

# Language Policy in India: Its Role in Learning Outcomes and Communicative Performance

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## ABSTRACT

In the year 2020, the government of India developed a national education policy which has also emphasized the use of the mother tongue in the classroom. The government has also established a high-powered committee so that various issues related to the education system can be solved and proper recommendations can be made.

**Keywords-** National education policy, Education system, Mother tongue.

## I. INTRODUCTION

### Background

India is a diverse country with a confluence of multiple cultures and empires and hence has been designated as one of the most linguistically diverse nations in this world. For this reason, majority of the Indian citizens need to be bilingual or multilingual in order to cross-interact between various languages (Weinberg, 2021). Due to this melting pot of multiple cultures, there is no such language that can be regarded as the dominant one which is used as the main communication language across every state of the nation.

In our country learning English symbolizes better culture better intellect and In a way better education and living. For most of the matters of Judiciary, education, literary and administration English is mostly used. Undoubtedly English is the most significant language in the country. English has the power of national language which makes people all around our multilingual nation to communicate with each other with ease and convenience besides that it's the link language for international communication. Despite the fact that English is not even the most spoken languages in the world it still remains the official language in more than 53 countries and also spoken as

the first language by 450 million people across the globe besides that English is the most common second language around the world.

Learning English language is important as helps in your overall growth, gives you access to news and information, and provide apt career opportunities and communication skills in modern world. It's considered the global lingua that which allows people from across all countries to connect and communicate with all. 50% of internet content is in English thereby proving its supremacy over other languages.

The Government of India uses English for most of its communication and this language is Enshrined in our constitution. Besides that, English is also the official languages in more than seven union territories, seven States and official language in seven other states and one union territory. This language bridges all the communication gaps brought in by our regional languages and effortlessly evens out the differences thus enabling effective communication. English also serves as the official language in more than 45 countries of the world.

It's very important to know this language if you want to enter the Global workforce as this is still the dominating language and its more of a necessity than choice to learn this as cross border political, business, economic and cultural communication happens in

English. Among the million movies produced and books published in the world most of them are in English, hence knowledge of this language gives you access to a wealth of information and entertainment.

## II. ASPECTS OF ENGLISH SPEAKING

Incomplete, improper, incorrect or inaccurate use of English even if it is not a hindrance to communication can cause irritation to people who can speak good English. Mostly people judge others by their capacity to express themselves in English. Subsequently those people who are poor in English are treated inferiorly by others and consider them as people who did not get any quality education.

These days in the age of globalization proper use of English language is considered a crucial part of any job. Several terms and expressions are blatantly misused by random English speakers who haven't learned it systematically. This language serves as an indispensable tool in our lives and careers that which has evolved through centuries, adapting to various cultures and has eventually emerged as the lingua franca despite his humble origins.

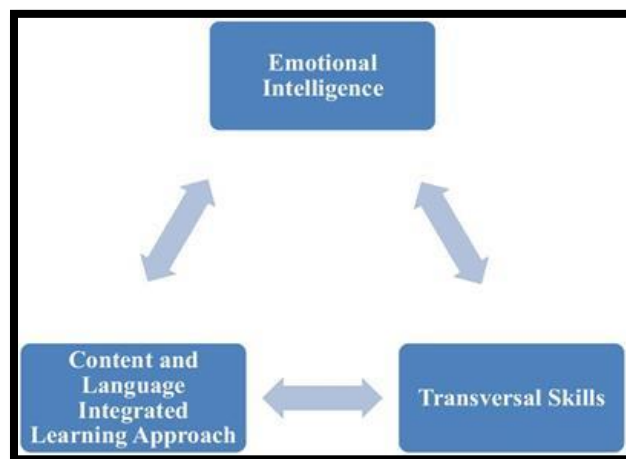
Undoubtedly English language is thoroughly established and has gained unparalleled importance. It's indeed the symbol of globalization through its continued evolution. Just as it has its advantages it brings in an array of challenges as well as English being the primary source of communication not only of former English colonies but also others who were untouched by British imperialism. It's the dominant language of Banking sector, entertainment industry including Hollywood, and in global business. While for some it serves as a useful language for others it's a necessary one and in the field of education, it stands out the most as students are most comfortable in this language as this is most accessible to students and teachers at international level.

