

# International Journal of Multidisciplinary Trends

E-ISSN: 2709-9369

P-ISSN: 2709-9350

[www.multisubjectjournal.com](http://www.multisubjectjournal.com)

IJMT 2022; 4(2): 157-161

Received: 18-06-2022

Accepted: 23-07-2022

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## Impact of education and language policies and constitutional provision in the Indian education

**Priyadarshini Ishwar Sanikop and Dr. Rajendra M Nayak**

### Abstract

In a Multilingual nation like India It is really interesting to see how in recent years educational experts have started to focus on the language dimension when it comes for schools education to meet the demands of modern knowledge societies. It is clear that languages play an important role in various aspects of our daily lives including education. Their role is not only limited to communication, rather it extends into the vast branches of knowledge and human sciences. As we know education is the process of human empowerment through knowledge in the process of disseminating the knowledge. Languages play vital role as they are the channels of communication of knowledge. The general importance of languages justifies the need for a scientific and objective study of the relationship between languages and education. As India is a multilingual nation there is always conflict between the supporters of mother tongue and supporters of English. Issue of language in education is addressed through many languages policies from British period to till date. Many education committees were constituted during British rule and after independence majority of these committees and commissions designed policies with major focus to language as a medium of instruction and learning. Even our constitution made many provision with regards to language and education and policies made by successive governments are under the frame work of constitutional provisions only. In this paper we have made an attempt to understand the provisions made in constitution and commissions with regards to language in education and their impact.

**Keywords:** Education and language, constitutional provision, dimension

### Introduction

“Education is the key that unlocks the golden door to freedom.”-George Washington.

As quoted by George Washington Education opens the door of real freedom without education there is no meaning for freedom and without education the growth become stagnant. Education provides knowledge, education teaches us humanity, it inculcate holy thoughts in human, education enables humans to contribute for human development, it gives identity and dignity, it provides opportunities to explore the human talent, education make path for research and development and education gives meaning to life. As education is an asset of every human being it also play very crucial role in building that Nation. Education is the need of the day for the deliberate and organized growth of the Nation development of the nation. As it is proved in many demographic studies a country can only progress if its population is educated, skilled and dedicated. In this connection to utilize the human resource of the nation for the growth of the nation every country provide best platform for education and skill development.

### Role of Language in Education

As acknowledged from the beginning of human thinking language is a vehicle of every kind of education. Teaching and learning are the basic pillars of the education and these pillars depended on language without language there is no meaning for Education. No matter what the subject area, students understand new perception when they listen in, talk, read and write about what they are learning. Speaking and writing reflects the thinking process of the student. For this process language play the role of mediator and way of communication to understand and act on the thoughts and ideas learnt. The role of language in Education can be listed like:

- Language as a important component for higher order of thinking and successful learning
- Language for all types and levels of education to be used as the medium of instruction from the ‘beginning of education till the end.
- Language is the prerequisite of all formal education without language education is likhuman without life.

- In our traditional ancient education learning language was the major part of the education, but today though the notion of education has changed but the role of language in education is still prominent.
- In every formal education languages are first taught and learnt after that every other aspects or subjects are taught and learnt, therefore language teaching and language learning occupies an important place in the total process of education both as a medium of instruction and as a subject of study in curriculum.
- Under different educational systems language can be planned in various ways but its importance as the medium of instruction for all education. Hence as a medium of instruction language always considered as the foundation of every level of education.
- Language is the foundation of the total course and curriculum. Because all the subjects of the course and curriculum like literature Geography, Economy, Polity, History and Culture, etc, are taught through the medium of language which is convenient to the students.
- Language is communication between the sender and the receiver, here in education teacher is the sender and the students are the receivers and language is the instrument of communication between these two.
- Eight modes of human activities involving language helps the students and teachers in education through as a mode of Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing, Viewing, Shaping, Watching and Moving
- Language in Education helps in valuing the human dignity, human rights, cultural diversity, democracy, justice, fairness and equality by making everyone learn in their language.
- Language in education helps to improve learning skills, analytical skills, thinking skills, empathy, flexibility and adoptability, cooperation and other skills required for education and social interaction.
- Language learning in education encourages interactive processes that facilitate the social construction of knowledge
- Language acts as a tool for making meaning in education. Without meaning there is no use of any communication hence language is the tool for making education meaningful.
- Language as a filter for assessing learning outcomes: Formal assessment procedures in school subjects heavily rely on open- or half-open-formatted tasks and on oral or written presentations by the student how s/he has solved the task.
- Better language skill helps to improve the knowledge and critical understanding of the self, knowledge and critical understanding world, politics, cultures, religions, practices, economy, environment, media and many other aspects of the world.

