

## **Mother Tongue Teaching Practices in Primary Schools**

**A. Joseph Jeyabal**

**Research Scholar Department of Linguistics Madurai Kamaraj University**

**Madurai – 625021**

**Email: [ajjeyabal1982@gmail.com](mailto:ajjeyabal1982@gmail.com)**

**Cell: 9698433326**

### **Abstract**

Tamil language has the most and largest traditional background in its origin. It is very easiest language for the best communication when we compare with other languages in the world. A good communication process helps the person to understand the views, thoughts and get perfect knowledge about the particular issues. Language helps to share one's feelings and thoughts exactly. Language teaching is a kind of an art. The language teaching methods and new strategies help the language teacher to teach the mother tongue easily in the schools. The different types of teaching methods are being used by the language teachers that are prescribed by the Department of Education in the State Government Education Policy.

The primary classes one to fifth contain the mother tongue teaching practices in a play mode. The mother tongue teacher teaches the language initially by showing some pictures, objects, colors, letters and finally making some small words through fixing more than one letter. Also the mother tongue teaching practices are being followed with the help of vowels and consonants table and the students will start to create the basic words by using the vowels and consonants. The initial stage of mother tongue teaching defines the clarity in knowing the each letters of vowel and consonant. If the finding of word order is clear then the language teacher tries to make the student to compile a sentence by making use of the words. The adequate practices will help the mother tongue teacher to get good result in their language teaching. This paper particularly frames different strategies about the mother teaching.

**Key words:** teach, teacher, students, language, methods, type, syllabus, school, mother tongue, children, students

### **Introduction**

The first language (MT) is mainly to be focused in the beginning of schooling. It is highly important for the young children to learn the language in their mother tongue without any fail and it is gifted to them by acquiring the same language system in their school environment too. Similarly, all the parents want their children to learn the first language (MT) fluently and speak very well in front of others. Accordingly the syllabus has comprised by the school Education Department of Tamilnadu and has taken the enormous initiative in teaching the mother tongue without any lose. Basically the syllabus making takes an important role in teaching the mother tongue to the youngest kids in the schools. When we have gone through the syllabus construction of primary level, we could able to understand the creativity of different teaching strategies being followed while teaching the mother tongue. Instead of relating the content with literally described in the curriculum base, much importance has given to the learning of mother tongue by play mode technique.

Children have a colorful, enthusiastic and creative thinking in learning such a developing activity through the school curriculum. They have a lot of innovative thinking power about the content of the subject when we start to teach the lesson. The present Era children are molded in performing the basic and normal activities whatever they think in their mind. They often like to omit it with their parents and friends those who are around them without knowing that whether it is correct or not. The initial stage of observing the things may not be proper and exact order but their deliverance of ability in all the facts will be cheerful. If the language teacher of MT accompanies with the school children, having the potential of teaching the MT in highly technical structured, they will get refresh in their learning and the teachers of MT also will be boosted in their teaching. The intension of creating the textbook syllabus is to take over the MT learning of children to acquire the knowledge of subject matter along with creative teaching aids that are picturized in the textbook. While teaching the MT, the language teacher also teaches about the social existence, cultural background, literature and art of our Tamil history in the subject teaching.

### First standard textbook

The first standard 'samccheer' textbook begins with playing activity for the students. The first standard children learn the basic classroom behavior with the friends and teacher. Through various kinds of designed pictures the students observe the objects, colors and even different type of playing method with other students. Secondly, the textbook contains maximum related letters and name of the animals, objects. From the given pattern, the students have to identify the correct and exact answer for the question raised by the teachers. Mainly the teacher instructed to teach the everyday activities in the classroom and ask the students to say it in the class. This kind of discussion with other students will make the child to induce their creativity and innovation in terms of different level of learning. It makes a chance to acquire the subject knowledge and the teacher starts to teach the vowels and consonants slowly.

### Introducing of vowels

The Tamil language has 12 vowels and 18 consonants. The subject teacher starts to teach the vowels with different types of objects which carry the same letter. Each letter has more than five verities of words and it will be in the textbook. All those words are also being used in their social environment. So they can easily understand the letters as well as the words. The initial stage of introducing the vowels, the teacher pronounces the letters with the help of normal practice what he/she had in their previous mother tongue learning. There are some language teacher uses some creative method of functions in teaching the vowels and consonants.

