** Centre for English Language Studies** 

**School of Humanities, University of Hyderabad, India**

Report on the

One-day Symposium on

The Historiography of English Education in India

29 January 2015

Coordinators: Pingali Sailaja and Sunita Mishra

The symposium began with the inaugural session in which Professor Sunita Mishra, Head, CELS, welcomed the participants. Professor Pingali Sailaja introduced the symposium and presented the details of the work being done in CELS as part of the university funded (UPE) project on *English Education in India*. The Dean, School of Humanities, Professor Amitabha Dasgupta gave his observations on the work being done by the Centre, and the relevance of English education in India. Professor Shreesh Chaudhary, of IIT(M), Chennai, gave the inaugural address and Dr Jasti Appa Swami gave the vote of thanks.

Pingali Sailaja described the scope of the university funded project undertaken by some of the faculty in CELS. In the first phase of the project, the focus was on all of India. In the second phase (currently running) the focus is on English education in Orissa and Madras Presidency, and in the latter case, after Independence, specific focus is on Tamil Nadu. She gave an overview of the aims of the project, and the attempt to create an archive of material pertaining to English in India. The aim is to document the manner in which English education has been disseminated in India from the earliest times. She gave illustrations of the different types of documents and other materials being collected for the project, and also highlighted some of the challenges faced by the researchers in putting together this archive.

Shreesh Chaudhary in his keynote address “**Sources and Resources for the Story of English in India”** spokeon the uniqueness of the spread of English in India,the sources for writing this history, and the locations, such as public and private libraries, and archives in India and abroad that contain much relevant material. He also alerted the audience to the fast disappearing nature of the materials due to wanton destruction and also the inevitable effects of the climate.

M Sridhar’s talk on **“Representation of Historical Aspects of English Education in Different Types of Texts by Telugus”** discussed the reception of English by the Telugu speaking people in the country as represented in their (creative) writings. He maintained that one should be cautious in reconstructing the history of English education in India, so that local specificities of its reception are not ignored.

Amol Padwad’stalk on **“Historiography of ELE in India: Points to Ponder”** pointed to the initiatives on the historiography, the sources,and theroles of different players in English in India and the issues that need to be addressed in such an enterprise. He proposed some action points for this study, the primary one being the establishment of a group that will share its research.

Santosh Mahapatrain his talk on **“Michael West’s *Bilingualism* and his Teaching Materials: An Evaluative Study”** discussed West’s notion of bilingualism and how it comes through in the study materials proposed and designed by him. He examined the works in the context of post-colonial re-readings of texts and attempted to establish to what extent West’s new method aimed to ‘empower’ and ‘normalise’.

Krishna K Dixit’s “**Towards Exploring the Notion of English in India”** presented a broad framework for the study of English education in India. He proposed that English in India has at least four different conceptualizations—as a language of employment, as a medium of instruction, as education and as a language of social justice and equality. He attempted to link these to language teaching.

R. Vennelain herpresentation on**“Using Methodology - Historiographic Research and its relevance in Studying English Language Education (ELE) in 19th Century Madras”** discussed methodological issuesthat maybe relevant to the study of ELE in Madras Presidency. The primary issues dealt with were historiography and its relationship to historicism and history, and some of the methods used in such a study.

Ramesh Mallik and Sunita Mishra in their presentation on **“English Education in Odissa – The Silences and the Voices”** discussed the noticeable absence of discourse on the need for or advantage of English education in Orissa during the nineteenth century while there is ample evidence of increasing use of English. They ascribed this to the urgency the educated elite felt at this point to establish Odiya as an independent language.

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