Language is the life line for any stage of education. Under different stages of education language plays its role as a mode of communication and vehicle of education. There are many studies carried out to understand the impact of language on education majority of these study proved that without giving importance to language any system of education succeed to achieve its goal.

**What is a language policy?**

It is worth to understand the conceptual aspects of language policy in a way to understand the language policies in Indian education with that view here we have made an attempt to discuss some basic aspects of language policy . Any decision or principle of action adopted with regard to the usage of language or languages by an organization or individual is known as a language policy. Language policies are basically designed to promote one or more languages and also it specify the usage of language in different domains, like education, administration, media, etc. So we can say that language policy is a cover term for all the linguistic behaviors, assumptions, and cultural forms, folk believes, attitude towards a language etc. A language policy is multidimensional. To satisfy multidimensional aspects of language issues government or the policy making bod of the nation or society will come out with logical framework with constitutional relevance which is called language policy.

**Need for Language Policy for Education**

Language is the heart of every strata of education, in this direction the language policy in education provides a legal framework to the dictates the language used in disseminating knowledge at different levels. When we observe the policies related to the language in India it is clear that the constitution, the authorities and the government are working in favour of multilingualism in Education. Multilingualism, early childhood psychology, language learning at early stage, impact of language on education, socio-economic realities of Indian population, historical implication of British and early British rule and rural, urban and semi-rural school system in India, demonstrates the need of language policy in Education as an instrument for the promotion constructive, creative, practical, value based and child oriented education at all levels of education. Good language policies are always needed inclusiveness of education in a multilingual country like India.

**Policy Recommendations on Language in Education by Various Committees and Commissions**

Before independence India was ruled by Arabs, Persian, Portuguese, Dutch, Afghans, and more than 200 years by British these historical developments added existing diversity in various areas including language. As language was major tool for education there were many initiations and developments with regards to language in education. British government has made many efforts through various committees and legislations to solve the problems education and language in various levels of education. After independence the government of India also made many attempt to reform education of various levels and recommended many measures related languages in education. Many commissions were established by the government of India after Independence. Here we made an effort to discuss the language provisions made through the committees before and after independence with regards to language in Education.

Committee/ Commission	Recommendations
Woods Dispatch 1854	Woods Dispatch recommended about language related to education is that, the medium of instruction at the primary level was to be vernacular while at the higher levels it would be English. The Indian natives should be given training in their mother tongue also. And English education must be given to Indians to meet the needs of East India Company Based on this recommendations many initiations have been took for making mother tongue at primary

