of the language and literacy contexts given the time constraints. Monday through Saturday, the *anathashram* schedule entailed morning prayers, school, lunch, playtime, evening prayers, evening study period, dinner, and, finally, bedtime. On Sundays, the children did many chores, but were allowed to watch some TV and call their parents or family members, and they also spent time drawing and painting. Although they lived in what was labeled an *anathashram*, not all children were "true orphans" (Mintz, 2004, p. 157), i.e., entirely parentless. Some of the children had two living parents, and the rest had single parents, guardians, or access to family networks. The children's parents or guardians were all migrant workers, having arrived from rural parts of West Bengal, Bihar, or Nepal to the North Delhi "slums" a few years prior to the start of the data collection.

Data Corpus

My overall engagement with the site spanned four years (2007-2011). The data for this study included more than 150 hours at the *anathashram* at 4-6 hours per week, from December 2010 through August 2011. While there were broader research questions framing the larger project prior to the start of data collection, these questions were refined and narrowed in focus as the data collection process commenced and continued. The data collection process entailed participant observation supplemented with video-recording, structured and semi-structured interview exchanges, and informal conversations to provide depth and detail (Patton, 1980). The data were principally collected through participant observation during evening *arati* (prayers) (from 7:00pm to 7.30pm) in the Kali temple and evening study periods (from 8:00 pm to 9:30pm) in the upstairs or basement children's dorms. Furthermore, I conducted audiotaped and videotaped structured and semi-structured

interviews and held informal conversations with the focal children, *anathashram* administrator and the two assistants. Written artifacts such as *anathashram* records, focal children's reading material and researcher's fieldnotes also inform this analysis. Fieldnotes documenting the process of data collection were typed up chronologically in a continuous Microsoft Word document in Hindi, English, and Bengali. Audio and video data were integrated into the same document, marked as separate sections, in the form of extended summaries of the data content. The Hindi and Bengali sections of the fieldnotes were accompanied by loose translations and short English notes in order to make the corpus more easily and readily accessible through English search parameters.

The first two extracts were taken from events during which children told *chutkule*. *Chutkule* (*tʃʊʈkʊleː*), plural of *chutkula* (*tʃʊʈkʊlaː*), means "jokes" or "funny anecdotes" in Hindi. The focal children told *chutkule* in a variety of formats: some were one-liners; some a few sentences long; and still others were elaborate anecdotes (such as those reproduced below). *Chutkule* were narrated by the children in different contexts, in school and at the *anathashram*, generally outside of the purview of adult authority figures (a category to which I was largely viewed as an exception). They were typically shared among peers during leisure periods and breaks from studying. Usually they were narrated in Bengali and Hindi; only exceptionally rarely were they told in English. Additionally, code switching between languages was a typical feature of these tellings. The third extract in this analysis was drawn from an interview exchange with two focal children during evening study period observations at the *anathashram*. The fourth captured a spontaneous interaction with a focal child also during evening study period observations at the *anathashram*. All these extracts derived from detailed annotated transcripts (in Hindi, English, and Bengali) of videotaped and audiotaped data. While both the Hindi and Bengali spoken by the focal children demonstrated strong dialectical and regional influences (from Bihari, Nepali, and Punjabi, among others), I have preserved these in the transliteration but not in the translation.

Analytic Procedure

The variety of methods employed and range of data collected allowed for the triangulation of data. Analytic codes (all in English) were both developed prior to the start of data collection and refined in the course of data collection. The codes included: "beliefs about languages," "English language ideologies," "English learning," and "globalization." After the coding of the entire data corpus was completed, data that corresponded to these codes were examined more closely and mined for emergent themes illuminating English language ideologies in particular. Representative extracts of data were isolated and then analyzed in detail to highlight prevailing views and beliefs about English. Transcriptions of the data involved transliterations, translation, and glossing of the Hindi, Bengali, and Sanskrit by the author.

The internal validity of this study derived from longitudinal data collection, informant interviews, participant observation, and researcher self-monitoring (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984). Potential ethical issues arising in data collection and analyses include biases inherent in interviews, pitfalls of participant observation, the researcher's own implication and influence in contexts of interaction and observation, and researcher bias (Diener & Crandall, 1978; Kelman, 1982; Merriam, 1988). These have been minimized here through prolonged periods of data collection, informant interviews, triangulation of data through multiple sources, and reflexivity regarding my own complex positioning within the

setting. My personal history as an Indian, a New Delhi native (where I spent the first twenty-two years of my life), a married Hindu Bengali woman in her thirties, playing the multiple roles of *didi* (Bengali, "elder sister") and researcher, a product of the Indian K-12 system and ensconced in American academia, and as someone specifically interested in the learning and teaching of languages (especially English), have potentially influenced the nature of the data collected and analysis conducted and also provided an additional source of reflection on the data.

DATA AND ANALYSIS

Extract #1, "Water! Water!" On a hot and muggy evening during the monsoons in August of 2011, I was observing Arjun, a 12-year-old Bengali boy during the evening study period in the upstairs (younger children's) dorm. Arjun (a 6th grader) and I sat on opposite ends of one of the children's beds, surrounded by colorful school textbooks and some small, roughly sharpened pencils. A breeze blew in from the open balcony door, bringing more heat in its wave. An unscheduled power cut meant that all the ceiling fans and most of the lights were turned off. The evening *arati* (a Hindu prayer ritual in which a lit lamp is waved clockwise in front of a deity) had finished and the children had just changed from their prayer attire (a *dhoti* and light shawl) into casual clothes. The bell had just rung for the evening study period, and around me children chatted, played, and studied on the other beds. The smell of *nag champa* (frangipani and sandalwood) incense permeated the *ashram*. Arjun, as one of the older boys, had a bed in the downstairs basement along with other older children; however, he would often bring his books with him and study upstairs with the younger children. During this videotaped observation, it was clear that Arjun was distracted. A few minutes into the observation, he put away his English grammar book, turned to me, and started gossiping about some of his classmates. Then he proceeded to telling jokes. Below is a short Bengali *chutkula* from that exchange. It is important to note here that I have heard three different versions of this *chutkula* over the extended period of my engagement at the site, between 2007-2011. Also important to mention here is that the first time I heard the story, in December 2007, Arjun was present as an audience member, but the storyteller was someone else. That version had been offered in direct response to my questions about how the children "felt" about English. This time, however, the anecdote was offered along with many others.

The different tellings of this *chutkula* I have witnessed have had the same general contour. A little boy is sent abroad from his village in rural West Bengal (an Eastern Indian state), for the purpose of learning English. The boy acquires English and then returns home. At mealtime, he chokes on some rice his mother serves him. As he chokes, he asks for water, in English. His mother does not understand him, since she does not know English. She does not bring water and the boy dies. Each telling of this story has ended with the narrator and audience member[s] guffawing.

Line	Speaker	Utterance
1	*Arjun*	ki hɔy, ekʈa tʃʰ-tʃʰele↑ **What happens, [there was] a b-boy↑**
2	*Researcher*	hæ̃, æ̃kʈa tʃʰele tʃʰilo, hæ̃ ʈarpɔre? **Yes, a boy there was, yes then?**
3	*Arjun*	ar or ma oke (.) pɔʈʰ- pɔʈʰ- iŋliʃ pɔʈar dʒonno (.) bideʃ paʈʰaye,

		His mother (.) to stud- stud- for learning English sends him (.) abroad,
4	*Researcher*	*aʧʰa↑* **Really↑**
5	*Arjun*	pʰir (0.1) ki hɔy dʒe iŋliʃ viŋliʃ pɔira (.) ase na↑ **Then (0.1) what happens is he learns English-Vinglish and (.) returns, no↑**
6	*Researcher*	hæ̃. **Yes.**
7	*Arjun*	ærekʈa bondʱu-bondʱur saʈʰe, **With another friend-friend,**
8	*Researcher*	hæ̃, **Yes,**
9	*Arjun*	o hindɟi (0.1) baŋla bʱule dʒaye. **He forgets Hindi (0.1) [and] Bengali.**
10	*Researcher*	o, ʈarpɔr? **O, after that?**
11	*Arjun*	o (.) gʱɔre ase. **He (.) comes home.**
12	*Researcher*	**Hmm↑**
13	*Arjun*	() asar pɔr bɔle gɔrom na? (1.0) ʈai dʒonne bɔle "fæn ɖo, fæn, fæn *ʧlao*." Hæ[n↑ **() After coming [he] says, [it is] hot no? Because of that, he says "give me fan, fan, turn on the fan." Ye[s↑**
14	*Researcher*	[dãʈa budʒʱʈe parʧʰi na dãʈa budʒʱʈe parʧʰi na ki holo (.) o pʰerot ase ʈarpɔre? **[Wait I cannot understand wait I cannot understand what happened (.) he returned home then?**
15	*Arjun*	pʰir bɔle "giv mi fæn" **Then [he] says "Give me fan."**
16	*Researcher*	seʈa ki hɔy? **What is that?**
17	*Arjun*	"giv mi fæn" **"Give me fan."**
18	*Researcher*	seʈa ki hɔy? **What is that?**
19	*Arjun*	O (0.1) pakʰa. **Oh, (0.1) [Bengali word for] fan.**
20	*Researcher*	O, fæ:n. (0.1) aʧʰa, "fæ:n," pakʰa. ʈarpɔre? **O, fan. Okay, "fan," fan. Then?**
21	*Arjun*	o ki kore gʱɔre giye ɖekʰe, iŋliʃ budʒʱʈe pare na, **Then what he does after going home he sees, [mother] cannot understand English,**
22	*Arjun*	ʈai to bʱater <u>pan</u> niye ase. **That's why he brings a <u>pan</u> of rice.**

23	*Researcher*	bʰat̪er **pæn** niye ase, atʃʰa ((giggles)) t̪arpɔr? **A rice pan brings, okay** ((giggles)) **after that?**
24	*Arjun*	**"Fan fan"!**
25	*Researcher*	hæ̃ hæ̃ ((laughs)) **Yes yes ((laughs))**
26	*Arjun*	t̪arpɔr ki hɔy (.) keu budʒʰt̪e pare na **Then what happens (.) no one can understand**
27	*Researcher*	hmm.
28	*Arjun*	bɔl bɔl bɔle pakʰa? () niye ase pakʰa. **Say say says fan? () fan brings.**
29	*Researcher*	**Hmm.**
30	*Arjun*	se kʰabar somɔy na, **He at meal time, no,**
31	*Researcher*	hæ̃, **Yes,**
32	*Arjun*	bɔle, o gɔlaye bʰat̪ at̪kaye, **Says, in his throat rice is stuck,**
33	*Researcher*	hæ̃, **Yes,**
34	*Arjun*	bɔle "water! water!" tʃillae.[10] **Says "water! water!" screams.**
35	*Researcher*	hæ̃ ↓ **Yes ↓**
36	*Arjun*	t̪ɔbe keu budʒʰt̪e pare na, **But no one can understand,**
37	*Researcher*	**Hmm↑**
38	*Arjun*	t̪o or bondʰu ra katʃʰe dʒaye, **Then he goes near friends,**
39	*Arjun*	ɖakt̪e age o more dʒaye. **But before they can be called he dies.**
40	*Researcher*	ei re! **Oh no!**

Table 2. Extract #1: "Water! Water!"

The story begins with the mother sending her child abroad (*bideʃ,* line 3) to learn English. The Bengali word *bideʃ* is a complex term, for, while it is most often used in the sense of "foreign land or country," it may also index any land conceived as "far away." In one of the other versions I collected of this *chutkula*, the boy in one story is sent from rural West Bengal, the Indian state, to "India." The use of the English name for India, within a Bengali narrative, in place of the Bengali name (*bharatbarsho*), highlights the complex relationship between urban and rural India. It hints at how urban parts of India—highly industrialized and what are often labeled "globalized" spaces—are so different from rural areas, that *they may as well be foreign.* Another version of this *chutkula* mapped out the journey from West

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[10] The infinitive here is a Hindi one, *tʃilla:na*, and Arjun conjugates it using Bengali rules for present tense, third person singular.

Bengal to New Delhi, paralleling the life trajectories of the children who have narrated these anecdotes. While this story shies from providing an exact location, the use of the term *bideʃ* suggests that English is something that can (only) be acquired in foreign or distant lands. The boy learns English (line 5; the "Vinglish," *viŋliʃ*, is tacked on as a part of a pattern of lexical reduplication[11]) and returns, with another friend (line 7) who accompanied the boy on the journey abroad. There are two important things to note about this journey. One, Arjun has made a similar journey in his life. Arjun's mother, who lives in poverty in rural West Bengal, sent Arjun to Delhi for better opportunities, as mentioned earlier, which, he implied elsewhere, are predicated on the acquisition of English skills. Two, we see that this is not an individual journey (cf. lines 7 and 38) for the boy; there are friends, i.e., other children, who participate in this linguistic migration abroad. This makes sense; the story of the boy being sent from rural India for the sake of better opportunities resonates personally for *all* the children who have narrated this *chutkula*.

For the boy in the *chutkula*, the acquisition of English has been subtractive: he has forgotten Hindi *and* Bengali (line 9). Since the child hails from rural West Bengal, it is actually unlikely that he would know Hindi, at least so well that it could be recognized as a language that was "forgotten," and/or be considered on the same level as the mother tongue. This actually bolsters the interpretation that the boy was sent *abroad*, or out of the country, in order to acquire English: the story thus could be seen to emphasize that the boy forgets national languages, not just his mother tongue.

Next, the boy comes home, and finds it hot (line 13). He asks for the fan to be turned on using a mixture of Hindi imperatives ("*ḍo*," "*tʃlao*") and English ("*fan*"). The imperative *ḍo* is second person informal imperative, "give," and *tʃlao* is the second person informal imperative, "drive." Also important to note here is that while the English word "fan" has been absorbed into Hindi, there exists a Hindi word for the same, pankha (*pə̃kʰaː*). The use of Hindi *and* English in the dialogue, however, now indicates that the journey was a domestic one. A point to note, however, is that the code switching also distances Hindi within rural Bengal, since Hindi is presented as a "foreign" language not understood in the context of rural Bengal. When I interrupt Arjun to clarify the term "fan", he repeats: the boy says: "Give me fan." After a little back and forth, the story proceeds. Because the mother does not understand English, she brings the boy a rice *pan*. Now, Bengali does not have a native voiceless labiodental fricative sound (/f/). It has a voiceless bilabial stop sound (/p/) that is unaspirated, in addition to its aspirated version (/pʰ/). The response of the mother, thus, makes perfect phonological sense. Interestingly, both "pan" and "fan" have been absorbed into Bengali *via* English, though Arjun seems to categorize "pan" as originally Bengali, but not "fan." This is not entirely unusual since Bengali has borrowed to varying degrees from English, Persian, and Arabic, and language boundaries or inheritances often remain unrecognized. The principle reason the word "fan" is marked as English, it appears to me, is because it is associated with an electric device more common in urban areas. As noted Indian energy entrepreneur Harish Hande has remarked, "400 million Indians today still have not seen a light bulb" (Revkin, 2012); electricity and electric devices, are still rare for many millions of Indians, particularly in the rural sector. "Fan" is therefore associated

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[11] This is called *Echo-Formation*, defined by Rana (2010) as: "An echo word is defined as a partially repeated form of the base word; partially repeated in the sense that either the initial phoneme which may be either consonant or vowel or the syllable of the base is replaced by another phoneme or another syllable." The use of "*v*," a sound that Bengali does not have in its repertoire, but Hindi does, shows that Arjun imposes Hindi reduplication within the Bengali sentence.

with the language of urbanity and privilege, i.e., English. "Pan," a metal container found in most Bengali households, does not distinguish itself in a similar manner.

To return to the story: we are next told, "no one can understand" (line 26), emphasizing the idea that there are *no* English speakers nearby. This seems to be a salient point, that rural areas are not English-knowing. The mother does not understand English, and neither do the others. Eventually, however, the mother guesses that the son wants a fan—she calls it by the Bengali name, *pakha* (*pakʰa*)—and brings it to him (line 28). Note here that he asks for the fan to be *turned on*, which indicates that he is referring to a ceiling or table fan. These, I noted earlier, are much more common in urban areas. The mother, however, gives him a handheld fan. Later, at mealtime, when the boy eats, he gets *bʰat̪* (cooked rice) stuck in his throat. It is important to pause here and consider that the boy chokes on rice, a basic Bengali staple. While there are many anecdotes about Bengali children choking on fish bones—narrated as an integral part of the socialization process of young children learning to eat fish—this is the only story of choking on rice I have encountered in my experience as a Bengali. This seems to indicate that the boy has become so *denatured* by English instruction, and his very *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1977) so transformed, that he is unable to consume something as fundamental to the Bengali diet as *bʰat̪.* He yells out "Water, water," and again, "no one can understand" (line 36). This is the second time in the story that something is uttered in English and "no one" can comprehend it. This serves to reemphasize the lack of English circulation in rural areas. Note here that, beyond the lack of linguistic disconnection, mother and child also seem to have lost basic *inter-subjectivity* (see Bucholz & Hall, 2005; Riley, 2007) as a result of the boy being sent abroad. The story progresses, and we are told that someone goes to call the boy's friends—presumably those who can act as linguistic mediators—but before they can be called, the boy dies (lines 38-39). As Arjun finished telling the *chutkula*, I laughed and asked him, in Hindi, so, do you then try to make sure to remember your own mother tongue, Bengali, by speaking it more? Pat came his response, also in Hindi: *"ɪs lɪɛ: English kəm paɽʰta hũ."* ("For this reason I study English *less*"). I joined him in his laughter.