Here the textbook follows the vowel's teaching pattern like this..

/a, a:/	-	/anilum, a:lamaramum/
/i, i:/	-	/ilani:rum, i:ccamaramum/
/u, u:	-	/uralum, u:ncalum/
/e, e:/	-	/erupum, e:nijum/
/ai, o, o:/	-	/ai! ottakamum, o:na:num/
/au/	-	/auvaip pa:tti/

These are vowel patterns that taught to the students in the class.

Before memorizing the letters, the students are asked to color the letters that are pasted in the cap. The children automatically will start to learn the letters through their own interest. Let us see some models in learning letters of vowels as given in the textbook.

Example

/a/ - /amma:/  
/appalam/  
/anil/  
/arici/  
/annam/

The above example words are given to keep the letter /a/ in mind. The above examples express the different word usages of the initial letter 'a'. Through this type of practice the students learn the vowels and consonants. Finally, a group of words that contains the initial letter 'a' and other words are also displayed in the textbook. The students have to match the correct words for the given vowels 'a'. This type of reinforcement will give best result of learning mother tongue. For every vowels and consonants have number of word formation for the better knowledge of students in the first standard.

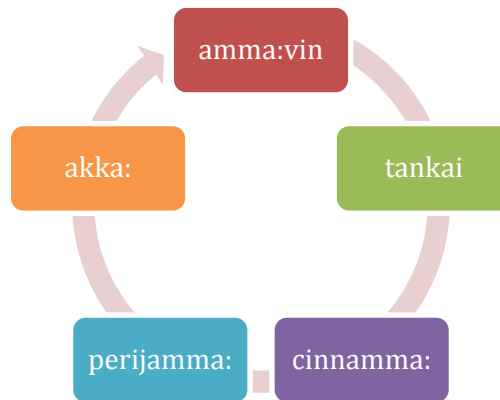
### **Second standard textbook**

The first standard textbook mainly insisted in teaching the vowels and consonants with lot of related words that produced from the textbook and apart from that the students also showed some special interest in creating new words that starts with initial letter vowel and consonants. Now the second standard textbook interestingly prepared for the students with lot of different teaching aids which can easily accommodate the students in learning the mother tongue in the class room. Basically the recent mother tongue teachers use some innovation in their teaching style. The second standard textbook consist of teaching the mother tongue through letter table and make the students to compile some new words. This letter table logically helps the students to often recall the pattern of letters and whenever they find difficulty in identifying the letters it will help the students.

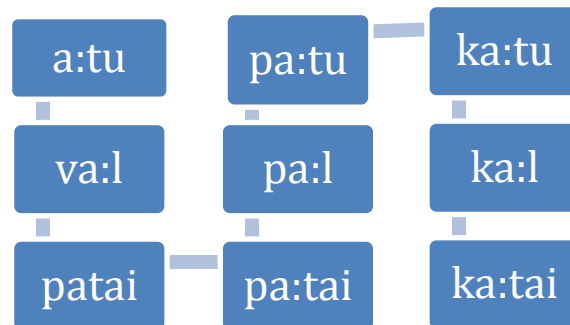
Here, number of practices have given in the textbook like creating new words, identifying the correct word to the given word, adding the new letter for the completion of the word, including more than two letters and create a exact word, matching right word formation to the equal words, recalling the words that are used in the previous learning process, different function of word usages in the right context, mentioning the word order in the given word structure, there are some short moral stories which give good example to follow in their daily life, teaching the relationship of family members and other social surroundings, the words that we use in our house, class and social environment. These are the different categories of mother tongue teaching is prescribed in the second standard textbook.

Example

The kinship terms is taught to the second standard students through the textbook in the form of some creative pictures.



The change of initial letter will create another word in number of places. Here the mother tongue teacher gave some words in the box. The students are asked to write some other related words that get change in the initial stage.



The above examples we could see the initial vowel letter ‘a:’ that indicates the ‘sheep’ and the second series instead of vowel ‘a:’ the consonant letter ‘pa:’ occurred and gave the meaning that ‘pa:tu’ (sing). Then the last word starts with the consonant letter ‘ka:’ and gives meaning as ‘ka:tu’ (forest). The same in the second line of the word starts with the consonant letter ‘va:’ (tail) and the second word starts with again ‘pa:’ that defines the meaning that ‘pa:l’ (milk). The final word starts with again ‘ka:’ which indicates ‘ka:l’ (leg). The third line first word starts with consonant letter ‘pa’ and defines the meaning that ‘patai’ (battle). This kind of exercises that mother tongue teacher gives practice to the children of second standard.

