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# Hindi language learning issues of Urdu medium learners: Aiming for a successful multilingualism classroom

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**Abstract**
Language is essential for human communication. It serves a variety of purposes, including the dissemination of information, the expression of feelings and opinions, and the provision of answers to inquiries. Development has been stressed as a factor in cognitive and social development by psychologists like Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky. If the speaker and the listener both have a proper knowledge of the signs and symbols and have mastered the complex system of communication, effective conversation would be possible. As a result, acquiring a language is crucial to a student's education. Understanding the distinction between first language acquisition and second language acquisition is equally vital to understanding the importance of language learning. When creating a curriculum for learning a second language and during the teaching-learning process, language skills and their components must be the areas of concentration. In India, 52 cores, or 43.63% of the total population, speak Hindi, according to the Census of India 2011. In India, it is the most widely used language. Therefore, learning Hindi is essential if you want to communicate with and comprehend the general public. This study aids teachers and curriculum designers in taking into account the issues and areas of challenges faced by students as they increase their competency in Hindi writing. Children need to be in a richly literate environment (Kumar, 2009). The setting should be rich in learning resources, and teachers should emphasise critical pedagogy for language development. For the learners, learning must be entertaining and useful. Although they appear to be the same, language learning and language acquisition are two distinct processes. Language learning entirely makes sense of knowledge, is voluntary, and is a progression that needs conscious effort to be effective. Language acquisition is a natural, subconscious, compulsive, and innate faculty that ignores grammar norms and syntax constructs. Grammar and syntax are valued in language learning, in contrast to language acquisition. The rules for how language functions in a context are as follows (Hussain, 2017). The researcher uses quantitative analysis to determine the writing competency levels of Urdu medium students who are learning in the Hindi language. The researcher has employed standardized assessment tests for the study. The results of the study reveal the drawbacks of the present education system in establishing a successful multicultural classroom.

**Keywords:** Second language, language learning, multilingual classroom

## Introduction
Human life is not complete without language. Man is a social animal; thus, he has an intrinsic ability to use language to connect with others and communicate with them (Wang & et al., 2021) [19]. Language is a word with a defined meaning. Language is described as a "System of sounds, words, patterns, etc. used by people to transmit thoughts and feelings" in the Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary (1989). Man created language to meet his social demands. Man needs language to flourish as a person and as a member of society. To express our ideas, desires, and experiences to other people, we employ the incredibly complex and versatile language system. Despite the fact that we employ gestures, signs, paintings, sculptures, etc., these cannot adequately substitute language (Bernales, 2016) [20]. Language not only helps humans name objects in their environment and express their wants to others, but it also helps them understand concepts that are outside the realm of their senses. Additionally, it facilitates the dissemination of that knowledge, which forms the cornerstone of all communications and philosophical thinking advancements that might have been produced. Man can preserve and transmit his knowledge to future generations through the use of language (Prastiwi, 2013) [21]. It is a well-known fact that social engagement is what leads to language development. Humans participate in the civilization of the future, cherish the present, and inherit the culture of the past. Language is necessary to open doors to education that allow one to connect with the more educated people of a society. Nearly all domains of language theories have emphasised the importance of language in learning.

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Lev Vygotsky and Jean Piaget both emphasized the significance of language in social and cognitive growth. The development of social connections is facilitated by the use of language by the learners to obtain information and expand their understanding of it. There are two connections between the four linguistic skills- listening, speaking, reading, and writing:
1. The communication's flow (In or out)
2. The communication channel (Spoken or written)

We can take spoken and written language inputs and outputs into consideration for a better comprehension of these language sub-skills. Speaking is the product of spoken language, whereas listening is the intake. However, in a written language, "reading" is the input and "writing" is the output. The language can be divided into two groups. Productive skills come first, followed by receptive skills. In language, "reception" refers to hearing or comprehending any string of words or a sentence, and "production" refers to creating the listened-to objects (string of words or sentence). In other words, speaking and writing are productive abilities while listening and reading are receptive skills.

The "macro-skills" are another name for the four language abilities of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Vocabulary, pronunciation, and spelling are referred to as "micro-skills" in contrast to grammar.