English still remains the primary language of press as books, study material, brochures, manuals, are all written mostly in English. It's simply a passport to any global community for Multinational companies prefer employees who are proficient in English and the command over the language is a pre requisite for any job and at any level. English language lifts the barriers created by other languages and cultures helping us gain access to opportunities, people and careers. Being the most dominant language it has its impact in every conceivable field of work.

## III. CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH TEACHING ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN INDIA

Among several challenges associated with teaching English language the foremost problems faced

by English teachers is phonetics and pronunciation. To a great extent primarily understanding the language is also a challenge just next to rules of grammar, confusing sentence structures, complexed tenses and slangs. The speech pace, accent, colloquialism, sound detection also prevails partially. The existence of complicated rules and exceptions of a few makes it more complicated and the mastery of the language is quite challenging even to the learned. At times English spoken by a non native speaker becomes a challenge as it is hard to be understood because of the accent. Learning idioms and phrases is also an ordeal as the same words if they are out of context or it's practical meaning does not mean the same. Lacking a conversation partner is also another challenge for the ones who they know may not English.



**Figure 1: Process of Learning a Language**  
(Source: Self-developed)

## IV. LANGUAGE POLICY AND LINGUISTIC MONOPOLY OF ENGLISH IN INDIA

In the previous few millennia, the Indian subcontinent has seen both unity under multiple empires and fragmentation into numerous minor kingdoms. Since no language has been able to overtake others as the primary language, many similar linguistic traits have been shared throughout Indian languages. With the goal of promoting national unity and facilitating regional communication, Indian officials decided to designate Hindi as the official language of India after gaining independence from the British in 1947. They devised a precise schedule and strategy for introducing Hindi and gradually discontinuing English since they were aware of the challenges associated with establishing a single language in India's diverse society. The position of Hindi and English as official languages remains the same even after this planning.

India our county houses millions of people speaking a multitude of languages. In all we have fifteen principal languages with each one claiming a minimum

of a millennium of history and literature. Even though each state's borders have become somewhat more homogeneous due to the reorganization of states based on the predominant language spoken in each region, linguistic minorities make up for a considerable percentage.

There are various reasons which justify this; It shows up in social distance, stylistic subtleties, linguistic geography, and language history. The millennium of cultural miscegenation must be considered in any effort for unity among this variety. India is a symphony or mosaic of several linguistic families and racial groups that have come together to form one cohesive cultural entity.

Understanding this variety as the foundation for language planning—which includes language choice, language usage, and language engineering—must come before any other intentional effort. In these circumstances, monolingualism is unaffordable for anybody hoping to continue education beyond the elementary level. This is especially crucial in a nation where those who have completed matriculation and beyond make up just 2% of the population overall and are thus expected to take on responsibility for the process of social reconstruction. Thus, multilingualism has become essential for India.

Prior to making any additional deliberate efforts, it is imperative to comprehend this diversity as the basis for language planning, which includes language choice, language usage, and language engineering. Monolingualism is now no more an option for everyone who wants to continue their education past the school level. This is especially critical in a country where the 2% of the population who have finished matriculation and above are expected to assume responsibility for the process of social reconstruction. Multilingualism is therefore crucial for India.

For this reason, even while each area gradually uses its own regional language in the fields of government and education, the nation as a whole has to make multilingualism its ultimate aim. Participatory democracy has been acknowledged as India's political objective. It has also acknowledged that achieving a socialist economy inside a democratic system is one of its objectives. The engagement of the vast majority of people in the nation's governing process is essential to the success of both. The gradual use of regional languages as administrative media can accomplish this with the least amount of national energy and in the shortest amount of time.

Furthermore, there is no other way to bridge the enormous and growing divide between the elite and the general populace. Using local language may help stabilize a community by providing a feeling of identity, belonging, and engagement to individuals in an electronic era when change and mobility happen quickly, uprooting people and ideas and shattering old relationships to form new ones. Regional language usage

is also present in the sphere of education. The majority of the region's mother tongue will undoubtedly unleash and harness a fresh reservoir of latent energy that will foster innovation, adaptability, and creativity.