**The third standard textbook**

The third standard textbook emphasizes on the Tamil language and Tamil people according with the involvement of children in learning the mother tongue and overcome from the fear of making attention towards the other students and teacher in the classroom. The three term syllabus focuses on social and cultural existence in the society and knowing the actual presence of society where they live. Here are many open sources to bring out the student’s ability and perform their innovative thinking along with the syllabus content. This practice will help the students to think over beyond the syllabus and make the happenings to connect with their day today lives. While they learn the mother tongue practices in a play mode, the linguistic knowledge of the language also will be tested.

The creativity in performing the mother tongue learning process the individual capacity of learning will increase in their daily activity. “kalaiyum, kaivannamum” topic enriches the

innovation of student`s learning in mother tongue through different methods of syllabus making from the top to bottom of the textbook. Here the computer lesson is introduced in the first term book. Students might have seen the various type of television, cell phones and other electronic items. But the computer knowledge and its usages are taught to the students. It covers the need and important of computer in the present world.

The first lesson book back questions itself the students come to know the question pattern in the book later on the same question pattern will be followed in the Tamilnadu public service commission examinations too. This test practices are being taught in the third term textbook.

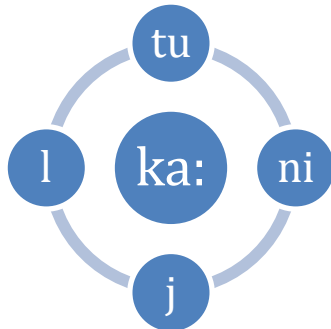
### Example

1. E:rram enra sollin porul  
a) so:rvu                      b) ta:lvu                      c) ujarvu                      d) irakkam
2. “enra+illai” – iccollaic ce:rttu elutakkitaipattu  
a) enrillai                      b) enrumillai                      c) enruillai                      d) enralla
3. munne: enra Collin etirccol  
a) etire:                      b) pinne:                      c) ujare:                      d) ki:le:
4. kanini----- valije: anaivaraijum inaikkiratu  
a) takaval kalancijam b) seyti                      c) katitam                      d) inaijam

The methods of teaching patterns vary from lesson to lesson and as I have gone through the whole textbook I never have seen any repetition of lesson as well as I could find the coherence in the syllabus making.

The word making and word play will mold the students in performing and creating new words by using the kinds that are given in the textbook for continuous practices. The adequate word practices will guide the students to learn more new words apart from the textbook.

### Example



From the above picture the students have to find new words by using the letter ‘ka’. There are number words in the initial letter ‘ka’.

- 1) Ka: - ‘ka:tu’ – ‘forest’
- 2) ka: - ‘ka:l’ \_ ‘leg’
- 3) ka: - ‘ka:j’ \_ ‘vegetable’
- 4) ka: - ‘ka:ni’ \_ ‘land’

Likewise the students have to compile many words by using the main letter. This is a kind word practice is being followed in the third term syllabus to obtain the new lexicons and it will help the students to use in the normal spoken usages. Here are some stories taught to the students of third standard to follow and practice in their lives. The moral values will teach some good lessons to the students in their young age itself.

**Fourth standard textbook**

The fourth standard textbook content is recalling the previous learning activities completely and focuses on the next level of learning mother tongue in the serious. Because after learning the words and its formation, the students switch over to the next level of reading the sentence with the help of mother tongue teacher. This is correct and right stage to look after the development of reading and writing skill in the mother tongue learning. The fourth standard is the right choice for assessing the students individually in their ability in different terms of practices being done in the classroom. The creative thinking on various aspects will make the student to perform in all the levels of learning mother tongue. The planning for the better completion in nature of doing things and have gradual improvement in learning the language.

The book back work exercise marks the student to have the over look what they learnt in the previous lessons and teaches the moral values for the betterment of their lives. Each and every lesson contains such moral values to incorporate it with their life and make practice those moral values in day today lives.

