

The Research Dialogue

An Online Quarterly Multi-Disciplinary
Peer-Reviewed / Refereed Research Journal
ISSN: 2583-438X
Volume-2, Issue-2, July-2023
www.theresearchdialogue.com



“Prospects and upcoming problems of Indian languages as medium of instruction in higher education institutions of India”

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Summary:

Higher education has the highest place in the education system of any country. Higher education refers to an education through which experts are prepared for different areas of the national society. With the arrival of the British, English language was mainly made the medium of study and teaching in higher educational institutions here and even today we have not been able to get out of the web of this foreign language. This is the reason why our Indian languages have not got importance in this field. Language is also an important basis of cultural identity of any nation or person or society and for maintaining its culture and better development of students, the medium of instruction in higher education institutions of India can be done only by adopting Indian languages. Since India is a multilingual country full of diversities. With so many languages and lakhs of dialects being spoken, making regional languages the medium of instruction at the higher level will be a challenging task for us, especially at a time when employment is a major concern before us. In the presented article, the possibilities of adopting

Indian languages as medium of instruction in higher education institutions of India and the major problems faced in this have been explained.

Key Words – Indian Languages, Higher Education, Medium, Culture.

Our country India is such a country in the whole world, which has enlightened the whole world with the light of its knowledge. This holy place of sages and sages where there were universities like Takshashila and Nalanda, in which students from all over the world came to study. Talking about knowledge, no doubt our ancient heritage is very great, because books like Vedas, Upanishads composed by Rishi Muni are relevant not only in ancient times but even today. It teaches us moral values and teaches us to walk on the path of religion.

In ancient times, multilingual education did not exist in India because in ancient times the spoken language of common citizens was local, but the medium of education at higher level was Sanskrit. After coming in contact with the Muslim civilization in the medieval period, Arabic-Persian languages were also used and this continued till the arrival of the British in India. Since the advent of the British, the medium of teaching and learning in higher education in India has mainly become English (foreign) language. The fascination for the English language in India began with the Mandate of 1833. In 1835, Macaulay talked about giving preference in jobs to those who know English, which later became mandatory and this thinking is still intact among Indians.

After the attainment of independence, Dr. Radhakrishnan Commission (1948), in its suggestion, talked about making students aware of three languages (regional, federal and non-Hindi languages) at the higher secondary level and Hindi language at the university level. The same Mudaliar Commission (1952) talked about using the three language formula (mother tongue and Hindi and additionally English and Sanskrit as alternatives). B. Yes. The Khare Committee/Language

Commission (1955) suggested making Hindi the medium of instruction in all universities. The Central Advisory Council of Education (1956) also gave the three language formula (mother tongue/regional language, English/modern foreign language and Hindi language for non-Hindi speaking areas and any Indian language for Hindi speaking areas).

Kothari Commission talked about giving education in mother tongue and regional language, which was also supported by the education policy of 1968 and 1986. But the Ramamurthy Committee constituted to review the National Education Policy 1986, first of all told to end its supremacy at the national level, terming the English language as a threat to the nation. In his article, Shambhu Nath also believes that “today the importance of any language in the eyes of a person is not generally determined by its relation to his caste and cultural identity or by it being his mother tongue, but by its How far can this language run in the market..... If globalization continues unabatedly, it will spoil the face of hundreds of languages of the world, consume hundreds of languages and destroy cultural diversity.” (Shambhu Nath 2008 p. 49).

To make mother tongue the medium of education, it was being talked about not only in a country like India but at the world level. In this sequence, in 1976, UNESCO said in its declaration that the medium of adult education should be the mother tongue. Again, in the annual declaration of 1999, UNESCO emphasized the use of “multilingual education” ie the use of national or international language as a medium for teaching as well as the use of mother tongue.

The National Curriculum Framework 2005 also states that “Language education should be multilingual. Not only in the sense of multiple languages, but also in terms of developing strategies to use the classroom as a resource. The three language formula needs to be implemented in letter and spirit so as to promote an environment of multilingual dialogue in a multilingual country. In non-Hindi speaking states, children learn Hindi; in the case of Hindi states, children learn a

language that is not spoken in that area. Apart from these languages, the study of Sanskrit as a modern Indian language can also be started. Classical and foreign languages may be introduced at later stages.” (National Curriculum Framework 2005 p.

Acharya Shri Vidyasagar, a serious thinker of the National Education Policy-2020, expressed his views in front of the Kasturirangan Committee, saying that “I am not against English as a language, this language should be kept optional along with other languages of the world, But the medium of education should be the mother tongue....” (Indian Education Policy 2020). In the new National Education Policy 2020, a comprehensive framework has been prepared to preserve and promote Indian languages by making them medium of instruction from primary to higher level.