There are several key issues that surface in the telling of this *chutkula*. First, notice how in the *chutkula,* English is constructed as a *foreign* language within rural India. Not only is the boy sent *bideʃ* to acquire English, it is repeatedly emphasized that English is not spoken at all in rural areas. One could interpret this story as indicating that urban India is so dramatically different from rural India, that it *may as well be* foreign. Discourses at the national policy level, however, as we saw in the previous chapter, paint a remarkably different and homogenous picture of the English-speaking landscape of India. The narrators of Indian globalization, as articulated through institutional discourses thus participate in ideological erasure, blocking out the yawning urban/rural gap that exists along linguistic lines. The gap, of course, as we discussed in the previous chapter, also speaks to socio-economic disparity between urban and rural India, carved out along the same linguistic lines. Because the only way to sustain the narrative of equality is by ignoring these divides, the differential access to English remains under-narrated in the discourse of Indian modernity, and the focus is shifted on how "everyone" wants to learn English. Second, it is important to note that English here is shown as being considered an asset in rural India. It is a critical enough a language skill that a mother sends her child *abroad*, far away from her, even though, as we are repeatedly told, no one in rural areas speaks it. Better opportunities are clearly envisioned as being in the city, and children are expected to build their futures there. Third, and a related point: this is not simply the story of one child. It is about the *movement of children* from rural to

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urban areas, in the quest to learn English. The boy in this anecdote, e.g., has friends who go abroad with him. An interesting point to note here is that while the friends are cast in the role of possible interpreters, they fail both the boy and the boy's mother in the boy's final moments. Fourth, English acquisition is framed as subtractive on several levels within this story. The boy, we are told, loses the ability to speak in Bengali and Hindi, in addition to losing the ability to survive in his own birthplace. This appears to be an argument against immersion learning contexts. Fifth, the learning of English seems to be linked to the imbibing of urban, "foreign" cultural practices and frames of expectations. For example, when the boy returns from abroad, he has the inappropriate expectation of being cooled by an electric fan, and finds himself unable to swallow a basic Bengali staple. This illuminates the narrative awareness that language and culture are closely intertwined. The learning of English, a "foreign" language, is followed by the adoption of foreign ways of being that are sharply at odds with local lifeworlds. This also contrasts with the discourses examined in the previous chapter, which framed English as an Indian language. The opposite characterizations of English—as "Indian" by Indian institutional discourses and as "foreign" at the local level—reveal the dramatically different circulation of English across different socio-economic contexts. Sixth, we have Arjun's remarkable comment, that in order to ensure that this never becomes *his* life story, he studies English *less*. Arjun's resistance to the subtractive powers of English, then, is manifested in his stated avowal to limit his study of English. This *chutkula* is thus a cautionary tale against the subtractive power English— subtractive to the extent that it leads to death. This particular *chutkula* reveals that language ideologies about English are conflicted and complex, displaying anxieties and tensions that undergird peoples' relationship to English.

Extract #2, "Thank you!" Below is another *chutkula* collected one cold, foggy evening in February of 2011: this one is in Hindi. The narrator, thirteen-year-old Kishore, was a Bengali boy originally from rural Bihar and a 6th grader. While I had heard this *chutkula* before, also narrated by Kishore in a group setting with other children, this telling was restricted to just us two. Kishore, enjoying a break from his studies, began telling me a series of jokes. We were in the basement (in the older children's dorm), with other children overhearing but not directly participating in the exchange. As usual, the basement was freezing cold, with the children studying under a single dim flickering light bulb and no heat source nearby. Some of the children wore thin cotton shawls over their sweaters in order to keep out the cold.

The outline of the story is as follows. An American man visits Bihar, an Eastern Indian state, and falls into a swamp. A Bihari man rowing a boat nearby saves the American. The grateful American responds with: "Thank you." The Bihari man instead hears "*pʰæ̃k ɖo.*" ("throw") and he throws the American back in the swamp. This process is repeated several times. At the end of the story, the American is left fallen in the water.

Line	Speaker	Utterance
1	*Kishore*	bɪhaːr dʒaːʈaː hæ ʊɖᶠʱər seː↑ əmriːkaː seː aːʈaː hæ↓ **[He] goes to Bihar from the direction↑ from America [he] comes↓**
2	*Researcher*	hã̃ː. **Yes.**
3	*Kishore*	ʈoː bɪhaːr aːʈaː hæ ʈoː, **So he comes to Bihar then,**

4	*Kishore*	ɛ:k naːʋ tʃəlaːʈa: rɛ:hɛːʈa: hæ kʊtʃʰ aːɖmi: bɪha:r ka: **Some men from Bihar are rowing a boat**
5	*Researcher*	hã:. **Yes.**
6	*Kishore*	ʈo: ʊska: ɖəldəl mẽ pær pʰə̃s dʒaːʈa: hæ, **So his feet get stuck in a swamp,**
7	*Researcher*	Hmm↓
8	*Kishore*	ʈo: ʊsko: bətʃa: lɛːʈa: hæ, məʈəb dʒo: ɖəldəl mẽ, **So he saves him, meaning [that person] who is in the swamp,**
9	*Kishore*	dʒo: bɪha:r ka: ho:ʈa: hæ↑ **Who from Bihar is↑**
10	*Researcher*	Hmm.
11	*Kishore*	əmri:ka: ko: bətʃa: lɛːʈa: hæ. **America is saved [by him].**
12	*Kishore*	ʊsi: ka: məʈəb dʒo: ho:ʈa: hæ, **The [only] meaning [of] that is,**
13	*Researcher*	hã:. **Yes.**
14	*Kishore*	ʊsko: bətʃa: lɛːʈa: hæ. **He is saved by him.**
15	*Kishore*	ʈo: vo: bo:lʈa: hæ "Thank you!" **Then he says "Thank you!"**
16	*Researcher*	((laughs))pʰɪr? **Then?**
17	*Kishore*	() bo:lʈa: hæ, pʰæ̃k ɖũ:? **() says, [I should] throw [you]?**
18	*Kishore*	ɖo:ba:ra: pʰæ̃k ɖɛ:ʈa: hæ. **Second time [he] throws him. ((laughs))**
19	*Kishore*	pʰɪr ɖo:ba:ra: ʊtʰa:ʈa: hæ, ʊtʰa:ʈa: hæ, pʰɪr ɖo:ba:ra: pʰæ̃k ɖɛ:ʈa: hæ ʊsko:, **Then for the second time picks him up, picks him up, then again he throws him,**
20	*Kishore*	**((giggles)) "Thanks."**
21	*Kishore*	((laughs)) pa:ni: mẽ gɪr dʒa:ʈa: hæ. **((laughs)) He falls in the water.**

Table 3. Extract #2: "Thank you!"

The *chutkula* begins with geographic mapping: the man from America goes to Bihar. The word *ʊɖʰər se:* (Hindi, *lit.* "from the direction of") is meant to underscore the importance of the directionality of the American's travels, *from* America *to* India. The other actors we are introduced to are boat-rowing men from Bihar. The American's feet get stuck in a swamp, which, beyond the immediate comic effect, may also be seen as a comment on the American's inability to successfully navigate (rural) Indian terrain. Lines 8-11 again emphasize geographic identities: in line 9, the one who saves the American is described as *dʒo: bɪha:r ka: ho:ʈa: hæ* (Hindi, lit. "Who from Bihar is"); in line 11, we are told: *əmri:ka: ko:*

bətʃa: le:ʈa: hæ (Hindi, *lit.* "America is saved [by him]"). The use of the word *əmri:ka:* is interesting here, given that that refers to the country: the term for an American is actually *əmri:ki:.* If not a deliberate mistake, it clearly is in line with the persistent emphasis on geographically situating the actors in the *chutkula*. Now in line 15, the American, grateful for being saved, says: "Thank you!" The Bihari hears, *pʰæ̃k ɖo:,* which is the second person informal imperative for the compound verb, *pʰæ̃k ɖe:na:.* The infinitive *pʰæ̃kna* means "to throw," and the compound verb is formed by taking the stem of *pʰæ̃kna* (thus, *pʰæ̃k*) and then the inflected form of *ɖe:na,* which means "to give" is added to indicate that the action is *for someone else.* Another thing to keep in mind is that the word "thank" for American English speakers begins with a voiceless dental non-sibilant fricative (*/θ/)*, whereas for Hindi speakers it begins with a voiceless aspirated dental stop (*/ʈʰ/*). The confused Bihari thus asks, *pʰæ̃k ɖũ:?* In line 17, which is Hindi, *lit.* "I should throw [you]?," the first person singular irregular subjunctive form of *pʰæ̃k ɖe:na:,* and the American finds himself unceremoniously thrown into the swamp again. This process is repeated, and the American is again thrown into the swamp. Kishore giggles, in a slightly mocking tone, and says "Thanks!" which sounds like *pʰæ̃k,* the second person intimate imperative form. The story ends with: *pa:ni: mẽ gɪr dʒa:ʈa: hæ,* the American falls into the water.

This narrative is important for several reasons. First, notwithstanding the popular discourses about English in globalizing India, regional and national lines (as uncovered in the previous chapter, e.g.)—between, e.g., Bihar and America—seem to be tightly drawn. National and regional identities, we observe in the telling of this *chutkula*, remain forceful ways of organizing and categorizing people and for pointing to differences. The American ("America") is recognized as a foreigner, clearly unable to negotiate the foreign culture and customs in India. The advent of so-called "global citizenship," popular in the discourses covered in the previous chapter, does not, we observe, collapse old boundaries. Second, note that the fact that the American does not know the local customs is emphasized in the *chutkula*. It is extremely unusual to express gratitude overtly with "Thank you's" in most Indian exchanges. Beyond the fact that there seems to be a cultural disconnect, there also seems to be ignorance of local linguistic forms such as "dhanyavad" (*ɖʰənjəva:ɖ*) and shukriya (*ʃʊkrɪja:*), which would loosely translate into "thank you" (but are used sparingly and only under specific circumstances). The American thus suffers from not knowing appropriate local cultural and linguistic customs. This seems to indicate that "globalization," as it was discursively constructed in the previous chapter, may offer mobility, but it does not automatically afford the ability to successfully negotiate local interaction. Finally, it is telling that despite the fact that there several men from Bihar, no one seems to be able to translate "Thank you" or help mediate this exchange. This is similar to what happened in Extract 1.

Both *chutkule,* we see, invoke a world in which rural India is non-English speaking, in sharp contrast with the discourses circulating at the national level, emphasizing the ubiquity of English in the Indian context. The fact that the American is left stuck in a marsh at the end of this extract is a final, mocking comment on the foreign intervention in Bihari rural life, as is the protagonist's death in Extract 1. Thus, not only is rural India non-English speaking, English speakers end up in trouble in rural areas. The linguistic rural/urban divide mentioned in the previous section arises in this anecdote as well, again in sharp contrast to the homogenized and level universe imagined in national discourses. Contrary to the popular narrative of globalizing India, where English spreads to all corners of the country, what this *chutkula* reveals is a still divided India, where English is foreign to rural parts. Clearly, there are language policy implications: language and educational policymakers conceive of rural

India as English-speaking, in how the space is locally imagined and exists in practice. What happens, thus, is that language policy is determined and shaped by a top-level perspective that is diametrically opposed to the beliefs and practices at the local level. The erasure of local conditions from the language policy equation has important consequences for educational equity, as I contend here.

Extract #3, "Because foreign people speak it." This extract is excerpted from an interview exchange that takes place in Hindi with two focal children, Arun and Prateek. Arun, a 7-year-old Bengali boy, and Prateek, a 9-year-old boy from rural Bihar, were sitting side by side on Prateek's bed, in the upstairs children's dorm in early February of 2011. The pungent smell of discarded banana peels piled on top of the full trashcan competed with the fragrance of *agarbatti* (Hindi*, lit.* incense stick) wafting in through the door. The other children were studying on their own beds, and I walked over and stationed myself next to Arun and Prateek Singh, both studying with their textbooks spread out before them on the bed. Arun was copying answers from his math textbook to his "fair"[12] notebook. Prateek was reading out loud from his computer textbook. During one of their (self-regulated) study breaks, I asked Arun about English, whether he liked it, and why, if he did. He gave an answer that is quite typical among the focal children at the *anathashram*: that Indians need English so that they can speak to foreigners if they come to India. The exchange takes place in Hindi.

Line	Speaker	Utterance
1	*Researcher*	ə̃greːziː pəsənd hæ? kjɔ̃ː pəsənd hæ? **You like English? Why do [you] like it?**
2	*Arun*	[() bʰaːʂaː hæ. **[() it is [a] language.**
3	*Prateek*	[() bʰaːʂaː hæ. **[() it is [a] language.**
4	*Researcher*	bʰaːʂaː hæ ətʃtʃʰaː bʰaːʂaː hæ ʈoː kjɔ̃ː siːkʰniː ʈaːhieː? **It is [a] language it is [a] language then why should it be learnt?**
5	*Arun*	kjɔ̃ːki ʋoː ʋɪɖeːʃ loːg boːlʈeː hæ̃ nə. **Because foreign people speak it, no.**
6	*Researcher*	kɔːn loːg boːlʈeː hæ̃? **Which people speak it?**
7	*Arun*	ʋɪɖeːʃiː səb. **Foreigners all.**
8	*Researcher*	ətʃtʃʰaː ʈoː ʈʊmhɛː ʋɪɖeːʃijõː se baːʈ kərniː hæ? **Oh, so you with foreigners want to speak?**
9	*Arun*	ə-əgər ʋoː koːiː əgər baːhər kaː aː dʒaːʈaː hæ (0.1) **I-If someone if from outside comes (0.1)**
10	*Arun*	ʈoː English mẽ baːʈ kərʈeː hæ̃ səmədʒʰ nəhĩ paːʈe naː?

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12 The children have two notebooks for each subject, one that is for "rough" work where they work out answers, and the other a "fair copy," the latter being the one that has the same work as the "rough copy," but is done over in "good" handwriting and submitted to the teacher at the end of the week.

		Then [they] in English speak [they] cannot understand, no?
11	*Researcher*	hã: **Yes.**
12	*Arun*	ɪs hi: ɪs hi: lie: English si:kʰna: pəɽʈa: hæ. **This only this only is why English has to be learnt.**
13	*Researcher*	ɔːr koːi: ɔːr koːi: umm reason hæ dʒɪske: lie: ʈʊm (0.1) **Is there any other any other umm reason because of which you**
14	*Researcher*	ə̃greːzi: si:kʰna: tʃaːhʈe: hoː, ʋɪ ɖeːʃijõ: se: baːʈ kərne: ke: ɪlaːʋaː? **Desire to learn English, apart from speaking with foreigners?**
15	*Arun*	hã: **Yes.**
16	*Researcher*	hãː, boːloː? **Yes, tell me?**
17	*Arun*	dʒəb dʒəb koːi: əpna: office mẽ dʒaːʈa: hæ, koːi: ba:hər se: aːʈa: hæ, **Whenever someone goes to his own office, someone comes from outside,**
18	*Arun*	English mẽ baːʈ kərʈa: hæ, ʈo: ka:m kərne: se: səmədʒʱ nəhĩ aːʈa: hæ **In English he speaks, then he cannot understand work**
19	*Arun*	[ʈo: ʊsko: səmədʒʱ nəhĩ a:ʈa: hæ nə. **[Then he cannot understand, no.**
20	*Preteek*	[ə̃greːzi: nəhĩ a:ʈaː. **[he does not know English.**

Table 4. Extract #3. "Because foreign people speak it."

Arun and Prateek both answer the question of why they like English, with a curious response, "it is [a] language." When pressed, Arun clarifies, Indians should learn English "*kjõ̃ːki: ʋo: ʋɪɖeːʃ loːg boːlʈe: hã̃,*" i.e., because foreigners speak it (line 5). Here again we have the association of English with foreignness, as we have seen in both Extracts 1 and 2. When I push to clarify *who* speaks it, Arun responds, "*ʋɪɖeːʃi: səb,*" all foreigners (line 7). This perception is in line with the language ideologies revealed in the data obtained as part of the larger ethnographic project, that *all* foreigners belong to an Anglo-American, English-speaking universe. When I next ask if they [Indians] learn English because they want to speak with foreigners (line 8), Arun responds that Indians learn it because if someone were to visit India from "outside," they will not be able to be understood by Indians (lines 9-10). Now, the term "*ba:hər ka:,*" Hindi *lit.* "of outside" (*ba:hər,* adj., meaning "outside" and *ka:,* possessive postposition) can refer to someone *from a place external to a particular space* (the boundaries of which may vary widely), or more specifically to a foreigner. Here it appears that traditional Indian hospitality may be at stake: Indians' inability to understand their visitor(s) may risk their being perceived as inhospitable. When I ask Arun whether there is any other reason someone would want to learn English, he offers the same reason as before, though he frames the rationale within a professional context (lines 17-19). If someone [an Indian] goes to work, he says, and someone visits from outside, the same problem arises: the Indian cannot understand the English-speaker. Note that it is the Indian who has to accommodate the English-speaker; the reasons as to why the foreigner cannot or will not learn Hindi or local languages (as in Extract #2) remain unarticulated. I contend here that

this accommodation may have derived from the Hindu notion of "*atithi devo bhava*," an important Sanskrit verse that translates as: "guest is God," and is at the heart of Indian hospitality (Banerjee, 2008). One other thing has to be kept in mind: because English-speaking foreigners are a rarity within Indian workplaces, it is possible that the "*ba:hər ka:*" person referred to is in fact an urban Indian person, cast into a foreign mold simply as a result of his speaking English.