	education and also in secondary and higher education the measures were took to teach English
Education/Hunter Commission 1882:	<p>Hunter Education Commission is game changing step towards education reforms of India The medium of education should be made Persian along with Hindustani in the schools located in the Muslim dominated areas. The education of provincial languages and standard etiquettes and manners of the provinces should be included in it. With regards to medium of instruction the commission recommended that the medium of instruction for primary education should be the provincial languages. It also recommended that the Provincial Government should make policies and plans for the development of these languages.</p> <p>With regards to the medium of instruction in secondary Scholl education the commission was clear that enhancing the employability among youths was the intention hence to make it easy and to prepare youths for administration it supported as English to be the medium of secondary education</p> <p>Based on the recommendation of the Hunter Commission provincial languages considered for medium of instruction medium of instruction and in Muslim areas the importance was given to Persian language. And measures were also taken to consider English as the medium of instruction at secondary education.</p>
Calcutta University Commission 1917:	<p>Calcutta University Commission recommended that All the subjects in higher education except English and mathematics to be taught in mother-tongue.</p> <p>Recommendations of this commission made universities to take initiations for making English as a medium of Instruction for higher education. Today also we can see the influence of this commission as most of the Indian universities providing facilities for studying in mother language.</p>
Hartog Committee (1929)	<p>The school schedule and curriculum should be tailored to the environment and conditions of the community in which they are located, and the subjects chosen should be of practical value to the students. And the medium of instruction should be in local language</p> <p>As this commission emphasized to protect local culture with practical learning with importance to local language many steps taken to make mother tongue as medium of instruction.</p>
1935 to 1947 period	<p>After the influence of various earlier recommendations and initiations By 1935 with many initiations the regional languages became medium of instruction in many levels of education. Only the institutions which were run by Christian Missionaries were providing education in English. During 1930s to 1947 many reformers demanded use of Indian Languages in all levels of education. After 1942 developments the British government in India accepted the Indian language as first compulsory language in education and English as English as second compulsory language for secondary education.</p>
Dr. Radhakrishnan Commission 1948:	<p>This commission recommended that the study of national language in Devanagari Script and English and regional language both at secondary and University stages. Medium of instruction in the higher education, the Commission recommended that English as a medium of instruction in higher education should be replaced as early as possible by an Indian language.</p> <p>The Radhakrishnan Committee's suggestions helped mould the education system for India's needs to report on Indian University Education and suggest improvements and extensions that may be desirable to suit present and future requirements of the country by giving importance to both regional languages and English.</p>
Secondary Education Commission 1953	<p>Regarding curriculum of Higher Secondary education the committee suggested that Higher secondary education curriculum should focus on Mother tongue, Hindi (for non-Hindi students) or elementary English or advanced English or any modern federal language or any foreign language other than English or any classical language.</p> <p>Based on this in the education policies made after 1953 considered the idea of three language policy and implemented in many states of the country.</p>
Kothari Commission/ National Education Commission 1964	<p>According to the commission, the curriculum of primary education should be the same for the entire nation, and according to the commission, special importance should be given to the study of the mother tongue and environment of primary education.</p> <p>This commission was constituted after re-organization of states based on the language, hence the commission enabled states to use three language policy for primary and secondary education by giving preference to mother language, Hindi and English</p>
The Draft National Education Policy Project 1979	<p>The Three Language Formula was recommended at the secondary stage. It includes the study of a modern Indian language, preferably a South Indian Language, in addition to Hindi and English in the Hindi speaking states and of Hindi in addition to the regional language and English in non-Hindi speaking states.</p> <p>Other recommendations on languages are Efforts will be made to improve the techniques of teaching languages. Efforts will be continued and strengthened to develop Indian Languages and Literature. Sanskrit has influenced in one way or another most of the modern Indian Languages Study of other classical languages will be promoted. Programmes to promote the development and propagation of Hindi as a link language will be strengthened. The study of Urdu will be accorded due recognition and encouragement.</p>
National Policy on Education (1986)	<p>Three language formula, improvements in the linguistic competencies of students at different stages of education and made Provision of facilities for the study of English and other foreign languages and development of Hindi language as a link language etc.</p>
National Policy on Education (1992)	<p>National Policy on Education emphasized on the need for greater transformation of the Indian educational system, with a focus on quality enhancement. The policy also stressed on developing moral values among students and bringing education closer to life and also suggested to give importance for mother tongue, regional language and English at various levels of education.</p>
Right to Education Act 2009	<p>Right to Education Act or The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act emphasizes the importance of free and compulsory education for children who are in the age group of 6 to 14 years. The act put responsibility on central and state government to provide compulsory education in the suitable language of the child.</p>
NEP 2020	<p>NEP 2020 emphasized to consider mother tongue as the medium of education at the primary level keeping in mind the interests of the Indian people in education policy. According to this policy the inclusion of vernacular in education will give new life to the endangered languages and will help to keep children connected to their culture. The National Education Policy 2020 proposes early implementation of a three-language formula to promote multilingualism from the school level. The National Education Policy 2020 emphasized on promoting</p>

	<p>and protecting indigenous languages by giving special status to those languages in imparting the formal education.</p> <p>NEP 2020 focused on promoting multilingualism in teaching and learning and enhancing the power of language. Widespread use of technology in teaching and learning, removing language barriers, increasing access for Divyang students was considered with high priority. Special attention will be given to employing local teachers or those with familiarity with local languages to meet the educational needs of the local students and it is also mentioned that Technology will be used to serve as aids to teachers to bridge any language barriers that may exist between teachers and students this will be piloted and implemented.</p>
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**Constitutional Provisions with language and education**