The gradual transition to mother-tongue media has been suggested by the government of India's successive Education Commissions. But the issue of education is a more complicated one than the issue of management. Here, multilingualism needs to be seen not just in the national but also in the global perspective. For this reason, a logical mindset about the study of English and other foreign languages needs to be established. For the sake of good neighborliness, global trade, connecting with the world's elite, and most importantly, exchanging the wealth of information generated globally and actively engaging in the twentieth-century cultural scene. The higher education curriculum must include instruction in a variety of foreign languages.

It is inevitable that English will take centre stage among the nation's intellectual languages. The intellectual isolation of the elite is a pseudo-problem in the Indian setting; the actual and more difficult issue is the separation of the people from the elite and from each other. It has been proposed that the growing adoption of regional languages can help to close the gap between the elite and the masses. A crucial requirement for fostering understanding among large populations is the use of one communication language. The Committee of Members of Parliament on Education's Report from 1967 correctly notes that "In practice, Hindi is already largely in use as a link language for the country."

There is still a great deal of misunderstanding about Hindi because some people mistakenly believe that Hindi is a communication language that can replace the current regional languages. Any language's ability to survive is primarily reliant on its speakers' commitment to it. The development of all Indian languages, including Hindi and English, would get assistance from the government. The Education Commission's discussions and the remarks of the several Union Ministers of Education make it clear that each language must have a function to play and complement the others. Because of this, polarizations resulting from the pairing of languages in a binary scale are not validated by facts or policy texts.

Within Indian universities, English study has up to now been considered sufficient preparation in Indian higher education institutions. Given the changing global environment, the new role and ambitions of Indian young to assume their due position, and the relevance of the nation in the international community, more possibilities must be established in the country for English.

The English-speaking elite's insistence that English should serve as a medium of communication gave rise to a conflict of significant dimension. Their claim was untenable because, despite the nation's concerted efforts over the past 200 years, only 1% of its

population can be said to have become experts at manipulating English in some way, and this is incompatible with socialism and democracy, the country's current twin objectives. On the other hand, efforts to raise the bar, clarify the goal, and create additional windows in order to foster a positive worldview and pursue it purposefully, are still ongoing.

The current ties based on English language will be reinforced even while such initiatives continue. Our primary communication channel with the outside world is English, and this will probably stay that way for decades to come. Given these conditions, a more practical strategy is required for the advancement of English. Thus far, a mostly literature-focused study of the language was in existence which has now paved way to other forms.

The vastness of issues in this subject has been exacerbated by poor language preparation, teachers with little to no experience in teaching, and a general lack of purpose that results in difficulty identifying targets and degrees of performance at different stages. Periodically, expert bodies have suggested major measures to meet the nation's demand to teach English. The Central Institute of English was established by the Union Ministry of Education in 1958 as a significant step towards putting these ideas into practice.

## V. TRENDS IN TEACHING ENGLISH

In India teaching of English language has gone through a paradigm shift. The conventional methods are replaced with a variety of contemporary methods. The teacher's approach, attitude and views have undergone massive change. The teaching culture itself is different and more student centric, moreover the content and text designs have evolved lately and the trends such as CLIL namely content and language integrated learning has come to place. Starting from task based learning, followed by situational learning, then E learning, flipped classrooms, content based instruction, cultural immersion and so on. Apart from this communicative language teaching has a huge impact on the teaching field. It exposes students to a variety of real life situations and helps them to get a grasp of practical situations and learn to communicate in the real world. Audiolingual methods have also proved quite effective as is the Cognitive code method while Grammar translation method aids students in grasping grammar situations.

English language teaching had been found easy using lot of gestures and visual aids. These methods with lot of repetition have proved very effective and engaging among students of the current generation. The core skills of language learning namely LSRW namely listening, speaking, reading and writing with all the prescribed set of the capabilities of all four forms of learning that allows a person to comprehend and learn spoken

language and aids in proper and effective interpersonal communication.

At times it's student led teaching and other times it's student focused ones, grammar and translation methods as well as lexical approach has gained momentum in English teaching field. They have developed several strategies to impart vocabulary, as they learn to read and read to learn. Read aloud inferencing and discussion is also a part of that as well as encourage students to learn new words and use them in sentences.