There are several reasons why I highlight this exchange. First, here again we see the alignment of English with foreignness and extra-locality: English intervenes in the given context in the form of a "foreigner," the *vɪdɛ:ʃi:* or the *ba:hər ka:* person. This is in direct contradiction to the institutional discursive construction of English as an Indian language, as uncovered in the previous chapter. The foreignness of English resonates with the ideological moves in the *chutkule* discussed above, providing additional support for the position that English circulates differentially across Indian contexts, and beliefs about it vary. This exchange again elucidates the marked language-ideological disconnect between institutional and policy discourses and local beliefs. Second, the Indian in this extract has to learn English *so that* the foreigner may be understood. English learning is thus necessitated by the possibility of foreign intervention in the Indian context, and not the need for Indians to communicate with the world (as in the discursive framing discussed in the previous chapter). Putting this into dialogue with the previous chapter, we see that the justification or need for learning English at the top institutional levels is framed differently from what we notice at the local level (as represented by the first three extracts). This is an important point that I shall return to later. Third, note that there is expectation that an Indian may encounter an English-speaker at work. Given that "foreigners" are uncommon in most Indian workplaces, the English speaker referenced here could be an Indian person who speaks English, and is therefore construed as a "foreigner" by Arun. What this reveals, again, is how English and English-speakers are still marked as foreign, despite the institutional rhetoric of the Courts, policymakers, and the media covered in the previous chapter. However, what this highlights is also the increased intervention of English in urban workplaces. Finally, this exchange is important because it offers up a common rationale that the children give when asked why they learn English. Instead of focusing on the necessity of English for travel abroad or for communicating with the world outside—as institutional discourses typically do—the focus is on the world *within* India's borders. This rationale is thus the very reverse of the centrifugal force of wider language discourses we saw in the previous chapter. This underscores the difference in the direction of mobility within the so-called globalizing world. For privileged elites, globalization offers the possibility of travel abroad and connecting with the world *without*; for these children, the world is more circumscribed, and interaction with foreigners is predicated on foreigners' intervention *within* the Indian context. This is not to say that the children are doomed to limited socio-economic mobility, and do not benefit from increased mobility in a "global" world. This exchange actually reveals that the children can pursue an alternate way for participating in "global citizenship." Even if their modes of participation in a "global" landscape are different, they also encounter the English speaker. Unfortunately, however, macro-institutional discourses typically remain silent on these alternate methods of participation.

Extract #4, A Question of National Security. It is a late monsoon evening in the first week of August 2011, when I was observing Sudheer, an 11-year-old Bengali boy. He was reading out a lesson entitled *Public Buildings* from his 2nd grade Environmental Studies (E.V.S)

textbook. He was sitting on his own bed in the upstairs younger children's dorm, his book spread out in front of him. To his left, Prateek, ten, was on his own bed, rocking lightly to the rhythm of a Hindi poem he was reading out loud. There was a lot of activity in the *anathashram* that night: the children were bustling with excitement because a guest was visiting. *Arati* had ended a half hour ago, and the boys had changed from their traditional *dhoti-kurtas* into the casual attire of jeans and light sweaters. The light fragrance of *agarbatti* and *dhuno* (a powdery mix of camphor, incense, and coconut husk, placed in little earthern pots and lit and offered to idols during *arati*) still hung in the air. A few children were hunkering down to study, but most were chatting and playing loudly with the visitor. Sudheer completed a matching activity in his textbook, and I found that all his answers were wrong. At first he told me that it was his teacher who gave him the wrong answers, but then began to waffle on the issue. He then started doing another exercise at the end of the next E.V.S. lesson, where he was asked to match the names of countries to the name given to its people: e.g., China with Chinese, Nepal with Nepalese. During the exchange I produce below, he offered an unusual theory as to why Indians aspire to learn English. He said it was so that Indians could keep tabs on the enemy; for the English—the previous colonizers—could attack again, and using English, Indians would be able to learn of an impending attack, and be prepared for it.

Line	Speaker	Utterance
1	*Sudheer*	((Reading from book))"The people of juːn-juːndəl" **"The people of yoon-yoondle"**
2	*Researcher*	**United.**
3	*Sudheer*	**"United Kingdom (0.1) are called English."**
4		((Looks at me.)) jeː hiː d̪iːd̪i ne həmaːre bʱaːrət̪ mẽ həmlaː kɪja t̪ʰaː ɪnhoːneː? **These [are the people], elder sister, they who had attacked India?**
5	*Researcher*	hã **Yes.**
6	*Sudheer*	bəhʊt̪ ʃæt̪aːn hœ̃. **They are very diabolical.**
		(The exchange is briefly interrupted by a child seeking advice for his homework.)
7	*Sudheer*	umm dʒoː əmriːk-dʒoː loːg hoːt̪eː hæ̃ nə, **Those Americ-those people are there, no,**
8	*Sudheer*	ʋoː ə̃greːzi həm ne ɪskiː ʋəd̪ʒeːh se zjaːd̪a zəruːrət̪ pəɽt̪i hæ↑ **They (0.3) English is important for this reason↑**
9	*Sudheer*	kjõːki dʒəb uhh bʱəgʋaːn ne həmẽ boːla t̪ʰaː kiː↑ **because when uhh God had said to us that ↑**
10	*Sudheer*	((Moves his hand from one side to the other)) dʒəb koːi bʱiː umm **Whenever anyone** **umm**
11	*Sudheer*	koːi bʱiː kɪsiː se ləɽaːi kərt̪aː hæ t̪o ʊse d̪oːst̪ bənnaː hi pəɽt̪aː hæ↓ **anyone with anyone fights then he must become↓ [his] friend**
12	*Sudheer*	tʃaːhe ʋoː kɪt̪na bʱiː bəɽaː d̪ʊʃmən **Regardless of how big an enemy he is**

13	*Sudheer*	ʈɔ: həm ʊnke: ɪʈɳe: se: ətʃtʃʰe: ɖo:sʈ nəhĩ bən pa:e: ɪs lɪe: ʊnki: bʱa:ʂa: si:kʰne: ka:.
		So we could not become very good friends with them therefore we [should] learn their language.
14	*Researcher*	pʰɪr se: bəʈa: səmdʒʱi: nəhĩ mæ̃!
		Say again, I don't understand!
15	*Sudheer*	dʒəb ʊnki: ɔ:r həma:ri: ləɽa:i: hʊi:,
		When we and they had a fight,
16	*Researcher*	hã:, kəb hʊi:, kɪʈɳe: sa:l pe:he:le: hʊi:?
		Yes, when was that, how many years ago?
		(Sudheer launches into a short historical overview of the Independence movement, and there are some disturbances, after which we resume.)
17	*Sudheer*	dʒəb həm ɖo:nõ: ki ləɽ-həma:ri: ɔ:r ʊnki: ləɽa:i: hʊi: nə?
		When the two of us figh-our and their fight happened, no?
18		(…)
19	*Sudheer*	ə̃gre:z ɔ:r ʊn mẽ[13]
		the English and them between
20	*Sudheer*	ʈɔ:
		So
21	*Sudheer*	bəhʊʈ ʋo: hʊa:. ʈɔ: pʰɪr dʒəb bʱəgʋa:n ne: ʊnse: pe:he:le: hi: bo:l rəkʰa: ʈʰa: ki:
		A lot of that happened. Then after that when God had already told them that
22	*Sudheer*	dʒəbi: bʱi: ləɽa:i: ho (1.0) kɪsi:ke: bʱi: sa:ʈʰ ləɽa:i: ho:
		Whenever there is fight (1.0) with whoever even the fight may be
23	*Sudheer*	kəbʱi dʒʱəgəɽ-dʒʱəgəɽ ke: ɖo:ba:ra: (0.1) ɖo:sʈi: kərni: tʃa:hɪe: ja: ɖo:sʈi: nəhĩ kərna: tʃa:ho:,
		Whenever after fighting fighting again (0.1) one should make friends or if you don't want to become friends,
24	*Sudheer*	ʈɔ: ʊnse: æ:sa: bʱ-brɪha:ʋ[14] kəro: dʒæ:se: ʋo: bʊra: nə ma:ne:.
		then with them you should b-behave [sic] in this manner that they should not feel bad.
25	*Sudheer*	ʈɔ: həm ne: bʱi: æ:se: hi: brɪha:ʋ kɪja: hæ:
		Then we too have behaved with them in this way only.
26	*Sudheer*	həm ʊnse: ʈɔ: ɖo:sʈi: ʈɔ: nəhĩ kər səke:,
		We were not able to not make friends with them,
27	*Sudheer*	ʈɔ: æ:se: brɪha:ʋ kər rəhe: hœ̃ dʒæ:se: ʊnhẽ bʊra: na: ləge:.
		so we should behave in this manner so [they] should not feel

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[13] The shift in pronouns here is worth noting. For example, in line 17 he shifts from referring to Indians as "us" (*həm,* first person plural pronoun "us," and *həma:ri:,* first person plural possessive, "our") to a more distanced "them" in line 19 (*ʊn,* third person plural pronoun). He returns to referring to Indians as "we" (*həm,* first person plural pronoun) in line 25. It is my thinking that this move is meant to index pastness: the Indians who had been told this by God were told this *before.*

[14] Sudheer uses the word "*brɪha:ʋ*" [sic] by mixing up what appears to be *vərʈa:v,* Hindi *lit.* "behavior," and the English word "behave."

		bad.
28	*Sudheer*	ki: ʋo: æːseː maːneː kiː (0.1) ʋo: əgər həm ʊnkiː bʰaːʂa hiː nəhĩ səmdʒʰẽ, **That they should feel that if we don't understand their language**
29	*Sudheer*	ʈo: həmaːre: bʰaːrəʈ ka: bəhʊʈ hiː nʊksaːn hoːgaː. **Then our India will experience a lot of loss.**
30	*Researcher*	ətʃtʃʰa: ʈʰiːk hæː. **Right, okay.**
31	*Sudheer*	kjɔ̃ːki: ʋo: kəbʰiː bʰiː aːke: (0.1) həm pe: həmla: kər səkʈe: hæ̃ (0.1) **Because whenever they can also come (0.1) can attack us (0.1)**
32	*Sudheer*	ja: pʰɪr həmẽ (0.1) həmeːʃa: ʊnke: lie: ʈəʈpər reːheːna: pəɽeːgaː. **then we always have to be ready for them.**
33	*Sudheer*	ɪs lɪe: dʒəb English siːkʰ dʒaːʈe: hæ̃, ʈo: pʰɪr uhh **That is why when English they learn, so then uhh**
34	*Sudheer*	koi: bʰiː unh səmədʒʰ dʒaːta: hæː ki: (0.1) ʋo: loːg həmla: kərẽgẽ **anyone also uhh understands that (0.1) those people will attack**
35	*Sudheer*	pəʈa: ləg dʒaːʈa: hæː pʰɪr ʋo: aːke: (0.1) səb ko: tʃeːʈaːʋni: ḍeː ḍeːʈ a: hæː **It is found out then he comes (0.1) [and] to everyone warning gives**
36	*Sudheer*	pʰɪr səb ʈəɪja:r ho: dʒaːʈe: hæ̃, ləɽaːi: ke: lie: ho: dʒaːʈe: hæ̃, **Then everyone becomes ready, for fighting they become ready,**
37	*Sudheer*	pʰɪr (0.1) unhh dʒiːʈ ha:r kəbʰiː bʰiː ho: səkʈɪ: hæː. **then (0.1) unhh victory-loss can happen anytime.**

Table 5. Extract #4. "A question of national security."

As Sudheer tries to pronounce the word "united," he stumbles; I step in to correct him. He repeats the word "united" after me, then reads out that the (factually incorrect) sentence that the people of U.K. are called English. The moment he finishes saying the word "English," he glances up from his book and looks directly at me. He inquires if these were the same people who had previously attacked India. Note here the use of the words "*həmla:*" (Hindi, *lit.* "assault" or "attack"), line 4, and "*ʃæʈa:n*" (Hindi, *lit.* "diabolical," "satanic"), line 6, which are strong, emphatic terms. It is also interesting that Sudheer uses the present tense to say that the English *are* diabolical, even though they had attacked India in the past [cf. *kɪja: ʈʰa:*, Hindi, *lit.* "had done" (past perfect tense), made up of the perfective tense of "*kərna:*," "to do," with simple past form of *ho:na:, "to be"*]. At this point, there is a brief disturbance, after which I asked Sudheer why he thought the English language was so popular, if the British had attacked Indians previously and were what he called "diabolical."

In line 7, when our conversation resumes, Sudheer begins to refer to the English as "*əmri:k*," but self-corrects before he finishes the word. He then gives a rationale for learning English I have never previously encountered (lines 9-13). God has said to us, Sudheer says, that whenever anyone fights with someone, they must become friends with that person (who is being fought with), regardless of how big the enemy is. Since Indians could not become very good friends with the English (one assumes here that this was due to British colonialism), they learn English, because, as God suggests, they have to try to be good

friends with their enemy. At this point in the exchange, Sudhir launches into a recap of the Independence movement, referring to India as *mã:*, Hindi *lit.* "mother." He then recounts some of the sacrifices and brave deeds of freedom fighters such as Gandhi, Subhash Chandra Bose, and Ram Prasad. His talk is interrupted by some distractions, after which I try to get Sudheer to return to his earlier point, asking him to explain the connection between befriending enemies and the learning of English.

Here, Sudheer tries to map out his reasoning more clearly. He begins by noting that Indians and the English had once fought. God had already told Indians, he says, that whenever there is a fight (and with whomever the fight may be), one should try to become friends. But, Sudheer says, if you don't want to become friends with your enemy, then you should behave in a manner so that the enemy does not feel hurt. He repeats this last sentiment in lines 26-27, and proceeds to say that if the English feel that we do not understand their language, our India would be the one at a loss (lines 28-29). As in the previous extract, it appears that the impetus for learning English, potentially, is the demand of traditional Indian hospitality. At this point he offers a different rationale. Sudheer now links language learning with national security: India will be at a loss by not knowing English because Indians have to be prepared, given that the English can attack at any time (lines 31-33). He clarifies still further what he means: since anyone who understands English will know when the English will attack (possibly by intercepting English messages or news), the impending attack would thus be discovered, and the person who found out about the attack could then warn everyone else. The knowledge of English would thus prepare Indians for war. The discursive arc of this extract is therefore quite remarkable: the English are first called satanic, then we are told God wants Indians to learn English to be friends with them, even though they may be enemies. Then, Sudheer makes a case for learning English as a question of national defense. At the end of this exchange, I told Sudheer that his theory was interesting, and that I had never heard it before. I asked him where he had learned it. He answered, with a big smile on his face, pointing a finger at his head: "*ʤma:g ləga:ja:, ʤi:ʤi:*" (Hindi*, lit.* "I applied my mind, elder sister").

This exchange is significant on a variety of levels. First, at the very outset this exchange challenges the notion that the colonial origins of English are immaterial and unproblematic for Indians, as The Teaching of English report (N.C.E.R.T., 2006) claimed. The exchange with Sudheer, on the contrary, indicates the reverse is true: anxieties about English and its colonial inheritance continue to endure. Colonial resentment seems to underpin the reason for framing the English as diabolical (*ʃaʈa:n*, line 6) and as Indians' enemy (*ʤʊʃmən*, line 12) at the very start of our conversation. As this exchange illustrates, English's colonial past not only influences but also *informs* language ideologies about English. The importance of the fact that a crucial government language policy document is blind to the ways in which the colonial inheritance of English shapes local language ideologies cannot be under-estimated. The move made in that document is in line with other privileged, elite perspectives that frame English as a local language in the Indian context, in direct contradiction to most local conditions of use. Second, there is a hint that the English-speaking world is not "global" in scope but Anglo-American. Note, for example, the use of "*əmri:k*" in line 7, even if it is quickly corrected, when Sudheer begins to talk about the English. This is an important, because it challenges the universalizing discourses we saw in the previous chapter. The widespread reach of English and the "global citizenship" which elite institutions imagine is clearly differentially experienced. This is an important point to keep in mind, especially as it relates to notions about globalization. As a discursive construct,

thus, the term globalization needs to be rigorously examined and cautiously used. Beyond the theoretical implications, there is the practical influence on educational and language policy of reductive top-level discourses about English learning and globalization within the Indian context. This influence needs to be critically examined, especially because top-level discourses about globalization are so often used to justify the push for English. Furthermore, as in the previous extract, there is an expectation that Indians learn English to accommodate foreigners. God, for example, does not demand that the English learn Indian languages. This also seems to link up with the tradition of Indian hospitality mentioned earlier. The burden appears to be on Indians at least partly to learn the language so that their guests and visitors will be accommodated. This also connects up with previous discussions of how the local need for English stems from accommodating foreigners, though this is not recognized or factored into policymaking. Fourth, the framing of English learning as a security issue involves two things: the expectation that the English are (still) capable of attacking Indians at any time (line 31), and the knowledge that English could be used to prepare for an attack. While this is an unusual rationale for English learning, it provides us, along with the other extracts, a startling glimpse into the anxiety-laden world of local ideologies about English. The question that arises again is, what do we make of language policy, such as those instituted by N.C.E.R.T., that ideological erases these anxieties and concerns that exist about English locally? What are the implications for instruction? While there are no simple answers to these questions, what is obvious is that these anxieties need to be accounted for within language and educational policy. Not accounting for them creates another layer of hegemony, beyond limiting opportunities to those who are already proficient in English.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this chapter, I closely analyzed two *chutkule* and two interview segments at the *anathashram*, in order to underscore the contrast with language ideologies manifested through discourses at the national level (as seen in the previous chapter). The anxieties, concerns, and ambivalences mined through the analysis of language ideologies here reflect enduring concerns with English, its learning, its cultural valence, and its speakers. Macro-level institutional discourses, we saw in the previous chapter, consider English as crucial for socio-economic mobility, and construct it as unproblematic within the language political landscape of India. *Everyone* wants to learn English, we are told. At the micro-level, however, as I show, we encounter a starkly different and differentiated language ideological universe. The analysis in this chapter, for example, shows how the English speaker is variously fashioned as dead, inept, incomprehensible, or as the enemy. That is not to state that English is viewed only in negative light. At the same time as it is portrayed negatively, English is recognized as a language of mobility, as a language of the Indian workplace, and as a language strategically important to know for the sake of national security. Language ideologies excavated in this analysis are complicated and conflicted, in contrast to broader national discourses that depict a language ideologically homogenous India, especially in peoples' relationship to English. The top-level discourses shaping national language and educational policy, as we have seen, are thus at odds with local beliefs language ideological beliefs, concerns, and needs. Because of the critical role English continues to play in elite formation within India, the disconnects between policy, ideologies, and practice becomes important to unravel in order to understand the ways in which language policies affect educational equity.