Article	Provisions	Impact on Education
Article 15	Article 15 says that the State shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them	Provisions of Article 15 put responsibility on the government authorities both at central and state should provide equal facility to every citizen without any discriminate. Under this while providing education without discriminating on language there should be an opportunity to everyone to learn in their language.
Article 16	There shall be equality of opportunity for all citizens in matters relating to employment or appointment to any office under the State	This provision opened job opportunities for the people of every language as the central government providing opportunity to write recruitment examinations in their regional language and also this Article forced the private MNCs and other organizations to give employment for the local people
Article 21	Protection of life and personal liberty No person shall be deprived of his life or personal liberty except according to procedure established by law	By this no citizen will be deprived of any opportunity for life and liberty. Even by giving the reason of language no citizen is deprived of life and liberty in any way.
Article 21A	The Constitution (Eighty-sixth Amendment) Act, 2002 inserted Article 21-A in the Constitution of India to provide free and compulsory education of all children in the age group of six to fourteen years as a Fundamental Right in such a manner as the State may, by law, determine.	According to the provisions made in Article 21A it is the duty of the state to provide compulsory education from 6 to 14 age of every child. For implementing this there should not be any barrier. It is clearly understood that it is the duty of state to provide education to child in their desired language and by giving the reason no child should be denied of getting education. Hence state governments have taken many measures to provide the primary education to the child’s mother language.
Article 26	This provide provision to establish and maintain institutions for religious and charitable purposes	Under this the religious organizations have right to establish institutions and they can provide knowledge of language without disturbing the basic structure and objectives of Indian constitution
Article 29	Protection of interests of minorities, distinct language, script or culture of minorities and right to conserve the same and no citizen shall be denied admission into any educational institution maintained by the State or receiving aid out of State funds on grounds only of religion, race, caste, language or any of them	To satisfy these provisions government have taken many steps towards protecting every language. Peoples Linguistic Survey of India has identified 780 languages and steps are taken protect these languages. And also state and central governments have taken steps to provide education to minorities in their languages at various stages of education and it is ensured that by linguistic minority no students are discriminated and denied any rights. Even no educational make arrangements to provide education in minority language to satisfy this constitutional provision
Article 30	Right of minorities to establish and administer educational institutions. According to this All minorities, whether based on religion or language, shall have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice	Under this constitutional provision all minorities have right to establish the educational institution based on language or religious minority. And it is assured that based on this religious or language minority the government should not deny any grants to these institutions. Hence, this helps minority language education to grow.
Article 46	According to this the State shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and, in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes	As it is mentioned in this article people of Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes should be strengthened through educational opportunities. While making provisions for education to SC and ST people the language of these people must also be taken care. The education to these categories should be given in their choice of language based on the legal provisions.
Article 51A	One aspect in this provision says with linguistic and regional or sectional diversities we should ensure the national integration.	As this provision say we should protect our national integrity with linguistic and other diversity. Hence many provisions made to protect both linguistic diversity and national integrity. Even when there were many threats for national unity by forcing any language on people governments have made amicable solutions for such issues.
Article 350	This Article talks about Language to be used in representations for redress of grievances Every person	Under this people can demand for the redress of any grievance to any officer or authority of the Centre or a State in any of the languages used in the Union or in the State, hence by giving the reason of language no people is denied of getting justice for their grievance
Article 350A	Article 350 A facilities for instruction in mother-tongue at the primary stage. It states that: “It shall be the endeavor of every State and of every local authority within the State to provide adequate facilities for instruction in the mother-tongue at the primary stage of education to children belonging to linguistic minority groups, and the President may issue	It is clear under this section that the education must be given in the mother tongue of the child. To satisfy this provision from the beginning of 1948 s to 2020’s New Education Policy many initiations have been taken. Dr. Rdhakrishnan Commission 1948, Kothari Commission Of 1964, Education policy of 1979, Education policies of 1986 and 1992 have made many provisions to provide education in mother tongue. The Section 29(f) of Chapter V under Right to Education Act, 2009 clearly

	such directions to any State as he considers necessary or proper for securing the provision of such facilities”.	states that, “ <i>medium of instructions shall, as far as practicable, be in child’s mother tongue.</i> ” The recent policy National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, states that wherever possible, the medium of instruction until at least Grade 5, but preferably till Grade 8 and beyond, is to be the home language/mother tongue/local language/regional language.
<b>Article 351</b>	Article 351 of the Constitution provides that it shall be the duty of the Union to promote the spread of the Hindi language to develop it so that it may serve as a medium of expression for all the elements of the composite culture of India and to secure its enrichment	There are many provisions made for promoting the Hindi language through many policies and programmes. With this intention the three language formula was introduced and recommended by many commissions for education and recently even the discussion is going on ‘One Nation One Language’ to promote Hindi as National language. As this Article says to promote Hindi but not impose on any one hence many heated discussions are still going on about considering Hindi as national Language

**Conclusion**

Education as an instrument for the promotion constructive, creative, and practical, value based and child oriented education at all levels of education. Good language policies are always needed inclusiveness of education in a multilingual country like India. From the study we evidenced that there are many language policies related to education were existing from Vedic period to till date and there are many constitutional provisions about language in education. Most of the policies and constitutional provisions designed for promotion of constructive, creative, practical, value based and child oriented education at all levels of education without disturbing the multilingual cultural identity of the nation and state.

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