A set of well-crafted and well develop student centric applications are in place. virtual reality is a path breaking technique which had been adopted recently by English educators. There are some other applications which aid learners to employ and enjoy native learning experiences. Augmented reality is yet another technology which overlays their natural surroundings which is enhanced digitally. Digital literacy has become the need of the hour especially among young learners and this is a worthwhile acquisition and a perfect supplement to classroom learning while they get images or videos along with matching words they can improve vocabulary. The approach is multi-sensory and learners in a way gets to play to their choice and in accordance to their strength. Motivation can be well maintained as these cutting edge nature as these modern technologies will provide the much needed excitement. Young learners will love the prospect of using phone in class as part of learning.

There are some entertainment channels offering practice sessions to enhance passive listening skills. There are some wonderful options offered by these popular channels to develop and expand student's language capabilities. Tiktok among other social media applications has seen unprecedented growth ever since its launch and making its foray into the world of education brilliantly blurring the brief line between education and entertainment. There are DIY as well termed do it yourself prompting the students to do tasks themselves through digital guidance.

### *Aim*

The following paper aims to discuss the role of language policies in India in ensuring proper learning outcomes and establishing communicative performances.

### *Objectives*

- To understand the existing language policies in India.
- To analyze the role of Indian language policies in ensuring better learning outcomes.
- To evaluate the role of Indian language policies in establishing improved communicative performance.

### *Questions*

RQ1: What are the existing language policies in India?

RQ2: What is the role of Indian language policies in ensuring better learning outcomes?

RQ3: What is the role of Indian language policies in establishing improved communicative performance?

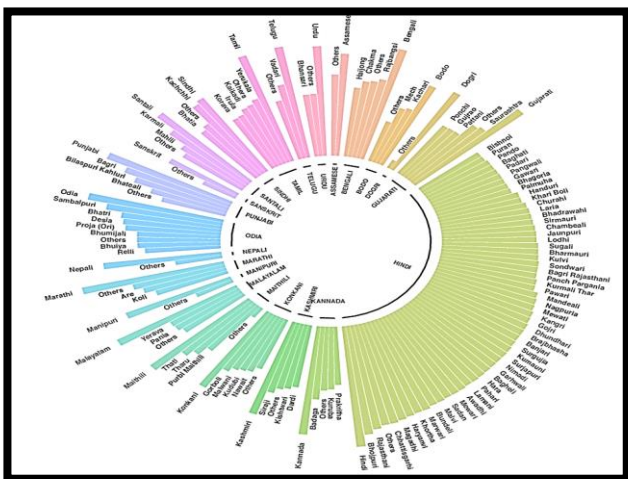
**Significance**

Indian languages have been formed so that the traditions and cultures of the people can be intertwined. These languages are also used in such a way that various benefits can be availed in terms of employment, education, and social aspects.

**VI. LITERATURE REVIEW**

**Language Policies in India**

According to Com, (2021), Indian Census play a crucial role in shaping the language policies of the country which in turn creates a huge impact on the education system. As per the reports of the 2011 Census, India has 121 languages among which 22 are scheduled and 99 are non-scheduled. More than 10,000 people in the country speak in their 147 mother tongues. Com, (2021), also stated that 22 scheduled languages account for about 96.72% of mother tongues in India. According to The India Forum, (2021), the census does not list native languages that are spoken by less than 10,000 people all over the country. This tendency of making native languages rationalized will most likely result in the invisibilisation of some of the languages mostly spoken by minor people. According to The People’s Linguistic Survey of India, 780 languages exist to date whereas Ethnologue identified 447 different languages. One ninty several different native languages have also been recognised by USENCO (The India Forum, 2021).