1. **English as a "foreign" language**: Within each of the extracts examined in this

chapter, English and its speakers are ideologically rendered as "foreign" or "foreigners." In Extract 1, for example, the boy had to be sent *abroad* to acquire English, and no one else (apart from another boy who also goes on the same journey) speaks the language in the rural setting. We also noted that the acquisition of English is accompanied by a cultural acquisition of "foreign" practices, manifested in the request for turning on the fan and the inability to eat the basic Bengali staple. The boy's very *habitus* is permanently transformed. Similarly, in Extract 2, the fact that the man comes "from the direction of America" is emphasized at the beginning of the narrative, his foreignness distinguishing him from that of rural Biharis (the other actors in the *chutkula*). The American's lack of linguistic and cultural awareness also marks him as foreign. Similarly, in Extract 3, English speakers are depicted as foreigners, the *vɪɖeːʃiː* or the *baːhər kaː* people. In fact, Arun says *vɪɖeːʃiː səb*, or "*all* foreigners" (line 7) speak English. In Extract 4, further, the world of English speakers reveals itself to be an Anglo-American one. Additionally, by framing the learning of English in terms of national security, Sudheer sets the borders of the nation in still sharper relief. This is, as I previously highlighted, in direct contrast to the more privileged institutional discourses we see at the national level, where English is rendered as *Indian*. This illustrates the sharp divide that exists in terms of access to English within India: elites are so immersed in English that it is configured as an Indian tongue; but for the vast majority of Indians for whom English is an aspiration but has limited place in everyday life, English is foreign. Given such a differentiated landscape and unequal linguistic access, what are the implications for language policy, when the former group provides policy framework for everyone? This is an important question, but one that does not get sufficiently problematized in the Indian context.

2. **English as urban**: In the first three extracts, rural India is mapped out as a markedly non-English speaking space. In Extract 1, the rural area invoked is clearly non-English speaking. For example, the boy is sent "abroad" from his rural village to learn English (which suggests that you cannot learn English there); and when the boy returns, we are told on two different occasions, *keu budʒʰte pare na*, "no one can understand [English]." In Extract 2, also, the Bihar evoked seems rural, given that no one speaks English. In Extract 3, the one who speaks English is again a *vɪɖeːʃiː* or a *baːhər kaː* person. There are also hints in Extracts 1 and 3, I have argued earlier, that the "foreign" English-speaker may not actually be "foreign" to India, but simply an urban Indian who speaks English. All the focal children in this study came to the city from rural India, so this framing seems even more salient in this analysis. The urban rural divide provides further evidence that language policy needs to be responsive to local conditions of language use, and not continue to operate on the basis of some kind of imagined language ideological homogeny at the national level. The rural/urban gap is acute in India (see previous chapter), and it is disadvantageous to rural students, making up 70% of India's children in schools, that the differential access to English (if any) within rural areas is not factored into language policy. This position also supports giving local policymakers more control in framing language policies at the local level, not only because of the different needs of urban and rural India, but in taking into account the differential access to English in those areas.

3. **The portrayal of the English-speaker**: Extracts 1, 2, and 4 paint the English-speaker in negative light. In Extract 1, the boy pays the ultimate price for learning

English (and forgetting his native tongues): death. In Extract 2, the American, as a result of his linguistic and cultural ineptitude, finds himself stuck in a swamp at the end of the *chutkula*. In Extract 4, the English are depicted as "diabolical," as the "enemy," and capable of attacking India at any time. These portrayals suggest that that language ideological concerns about English, drawing on colonial and neo-imperial fears, shape the way in which English-speakers are framed today by a section of Indian society. These extracts counter the image that arises in the privileged, elite discourses, unproblematically framing English as the neutral medium of opportunity.

4. **English as a language of mobility**: In all the extracts, those who speak or learn English are associated with mobility, but not others. In Extract 1, the boy is sent abroad from India, and also makes a return journey (along with his friend). In Extract 2, the American makes the trip to Bihar. In Extract 3, English speakers are "foreigners" who visit the country or Indian workplaces. In Extract 4, the English are seen as the ones who *could come over* and attack India, and also, the English-speaking "sentry," we are told, would *go* and inform the others. Thus, mobility appears to be affiliated with English. However, regardless of the mobility acquired through English, there is a price to pay for speaking the language. In Extract 1, it is death; in Extract 2, it is being stuck in a swamp; in Extract 3, the visiting English speaker risks incomprehension; and in Extract 4, the English speaker is portrayed as a villain and an enemy. In addition, as I discussed in Extract 3, the difference in the direction of the mobility, i.e., between centrifugal forces of institutional discourses, and the centripetal forces of local ones, reveals again how differentiated the two universes are. I will discuss this point in greater detail in the concluding chapter.

This analysis indicates that top-level language ideologies, reflected in broader national discourses, while appearing to confirm, actually modified local beliefs about English (see Spolsky & Shohamy, 2000). Where national discourses indexed a language ideologically homogenous India, overwhelmingly positive about English, local language ideologies, we saw here, ran counter to those beliefs. I will unravel the implications of this disconnect in the concluding chapter.

CHAPTER IV[15]

Mediating Inequalities: Exploring English-Medium Instruction in a Suburban Indian Village School

INTRODUCTION

Literacy plays a preeminent role in a rapidly developing India. And while it is true that literacy facilitates economic and political participation in developing contexts, it often also simultaneously "sets the conditions for new forms of hegemony and social stratification" (Luke, Iyer, & Doherty, 2010, p. 3). The present Indian educational system—the second largest in the world—forms a crucial pivot in the production and reproduction of socio-economic inequalities (Phillipson, 2009). Although universal education has been a policy goal since Independence in 1947, India continues to be plagued by poor literacy levels (Kingdon & Muzzamil, 2008). Only 219 million of the 361 million children of school-going age attend schools (Sancheti & Sudhir, 2009). Major systemic concerns include: teacher absenteeism (Kingdon & Muzzamil, 2008; Muralidharan & Kremer, 2006); insufficient government funding (Mehrotra, 2012); gender disparity (Bose, 2012); poverty and child labor (Reddy & Sinha, 2010); inadequate infrastructure (Kumar, Kumar, & Narula, 2011); high dropout rates (Sajjad, Iqbal, Siddiqui & Siddiqui, 2012); as well as corruption, graft, and spotty enactment of policy (Tandon & Mohanty, 2003; Grant 2012).

India's complex multilingualism also poses a significant educational challenge. With a population exceeding 1.2 billion, India is home to 1,652 languages (Census of India, 1961) belonging to several distinct language families (Pattanayak, 1998). The Indian Constitution, however, accords official status to only 22 languages, and just 43 languages function as instructional medium in schools (Mitchell, 2009). Furthermore, there has been a significant decline in the number of languages used as instructional medium, down by half since 1970 (Mohanty, 2010). Arguably the most influential among the national language-in-education policies has been the *Three Language Formula* (TLF), outlined in 1956. It recommends the study of a modern Indian language (preferably South Indian) in addition to Hindi and English (for schools located in the "Hindi belt," which refers to the Hindi-dominant region of India, primarily the north and central regions); and Hindi, English, and the regional language (for schools outside of the Hindi belt). Although a government policy recommendation in force since the 1960s, TLF's implementation has been largely inconsistent (N.C.E.R.T., 2006). Further, as Khubchandani (1978) has noted, concerns about "language privileges, cultural prestige, and socio-economic mobility" (p. 14) have strongly influenced the selection of second or third languages within the TLF. Minority languages, if used at all, have remained underrepresented within the TLF (Vaish, 2008a). Moreover, even when schools have privileged local languages as instructional medium, these have been typically standardized varieties, disadvantaging speakers of dialects (Khubchandani, 2003). Moreover, the hegemony of Hindi and English within national policy has served to exacerbate local tensions as a result of a complex matrix of regional language politics (Langer & Brown, 2008). In large part due to the TLF, the vast majority of Indian children receive

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instruction in a language that is not their home language (Hornberger & Vaish, 2009). Such students experience a variety of disadvantages within the Indian school system (Daswani, 2001; Mohanty, 2005). In fact, Jhingran (2005) has contended that a quarter of all children attending elementary schools in India experience moderate to severe learning difficulties due to the disconnect between the child's home and instructional languages (see also, Spolsky, 2009).

Another issue is the problematic role of English. Across developing contexts, English literacy skills are increasingly privileged over others, as they are perceived to be necessary for socio-economic advancement (Dua, 1994; Farrell & Giri, 2011; Hornberger & Vaish, 2009; Phillipson, 1998, 2001; Stroud & Wee, 2005). Within India, however, English schooling has historically either been unavailable to or forbiddingly expensive for the average person. As the government's own National Knowledge Commission (2009) has pointed out, English is "beyond the reach" of a majority of Indians and characterized by "highly unequal access" (p. 27). As far as educational sector is concerned, the Seventh All-India School Education Survey (N.C.E.R.T., 2007), conducted with a data reference date of September 30, 2002, found that only 12.98% schools at the primary level, 18.25% schools at the upper primary level, 25.84% schools at the secondary level, and 33.59% schools at the higher secondary offered English as a medium of instruction. Furthermore, there is only partial consensus on how many Indians "speak" English, and the criteria for determining what constitutes "speaking" English vary widely. To give some sense of the numbers, the National Knowledge Commission (2009) claimed that just 1% of Indians use English as a second language, whereas an earlier estimate by linguist Crystal (2003) put that number at 20%. English scholar Hohenthal (2003), meanwhile, pegged the total number of English speakers at 4% of the population, whereas English literature scholar Mishra (2000) claimed that it stood at 5% of the population. And the India Human Development Survey (2005) found that 4% of Indians could speak English fluently, and 16% could speak it a little. While estimates and benchmarks used in determining the criteria differ, there is broader agreement that English speakers form a minority.

Limited as it is in circulation, English skills are highly coveted. A colonial inheritance, English is widely viewed as offering spatio-economic mobility within India (LaDousa, 2005; Kumar, 1993; Ramanathan, 1999). Socio-economically disadvantaged communities in particular have been making increasing demands for English because they recognize its role as a gatekeeper to higher education and higher-paying jobs (see, Hornberger & Vaish, 2009; Kam et al., 2009). There is significant correlation between English-language skills and salaries. Azam, Chin, and Prakash (2011) found, e.g., that male fluent speakers of English earn 34% more than non-English speakers in India, while the average increase in hourly wages was 13% for those men who spoke some English. As important as English skills are in the country, government-run primary (elementary) schools, a free option for all Indian children, receive heavy criticism for the poor English instruction they offer (Thiyagarajan, 2008). In such schools, English pedagogy is centered on transmitting "scholastic" English (emphasizing reading and writing) (Gupta, 1997), with the acquisition of highly valued communicative skills being secondary goals (Vaish, 2005). Moreover, English acquisition is almost "entirely dependent on classroom experience" (Gupta 1997, p.9) for poorer children, because they have little or no access to the language outside of it. For parents of poorer children, this leads to greater frustration because their children's acquisition of English, and hence their future educational and employment opportunities, are entirely dependent on what unfolds in the classroom. Poor teacher training, inadequate teacher language skills, emphasis on rote-memorization, and minimal allocation of time to language teaching also

contribute to form an inadequate English language learning experience for a majority of children (Vaish, 2005). Thus disillusioned by English teaching at government schools, many parents enroll their children in private English-medium schools, despite soaring costs (PROBE, 1999).

This has contributed to the exponential rise in the number of un- or semi-regulated, private English-medium schools, most of which cater specifically to the poor (Aggarwal, 2000; Annamalai, 2005; De, Majumdar, Samson, & Noronha, 2002; Jhingran, 2009; Nambissan, 2003). A key concern is that many such schools are what Lin (2005) has referred to in the Hong Kong context as English-medium "in name if not in reality" (p. 48). Mohanty, Panda and Pal (2010) have criticized the proliferation of such schools, serving those primarily from the lower socio-economic strata, based on a "myth of English-medium superiority" (p. 214). They argued that such schools aim for "cosmetic Anglicization," where, despite the *nominal* importance of English, vernacular languages dominate (p. 216) (see also, Khubchandani, 2003). Poorer parents, however, typically without formal education or knowledge of English, enroll their children in such schools without realizing that instruction is not being mediated in English. Furthermore, Annamalai (2005) critiqued the fact that when English is acquired at such schools, it is not "critical, creative and applicable to the problems of real life and the needs of the society" (p. 26). Students acquired "bookish," non-communicative language skills in English; what they learned, he claimed, was to imitate, not interpret texts. Elites, in contrast, as Mohanty (2006) pointed out, enabled "with…positive attitudinal and environmental support for English" (p. 269), are able to access far more effective English instruction. Sheorey (2006) has thus called English a "divider rather than a unifier" in India, pointing out that the "advantages and the 'power' inherent in English literacy are enjoyed primarily by the middle and upper classes" (p. 18). These are beyond the reach of students who are hindered by their financial condition and/or caste (Ramanathan, 1999). Either they cannot access English instruction or the kind of English they acquire is insufficient for today's demanding job market (Mohanty, 2006). In the Indian "globalized economy," Mohanty (2006) noted, the language of instruction thus reflects, maintains, and perpetuates socio-economic divides (p. 269). In this manner, "English-medium education widens social fractures in Indian society by creating and reinforcing a social, cultural, economic, and discursive divide between the English-educated and the majority" (Faust & Nagar, 2001, p. 2878).

As small, private English-medium schools mushroom across India, it is important to qualitatively identify, excavate and understand the different literacy practices engaged in at such schools, and analyze their broader educational implications for social equity. In order to investigate the issues involved, this ethnographic case study focused on young learners living at an *anathashram* (orphanage) and attending an English-medium village school in suburban New Delhi. The investigation pivots around the negotiation of the instructional medium, because enrolment in such schools is crucially dependent on their (self-)identification as "English-medium." I use the language policy and planning (LPP) inter-disciplinary perspective in order to illuminate the different micro- and macro- contours of the problem. LPP is a sub-discipline within the field of applied linguistics (Takala & Sajavaara, 2000), and, as Wee (2011) asserted, offers an "awareness of the kinds of constraints faced by applied linguistics as it attempts to engage with 'real world' language-related problems" (p. 11). An influential definition of the paradigm was offered by Petrovic (2010): it "involve[s] a body of ideas, laws, regulations, rules, and practices enacted to promote systematic linguistic change in a community of speakers" (p. 3). The framework has historically evolved as a "dynamic interplay between academic concerns, on the one hand, and political/bureaucratic interests

on the other" (Wee, 2011, p. 11). This study conducts an ethnography of language policy (Hornberger & Johnson, 2007), which falls within the broader LPP research orientation. This ethnographic method, as Johnson & Ricento (2013) asserted, brings together "a focus on structure and agency, the macro and the micro, policy and practice" (p. 16), which is the aim of this chapter.

The complex multilingual Indian context has resulted in significant language policy and planning challenges for the educational system, particularly those posed by the thorny issue of medium of instruction (see, e.g., Dua, 1985; Groff, 2007; Hanna, 2011; Meiringer, 2009; Mohanty, 2010; Mohanty, Panda, & Pal, 2010). This study seeks to contribute to this emerging field, by unpacking the politics of linguistic mediation of instruction through the exploration of school and home literacy practices. Literacy practices in this study are conceptualized as "observable behaviours around literacy…[and] the concepts and meanings brought to those events and which give them meaning" (Street, 1997, p. 50). The following research questions guided this study: 1) How is literacy instruction structured in English medium classrooms? 2) What are the implications of these for learning at the school and at the *anathashram*? 3) What are the wider language policy and planning implications, especially for educational equity? The first question sought to understand how teaching and learning occurred at the sites, in ways that illuminated issues around the instructional medium. The second question sought to shed light on their implications for student learning. The third and final question considered the implications of the instructional medium for classroom learning as well as more broadly for building equity through language policy and planning within the Indian educational system.

