



# MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION IN INDIAN SCENARIO: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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## ABSTRACT:

For culture to exist, translation is necessary. Each civilization learns about itself and obtains access to "the other" through translation. Ideas are transmitted through translation. With the growth of migration, more and more nations now view the right to receive public services (such as health, justice, and law) in a language that one is fluent in as a fundamental human right. Interlinguistic communication is not the only type of translation. It involves cultural and educational nuances that might affect recipients' choices and attitudes, making it more complex than simply translating text from the source language into the target language. Since translation is an authentic act of communication in multilingual communities and a globalized world, it is used everywhere from families, schools, hospitals, courts, and clinics to corporate meetings and the United Nations. Making sure that professors and students can communicate on different levels is the aim of translation in the educational system. Students can comprehend the ideas that professors are explaining to them by interpreting more than just words. This essay explores the difficulties a multilingual country like India experiences in educating its citizens to a high level, and how translation might help close the gap left by multilingualism in the classroom. It also clarifies certain best practices necessary to transform translation from a challenge to a useful skill.

**Keywords:** Multilingualism, Translation Challenges, Translating Cultures, Language Structure, Cultural Differences, Value System, Cultural Understanding.

## INTRODUCTION:

The NEP 2020 formula in three languages is not new in the Indian setting. It was a component of the national education policy that was in place at the time and had been put into place in 1968 under Smt. Indira Gandhi's leadership. There was no such standardised teaching methodology, though. The North employed Hindi as its primary language of instruction whereas the other areas either used English or their own local tongues. This led to unprecedented confusion and communication obstacles. To circumvent these issues, the NEP 2020 formula was developed, which makes use of three different languages. The National Education Policy 2020 formula provides a fresh idea of early implementation of the three-language formula to promote multilingualism and national cohesion. The national education policy allows each state to choose its preferred language. The three-language formula has flexibility thanks to the NEP 2020's language policy in education because no state is compelled to choose a specific language. It is up to the states, regions, and students to decide which three languages they want to master, if at least two of them are inherently Indian. However, the students can decide which language to focus more on. Students may do so in Grades 6 or 7 if they can master the three languages' fundamentals by the end of secondary school. In India, there are numerous native languages that are used; hence it is common for people to be able to speak and understand a

variety of dialects, some of which may have different writing systems. According to the 2011 census, 121 languages were spoken in India as of that year.

The benefits of bilingual education have been recognised in the educational policy since India's colonial era. Hindi and English are the two most used languages for education in India, although there are many other languages as well. Many schools additionally provide instruction in the native tongue of the students or in the regional state language. The three-language formula (TLF), a method for teaching trilingualism, was included in educational policy by the Ministry of Education in 1968 and has been debated in parliament every year since 1948, the year after independence. Around the country, the TLF is currently being implemented in a variety of methods, with many English-language schools either teaching little or only utilising English textbooks and educational materials. The idealised linguistic model of the 1968 TLF strategy intends to give pupils the trilingual abilities they'll need whether they choose to enrol in an English-dominant higher education institution or a globalised workforce. Supporters of multilingual education in India emphasise the relevance of the three-language formula to properly educate elementary and secondary school students for the linguistic requirements of higher education and to maintain India's rich linguistic past.

## ISSUES AND STATUS OF MULTILINGUISM IN SCHOOLS

If the school is monolingual and the pupils are multilingual, the school and its system will not be able to include different languages and cultures into its teaching and curriculum. The state is unsure of how to proceed even though it has the political will to implement a multilingual strategy because this approach has not been thoroughly studied and there are only a few frames of reference pertinent to the Indian setting. It is allowed for state governments to design their own curricula in their local languages and to offer textbooks with material that reflects their cultures. To this purpose, state textbook authors use a few cultural icons from their states as tokenism for state identity, such as a great man, a few temples, random natural species, and cultural heritage. This, in a nutshell, is the macro curriculum.

Only a small amount of state distinctiveness can be covered in social science, literature, and language curriculum. In every state of India, the same mathematical foundation is applied. The regional nomenclature of biology or natural science is not mentioned in the scientific texts. Complex botanical terminologies cause students' difficulty, as though they are unsure of the context. For instance, many students will come across the botanical name *bassia longifolia* or *basia latifolia*, which is more popularly referred to as mahua by the tribal and rural kids, in their science textbook. They won't be able to relate it to anything they already know, but they will still learn it. Mango is referred to as "uda" in the Saora language, "amba" in the Odia language, and "Mangifera Indica" in a botany textbook! Since their accountability is based on how well their pupils perform on the examination, which is standardised and based on textbook terms, the teachers' so-called competence is based on and restricted to textbooks.