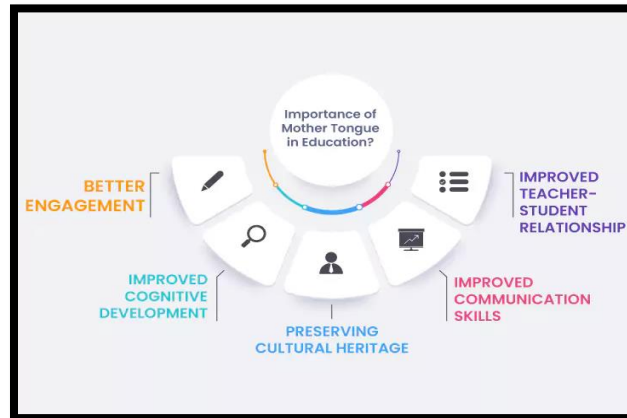


**Figure 2: Different languages of India**  
(Source: The India Forum, 2021)

**The role of Indian language policies in ensuring better learning outcomes**

According to The India Forum, (2021), the Ministry of Education of India has decided to implement and develop a curriculum framework so that the advantages of receiving education in the mother town can be realized. According to The India Forum, (2021), the government has also developed the DIKSHA portal to offer proper course material to the students who are in

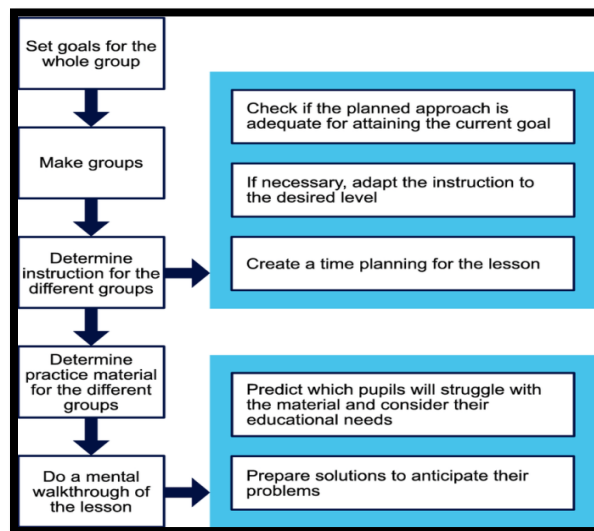
Grades 1-12. Besides regional languages, these study materials are also available in sign languages. It is believed that the establishment of such portals can achieve better learning outcomes in the country.



**Figure 3: Importance of Education in Mother Tongue**  
(Source: Weinberg, 2021)

**The role of Indian language policies in establishing improved communicative performance**

The Indian education system has been developed in a systematic manner where in primary education mother tongue of the pupils receives more importance whereas in higher education English receive greater importance. This particular structure not only prepares pupils for their future endeavours but also allows them to have a basic knowledge of their native languages. The Government of India has also developed a portal which can be regarded as a comprehensive library of study material. All these initiatives taken by the government are crucial for undertaking cognitive development which in turn will bring communicative development (Agbo *et al.*, 2020).



**Figure 4: Steps to Achieve Language Proficiency**  
(Source: Yunusa *et al.*, 2020)

**Literature Gap**

The study has not mentioned the challenges that are associated with the process of formulation of a new language policy.

**VII. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The following study has adopted a secondary research framework where all the valuable data have been collected from various secondary sources including articles, research papers, journals and so on. Google Scholar and Direct Science are popular online databases that have been used to complete this study (Pandey and Pandey, 2021). After collecting all these data a concise analysis and discussion have been performed.

**VIII. DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS**

**Analysis**

The Census of 2011 has clearly shown the number of existing native languages and the number of scheduled languages depending on which the government has introduced its national education policies (Agbo *et al.*, 2020). It has been stated that people are more comfortable with their mother tongue and hence they understand it better than a foreign language. For this reason, promoting increased use of mother tongue especially in primary education can make the education system more effective. With the help of these languages, students can successfully increase their cognitive abilities and communicative performance.

**Discussion**

Improved cognitive development can successfully achieve better learning outcomes. With the help of the DIKSHA portal teachers can also receive an idea regarding teaching procedures in multicultural classrooms (Klimova *et al.*, 2019) Teachers are now capable of developing an inclusive learning environment so that all the students can receive proper opportunities and can receive their basic education in their mother tongue. This framework has allowed these students to develop a better understanding and knowledge of their mother tongue.

**IX. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

**Conclusion**

Through the National Education Policy, a decisive step has been taken by the government so that the education system can be advanced towards the greater utilization of the mother tongue at schools.

**Recommendation**

- To create an e-learning infrastructure focusing on the greater use of mother tongue or native languages.
- Creation of more content and study materials in regional languages.
- Creating a technology-enabled assessment system for improved accuracy.

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