METHOD

The data focused on in this chapter draws on eight months of ethnographic fieldwork at the *anathashram* (orphanage) and village school between December 2010 and August 2011. An ethnographic approach was adopted because it afforded the close observation of literacy practices in the school and home contexts. While there were broader research questions framing the larger project prior to the start of data collection, these questions were refined and narrowed in focus as the data collection process commenced and continued. The data for this study included 250+ hours at the sites, involving nearly 100 hours of classroom observations at approximately 4-6 hours per week when the school was in session, and more than 150 hours at the *anathashram* at 4-6 hours per week, from December through August. The data collection process entailed participant observation supplemented with audio- and video-recording, structured and semi-structured interview exchanges with the five focal children from the *anathashram,* the *anathashram* administrator and two assistants, and five teachers at the school. The interviews were conducted in Hindi, Bengali, and English; many interviews involved code-switching between these three languages. Written artifacts consulted included: textbooks across subjects from nursery through Class VIII, homework, schoolwork, Unit Tests, Mid-Terms, final exams, *anathashram* records, fieldnotes, and interview notes. The variety of methods employed for data collection allowed for the triangulation of data (Denzin, 1970). During classroom observations, I would sit in the last row, video/audio recording and/or noting down observations as classes were conducted. After an initial flurry of excitement about my presence in the classrooms, the focal and non-focal students came to ignore the camera and/or my note taking for the most part. At the *anathashram*, because of its physical layout and other constraints, I would walk around with my camera and set it up wherever the focal subjects sat.

The data collection was broadly focused on language use, oral and written. I explored both home and school sites in order to get a more complex, ethnographically rich picture of the literacy practices engaged in by the focal children. The decision to choose these two sites goes back a few years. Since December 2007, I had been volunteering at the *anathashram*, during winter and summer breaks from my graduate studies, and had come to know the children and administrators well. I spent dozens of hours every trip tutoring the children in English, teaching them computer skills, telling them stories, and participating in the celebration of Hindu rituals and festivals. I first visited the village school in winter 2008, and returned to the site during every successive annual visit to India. During those visits, I had multiple conversations with the principal and two of the teachers, and informally observed several English periods in three different classrooms (across six grade levels). Thus, when the intense data collection period started, I was a familiar figure for the focal children and to many at the school.

While exploring English-medium instruction primarily though English classes is not ideal, there are two reasons I employ this approach. First, classroom observations I conducted, spanning English, Environmental Studies, Social Studies, Math and Science determined that there was no discernable difference in the manner in which the instructional medium was negotiated in these subjects. That is, while the textbooks were in English, the (oral) instructional medium was Hindi, or English-in-Hindi-translation. Second, for the broader project I was interested in English teaching and learning issues, and therefore a focus on English was preferable.

Data analysis was conducted both during the collection process and after the collection process ended. For this part of the analysis, the data was coded for "literacy," "English learning," "English teaching," and "medium of instruction." Codes were devised prior to the start of data collection and refined in the course of data collection. The coded data was then explored through analytic memos, which were detailed notes containing reflections on and analysis of the data. These memos illuminated emerging themes, such as multi-grade pedagogy, translation, communicative skills, content mismatch, memorization, and "question-answers." Emergent themes illuminating the negotiation of instructional medium were then explored through representative examples in this study.

Potential ethical issues arising in data collection and analyses include biases inherent in interviews, pitfalls of participant observation, the researcher's own implication and influence in contexts of interaction and observation, and researcher bias (Diener & Crandall, 1978; Kelman, 1982; Merriam, 1988). These have been minimized here through prolonged periods of data collection, informant interviews, triangulation of data through multiple sources, and reflexivity regarding my own positioning. While this study focuses on one English-medium village school, my visits to two other English-medium schools nearby, an interview with a veteran teacher from New Delhi, a review of the relevant literature, as well as my own experience growing up in New Delhi indicate that the selected school is representative of those that cater to low-income students. Finally, my personal history as an Indian, a New Delhi native (where I spent the first twenty-two years of my life), a married Hindu Bengali woman in her thirties, playing the multiple roles of *didi* ("elder sister") and researcher, a product of the Indian K-12 system and part of American academia, and as someone specifically interested in the learning and teaching of languages (especially English), have influenced the nature of the data collected and analysis conducted, and provided an additional source of reflection on the data.

The Study Context and Participants

This study was conducted in Noida, a satellite town of New Delhi, the Indian capital. Noida is one of the cities comprising the *National Capital Region* (a conurbation of New Delhi and several urban agglomerations). Noida is an ethnically, culturally, linguistically, and socially heterogeneous city, with about 700,000 inhabitants, according to the 2011 Indian Census. The languages of state administration, business and commerce, and schooling are English and/or Hindi, although many inhabitants speak other languages at home (e.g., Punjabi, Urdu).

The anathashram: The *anathashram* was situated in an *ashram* (a Hindu religious commune) in a quiet residential area in Noida. The priest/administrator, two assistants, and the Board of Directors (appointed by *ashram* headquarters in the eastern state of West Bengal) managed the *ashram*. The five focal children's ages ranged between nine and thirteen, and they received room, board, and/or education free of charge or at subsidized costs. The children spoke Bengali or Bihari as their mother tongue, and Hindi as a second or third language. The five focal children were selected on the basis of several, pre-decided criteria, including that they: had to have been residing at the orphanage for a minimum of six months prior to the start of data collection, were five or older, and had rural backgrounds. The decision to focus on five children was motivated by a desire to arrive at a "thick description" (Geertz, 1973) of the language and literacy contexts given the time constraints. Monday through Saturday, the *anathashram* schedule entailed morning prayers, school, lunch, playtime, evening prayers, evening study period, dinner, and, finally, bedtime. On Sundays, the children did many chores, but were allowed to watch some TV and call their parents or family members, and they also spent time drawing and painting. Although they lived in what was labeled an *anathashram*, not all children were "true orphans" (Mintz, 2004, p. 157), i.e., entirely parentless. Some of the children had two living parents, and the rest had single parents, guardians, or access to family networks. The children's parents or guardians were all migrant workers, having arrived from rural parts of Bengal, Bihar, or Nepal to the North Delhi "slums" a few years ago.

SCB Public School: The school in which the children studied was SCB, located in Madhupur Village. The school had approximately 250 students. Madhupur was home to approximately 3,500 inhabitants, a mostly floating population of migrant workers. The principal of SCB, *Bade* sir, started the school in a multi-story building, renting out the ground floor to tenants, and using the first and second floors for the school. The primary section (KG through Class VI) took up one large room on the first floor, partitioned into five classrooms. Wooden desks were arranged so that students in one grade occupied one column, and those in the next higher grade occupied the other (see *Image 1*). The second floor had two rooms, where the highest classes were held, and the roof was used for teaching, conducting examinations, and holding morning assembly. School was in session from 8:00 am through 1:00 pm, Monday through Saturday. Fees were reduced for the poorest students (including the *anathashram* children), and supplies offered at subsidized rates for everyone. All the teachers were in their thirties and forties, and had grown up in nearby towns and villages. They had been educated in Hindi-medium schools, and held post-graduate degrees in various disciplines from regional universities. With the sole exception of Raj sir, moreover, all teachers had attended rural *multi-grade* schools (see next section). Interviews revealed that none of the teachers were confident about their English skills. Raj sir, e.g., told me several

times that he found it challenging to speak English, and at one point inquired from me if I had suggestions for tutoring centers where he could learn to do so. The teachers were thus all second or third language English speakers, giving rise to what Evans and Cleghorn (2010) referred to as *complex language encounters*, a classroom context in which "teachers and their learners engage with each other in a language which neither party can use with ease" (p. 32) (see also Lin, 1996; Poon, 2000).

Before proceeding to the next section, it is important to raise a few points. Apart from the Hindi textbooks and the Class VIII Social Studies reader, all textbooks used in the school were in English. Additionally, all textbooks were modeled on the National Council of Educational Research and Training (N.C.E.R.T.) curriculum. The N.C.E.R.T., established by the government of India in 1961, assists the Ministry of Education and Social Welfare in educational policymaking, and helps inform educational curricula and programs nationwide. The English textbooks, the focus of my investigation, were of two types: grammar books and textbook readers. The grammar books focused on different grammatical structures and contained exercises and model compositions (comprising essays, short stories, and formal and informal letters). The textbook readers were drawn from three series: the *Baby Birds* series (Class I, II, IV, and V); *Spring* (Class III); and the *Excellent English* series (Class VI and VII). The textbook readers were all explicitly modeled using a Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach, a point which will become salient in the later part of this chapter.

FINDINGS

In this part of the chapter, I present the findings of the study, organized according to the following themes: 1) Multi-grade teaching, 2) Translation, 3) Communicative skills, 4) Content mismatch, 5) Memorization, and 6) "Question-answers." These themes shed light on the different literacy practices that influence the negotiation of the instructional medium as well as language learning, and point to broader language policy and planning concerns.

Multi-Grade Teaching

An important finding of this study was that the multi-grade classroom context had an effect on the learning *of* and *through* language. Multi-grade pedagogy is defined as "the teaching of students of different ages, grades and abilities in the same group" (Little, 1995, p.1). Typically, in multi-grade settings, the instructor teaches across two or more different classes or grades in one class period (Little, 2001). In India, eighty percent of primary schools have three or fewer teachers: multi-grade teaching is, out of necessity, a norm, especially at lower levels (CREATE, 2011; Blum & Diwan, 2007). Multi-grade teaching is ubiquitous in the state of Uttar Pradesh (the state where this study was conducted), particularly in poorer areas (Kingdon & Muzzamil, 2008). In Uttar Pradesh, the average number of classrooms per school is 4; the average number of teachers 3.6; and the student teacher ratio 44:1 (DISE, 2012).

At SCB, 12 grades were packed into six classrooms. For the 2010-2011 academic year, four men and three women were officially listed as teachers at the school. However, in January 2011 two of the female teachers left the school, but no replacements had been hired at the time data collection ended. This added to the existing workload of the remaining teachers. During a typical class period, a teacher taught one group while the other group (belonging to a different class, and physically separated by a narrow aisle) was assigned a writing task. For the most part, the teacher's body was oriented toward the class he or she

was teaching. The teacher would physically orient to the class that was not being taught only when those students grew noisy, became visibly distracted, or to check in and make sure they stayed on task (which occurred once or twice during each class period). In *Figure 8*, Class VII is shown on the left, and Class VI on the right. Half-walls, to the right and to the left, separated this classroom from the adjoining classrooms (the sunlight was streaming in through open, grilled bars on the ceiling). While most children could not see the other classrooms from where they sat, they could hear noises, since the classrooms were not fully separated. Further, while this is not visible in *Figure 8*, the partial walls did not adjoin the back wall; the backbenchers, because this left an opening between the side and back walls, were barely separated from other children in the adjoining classrooms.

The multi-grade classroom raised several concerns. The context was challenging for SCB teachers, who would often resort to shouting angrily when students became noisy, although this technique worked to quiet students only for brief periods. The pedagogy, as Raj sir expressed it, had to be focused on the "handling" of children, that is, on managing them. Two key issues arose. Firstly, the class not being taught (but in the same classroom) needed to be kept occupied. This meant teachers assigned extensive "quiet" work. This was referred to as *ka:m ɖe:na:* ("to give work"), which either involved assigning copying work, "*doing question answers*" (which almost always meant copying into a "fair notebook[5]" answers previously provided by teachers), handwriting practice, or silently committing texts to memory. While this afforded extensive English writing practice, it came at the cost of more engaged, interactive learning espoused by the textbooks. Secondly, when a class *was* being "actively" taught, the pedagogy was shaped by the need to keep noise levels down, in order to least disturb others across the aisle. The multi-grade context thus led to classrooms that were strongly teacher-centric, with teaching being predominantly lecture-style: students' language production was secondary to this concern. The need to manage difficult classroom arrangements also meant that teachers relied heavily on Hindi, the language in which they had most proficiency and could more easily exercise control.

One motivation in maintaining this classroom configuration was financial. The higher the number of children taught per teacher, the greater the school's revenues. Lal sir, a veteran teacher with several decades of experience under his belt, e.g., said (in Hindi) that if they did not have multiple grades in one classroom, the school could "*not take that much payment [from the parents].*" He further asked, "*If there aren't more children then how will you give money to your teachers? To give teachers [money] also it is necessary to take payment from children.*" Bade Sir, on the other hand, said that it was the constraint of resources that led to the multi-grade context. They were poor, they had little space, and access to few qualified teachers. Furthermore, multi-grade teaching, he felt, was an acquired skill that the teacher could easily develop: they had to be innovative and give appropriate assignments so that they would be able to "handle" the context. Children, he said, easily "adapted" to these conditions and were not troubled by them. When interviewed about this, the focal children did not express resentment at the multi-grade context, beyond noting that they became irritated when they had to wait for long periods for the teacher's attention.

Given that multi-grade contexts are commonplace in India, this classroom feature deserves critical attention, especially from a language policy and planning perspective. Little (1995) has previously noted that regardless of the widespread prevalence of multi-grade classrooms, education ministries, curriculum developers, and teacher education organizations rarely attend to this issue. Blum and Diwan (2007) stressed the importance of recognizing multi-grade pedagogy as a key feature in most Indian classrooms. Little (2001) offered an

excellent series of questions that are helpful to consider in reconceptualizing pedagogy under such conditions:

> Do teachers have a range of teaching strategies at their disposal to address the need for multigrade teaching and multiability teaching within monograde classrooms? Are we able to identify examples of good practice in multigrade classrooms, especially those in poorly resourced schools and communities? Can teachers be enabled to share their strategies and ideas with other teachers effectively through print and other means?...What is the quality of the content and delivery of teacher education curricula for multigrade teaching? (p. 493)

To these we must add: What happens when multiple languages are mediated in classroom instruction, such as at SCB? What are best practices to attend to such complex linguistic negotiations and contexts? How do we integrate these best practices into teacher education programs, and disseminate these to teachers across the educational system? As the number of small, private, English-medium schools catering to the poor continues to rise, the complex issues entailed in multi-grade language-in-education pedagogy, influencing what kind of English skills is acquired, will only become more salient.

Translation

Another crucial finding was that teachers taught texts in English primarily by translating words, phrases, or sentences into Hindi. After assigning tasks to the class not being taught, the teacher would stand near the blackboard with his or her body angled toward the students s/he was teaching, and start with a "lesson reading." During this time, the teacher would read the lesson (a short story, poem, text) out loud, doing simultaneous translation into Hindi of English words, phrases, or entire sentences. Below, for example, is an extract from a lesson reading sequence, of Chapter 12 from a Class V *Baby Birds* English textbook (observed on 2/7/2011). *Bade* sir read the text and translated it as follows (All words in Italics have been translated from the Hindi by the author):

> "Once a mouse was roaming a house." "Once" *meaning one time*, "mouse" *meaning [Hindi word for mouse], the mouse was roaming around,* "in the house." *One time one mouse was roaming around in a house.* "He was also hungry" *He was also hungry.* "He went into all the nooks and could not get anything," *the mouse had entered the house, was hungry, also therefore he went to all the rooms but he could not find anything to eat, he was not able to get anything to eat.* "At last" *meaning at the end, where did he reach?* "Kitchen" *he reached, in the [Hindi word for kitchen].* "In search of food," *he was searching for food.*

Comprehension checks of the English texts were conducted in Hindi, with students responding in Hindi. Later that same day, e.g., *Bade* sir was teaching a different lesson, "The Large Cats" (from *Baby Birds* Book 4) to Class V. During the lesson, he read out in English that the lion had turned into a mouse. He translated that at the sentence level, and then asked in Hindi, "*What did the lion turn into*?" The children responded in a chorus, "*Into a mouse!*" in Hindi.

The teaching-in-translation approach resulted in a series of problems. Texts were translated and paraphrased into Hindi without pointing out which syntactic and lexical items were being introduced or excluded in the translation process. This affected students' ability

to identify the meaning of individual words, as I would discover during one-on-one interactions with focal children when they later studied the same texts at the *anathashram*. Let us return to the sample lesson-reading excerpt provided previously. *Bade* sir translated and explained the English text "He went into all the nooks and could not get anything" into Hindi as "*the mouse had entered the house, was hungry, also therefore he went to all the rooms but he could not find anything to eat, he was not able to get anything to eat.*" Because the translation and explanation were melded together, the meaning of individual words was not clear. Take the word "nook," for example. During observations at the *anathashram* later that day, I found that focal students in that class had not understood the meaning of "nook." This occurred repeatedly over the course of my observations, where unsystematic paraphrasing and translations contributed to children's difficulties decoding English texts taught in class.

On February 22, 2011, for example, I was observing 10-year-old Prateek studying English. He was memorizing a text from his English reader, *Baby Birds* Book 3, "It does not pay to be lazy." I asked him to explain the meaning of the title of the story. Prateek thought for a minute, eyed the pictures of an Indian king dressed up in gold finery accompanying the text, and then offered in Hindi: "*The king is very rich.*" I asked him to try again, and he shrugged. This was not an atypical event. Across different grade levels, the focal children, when asked the meaning of something from their books, would first scan the pictures that accompanied the texts, and then give an account in Hindi of the text as they remembered it in translation, using illustrations to prompt their memory. This teaching approach did result in moral socialization, since many of the stories and lessons had moral tales that were transmitted through translation. However, content recall was approximate, however, since the texts were only explained once in class and the children could not make much sense of the texts on their own, as we saw with Prateek and the lesson "It does not pay to be lazy."

A heavy reliance on translation in conjunction with unsystematic translation practices in teaching led to several concerns. While getting the general comprehension of texts was important and a desirable outcome, such practices led to difficulty in decoding and comprehending English texts when children studied texts by themselves. The children did understand the broader story or content in English during teaching, as students' correct responses in Hindi indicated in classes, but the content was often forgotten, misremembered, or partially remembered after class was over, and students were then restricted from the content because of language barriers. Without exception, the focal children said they could not understand most of the English in their textbooks across different subjects. These difficulties led to increased reliance on memorization for tests and exams. This also meant that students were less directly engaged with the language, because they could only access English in translation, which the teacher controlled in entirety. Overall, these practices posed practical and serious barriers to children's ability to decode English and retain content.