The child's language is a crucial prerequisite for learning that will be meaningful. A youngster uses her native language, whatever it may be, to make sense of the world around her as she observes nature and her social context. She does not distinguish between her mother tongue, first language, home language, or regional language in her thinking. She is able to communicate and comprehend the discourse of the language she is most familiar with while having the capacity for significant thought, analysis, interpretation, and creative speech. It suggests that she can unlock and access the words' deeper or hidden meaning. However, when her teacher rejects her vocabulary and her words for well-known objects, the same youngster starts to withdraw from the class.

For instance, her teacher might insist that new words that she has never heard of be used to describe to the elephant, fish, and mango pictures she is shown. Take a moment to consider the following: Her instructor has debunked her experience, language, and belief in front of the entire class. Because of this experience of silent agony, she can incur serious psychological ramifications. She is left wondering how she and her language must come across to the other children. Other pupils in the classroom may have refrained from speaking after this incident because they were afraid of embarrassing the teacher. This silent agony and ensuing quietness cannot be good for a child's development. In rural and Indian communities, where millions of children are routinely denied the chance to converse in their native tongue, this is a normal classroom scenario. Children are barred from speaking in their home tongue even in some English-medium schools attended by members of high society, and if they do, they are either penalised or their parents are called in to ask them to stop. Semiliterate parents start using English at home to expose their kids to this powerful language. This constraint that the youngster is subjected to on all sides is unquestionably detrimental to their cognitive development and sense of self-identity. Such rejection and hatred cannot aid in the development of a country that takes pride in having its own educational system.

The state of Odisha is a good example of how children's native tongues can be successfully incorporated into classroom instruction. By hiring specific language teachers and offering culturally relevant textbooks in tribal languages, it has embraced 21 tribal languages in 1500 schools. Due to the government's political will and efforts over the past two decades, tribal schools now offer multilingual instruction in response to community demands for the use

of their home tongue in primary settings. Even if the NEP permits mother tongue instruction in schools, it is important to investigate other states' multilingual education programmes. Incorporating an unwritten language into the curriculum has a positive and inclusive consequence, even though it could take some time. The inclination of instructors to demand excellent learning outcomes from pupils right immediately without giving them enough time or educational input is a fault in the system. Teachers in nearby schools lack a basic understanding of the key components of the national goals. The aim of the wave of recommendations, whether it is the movement for Learning Outcomes, Comprehensive and Continuous Education, or Total Quality Education, is to placate higher authorities by offering proof of each school's achievement.

The primary goal is typically something else, but it almost always changes to data collection. Information gathering can become a state-driven ritual in which teachers act as information producers when a programme lacks a solid field foundation. The information gathered is never used to analyse reality or take significant action to solve issues that are specific to a given school. For teachers, this means that you are the best choice to create a native solution if you have looked at the data, investigated the issues, and determined why specific things aren't working. When teachers employ a variety of techniques from their actual classroom settings rather than a prescriptive approach that is not based on their reality, language problems in the classroom can be resolved. Perhaps the system needs to prepare these teachers rather than those who carry out the duties of employees while acting as agents of the state apparatus without exercising any independent judgement.

## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Translation is not merely an interlinguistic process. It is more complex than replacing source language text with target language text and includes cultural and educational nuances that can shape the options and attitudes of recipients. Translations are never produced in a cultural or political vacuum and cannot be isolated from the context in which the texts are embedded (Dingwaney and Maier, 1995:3). As David Katan in *Translating Cultures* puts it: '...the translator is a bilingual mediating agent between monolingual communication participants in two different language communities' (2004: 16). Translators must therefore be both "bilingual and bicultural," as stated by Aniela Korzeniowska and Piotr Kuhluczak in *Successful Polish-English Translation Tricks of the Trade*, in addition to serving as translators across other linguistic systems (2006: 71). Thus, translation is essential to our comprehension of the cultural "other." The translator plays a crucial role in mediating ideas from sources across cultural and national barriers, which puts them in a unique position to comprehend a variety of development-related concerns.

The urgent need for the translation of indigenous books and other forms of literature in India should be the central topic of execution of three language system as per NEP 2020 in the education system. The lack of translation of resource books gives birth to the main reason of dropout from schools in rural areas where the student faces challenges learning in a language different from his own local language.

Given that many local languages lack many scientific, mathematical, and even geographical terminologies, the vocabulary gap is another significant issue that needs to be addressed. The primary goal of the translation process should be the creation of an accessible vocabulary to help learners understand the concepts with ease.