Knowing numerous languages is what is meant by the term "multilingualism." Multilingualism is viewed as a school resource that provides the chance to engage kids in a variety of linguistic environments. It is best for learning to be relevant to students' everyday life, especially in primary school, so they can relate to the material and stop viewing school as an alien place. The inclusion of the children's mother tongue as the main and elementary instruction medium is one of the greatest ways to achieve this goal. Additionally, learning multiple languages is crucial for developing abilities like communication, teamwork, critical thinking, etc., which will eventually result in youngsters having more outgoing personalities (Baker, 2014). Learning many languages also boosts students' self-confidence and self-esteem.

Education needs to be made democratic in a democracy like India. The Indian government has taken a number of steps to reach this goal. One of these is the National Education Policy, which encourages educational equity at all levels, including primary, secondary, and tertiary education.

## According to University Education Commission (1948-49)
1. Three languages-a regional language, a language of the Union, and a foreign language-should be taught to the students.
2. This commission adheres to the idea that languages should be free from all regional, religious, national, and local prejudices.
3. Creating federal languages by incorporating words from other languages.

## According to Secondary Education Commission (1952-1953)
1. This commission recommended two things: the introduction of three languages (mother tongue, English, and any other Indian language), and the introduction of two languages (mother tongue and English or any other Indian language).
2. The secondary education system was expanded as a result of using mother tongue as a secondary language.

## According to the Education Commission (1964-66)
1. It underlined the value of Hindi language development.
2. The goal of this policy was to encourage an acceptable degree of Hindi usage competency by making Hindi the link language.
3. The emphasis was on the fact that by introducing three linguistic formulas, learners' proficiency in utilising Hindi would also rise. It highlighted the importance of learning the fundamentals of Hindi so that everyone could communicate throughout India.
4. It also placed emphasis on the advancement of regional, Hindi, Sanskrit, and international languages.

## According to National Policy of Education (1968)
1. To improve the language proficiency of the students, it placed an emphasis on the development of regional languages and the three-language formula, which includes Hindi, Sanskrit, Regional languages, and International languages.
2. This strategy also places a focus on enhancing how instruction and material are delivered in language classes.
3. It discusses the creation of bilingual and multilingual dictionaries as well as the translation of books.
4. Create educational materials based on the aptitude and interests of the students.
5. Holding workshops on language competence (particularly Hindi) to encourage Hindi fluency among non-Hindi speakers.

## According to National Policy of Education (1986)
1. With regard to the language policy, the NEP of 1986 did not demonstrate significant change.
2. The application of the three-language formula was discussed.
3. It also covered a few of the reasons why the three-language approach wasn't used successfully.
4. It was emphasised that in order to successfully implement the three language formula, the three languages should be made mandatory up until the secondary level, language proficiency goals should be developed, and bilingual dictionaries and textbooks should be created to help children become more fluent in multiple languages.

## According to Program of Action (1992)
1. It strongly suggested that Hindi be developed as a connecting language.
2. It placed a strong emphasis on advancing Sanskrit and other classical languages by utilizing three linguistic principles.

## According to NEP 2020
1. Use of the student's native language as the instruction medium.
2. Students in preschool and grade one will be exposed to three or more languages.
3. The three-language system will remain in place with flexible language options.
4. Students in high school would have the option of taking

a foreign language. Sanskrit will be one of the optional languages at all levels of secondary and higher education.

5. Other classical languages and literatures, including Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Odia, and Persian, will also be taught in schools in addition to Sanskrit.
6. Schools should work to ensure that children have access to classical languages as possibilities.
7. Each and every student should complete a project based on the theme "The Languages of India."
8. Foreign languages including Korean, Japanese, Thai, French, German, Spanish, Portuguese, and Russian will also be offered at the secondary level as per their interest, in addition to English and Indian languages.
9. Curriculum resources for pupils with hearing impairments will be created, and Indian Sign language will be standardized.
10. Innovative teaching techniques such as movies, theatre, storytelling, poetry, music, etc. will be used to teach languages based on the experiential learning philosophy.

**There are two ways to learn a new language**
- **Foreign language context:** Learning a language that is not widely spoken in the community or surroundings.
- **Second Language context:** Learning a language that is used in the local community.