Communicative Skills

The explicit pedagogical approach utilized by the textbooks, ironically, privileged the development of communicative skills in the English acquisition process. The *Baby Birds* preface, e.g., described its approach as informed by current pedagogic trends, "futuristic" (i.e., forward-thinking), "learner-oriented," and further stressed the importance of using English communicatively. The final line of the preface admitted, however, that "teachers' role is, to say least [*sic*], very crucial, in fact, more important than the reading material." The *Spring: Textbook of English* series also stressed the importance of communication, and claimed that the text was organized so that "children will respond to the teachers." It further

emphasized its communicative, "child-centred and activity-based" approach to language learning. Therefore, at least as far as the textbooks were concerned, the development of communicative skills in English was a key goal for both the series. Both had communicative activities at the end of each lesson, providing opportunities for learners to use English communicatively. The textbooks' goals, however, did not translate into practice in the classroom, as we see next. Communicative tasks were set aside, and the teacher—as the *Baby Birds* series predicted—played the defining role in students' English learning experience.

The lecture-style, teacher centric pedagogy resulted in minimal opportunities for students to use English communicatively. After lesson readings, teachers always wrote out answers to "comprehension" questions, which students were actually supposed to answer, as per the textbooks. These were WH- questions, such as "Why did the little boy vanish in the sea?" "What happened during a great famine in Germany?" Any textbook questions that required interaction, group work, or communication were skipped over. In fact, no communicative tasks were assigned during the entire period of my observations, even though they were explicit goals of curricular instruction. The *Baby Birds* series, for example, had five sections of exercises at the end of the lesson: *Comprehension skills, Vocabulary skills, Language skills, Listening and speaking skills, Writing skills.* The teachers never assigned any exercises with a communicative component. Part of the problem, one has to note, lay with the exercises themselves. For example, the *Interactive Skills* section in the Class III *Baby Birds* English textbook contained the following exercise, which, as usual, the teacher skipped over. The exercise, on "good habits," offered an exchange that students were supposed to read out loud in pairs (each of the pair of students was to read alternating lines):

A) Talk about the good habits. Talk in pairs:

Joy:	I plucked a flower from the garden.
Tina:	Don't pluck flowers.
Manu:	I speak to her loudly.
Rina:	Always speak softly.
Rony:	Let us run on this soft grass.
Nina:	Don't run only walk on the grass.
Ali:	Let us fly a kite on the terrace.
Raja:	My room is all messed up.
Tara:	Keep your room tidy.

Beyond this pointing to a larger pattern of ignoring communicative tasks, this exercise, as we see, offered only stilted and decontextualized speaking practice, as was characteristic of most exercises provided in the textbooks (there is also a strong moral component in this exercise, a point I plan to develop in a subsequent study). The *kinds* of interactive exercises offered by the textbooks, therefore, also need to be recognized as constraints.

How did this disconnect influence the negotiation of the instructional medium? What did it mean for learning? Clearly, the communicative intent of the textbooks was at odds with classroom literacy practices. This is not entirely surprising, since SCB teachers had acquired English through rote memorization techniques and grammar-translation [16]

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[16] Grammar-translation methods "rely heavily on teaching grammar and practicing translation as its main teaching and learning activities. The major focus of this method tend[s] to be reading and writing, with relatively little attention paid to speaking and listening...Consideration of what students might do to promote their own learning ha[s] little or no place in

approaches, as interviews revealed. Without proper training, there can be little expectation that teachers with no prior communicative language teaching (CLT) background will adopt and employ CLT techniques. Canagarajah (1999, 2002) has criticized the decontextualized circulation of CLT approaches in such contexts because 1) they are disembedded from the contexts of their circulation, and 2) the importation of these methods occurs with little dialog between those who created these methods and those who employ them (see also, Block, 2010). The proliferation of English-medium schools in India, however, has led to a growth in the popularity of textbooks subscribing to CLT approaches, which are seen as more "modern," as Raj sir noted. These books may be "[b]ased on current trends in English teaching" as *Baby Birds* puts it, but these approaches cannot prove effective in classroom practice if teachers have not been trained in their use. The CLT methods used in the SCB textbooks contained exercises which were modeled on approaches that had been created elsewhere, under different conditions, and for a different population of students and teachers. At SCB this meant that communicative exercises were sidelined, and teachers continued teaching the way they themselves had been taught English. This disconnect meant that students were not only cut off from communicative practice, but were also trapped in a confusing situation where the explicit curricular goals of their textbooks were at odds with classroom practices.

Content Mismatch

Another significant finding of this investigation was that the disconnect between the content of various textbooks and students' everyday lives posed a barrier in the acquisition of language. The book cover of an SCB textbook exemplified this disconnect. The book cover for the *Baby Birds* series pictured a smiling, cherubic young boy. Fair-skinned with reddish, curly hair, he was pictured leaning his face on his right hand, which gripped a white flower. Even given the vast range of physical characteristics across geographic contexts in India, this child did not fit the image of a "typical" Indian child. The image did, however, tap into certain beliefs about what English speakers look like—i.e., foreigners. The content of texts used in English as well as E.V.S. (Environmental Studies, a subject that was integrated into the teaching of English) sharply contrasted with the reality of the children's lives. The lesson "*My School*," in the English grammar reader for Class V shed more light on this. The lesson began by describing "My School" as "a famous school of the city." It was a "very big building," with classrooms that were "clean and airy." It contained "a large playground" and "a beautiful garden." The staff comprised 50 teachers, who were "well qualified." In fact, it was "an ideal school." The contrast with SCB was remarkable. SCB was not famous; it catered to schooling demands from the local village. Space was a major constraint, as noted earlier. Few classrooms had windows, and they could not be described as "airy." Further, the classrooms were not very clean: they were dusty and the garbage bin was a spot on the classroom floor near the back row. The school itself was located off from the main village street, and the area was home to multiple open drains filled with overflowing sewage, unattended garbage, building materials spilling over from under-construction buildings, and puddles of mud that became breeding ground for swarms of mosquitoes throughout the

grammar-translation theory, which tend[s] to assume that, if students simply follow the method, learning would result as a matter of course" (Griffiths & Parr, 2001, p. 247).

summer. The school had neither a playground nor a garden. SCB had limited staff, as previously established.

A similar image was offered in the lesson "The School" in a Class I E.V.S. textbook. It described the school of Sujata, a young Indian girl. This primary school was again big, with "many classrooms." Alongside descriptions of learning reading and writing at the school, it told of Sujata learning computers, music, and playing "many sports" at school, including swimming. One also learned of a librarian to lend books, a gatekeeper to provide security, a peon to ring the bell, and a maid to "look after the little children at the school." The type of school presented, again, was at odds with the experience of the children attending this school: most of the opportunities outlined therein were unavailable to SCB students. There was no library (and thus no librarian), no gatekeeper, and no maid to look after little children. This last point was especially at odds with the children's experience: several mothers of the focal children were maids. They were not, to be clear, from a socio-economic status where maids would take care of them in school.

An E.V.S. Class I textbook lesson, "Sweet Home," was similarly disconnected from the focal students' lives. The lesson began with a definition of home, described as "a place where we live with our family," which, of course, was a more complicated arrangement for the focal children than the normative situation presented in the book. The home of Radhika, a young girl, was described in the following manner: it was "very big," with "many rooms." We learned about a drawing room (living room) where she and her family would "sit and entertain…guests"; a bedroom where they rested, a kitchen where the mother cooked food, a bathroom where they bathed, a storeroom to store things, and a study room where Radhika did her homework. This text portrayed a "typical" home that was far from typical in the experience of most Indian children from poorer homes. The focal children's parents either lived in one-room "slum" dwellings in North Delhi, or lived in mud huts in rural India. The home described diverged sharply from the normal experiences of the low-income children for whom this book had purportedly been written. At the *anathashram*, in particular, there was no "drawing room," and the "bedroom" doubled up as a study area. Even allowing for the fact that the *anathashram* children's living situations were extraordinary, the elite, privileged home glimpsed here was also removed from the typical experiences of poor Indian children.

It is important to pause and consider the language difficulty, in conjunction with other issues, arising from the gulf between textbook content and the children's everyday lives. On March 12, 2011, I observed two focal children reading the text "The School." They both struggled over unfamiliar words such as library, peon, and swimming pool, and when quizzed, it was revealed that they had no idea what those words conveyed. The closest either of them came to understanding the word "library" was in describing a bookstore. A real concern with the worlds invoked by their textbooks, thus, was their irrelevance to children's lives, which resulted in exacerbating the language difficulties the children were already experiencing due to other factors. A further issue of concern was the presentation of a privileged Indian life as the normative experience, which itself is seriously problematic. This aspect needs further interrogation, because it is tied to the aspirations of socio-economically disadvantaged children and their parents.

Memorization

Memorization was a key aspect of learning, observations at both the *anathashram* and the school revealed. In addition to spending a minimum of two periods memorizing texts

each day in school, students also spent a large chunk of their time memorizing during evening studies at the *anathashram*. For English, one of the main texts students were asked to memorize were the compositions. The textbooks and grammar books contained model compositions such as short essays or (formal and informal) letters. The teacher typically wrote out a model composition on the board or students were told which essays to commit to memory from their grammar readers. Students were expected to memorize—"by heart" as the teachers called it—the letters and essays, and reproduce them as faithfully as possible during tests and exams. For example, a model composition for the topic prompt "*The Cow*" for Class VI provided in the grammar reader was:

> 1. The cow is an useful animal. 2. We call her Gau Mata. 3. She has four legs, two ears, two eyes and two horns. 4. She eats grass and straw. 5. She gives us milk. 6. She gives calf. 7. The calves plough the field. 8. They are also used in cart. 9. Hindu worships the cow. 10. Cow are found in black, white and brown colours.

The same topic prompt, "*The Cow*," for Class VII, the next in the grammar series sequence, came with only a slightly modified version:

> Ram has a cow. She is domestic and gentle. She is brown. She has four legs, two eyes, and two ears. She has two horns. Her tail is very long. She has her calf. She loves her calf very much. She eats green grass and straw. She is very fond of gram and wheat. We worship and call her Gau Mata.

For class VIII, the same topic was provided with the following model in the next level in the grammar series:

> The cow is a useful animal. They are white, black, brown or spotted. She eats grass, straw, oil cake or anything that is given. She gives us milk. Milk is good for all. She gives us calves. They plought fields. Her dung is good for farming and cooking food. The Hindus worship her.

An analysis of 30 models across first and eighth grades revealed that they: 1) did not vary much in content or level from one year to the next, or even across several grades, 2) contained many spelling and grammatical errors, and 3) often contained material that was uninteresting or irrelevant to children's lives (as indicated by follow-up interviews). While it is beyond the scope of this study to delve into this here, the religious underpinning of the "Cow" composition models, which presume a Hindu religious affiliation for children reading these putatively secular textbook models, should be noted.

Because of the emphasis on memorization of models, there was little or no incentive for creative expression in English. It ended up being students' memory and recall that was tested. The emphasis was on *jaːɖ kərnaː*, "memorizing," a verb the focal children often used in describing what they were expected to do with their textbooks. The passive learning style the children imbibed is best demonstrated by nine-year-old Gopal's comment when I asked him the difference between learning Hindi and learning English. In English, he told me, "*I do as I am told*" (fieldnotes, August 3, 2011). He was, further questioning revealed, pointing to his engagement with English as *something to memorize*. I do not mean to signal here that memorization skills are not in themselves important for children to acquire; they are. Such

skills are highly valued in the Indian educational context. However, the push for the acquisition of communicative skills are part of the project to have students reflect critically, deeply, and meaningfully about texts and be more competitive in a "global economy" (Krishnaswamy & Krishnaswamy, 2006). In this particular setting, the single-minded push for memorization meant that students felt increasingly alienated from English and from content mediated through it as they proceeded up the classes. The approach fit into a "banking" model of education where students were treated as receptors with limited agency in learning (Freire, 2004). This highlights the passivity with which the focal children imbibed English: instead of it being an engaging, reflective, interactive, and shared learning process—crucial for being competitive within the globalizing Indian marketplace (Annamalai, 2005)—*they did as they were told.* Gopal's silence on Hindi, further, indicated that he found some agency in learning it, an aspect that requires further investigation. Ultimately, this process meant that there was not only *less* learning of language and subject matter, the kind of training they were acquiring was ill-suited to the needs of a transforming Indian educational and economic landscape.

"Question-answers"

Sustained observations at SCB revealed that in general, teachers provided answers to the questions posed in textbooks, which the children then memorized for tests. The cognitive load on the children, thus, was low. Let us take a closer look at this. During observations on February 7, 2011, after *Bade* sir, finished teaching a math lesson to Class V, he assigned Class V math homework, and then turned his attentions to Class IV. He had previously conducted the "lesson reading" for the chapter, "*Bachendri Pal,*" about the first Indian woman to scale Mount Everest, from the *Baby Birds* English textbook. He gestured toward the question: "(B). Write the root words for the following words," which was followed by a numbered list of eight words that appeared in the lesson. *Bade* sir went to the blackboard, and wrote out the answers: 1) mountain, 2) teach, 3) learn, 4) high, 5) continue, 6) climb, 7) success, 8) complete. He then wrote out the answers to the remaining WH-questions given in the book, until the bell rang and the children rushed out for lunch. On yet another day of observations, Class VII students were instructed to copy the comprehension questions into their notebooks, leaving three blank lines between questions. While the children copied the questions, *Bade* sir wrote the answers on the board. The students, after copying the questions, copied the answers. Below, I reproduce the section from the fieldnotes (Feb. 1, 2011) regarding what happened next (All words in Italics have been translated from the Hindi by the author):

> After approximately fifteen minutes, *Bade* sir walked down the aisle, and with his body angled toward the Class VII students, asked: "*Are these seven questions complete?*" Once he was satisfied that the students had copied the work, he said, "*Come, let's go ahead.*" He read out a question. "*There are three options given here, the right option has to be marked out [ticked]. First is, '*Why does he went to see the king?*'...'*Perhaps it was to complain against someone*'...Third one is right, mark the third one. Third one, second, in third [question] second...'*Who said?*' You have to write who said these sentences in front of them. First sentence '*Who said?*' Okay? I am writing [answers] on the board.*" He proceeded to turn his back to the children, and started writing out the answers.

The rest of the period involved his writing out the answers on the board, and the children copying them into their notebook. This sequence was repeated each time at the end of lessons during the observations.

In the process the students, my analysis revealed, developed an expectation that *questions were to be answered by teachers.* They learned to leave blank lines in their notebook to copy answers that the teachers would write on the board. The focus on memorizing "question-answers" (as these were called) also meant that learning was focused more on preparing for tests than on acquiring knowledge. On August 3, 2011, e.g., I found Prateek doing a question that required him to match synonyms across two columns. Instead of finding relationships across the different columns, he kept trying to find relationships down the columns. When he asked me for help, I asked him, which of the fourteen words listed did he know? He pointed to the word "clean" as the only one he knew. When I asked him to go back to the lesson and look at the words in their context, he resisted, saying, "*[the lesson] has been done, not taught…only the question answers have been done.*" That is, the teacher had skipped over the lesson entirely but given out the answers to the questions in the lesson for the upcoming exams. The teachers for their part expressed frustration at the government's decision, enforced through the 2009 *Right to Education Act* (Chapter IV, Section 16), to forbid schools from failing or expelling students until Class VIII. This put pressure on teachers to "feed" answers to students, they claimed, to ensure that students would pass.

The teachers' providing of answers to questions raised concerns at several levels. Because students were largely focused on memorizing answers provided by the teachers for tests, what they were tested on was largely recall and memory skills. Children developed an expectation that answers were to be provided by the teachers; students themselves were not encouraged or incentivized to think of answers themselves. This was not only limited to English learning but extended beyond, to the teaching and learning practices in other subject areas as well. Students thus had little or no incentive to try to understand questions posed in textbooks. The stress on testing thus meant that critical engagement with English—the language in which questions were posed—and other content was minimal, with students being expected to memorize and regurgitate answers. The language skills they acquired through such methods were not easily or sufficiently transferable from text to text and context to content. This led to frustrations on the part of both students and teachers, and clearly hindered learning. There is another important drawback to these practices: all students are required to take the crucial state or national examinations in tenth and twelfth grades (called the Board Exams). They cannot be "fed" those questions in advance, since those are created by independent state and national educational bodies. Their habituation to tackling only those questions to which their teachers have provided solutions and answers thus makes them even more vulnerable and disadvantaged than the privileged few, when during the Board Exams.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

This chapter has explored literacy practices of young learners at an *anathashram* and a village school, with the aim of understanding how the medium of instruction, identified by the school as English, unfolded in practice. I was specifically interested in exploring the different literacy practices that influenced the negotiation of the instructional medium, and their implications for learning. Furthermore, I set out to understand the consequences of the choices made in instructional medium in the classroom context, as well as to explore its larger implications for educational policymaking. The analysis of the data collected revealed

the following aspects that affected the negotiation of the instructional medium: the multi-grade teaching format; reliance on translation in language teaching; an emphasis on memorization; low emphasis on communication skills in classrooms; content mismatch; and teachers' providing of answers to questions.

