Speaker:
Kaustuv Roy, Randeep Kaur, Rajesh Kumar and Parthasarathy Misra

Date / Time:
April 3, 2013 - 9:30pm - April 4, 2013 - 4:30pm

Venue:
Room No 412, Pixel B, APU

Abstract:
03 April 2013, Wednesday
Time: 9:30am to 11:30am

Venue: Room No 412, Nagavalli, Pixel B, APU

Speaker: Kaustuv Roy

Two Logics
This paper (part of ongoing research for a book) is a cross-disciplinary effort in trying to understand connections between a particular structure of formal logic (that underlies a culture) and its resonance in non-formal domains of social reasoning, say, for example, Western formal logic and its connections to the apparent hyper-rationality of Western socio-political and socio-economic reasoning. The method attempted is to compare and contrast the above with a logical system coming out of a different society and examine its corresponding relation with the associated social thinking. Being meta-mathematical, the argument has implications for pedagogy.

03 April 2013, Wednesday
Time: 2:30pm to 4:30pm
Venue: Room No 412, Nagavalli, Pixel B, APU
Speaker: Randeep Kaur

Language, language acquisition and language learning
Language is central to human beings and to leaning in human child. While it is debatable whether the child's perception of the world is shaped by her language, it is certainly affected by the language she uses. There is no doubt that language is very important part of our being and is constructive of our identity in the sense that it both defines us and shapes our development.

Language is not only a means of communicating with others; we constantly talk to ourselves! Language helps in meaning making, identifying, differentiating, reasoning, questioning and analyzing. Language helps in constructing things in abstraction. A child at the age of four is a linguistic adult in the sense that she is able to communicate, conceptualize and reason in her own language. The child of four can do many other things including physical tasks, competently using spatial relations and transformation; visualizing, estimating and having a sense of number and quantity. She has acquired all this through a natural environment with the world around her. This paper is an attempt to focus on what is language, what is the difference between language acquisition and language learning and the relationship between language and brain.

04 April 2013, Thursday
Time: 9:30am to 11:30am
Venue: Room No 412, Nagavalli, Pixel B, APU
Speaker: Rajesh Kumar

Makings of Human Knowledge and Language
How do we know, whatever we know, has been an enigma – there have been times when we thought we have solved it. This question has drawn best of the minds like Lock, Descartes, Wittgenstein, Piaget, Vygotsky and Chomsky. Someone like me, a student of language who thinks that language must have a role in it, getting trapped in it is quite natural. In the recent past a discussion on the language e-group about what role language does play in human understanding and to what extent, rekindled my interest in this issue.

Rationalism and Empiricism are the two dominant philosophical traditions of knowledge claims. Rationalism believes that significant amount of our concepts and knowledge are gained independently of sense experience. Empiricism, on the other hand, believes that sense experience is the ultimate source of all our concepts and knowledge. Knowledge outstripping the sense/experience-generated information, and reason taking us beyond the bounds of the world are the arguments in favour of rationalism. Empiricists counter these claims, and at extreme, turn to scepticism – no experience means we have no knowledge. I am trying to explore the common threads which, I hope, will not irritate either of the camps much. Beginning with senses/experiences, our knowledge moves on and beyond in which signs and symbols (language) play crucial role.

04 April 2013, Thursday
Time: 2:30pm to 4:30pm
Venue: Room No 412, Nagavalli, Pixel B, APU
Speaker: Parthasarathy Misra

Understanding Writing: Exploring the Unknown World
Writing is often treated as a mechanical skill for expressing one's knowledge as per the written conventions of a particular genre. Writing is also often underestimated in language teaching, and for many ESL faculty, teaching writing has often been synonymous with teaching grammar and sentence structure. Teachers of writing classes are often treated with contempt as classroom practitioners skilled in grammar instruction but lacking theoretical or research competence. The objective of this paper is to explore the writing theory and practice in the

second language classroom and to examine writing as a social process. It is assumed that ESL writing is not a generic linguistic and rhetorical process based on a single standard of correct English, it is a social and political practice nourished by   a particular local context. The paper will also try to   trace the historical and theoretical development of writing in second language education and will make a critique of the controversial perspectives on writing in English. Exploring the unknown world of writing, the paper advocates an experiential and contextualized theory of writing that recognizes writing as a developmental process unfolding the social perspective of the writer.

About the PROBE
There is strong correlation between how we teach a concept and how well we understand that concept, in any discipline. Having robust disciplinary understanding provides a strong foundation to how we approach teaching. We as learners, being different from other learners, have learned the same set of concepts in different ways, which manifest in the way we teach. Secondly, given that the context of a child influences both these areas, it's what we teach that decides how we teach. So there is a strong need to have a platform where different learners across various discipline like science, mathematics, language, psychology come together and share their own understanding of various concepts. PROBE seminar is a similar attempt to go deep into any concept and explore it afresh. The scope is wide enough to uncover the concepts from school level to the higher levels of study.
A Note on the Speaker:
Kaustuv teaches philosophy and art in Azim Premji University. He has spent several years in classrooms all over the world including a variety of schools in India. Kaustav is the author of two books in the Teacher Education Segment - Teachers in Nomadic Spaces (2003), Peter Lang Publishers, New York; and Neighborhoods of the Plantation: War, Politics, and Education (2008), Sense Publishers, Netherlands. Besides these, he has also authored several papers in professional journals such as 'Educational Theory' and 'Journal of the Philosophy of Education'

Randeep Kaur, works with State Institute, Uttarakhand. She worked as a Master Trainer with Infrastructure Leasing and Financial Services, Education & Technology Services prior to joining the Foundation. She has also facilitated sessions for IELTS "International English Language Testing System" and English. She has a flare for writing Poetries and Short articles.

Rajesh Kumar started his career teaching English Language and Literature for nearly 11 years in the Universities/Colleges of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and Meghalaya. He also worked in the Universities/Colleges of Yemen, Egypt and Oman for about 10 years. While working in the English Department he got interested in education which culminated into his joining Digantar in 2009. He has been working as the Executive Director of The Academic Resource Unit (TARU) of Digantar since then. Besides languages, his current area of interest are human learning, teacher education and educational researches.

Parthasarathi Misra works with Azim Premji University. He has been working in the field of language and language teaching for more than three decades. He has a postgraduate degree in English Language in Literary Studies from the University of Nottingham, UK, a Ph. D in Linguistics from the University of Calcutta and a Postgraduate Diploma in English Teaching

from the English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad. His areas of specialization are second language Pedagogy, Stylistics and English language teaching.