Language acquisition is a conscious process that results from either structured learning environments or a self-study programme (Kramina, 2000:27) [22]. The number of possibilities for language acquisition in their society, such as at home or school, has an impact on language learning.

**Research methodology**
The purpose of this study is to identify the challenges faced by Urdu-speaking students in schools who are studying Hindi. The researcher used a quantitative research method for this investigation. This specific research design was employed taking into account the issue and the goal of the study.

**Objectives of the study**
The objectives of the present study are
- To find out the proficiency levels of the Urdu medium learners for Hindi language writing skills.
- To identify the areas of difficulty while gaining proficiency in the Hindi language writing skills.

**Sample**
Purposive sampling was used to choose the sample for the investigation. The class VII kids of an Urdu-medium school in New Delhi made up the study's sample. These pupils were in class VII and were taking Hindi as one of their courses, but they were learning it in Urdu. 35 seventh-grade pupils made up the sample size.

**Methodology of the Study**
This study uses quantitative analysis to determine the writing competency levels of students who are learning in the Urdu language. The researcher has employed standardized assessments that she designed herself to achieve the study's goals. By confirming the test's validity

and reliability, it was used. The test had 76 items, and the levels of competency were determined by assigning marks to each item. The correct response received one mark, whilst the incorrect response received none. The final step involved calculating the marks earned and determining the level of competency.

**Data analysis**
**1. Scores obtained**
The children did not perform as expected on the achievement test. The concept of opposite terms had the highest percentage of correct answers (157 out of 210) for question number -02, while the concept of prefix and suffix had the lowest percentage (47 out of 140) for question number-09.

**2. Comparing the achievement level in different concepts**
From the data manipulated it can be found that the lowest scoring concepts for the learners were:

**Table 1:** Low percentage scores

| Concept | Percentage |
|---|---|
| Hindi letters- ऋ, रि, ण, न, छ, क्ष, श, ष, स, Visarg, Sanyukt Vyanjan | 13.97% |
| One word substitution, using maatra of 'au' and 'ae' | 24.29% |
| Prefix | 25.71% |

It can be inferred from table 1 that there are some concepts that require major attention to improve the proficiency levels of the learners.

**3. Analyzing the situation**
The data obtained from the test has been categorized into the following categories:

**Table 2:** Scores and categories

| Scores | Category |
|---|---|
| 80-71 | Outstanding |
| 70-61 | Excellent |
| 60-51 | Good |
| 50-41 | Average |
| 40-31 | Below Average |
| 30-21 | Poor |
| 20-11 | Very poor |
| 10-0 | Very Very poor |

Instead of labelling the child, understanding the level of intervention needed was the goal of categorizing the scores. In order to determine the requirement and areas of Hindi language writing that need assistance, it is required to examine the learners' circumstances. More than half of the students (20 out of 35) scored below 30, placing them in the "POOR performance" category. Only three out of 35 students received a "Very poor performance" grade. Six students received "Average performance" grades. The findings indicate that the learners' competency level is below average. Consequently, a serious intervention is necessary.

**Findings and discussions**
More than 50% (20 out of 35) of the students scored lower than 30 out of 72, indicating a low proficiency level in writing. As the study's findings indicate that most students struggle with their ability to write in Hindi, teachers must

employ a critical pedagogy that focuses on the needs of their students.

- The approach to teaching needs to be modified.
- To assist the students, an intervention must be used.

There are a few factors that have impacted the ability to write in Hindi. These areas of low understanding are as follows, according to test analysis:

## Number
It has been discovered that some of the learners made the mistake by overgeneralizing the use of Hindi plurals. The subject-verb agreement of the phrase is influenced by the use of the proper Vachan or Number. Students need more time to Practise the topic because they don't Practise it as often.

## Gender
The students overgeneralized the words and made Maatra mistakes when writing the gender words that were requested. They frequently mix up ling Badlo and Vilomshabd. By giving learners plenty of opportunities to exercise, these conceptual misunderstandings can be clarified.

## One word substitution
Due to their ignorance of suitable word usage and Maatra usage, students make mistakes when writing appropriate one words. This is due to the just-right number of situations being generated for learning, remembering, and employing the new vocabulary learned.