The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis is a crucial notion that cannot be disregarded during the translation process. The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis states that a person's perception of the outside world is influenced by the grammatical and more verbal structure of their language. It emphasises how language influences or shapes one's thoughts. For instance, different words have different meanings in other languages. Not all words from one language have a precise translation in another. These minute but significant variations can have catastrophic effects if the wrong word is used within a given language. Therefore, the translation of this native language is a priceless source of knowledge about this fascinating civilization. The language may provide an invaluable window into their worldview, moral code, and comprehension of their immediate environment. In the most cutting-edge sense, careful and culturally appropriate translations can be used as a development strategy. The difficulties with translation are mostly brought on by a lack of understanding of how culture influences language development.

The idea that you must give up or forget your original tongue in order to acquire a new language is untrue. To help children acquire the new language more rapidly, families stop speaking the kid's native tongue at home. However, if a child is trained in both languages, it helps them become fluent in both. Translation is necessary because, if anything is explained to a person in their native language before we teach them a new language, the idea will be permanently implanted in their memory. This not only makes learning easier but also respects a child's first language. Translation allows a youngster to compare his native tongue to the language he is learning in class, which aids in his vocabulary growth. Translation in education serves to reassure kids that they are not illiterate and that they can express themselves in different languages. They become more confident as they get older. These youngsters are better able to express their ideas and broaden the scope of their imaginations. Therefore, the educational system must properly translate cultures.

Communication and education are closely related; hence they commonly occur together. It goes without saying that if a child struggles with the language, their chances of grasping other subjects are diminished. When attempting to improve

the teaching and learning environment, language is a crucial factor. There may be students in a classroom from different language and cultural backgrounds who do not speak English well or at all; in these situations, interpretation and translation are beneficial. Giving every child the opportunities necessary for their personalities and value systems to completely develop is important since every child is unique.

## CONCLUSION:

A grasp of language is necessary to comprehend the mutually reinforcing links between language use, elite creation and vertical educational expansion, unequal opportunities, and rising social and economic inequality. Inequalities are formed where none previously existed, in addition to being accentuated by being taught in a mother tongue that is different from the mother tongue spoken at home, enforced norms, and superimposed languages. We have not given language concerns in education the attention they require in connection to the broader framework and how crucial they are from a functional standpoint, even though India's linguistic environment is very complicated. The pragmatic use of language in education must consider the mechanisms of language standardisation across diverse societies.

Multilingual and multicultural education necessitates not just having positive attitudes about speech variety but also a high level of planning, fluency in both the classroom's native tongue and the pupils' native tongues, and a high degree of teaching ability. One is considered to lack an adequate awareness of the socio-cultural process if they are unaware of the dialectical relationship between language, education, and society.

We talked about the need for the three-language translation system in the NEP 2020. the difficulties encountered in the translation process, the shortage of translators, and the need for translated books and resources in the local languages to reach every child. By presenting projects that include research into the cultural influences on a particular language, the creation of necessary vocabulary to close the vocabulary gap, and participation of locals in such initiatives, these difficulties can be amicably resolved. Establishing neighbourhood libraries where the locals can access the translated books. Establishing credit-based language-translation programmes for individuals, which will eventually aid in creating jobs in the translation industry? Angadwadi's involvement in early childhood education is beneficial. They can give mothers more influence because they are the ones who teach their children how to think and speak.

A spoken language must evolve over many years before it is accepted in the classroom. The hierarchy of languages is closely tied to caste status and, on occasion, untouchability issues. The system oversees assigning each language in the school equal status and scheduling it in the classroom. After a hard fight of 30 years, the Santali language as a speech community was able to renew their language in the VIIIth schedule. Their language is now a representation of acquiring power and wisdom. The modern state languages also struggled with language identity before stronger languages like Arabic, Persian, or English. The system needs a broad vision and farsightedness to transform the schools with the Indian knowledge system articulated in the children's multiple Indian languages. Once you understand how important interpretation is to education, selecting the right provider becomes important. Bhasha Bharati, one of the most seasoned interpretation services, provides full assistance to e-learning businesses in the translation of their journals and instructional materials. All levels of the nation must have access to these services in order to provide quick resource availability and translation.

Young learners should receive assistance in growing their primary language as a foundation for acquiring additional languages (or languages, if they are bilingual). Teachers and parents can help their pupils by pointing out the differences between the languages they are learning and gently correcting word order as well as social language like greetings and gratitude.

Consequently, the best course of action for everyone is to pursue a multilingual education.

The same way a fish that cannot climb a tree excels in academics; a child who does not understand English well also does so. One of the most important elements is the requirement for better communication. The need for a common language to communicate and the need to comprehend a language run parallel to one another. It is impossible to disregard the numerous benefits of interpretation in the classroom and translation in education. Using education translation to spread knowledge and speed up language acquisition is a great idea.

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