There are important issues that arise in this analysis. First, the multi-grade teaching approach merits closer and serious examination in the Indian context. It is a normative feature of the Indian classroom, and strongly shapes pedagogy adopted within the classroom and the kind of learning that occurs as a result. Teachers should be provided specific training that incorporates knowledge of multi-grade classroom contexts and the strategies that may be employed therein for effective classroom instruction. Second, pedagogic strategies that rely heavily on translation need to be addressed. While translation is not an inherently unsound practice, unsystematic translation practices, as this study found, made students frustrated and limited their learning of language and content. Third, the extensive and almost exclusive use of memorization in dealing with language and content meant that students were focused more on retaining content than understanding it. While they acquired the ability to read English out loud, albeit with some difficulty, across all grades, they demonstrated extremely limited communicative skills in English. In addition, they did not understand what they read for the most part, a fact that posed challenges when they studied by themselves. Fourth, while communicative skills were the stated curricular goals of textbooks at SCB, classroom practice ran utterly counter to those aims. Children, again, received no communicative practice in English. There needs to be greater awareness among educational stakeholders about such classroom disconnects between curriculum and pedagogy. Stakeholders both from the teaching and publishing sectors need to be brought together to resolve or minimize these issues. Fifth, the content mismatch the children experienced in their textbooks is something that also poses a problem. Publishing companies should work together with schools they serve to understand and better serve their populations, and schools should also be encouraged to consider their student populations in making decisions about which textbooks to order and use. Last but not least, the culture of teachers' providing answers to questions needs to be reconsidered. Students should be encouraged to be more in charge of their own learning, even if the traditional teacher-centric models were to continue. Teaching to the test does not serve either teachers or students well.

Why do these things matter? The case of Anil is a cautionary tale. On March 3, 2012, Anil, a first-year tribal student at the prestigious All-India Institute of Medical Sciences (A.I.I.M.S.) committed suicide. According to national media reports, this was due to stress caused by his inability to follow lectures in English. The son of a poor farmer, Anil had studied in Hindi-medium schools until entering A.I.I.M.S., where the language barrier proved insurmountable. While Anil's tragic end is an extreme case, the difficulties he experienced due to the English-vernacular divide are by no means atypical. Medium of instruction, thus, remains a salient concern in the Indian educational content, and becomes sometimes a question of very survival. As the number of children attending schools labeled English-medium continues to grow in India, there is a need for additional qualitative studies to illuminate the language and literacy practices at such schools. These issues must be dealt with at the micro- as well as macro level, by exploring local literacy practices and connecting them to broader policy concerns. A holistic approach bridging the two can help us better understand the problems and concerns plaguing Indian education. A language policy and planning approach that is more attuned to on-the-ground realities in Indian schools would lead to a more equitable educational context.

CHAPTER V

Concluding remarks

From the obvious only the obvious and superficial results. The profundities of things, their real truth, can best be discovered by penetration into the hidden things that the surface of phenomena conceals, into that past development of which the finished forms present only secret and dispersed indications or into the possibilities from which the actualities we see are only a narrow selection. (Sri Aurobindo, 1998, 50-51)

REVIEW OF THE PROJECT

This ethnographic case study explored English language and literacy in the multilingual Indian context, at an *anathashram* (orphanage) and a village school. The investigation occurred along multiple analytical axes. The first examined institutional discourses about English learning across India and how they were motivated and informed by the dominant theme of "globalization." The second scrutinized English language ideologies manifested in the everyday discursive practices of this study's participants. Finally, a third unpacked salient literacy practices at school and at the *anathashram*, with an eye to understanding the negotiation of English as an instructional medium and its consequences. The multidimensional perspective provided insight into the ways in which English language learning was, discursively and in practice, a space of contestation, difference, and inequity.

A first step in this project was to examine various institutional discourses about learning English. Globalization, I showed, emerged as a predominant theme undergirding ideas around English. Further, ideas about English learning were found to be ensconced within a liberatory rhetoric of globalization. Additionally, I demonstrated that while institutional discourses accepted globalization as *doxa* (Bourdieu, 1981), little attention was paid to its differential intervention along socio-economic lines. Through an analysis of language ideologies manifested within these discourses, I elucidated how such discourses forged a selective, privileged view of the spread and reach of English in India: Within these discourses was a homogenization and leveling of an unequal landscape, where the learning of English was constructed as an imperative and the object of desire for *all* in globalizing India. A second step entailed the analyses of the children's linguistic practices and interview data, which shed light on the ways in which the focal children's language ideologies countered, resisted, and contested the institutional discourses as well as voiced enduring anxieties about English. A third and final step of this investigation explored English literacy practices. The analysis involved the close examination of literacy activities, curricula, and pedagogy at the children's school. The study revealed that factors such as poor infrastructure; multigrade classrooms; teacher-centered pedagogy; level-inappropriate textbooks; emphasis on rote memorization; and the difficulty of teaching and learning in a language in which neither the instructor nor the student had proficiency resulted in limited and superficial English acquisition. Furthermore, it limited children's access to educational content. In light of my findings, I argue that such private English-medium schools catering to poor children not only widen the English-vernacular gap, they also reinforce the role of English in elite formation within an already divided and disparate Indian society.

THEORETICAL REFLECTIONS

Centering institutions, ideological erasure, and globalization

In this study I engaged three core theoretical constructs, that of centering institutions, ideological erasure, and globalization. Briefly, centering institutions (Silverstein, 1998; Blommaert, 2005) are focal nodes of authority responsible for enacting and enforcing *doxa,* defined as the "acceptance of the established order situated outside the reach of critique" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 247), at different levels of society. The centering force of institutions, furthermore, entails "either perceptions or real processes of homogenisation and uniformisation: orienting towards such a centre involves the (real or perceived) reduction of difference and the creation of recognizably 'normative' meaning" (Blommaert, 2005, p. 75). Ideological erasure is defined as "the process in which ideology, in simplifying the sociolinguistic field, renders some persons or activities (or sociolinguistic phenomena) invisible" (Irvine & Gal, 2000, p. 38). Globalization is described as "the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa" (Giddens, 1990, p. 64). These constructs enabled me to clarify mechanisms for the discursive constitution and reproduction of iniquity around English in India.

In Chapter II of this investigation, I showed how centering institutions, operating discursively through the courts, policymaking agencies, and the media, disseminated specific, normativizing ideas about the spread, reach, and utility of English in India. We saw that Indian institutional discourses crafted strongly homogenizing views about the role, place, and importance of English in India, despite the disparity and diversity characteristic of the Indian context. Important to note here is that within these discourses, globalization emerged as an important trope, entwined with the formulation of English as an imperative for Indian citizens. The framing of globalization was part of a similar homogenizing exercise. The push toward homogeny and uniformity on both these fronts, I showed, necessitated the enactment of ideological erasure of difference. In this manner, the centering force of institutions led to ideological erasure enacted in discourse. This resulted in the discursive leveling of an unequal landscape, where English was cast as an imperative and the object of desire for *all* in globalizing India, as text after text revealed. Globalization, furthermore, was constructed as intervening in India in an uncomplicated, egalitarian, and positive manner. The portrayal of the intervention of globalization in India, specifically with reference to notions around English and technology, appeared to be diametrically different from on-the-ground realities (see Chapter II). Within this investigation, Chapters III and IV provided important counterpoints to the perspectives manifested in macro-institutional discourses. Chapter III, on the one hand, illuminated language ideologies that were dramatically different from those manifested in national institutional discourses. Chapter IV, on the other hand, provided an intimate view of English literacy practices in a village school that ran counter to or problematized assumptions made about English learning within institutional discourses.

These moves are important to parse out for several different reasons. Such discourses mask inequalities in their bid to homogenize the Indian landscape, by crafting select, privileged perspectives that ignore or deliberately render invisible difference. The differential possibilities and avenues available to Indians across different socio-economic divides are subsumed within a broad, unitized umbrella of equal opportunity. Importantly,

these discourses suggest that it is the acquisition of English that can open doors, not the kind of English, even though the distinction is critical. English by itself cannot offer opportunities: it is a particular kind of English that is valued in the "globalizing" Indian marketplace and higher education (see Annamalai, 2005). By neglecting to make note of this crucial distinction, institutional discourses can ignore the complex problems of poor resources, inadequate teacher training, ill-adapted pedagogy, and limited access to English that plagues children from lower socio-economic strata, in sharp contradistinction to the educational opportunities available to children from more privileged backgrounds.

The centering force of institutions, therefore, resulted in the discursive modification and homogenization of beliefs about English and its learning, instead of their representation (see Spolsky & Shohamy, 2000). In order to do this, the discourses enacted language ideological erasure, as well as perpetuated the notion that globalization intervened in similar ways across India. Both these moves ultimately served to fashion an equal India, starkly different from the inequities, disparities, and diversities that mark the landscape. Because these centering institutions play influential, dominant roles within India, these moves need to be highlighted, critically analyzed, and problematized, especially with reference to the ways in which they reinforce systems of power and contribute to the reproduction of inequality.

Medium of Instruction

In addition to contributing to the study of discourses and ideologies, this examination also focused on schooling, curriculum, and instruction. A core aspect of that part of the investigation entailed the problematization of the notion of instructional medium within SCB School, a school that self-identified as English-medium. As a small school located in a suburban village, it had few trained teachers, limited pedagogical resources, and infrastructural constraints. These conditions produced and reproduced some of the broader systemic problems within the Indian education system, which include teacher absenteeism, multigrade teaching, limited funding, gender disparity, poverty and child labor, inadequate infrastructure, high dropout rates, corruption, graft, and spotty enactment of educational policy (see Bose, 2012; Kingdon & Muzzamil, 2009; Kumar, Kumar, & Narula, 2011; Little, 2006; Mehrotra, 2012; Reddy & Sinha, 2010; Sajjad, Iqbal, Siddiqui & Siddiqui, 2012; Tandon & Mohanty, 2003; Grant 2012). This investigation, while pointing to broader practical problems with the general schooling of poorer children within the Indian context, signaled a gap in the theoretical conceptualization of instructional medium, the analytic focus of Chapter IV. The multi-grade teaching format; reliance on translation in language teaching; an emphasis on memorization; low emphasis on communication skills in classrooms; and content mismatch led to difficulties in the acquisition of English, and, by extension, of educational content. This investigation adds to the emerging literature on medium of instruction within the Indian context (e.g., Annamalai, 2005; Khubchandani, 2003; Mohanty, Panda & Pal, 2010), and sheds greater light on an issue that, while a significant challenge for the Indian educational system, receives far less scholarly and policy attention than it deserves. Beyond unpacking the negotiation of instructional medium at SCB, this study also posed questions about what kinds of English may be acquired in such contexts, with what consequences for students and for language policy planning more broadly conceived. The larger issue here, ultimately, is that of inequality. Children across a wide socio-economic spectrum attend what are labeled as English-medium schools; however, the quality of (language) education acquired at such schools varies widely (my own middle class experience,

e.g., was vastly different than the focal children's, even though I went to school a mere 13 miles away). The national discussion around English teaching and learning, however, glosses over this critical point, thereby enacting ideological erasure. The children attending SCB School, while attending a school identified as English-medium, did not acquire functional or communicative English, I found. As they proceeded through higher classes, in fact, their difficulties with English and content continued to grow. The core problem in the educational experience of the focal children stemmed from this disconnect between what was labeled as the instructional medium (English), and what was the medium of instruction (Hindi/English-in-translation) in classroom practice. This investigation, therefore, provides a strong rationale for conducting more studies in theoretically mapping out the notion of medium of instruction, a complex and crucial issue in multilingual contexts.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Specific Pedagogical Recommendations

In this section I outline a variety of specific pedagogical recommendations growing out of this investigation. First, it is crucial to develop systematic strategies for dealing with multilingual, multigrade pedagogical contexts at schools like SCB. In this context, Little's (2001) suggestions are instructive to revisit. She suggested exploring different strategies teachers employ in multigrade contexts; isolating best practices, especially in impoverished schools; facilitating teachers' sharing of multigrade pedagogical approaches; and examining the integration of multigrade pedagogy concerns in teacher training curricula. At SCB, the multigrade nature of the classroom imposed real constraints. Little's (2001) suggestions may be used to guide teachers on how to deal with issues arising from the multigrade context. It is recommended that teachers engage in regular dialogue about strategies they use in their classes and pinpoint best practices. The school could also facilitate teachers' collaboration with teachers teaching under similar conditions to explore strategies across comparable contexts. The school could also look into providing teacher-training materials that focus on this issue. The Rishi Valley Education Centre (Chittor, Andhra Pradesh), e.g., offers Teachers' Resource Packs that provide training materials for this purpose. The CREATE Pathways to Access, Research Monographs No. 17 and No. 26 (Blum & Diwan, 2007; Little, 2001) also offer useful suggestions for teachers working in multi-grade contexts.

Second, the curricula at SCB need to be carefully and seriously reevaluated, since, as it now stands, it is not appropriately serving the needs of teachers or students. Some critical questions first need to be asked in determining the curricular needs of SCB teachers and students. What is the target population for the textbooks being used? How does it square with current student and teacher needs? What kinds of training do these textbooks assume teachers have, and do teachers have the training required to employ methods used in the books? How do the methods adopted by the textbooks align with teachers' preferred teaching methods? What can be done to bridge the gaps, and what alternative textbooks and approaches may be considered? Additionally, what kind of access to English is presumed for students? How does it match up with students' own experiences? What kind of English skills do these textbooks aim for? For what reasons? How does it relate to the needs of students at SCB School? Exploring these questions would go a long way in bridging the gap between textbook and teacher pedagogical approaches.

Third, while rote memorization has its place in teaching and learning, the almost exclusive reliance on such information in learning for tests was observed to be stunting

students' acquisition of language and content. This is particularly so because the focus at SCB, I found, was not on learning per se, but learning for exams. Students focused only on memorizing questions and answers and model compositions in English, without attending to issues of comprehension. There has to be a reconsideration of this practice, and an evaluation of what other strategies may be adopted and integrated into the teaching and learning process to better serve the students in the long term.

Fourth, there is the issue of translation practices. Translation practices have long been part of the second/foreign language teaching process across the world (Herron, 1976; Howatt, 1984; Rutherford, 1987). In India, translation practices have been a core part of the language teaching process (Sheorey, 2006). While translation can be used effectively for developing a variety of language skills in SL/FL contexts (see, e.g., Canagarajah, 1999; Cook, 2007; Duff, 1989; Ellis, 1992; Kramsch, 1993; Littlewood & Yu, 2011; Widdowson, 1979), this investigation revealed that the translation practices engaged in by the teachers and students resulted in serious and enduring difficulties for students in the acquisition of English. The unsystematic translation practices, where textual extracts were translated without explanation of which lexical and semantic forms were being included and which left out, resulted in confusion for the students and made it difficult for them to decode texts when working by themselves. While content was conveyed through translation during teaching, it was often forgotten, only partially remembered, or misremembered afterward, as I discovered. Because of these issues, it is recommended that teachers use translation in a more systematic manner, by bringing attention to form and content.

Fifth is the issue of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). CLT methods were initially met with resistance within the Indian classroom context. The economic reforms of the 1990s, however, gave rise to a growing demand for English communicative skills in many workplaces, and, over time, CLT techniques have slowly gained acceptance (Gupta, 2004). This has led to the adoption of textbooks using CLT methodology across a variety of contexts in India, but a key concern is that many teachers have not received training in using them. Teachers at SCB, e.g., consistently ignored all communicative tasks and taught the textbooks using grammar-translation methods. As Ellis (1996) has warned, for CLT to work in Asian contexts, it is necessary that it be both "culturally attuned and culturally accepted" (p. 213). Textbooks that use CLT methods thus need to be more culturally sensitive, and teachers need training in these in order to make the most efficient use of these texts. Another possibility is hybridizing traditional and newer teaching practices so that more effective teaching and learning can occur[17] (see, e.g., Chang, 2011; Holliday, 1994; Kong, 2011; Li, 1998).

Educational Policy Recommendations

In addition to the more local, site-specific nature of the recommendations outlined in the previous section, I offer the following broader educational policy recommendations arising as a result of this investigation.

Disconnects between national institutional and local discourses regarding English education need to be urgently and carefully addressed. As I have argued here, in terms of language policy in particular, local language ideologies need to be taken into consideration in

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[17] It is important to bear in mind while adopting these recommendations, however, as Beaumont and Chang (2011) have pointed out, that the traditional/communicative divide is not entirely clear-cut; this should therefore also be factored into any discussions around the two pedagogical practices.

order to create policies and encourage practices that are sensitive to and respond to the language educational needs of local students. This requires that national institutional discourses be more tuned in to contexts on the ground. This can be done by sending policymakers out into the field as well as inviting teacher's voices into policymaking to get a better sense of on-the-ground realities.

Additionally, medium of instruction continues to be a thorny issue in Indian educational policy-making. This issue is at the heart of many serious and pressing problems facing Indian education today (see, e.g., Annamalai, 2005; Khubchandani, 2003; Mohanty, Panda & Pal, 2010). More systematic analyses need to be undertaken, across diverse contexts, to grapple with this urgent problem. Because India's rich multilingualism forms a formidable educational challenge, it is recommended that N.C.E.R.T., national and regional educational policymaking bodies, scholars, teacher-practitioners and other educational stakeholders come together in national and local dialogues at different venues (such as the *National Multilingual Education Resource Consortium*, e.g.) to rethink pedagogical, policy-based, and programmatic issues arising from the multilingualism of India's children and its language educational policy implications, paying particular attention to the issue of medium of instruction.