## Sentence formation
A syntactical error and lexical error, including the improper use of punctuation marks, stance structure, and Maatra, were the main mistakes made while composing the sentence.

## Punctuation marks
Due to a lack of suitable expertise, Urdu-speaking students' usage of Hindi punctuation often results in mistakes. Additionally, the Devanagari script of Hindi is written from left to right, whereas the Perso-Arabic script of Urdu is written from right to left. Additionally, it has been discovered that if the proper use of each punctuation mark is demonstrated to the pupils before they use it, they will learn how to do so.

## Prefix and suffix
Because they lack a clear knowledge of the subject, are ignorant of the various prefixes and suffixes, and lack adequate and suitable word usage, the students make mistakes when writing. They encounter problems while trying to add a particular Upsarg or Pratyay to the base words since they are unable to comprehend what they represent individually.

## Maatra
There are variations in Maatra in Hindi and Urdu that confuse students in pronunciation.
Writing skills play an important role in an individual's social and academic life. Therefore, the students should be provided with the best possible opportunities to learn and practice. From review of related literature, it has been found in a study that due to mother tongue interference students face difficulties in written English with respect to Verbs, punctuation marks, spelling, and Vocabulary, it has also been found in some studies that students ignore the use of punctuation marks while writing. Similar has been the finding of the pre- test that shows a large no. students score poorly on the test for many concepts such as Upsarg, Pratyay, Sanyuktvyanjan that require more complex skills. A study by Ammal found that fewer mistakes were made in vowels and two-letter words and the most commonly misspelt works are Dha, Dya, Dhya, and Gha also it was found that pronunciation and spelling errors were related to each other, and major areas of difficulty was the letters having similar shapes. The researcher has found that students from higher classes generally know how the alphabet will be spelled so they do not require any Maatra to pronounce any word. Urdu medium students make more errors in writing clusters than in writing vowels and consonants (Srivastava, 1997). Also, there are two kinds of Matra in Hindi for each vowel; short vowel sound and long vowel sounds. In the Urdu language, there are seven long vowels. In Urdu, like in English, we use some letters (Huroof) for long vowels. For example, we use the letter (Harf) الف for sound of Aa. आ For ee ई we use Chhoti Y ی. For ae ए and aei ऐ we use Bari ے. We use waw و for oo, ऊ ou ओ and ouo औ sounds. Therefore, a large no. of students make errors while using Maatras. A study conducted by Anand (1985) also found that students made the largest number of mistakes in the usage of Matras which was closely followed by the use of incorrect words and a large number of students of class 5th were not able to learn the sound-letter association required for correct spelling. specific instructional programmes should be undertaken so that students develop the insight into rules and ways in which Hindi words are spelled prior to their third year in school and since pronunciation drills and reading practice alone can't help in remedying deficient spelling ability, it should be accompanied by word study and writing practice. So, the intervention for the students must be based on the achievement of complex skills of writing Hindi as a second language. While designing the intervention all these findings must be considered along with the consideration of the fact that there is 1st language interference also.

## Conclusion
While learning new language skills that an individual does not use at home or in some cases doesn't even have any official or unofficial background becomes hard to achieve the task. When students learn a second language be it Hindi, English, or any local dialect of/her mother tongue, the first language leaves its impact. Various researchers found the impact of the first language on second language acquisition. Sometimes it helps in understanding the new language, and many times it becomes a hurdle to learn a set of rules, words and uses from a very different point. The linguistic difference is what decides the whole scenario and difficulty in learning a new language is directly proportional to the linguistic difference. When the linguistic difference is less between the first language and the second one, learning a new language becomes less hard and vice versa. Teaching Hindi as a second language to non-Hindi speaking children is a really tough task. It needs a strong push to make them understand a language that they do not use at home. To make students stand, we need to frame appropriate

strategies, we need to shape our pedagogy and we need to give an artificial atmosphere to experience language and practice the skills (Srivastava, 2000). It has been deduced from the statistics presented that the majority of learners make serious mistakes while Utilising proper Matras, writing words employing consonants, and using appropriate vocabulary. Additionally, student achievement levels are poor. As a result, there is a need for intervention that concentrates on the areas where the students make mistakes. Therefore, effective pedagogic tools are required to help learners to learn in a multilingual setup.

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