Even after 75 years after independence, there are many universities in India where even today the medium of instruction is English language and most of the youth of the country and their parents are also giving importance to English language. Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia also believed that “status and money are attached to English. That’s why English is running.” (Lohia, 2013 p. 88) But they are not able to see the harm being done by this foreign language, how we are getting entangled in the web of English language and due to this our own Indian languages are being neglected continuously. There are 22 languages in the eighth schedule of our constitution, but hundreds of dialects are also spoken by the people here, which are not getting proper development.

Higher education in our country is becoming concentrated in the English language only. Even today it is impossible to disagree with the disadvantages of imparting education in a foreign language that Gandhiji pointed out in the early decades of the twentieth century. According to Gandhi, “the foreign medium has weakened the power of the nation, it has alienated them from the masses and it has made education unnecessarily expensive”. But through most of the research done

in the world, it is known that the education received in the mother tongue is the most effective. More than 150 research studies over the past 50 years show that teaching in the mother tongue leads to better development of students' understanding than teaching in other languages.

At present, the biggest example of this is China and Japan, who have made their mother tongue a medium of rapid industrial progress by giving it a form of self-pride. Our neighbouring country China is also multilingual like us, but it has established its language Chinese (Mandarin) and made it the medium of education. On the strength of this language, China has created a different definition of development in the whole world. This shows that complete development of any nation is not possible without the prosperity of its language. If we talk about our country India, then we also have so much potential that we can leave behind a country like China because the image of our country is more reliable and authentic than that of China. Since the Sanskrit language of our country is considered to be the oldest and the mother of all languages, we are citizens of such a country which is a matter of pride for us. Gandhi ji has also rightly said in "Hind Swaraj" that "I feel that we should make all our languages bright and beautiful" (Gandhi, 2014 p. 69). That's why today our Indian languages should be given importance instead of English.

Prospects of Indian languages as medium of instruction in higher education institutions-

- Research studies conducted in various Asian countries show that using one's mother tongue as the medium of instruction will lead to higher academic achievement levels of students and improve subject content.
- When the medium of education will be the mother tongue, then the enrollment rate will increase at higher level, children who drop out due to weak grip in English will also be able to study, due to which their attendance will also be 100%.

- Till yesterday the children who used to be afraid of English language, today they will be able to express their subject matter with full confidence and at the same time the participation of their parents will also increase.
- Some children who want higher education, but are unable to study due to rural background and English medium of higher education, will also be convenient for them.
- Making Indian languages the medium of instruction will increase its vitality and regional higher education institutions will also be motivated to organize educational programs in regional languages, which will also reduce language-based discrimination.
- Learning in their own language will enable students to learn and express themselves better.
- Like other countries, Indian students will also be able to take education in their own language, due to which our culture will also remain intact.

Problems faced in adopting Indian languages as medium of instruction in higher education institutions-

- Creating high quality reading materials in Indian languages is a complex task.
- Skilled teachers will be needed to impart technical education in Indian languages. Therefore, teachers will have to be fully trained, which will require time and money.
- Doubts will remain in the future as the result of teaching in regional languages (Tamil language in Tamil Nadu Engineering College, Hindi language in Atal Bihari Vajpayee Engineering College, Bhopal) done in the past years is not good.
- Due to the pathetic situation of employment in the present times, the employment opportunities through language studies may be doubtful in the future.

- Getting technical education in Indian languages may make it difficult for a student to compete internationally where English is the dominant language.
- Higher education in India has a legacy of English medium and retaining quality teachers willing and able to teach in the regional language will be a challenging task.
- Translating international knowledge into local languages will require more time and money.
- Imparting education in local languages may alienate students from other regions.
- If there is not enough development of English language, it will be difficult to get study and employment abroad.
- After getting education in regional languages, business problems related to employment and residence in other region may also arise.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, we can say that our India is a multilingual country, there is no problem in learning foreign languages like English, French, Arabic, Farsi etc., but not by neglecting Hindi and all other Indian languages but as an optional subject. The way the English language is being dominated at a higher level, due to which this foreign language has become fatal for our country, society and culture and which is taking away our identity from us Indians. In this situation, if we want to bring the culture and education system of our country to the world stage, then we have to adopt our Indian languages as the medium of education. Blind imitation of westernization has to be avoided and the culture and pride of our country has to be saved because only our culture will give us a different identity in the whole world. That ancient India which was once a beacon of learning whose light used to draw foreigners towards itself, can again be in its former form. That's why we have to give importance to our languages and adopt them only then India will be completely strong.

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THE RESEARCH DIALOGUE

An Online Quarterly Multi-Disciplinary
Peer-Reviewed / Refereed Research Journal

ISSN: 2583-438X

Volume-2, Issue-2, July-2023

www.theresearchdialogue.com

Certificate Number July-2023/13



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**Prospects and upcoming problems of Indian languages
as medium of instruction in higher education
institutions of India**

Published in 'The Research Dialogue' Peer-Reviewed / Refereed Research Journal and
E-ISSN: 2583-438X, Volume-02, Issue-02, Month July, Year-2023.


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