Another important aspect that arose in this investigation was that SCB, while labeled an English-medium school, did not turn out to be so in practice. As noted earlier, this is not a unique situation. Given that many poorer parents (who may not have received formal education or English instruction) enroll their children in such schools precisely because of their self-identification as English-medium, this is an issue of some concern. National and local educational organizations, therefore, need to develop some method of categorization to regulate which schools may be identified as English-medium.

Furthermore, in addition to English, Indian vernaculars must also come into greater focus. There should be a close examination of the role and place of vernaculars within the Indian educational system. Several issues need to be taken into consideration. What kinds of linguistic hierarchies exist between vernaculars? How does the use of standardized varieties of languages in the classroom influence learning? What is their relationship to English? What are different language ideologies among different educational stakeholders about the vernaculars? That is, what are the educational, cultural, economic valences of vernaculars according to educational stakeholders?

Given that the vast majority of Indian children attend vernacular-medium schools, the existence of only English-medium higher education puts most students from vernacular medium at a disadvantage. It is pertinent here to revisit the story of Anil, whose tragic destiny I mentioned in Chapter IV. In March 2012, Anil, a first-year *adivasi*[18] (tribal) student at the prestigious All-India Institute of Medical Sciences (A.I.I.M.S.) committed suicide. According to national media reports, this was due to stress caused by his inability to follow lectures in English. The son of a poor farmer, Anil had studied in Hindi-medium schools until entering A.I.I.M.S., where the language barrier proved insurmountable. While Anil's tragic end is an extreme case, the difficulties he experienced due to the English-vernacular divide are by no means atypical as this investigation revealed (see also, Annamalai, 2005; Ramanathan, 2005b). The frustrations he underwent parallel and mirror many poorer Indian children's experiences. It is therefore of pivotal importance that the government invest in vernacular higher education in addition to improving English teaching and learning practices.

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[18] For a discussion on the complex circulation of the term*, see Steur (2009).

Moreover, Chapter II revealed that the divergent needs of a diverse student population were not taken into account in institutional discursive frames. Because such discourses influence educational policy, the homogenizing view of student needs means that this results in the loss of nuance and understanding of a wide range of student needs in policymaking. There are multiple levels of student needs as far as English skills are concerned, both local and international (see Kramsch & Sullivan, 1996), yet this gets lost in institutional discourses. It is therefore recommended that student needs be more carefully and thoroughly assessed.

The policy enacted in the 2009 *Right to Education Act* (Chapter IV, Section 16) forbidding schools from failing or expelling students until Class VIII, furthermore, seems to be encouraging teaching to the test, since all students are required to pass the exams. This policy, while well intentioned, does not serve students or teachers well. This particular policy should be reconsidered in light of this drawback.

Additionally, this investigation supports the claim that there is a great need for better training facilities, resources, and pedagogical support for teachers (Dyer, 1996; Kingdon & Sipahimalani-Rao, 2010), particularly given the complex challenges faced in most Indian classrooms. This requires not just a reconsideration of existing teacher-training curriculum but wide-ranging outreach measures involving teachers in the field through regular workshops and training sessions.

Given the scale of the Indian educational system; the diversity of languages; poverty and socio-economic disparities; graft; language and regional politics; and infrastructural constraints, these recommendations will be challenging but not impossible to implement. The consequence of not attending to these issues will, however, mean the perpetuation of a divided, inequitable, and disparate society.

METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

Willis and Trondman (2002) described ethnography as "a family of methods involving direct and sustained social contact with agents and of richly writing up the encounter, respecting, recording, representing at least partly in its own terms the irreducibility of human experience" (p. 394). It is this very project that I undertook during this investigation. Through long-term engagement with participants, detailed documentation of texts, and (re)presentation of encounters, I sought "to produce historically, politically and personally situated accounts, descriptions, interpretations and representations of human lives" (Tedlock, 2000, p. 455). In the course of this investigation I have kept in mind the unique intricacies and complexities of the ethnographic endeavor, with the goal of capturing the richness of the contexts under examination through the use of rigorous methods.

While yielding important insights, the methods employed in this investigation have posed some difficult challenges. One of the important methodological issues here was the circulation of multiple languages, namely Hindi, Bengali, Sanskrit, English, and dialectical variations of Hindi and Bengali, in the two sites under examination. For the purposes of transcription, I initially represented the different languages in their respective fonts in MS Word, but due to the subsequent development of a series of software glitches and document stability issues, I switched to rendering the scripts in IPA. As Bucholz (2000) has importantly cautioned us, however, IPA brings with it its own set of socio-cultural assumptions that need to be factored into any analysis. I preserved the dialectical language forms in the IPA, but did not make note of dialectical shifts in the English translations. This was a hard decision to take, but I felt the dialectical variations were difficult and problematic to render in translation

and were not essential for making sense of the meaning. Importantly, in this investigation, translations and transcriptions were considered to be "socioculturally embedded linguistic and metalinguistic practice" (Bucholtz, 2007, p.785)(see also, Ochs, 1979). Moerman's (1996) cautioning that transcripts are ultimately only "claims to translate" was kept in mind, since, as he also noted, we as researchers "must all recognize that it is never as a certified unchanging truth that an analyst presents an utterance in one language as the equivalent of an utterance in another language" (p. 150).

Cameras posed another challenge at the start of the investigation. The focal children had rarely encountered them, and were initially shy to be photographed and videotaped. The self-consciousness quickly turned to delight for the focal children, and this caused other problems: the children kept trying to pose, instead of ignoring the camera's gaze. This problem was compounded by the physical constraints of the spaces I recorded in, i.e., the compact classrooms and the crowded *anathashram* dorms. There were two ways in which I minimized this problem. First, I allowed them "photo time" during which I took pictures of them posing for the camera. However, I explained that once that time was over, they should try to ignore its presence to the extent possible, a directive they generally followed. Second, I made sure to leave some time every week (particularly weekends) to spend time with the children without recording, so that they would get some respite from being recorded and also become more used to being observed, but with less pressure. I would make brief notes while I observed them which I would type up later, and these times helped me engage with them without the somewhat intrusive gaze of the recorder. These two strategies helped integrate the camera within the contexts within a few weeks.

While posing challenges, the methodological issues arising during the investigation also facilitated deep reflection on the process of conducting ethnographic work, thereby enriching this study.

RESEARCHER POSITIONALITY

My own positioning within the anathashram and SCB School influenced the nature of the data collected, analysis conducted, and provided an additional source of reflection on the data. As noted earlier, I grew up in nearby New Delhi, some 13 miles away, in a similar linguistic landscape. I grew up speaking Bengali at home; spoke Hindi for socializing with friends and locals; picked up Urdu in my teens; and was socialized into Sanskrit through religious rituals and also studied it in school for many years. Because of the background of my father, a Bengali who grew up in rural Bihar, I understand Bihari, and can also comprehend Punjabi and Nepali since these languages circulated widely around me growing up in Delhi. This linguistic context is one remarkably similar to the one the focal children were immersed in, a point that helped me immensely in gaining entrance into the community, finding acceptance within it, as well as in better equipping me to understand and unpack local ideologies. My exposure to and experience with other languages, however, does not align with that of the focal children's. I attended a private English-medium school in South Delhi, and also received elementary schooling in upstate New York in 5th and 6th grades (while accompanying my father on his sabbatical). I also had plenty of access to English through books, films, and TV growing up, unlike the focal children. In the course of this investigation, I have reflected on my privileges and language ideologies, and been careful to factor them into the analyses.

Adapting to the linguistic context for me meant being flexible during data collection. I engaged with the children in both Bengali and Hindi; spoke with the *ashram* administrators

and assistants in Bengali; interviewed policymakers in Hindi and English; and collaborated with the principal and teachers in Hindi. Code-switching between different languages was an important practice within these encounters, one that I also engaged in. My proficiency in the participants' own languages facilitated easier dialog, allowed me access to the communities in important ways, and also enabled me to catch nuances in language use for analytic purposes.

Beyond the linguistic, other aspects affected my positioning within the sites. At the *anathashram*, e.g., I was referred to as *didi* ("elder sister"). This was more than a customary term of respect and affection: the *anathashram* boys invited me to tie *rakhi* (sacred thread) on their wrists for *Raksha Bandhan*, a Hindu festival that celebrates the bond between brothers and sisters, which I did. In tying *rakhis* on them, in the last month of data collection, I not only felt profoundly grateful and humbled, I also most clearly realized the complexity of the bonds that exist between researchers and their study participants.

Other aspects also played an important role, such as my marital status, the fact that my husband is American (a fact known to participants), my being a researcher, my age, my gender, my Indian background, my student status in American academia, as well as my explicit interest in language issues. I reflected on these in the notes I maintained, keeping them in mind as the investigation progressed. During the course of the study, I also used my political, socio-cultural, historical, and linguistic knowledge acquired by growing up in India to reflect on the ways in which I positioned myself as well as the ways in which I found myself positioned. My complex, shifting standing within the two sites, where I was variously positioned as a local, an NRI (Non-Resident Indian), and a foreigner, made it both easier and harder to conduct this study. My appearance and proficiency in Bengali and Hindi, e.g., made it easier to "blend in" with the community and gain members' trust, but my proficiency in English, my being a researcher "from America", among others, created divides between my participants and I. My self-positioning and the positioning by others in the field thus led to fluid, complex, and multi-layered encounters that enriched my experience as an ethnographer while also allowing me to reflect richly on the data in multiple ways.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

While the study spanned four years, because of constraints of time (as I was a full-time graduate student at UC Berkeley), I could not spend as much time as I would have liked to at the sites. Even during sustained data collection in Noida, there were intervening constraints, such as winter and summer holidays (during which some of the focal children left to visit their parents or legal guardians), and several national and regional holidays also fell during the data collection period, limiting the amount of data collected.

Additionally, the *anathashram* setting posed some problems. Because of the unique home context, there was no direct or immediate access to parents or legal guardians. I only encountered some of them briefly, typically during celebrations of religious festivals at the *ashram*. Most parents and legal guardians were unavailable because they lived far away. This meant that I could not get a direct sense of the literacy practices and language ideologies the children had encountered and been socialized to in their parents' or guardians' homes. I tried to minimize this problem by: asking children about their language and literacy practices when they spent time with their parents or legal guardians; asking questions about parents' and legal guardians' language ideologies; and documenting their prior experiences with literacy and schooling.

The *anathashram* context also meant that the children's learning happened in accordance with the institutional norms and practices established for the children by the

priest and the *ashram* assistants. Because the *ashram* was part of a larger network of ashrams across the country, these practices also drew on the larger learning and teaching philosophies of the network, which were not directly accessible to me.

There were several other factors that need to be considered. I had complex, shifting, and unstable insider/outsider status within the two communities, and this undoubtedly shaped participants' responses and behaviors to some degree. While there was no linguistic divide as far as Hindi and Bengali were concerned, my proficiency in English was often remarked upon by both the focal children as well as the teachers at the site; I was constructed as the English "expert." My specific interest in researching English issues has also potentially influenced participants' responses and behaviors. The socio-economic divide between the participants and I was also something that I was conscious of in making sense of the data, and also would have played some role in my negotiations at both the sites, a point that is not fleshed out in this study.

Additionally, I was generally the sole female in the *ashram*, which had male administrators and assistants and, of course, the children were all boys. At SCB School, most of the teachers were male, and I had maximum interactions with them. I perceived some of the spaces I encountered as gendered, but given the focus and scope of my study, I did not engage in these issues, although this could have been useful to unpack. Finally, the focal children were interviewed and observed in sites where they were under supervision. This also constrained children's behavior and responses to me. The teachers, because they were observed and interviewed at the school site, were also constrained in what they felt they could share with me in the presence or vicinity of the principal. Regardless of these limitations, the data paints a picture that is strongly faithful to the participants' lives.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

While this study engages in different issues regarding the vernaculars, this aspect remains underdeveloped in the study. Greater research needs to be conducted to identify salient ideologies about vernacular languages, such as Hindi and Bengali. The hierarchies within these languages also need to be unpacked in different contexts. Another issue that would be productive to analyze is how different dialects are discursively framed, i.e., what position they fill in the Indian language ideology landscape. Unearthing these ideologies would help inform local language educational policies, and offer insights into the challenges faced by linguistic minorities (such as migrants, as are the focal children of this study). Because English was the primary focus of this investigation, these issues were not dealt with here, and would benefit from further study.

Another important issue that would be useful to explore is whether and how those local forms of knowledge that have been historically transmitted through Indian languages are sustained, given a growing shift toward English-medium instruction. It would also be useful to examine how English-medium instruction transforms, modifies, or shapes the knowledge that is transmitted. What is being lost, modified, or retained in the transitioning to English-medium? An exploration of these questions would help locate the kinds of heritage knowledge transmitted and mediated through different languages, and explore their socio-cultural consequences.

Another aspect that merits further study is the effect of the mediation of instruction as it occurs at SCB on the acquisition of knowledge in other subject areas. Since the focus of this investigation was English, this is one area that I did not delve deeply into, since I had determined through analyzing the teaching of different lessons that the mediation of

instruction was remarkably similar. A detailed analysis of language and literacy practices across subject areas such as science, math, and computers would, it is hoped, yield additional insight across learning contexts.

On a related note, it was reported in June 2013 that the Supreme Court has decided to revisit an earlier verdict on the right of a state government to require the use of a regional or local language in primary schools analyzed in Chapter II (Venkatesan, 2013). This points to the fact that the medium of instruction issue remains a charged issue in Indian language policymaking, and underscores the importance of continuing research on this issue. As it is a core concern in the Indian educational system, it would be useful to follow the debates that occur in the Supreme Court in addition to using the questions in defining the terms of the debate.

There are several important aspects of pedagogy that merit further investigation. Teachers' negotiation of and beliefs toward Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) practices are especially important, given the growing popularity of CLT textbooks in India. Investigations could unfold along several lines: In what specific ways are CLT practices at odds with or harmonious with their current practices across different contexts? How do teachers' educational backgrounds, pedagogical practices, and language ideologies frame their understanding and use of CLT techniques? What kinds of hybrid practices could be adopted in dealing with the disconnect arising from mismatches between teaching styles and textbook methods? What kinds of learning would hybrid practices entail? Further research in this area could help address the concerns arising from the disconnect outlined, as well as offer practical pedagogical recommendations.

Rote memorization practices that are part of traditionally-derived learning techniques, and are extensively used in learning at the *anathashram* and SCB School, also need to be unpacked in greater detail through further studies. Furthermore, the embodied nature of these practices also needs to be excavated and explored to assess if and how these vary across different languages and educational contexts. Continuing research on rote memorization techniques is essential because it is important to understand the affordances, strengths, and drawbacks of these practices and see how they align with educational stakeholders' goals for language learning.

Another issue that would be fruitful to explore is English's complex functioning as both a second and foreign language in India. A second language is a language that is not a mother tongue and acquired in a context where that (second) language is predominant, whereas the term foreign language refers to a language acquired in instructional or study abroad contexts in furtherance of educational or career goals (Kramsch, 2008). The usefulness of this distinction as a heuristic to understand language acquisition and education challenges facing Indian children could be crucially important for the future. It would illuminate the distinct challenges of Indian children facing differential access to English across different socio-economic contexts.

Additionally, given the discursive arc of the institutional discourses uncovered in Chapter II, it is important to more deeply explore what kinds of English language skills are desired at various socio-economic levels in India. A related question arises: How are the demands and desires motivated by local and global needs? These are important issues that have been engaged with in this dissertation, but need fuller development through further investigations. On a related note, additional research is required to unpack globalization discourses and uncover the ways in which they engage with or ignore questions of socio-economic and educational equity. While this dissertation shows how this works within

specific Indian institutional discourses, it is important to also find out how this unravels across a wide variety of discursive contexts to get a fuller picture of the issues at stake.

Furthermore, in order to get a better sense of the scope and scale of the problem of differential education afforded across different English-medium schools, there needs to be sustained ethnographic investigations of English-medium schools across a socio-economic cross-section of Indian society. Comparative studies that explore this issue across socio-economic divides would shed more light on the different ways in which children are differently educated across such divides. Ethnographic studies that also explore out-of-school access to English across different socio-economic strata would also shed light on other factors that affect schooling success.

With the Indian parliament's passage of *The Right to Education Act* (*RTE*) in 2009 mandating, for the first time, free and compulsory education for all children between the ages of six and fourteen, roughly eight million new children (many among India's poorest) are being introduced into the world's second largest educational system. The deadline for *RTE* implementation passed in March 2013. As schools have only recently begun to fully comply with *RTE* requirements, however, it is unclear how the English-vernacular gap will be impacted by *RTE*. Research needs to be conducted to explore how the issues, concerns, and problems investigated here will be affected by *RTE* implementation across the country. In particular, its implications for access, equity, and rights within the Indian educational system need to be examined. While the idea of universal education is inherently desirable and commendable, care has to be taken to ensure that it is education that makes a more equal society, not one that systematically produces and reproduces inequalities. Refocusing attention from the aim of mere access to that of substance presents the major challenge to educational researchers who seek answers to the question of educational equity in India.

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87

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APPENDIX 1.

Transcription Conventions

Underlining:	Vocalic emphasis.
(.)	Brief pause of less than (0.2).
(0.2)	The numbers indicate silence, represented in tenths of a second.
(( ))	Description of scenic details.
( )	Transcriptionist doubt.
.	Falling intonation contour.
?	Marked rising intonation.
↑↓	Rising and falling intonation.
[ ]	Overlapping talk.
!	Animated speech tone.
-	Halting, abrupt cut off of sound or word.