Example

**moLiyo:tu viLaiya:tu**

nilavu	mati	A:tavan	tinkaL	katiravan	cantiran	Parity
Amma:	Ce:j	Annai	kuLantai	Ta:j	maLalai	Ma:ta:
makutam	aracan	maNimuti	Talai	Kiri:tam	aNikalan	Araci
tiran	Ku:ttam	Kataivi:ti	nerukkam	makkaL	kumpal	Nerical

The above table is the one example from the fourth standard textbook to show the polysemy words in the utterance given for the one word. By practicing this kind method in mother tongue teaching the students will have more knowledge of different vocabularies as well as new words for the given word from the text book.

**Fifth standard textbook**

The fifth standard text book enhances the four kills of the language in mother tongue learning. Four skills are equally practiced in the fifth standard text book for the better improvement of the students. The literature based lessons are also taught in the fifth standard curriculum and the Tamil grammatical basic structure of the language is taught to the students. The subject contains ‘seyyul’ ‘urainatai’ and ‘tunaippaatam’.

**‘Seyyul’**

‘Seyyul’ defines the literary work of the Tamil poets and every textbook after the third standard will have the same pattern of teaching for the mother tongue learning students. Through the ‘seyyul’ the students will come to learn the literary forms of Tamil language and ancient



usage of Tamil language. The current situation of teaching the mother tongue may not show that much of interest in teaching as it is in the 'seyyul'. Unless the mother tongue learner shows interest in learning the language teacher's teaching the students will fail in his/her learning mother tongue and may not succeed in their further learning. After teaching the 'seyyul' there will be exercise like work sheet in the book back. There we could find number of grammatical work exercises will be given and through that work exercise the student can learn the basic structure of the grammatical features of Tamil language.

Here is the work practice which is taken from the fifth standard text book to make the students in learning mother tongue easily. Through this 'marapuccoRkal' teaching the mother tongue teacher can teach about the earlier word usages of animals and their sound habits. The modern Tamil speakers may not be aware about the word usages what they have to actually use for the animals and many other objects too. Now here is the work practice of learning the name of the animals and their sound habits.

### MarapuccoRkal OlimarapuccoRkal

Kuranku alappum	Puli uRumum
Kujil ku:vum	Ja:nai piliRum
A:tu kattum	A:ntai alaRum
Sinkam mulankum	Majil akavum
Na:j kuraikkum	Pa:mpu ci:Rum

The above table content we can clearly know the sound habits of the different animals. But when we compare with our present usages are entirely different from the above table view. An example of wrong usage words for the particular animal 'sinkam'. We say that 'sinkam karjikkum' and 'mayil kuuvuthu'. These are all wrong word usages in the present time.

### Vilankukalin ilamaippejar marapuccorka

A:ttukkutti	Ja:naikkanRu
Ko:likkuncu	Sinkakkurulai
Kutiraikkutti	pulippaRal
Kurankkutti	Ki:rippillai
Ma:n kanRu	aNiRpillai

The above liturgical words may not know to the present year students and not at all used those words in their lives. This mother tongue teaching could be right way to teach the ancient and liturgical words to the students through 'seyyul'.

### 'uarinatai'

The content of the 'urainatai' always give a message in the form of story that figures our natural life and like 'conversation' 'debate'. These are all under accumulating the presence of mind of the students in learning mother tongue. Every lesson contains some moral stories to

capture the students mind and heart. After teaching the 'urainatai' there will be some one word questions like objective type and small questions that is related with the 'urainatai'.

**Tunaippa:tam**

This is also one of the syllabus making pattern in the fifth standard Tamil book which follows in the position of third. In every lesson the book back exercise begins with different terms like 'kaRpavai kaRRapin', 'matippi:tu', 'kaRkantu', 'moLijai', 'a:lvo:m', 'moLijo:tu viLvija:tu', 'niRka ataRkkuttaka', 'aRintu kolvo:m' and finally 'cejal tittam'. Thses are patterns being followed in the fifth standard Tamil textbook.

**Conclusion**

This paper will help the upcoming mother tongue teachers to teach their language in a fruitful manner and not only the language teachers but also the main subject teachers can get benefit by referencing this research paper. The state Government Education policy insists on particularly a perfect outcome from the students in terms of different teaching practices that are taught by the language teacher in the primary schools. The above mentioned teaching strategies for the mother tongue teaching is highly valuable, creative, innovative teaching techniques followed, different methods of book back working exercises logically comprised and formulated the samaccheer textbook of primary schools.

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