

# Linguistic Overview of India



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## Abstract

India is certainly one of the multi language nations in the world today. In India being a developing nation is currently facing many challenges and the language policy is being one of them. In today's time one of the major road blocks to this equality is the language policy. All country in the world include person belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic, minorities, enriching the diversity of the societies. Although a great variety of minority situations exist, common to all it is the fact that too often minorities face multiple form of discrimination resulting in marginalization and exclusion. Achieving effective participation of minorities and ending their exclusion require that we embrace diversity through the promotion and implementation of international human right standard. The choice of language formula in India at the context of making of the constitution was not simple and smooth.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Said, "One language can unite people. Two languages are sine to divide people. This is an inexorable law. Culture is conserved by language." Since India wish to unite and develop a common culture it is a burden duty to all Indians to own up Hindi their official language. Any Indian who does not accept this proposal as part and parcel of a linguistic state has no right to be an Indian. However the United Nations Declaration on the right of person belonging to National or Ethnic Religious and linguistic minorities is the document which sets essential standard and offers guidance to states in adopting appropriate legislative and other measure to secure the right of person belonging to minorities overall, states, through their commitments under treaty law and minorities themselves. This paper is attempts to analyze India's Constitutional policies concerning the use of language reflect the economic and cultural evaluation within this diverse and multilingual country with over 900 million people and more than one thousand language. We do need a national language because there are too many languages and we cannot communicate with another person unless we have a common medium of expression.

**Keywords:** Language, linguistic, Minorities, International Law, Human Rights, Constitution of India, Supreme Court, Article, Fundamental Rights.

## Introduction

Recently there has been a huge debate on the issue of languages in India. India's Constitutional policies concerning the use of language reflect the economic and cultural evaluation within this diverse and multilingual country with over 900 million people and more than one thousand language, India is certainly one of the multi language nations in the world today. It is home to the Indo-Aryan and Dravidian language families, two of the worlds largest. Languages of the Austro-Asiatic and tibeto-Burman language families are also spoken in India. This multitude of languages reflects in India's lengthy and diverse history. During this last few thousand years the Indian Sub-Continent has been both united under various empires as well as fragmented into many small kingdoms. India's language policy demonstrates this duality. They waver between preserving pressure on the pragmatism of India's language policy. They waver between preserving the country's rich language diversity and supporting economic objectives that increasingly depend upon English, the widespread use of which is one of India's greatest economic advantages. The report will explore the culture is economic condom played out in India's language policy and provide policy recommendation that land insight into how these seemingly opposing goals can be approach in tandem.

## The History of Language Policy in India

While same associate use of English solely with the British Colonization. In contrast the Southern States of India were first exposed to the language in the 17<sup>th</sup> century with arrival of traders from England.

Regardless of its origins in India, the English language has long been a part of a multilingual identity for many Indians.

When developing its constitution, Indian leader's enacted language development and language survival. The policy and subsequent document have produced a school system than encourages tri-lingual education with students learning their mother tongue, Hindi and English. However while the constitution highlights the importance of mother tongues, in practice it has proven unfeasible to protect the 22 scheduled language lists, let along the hundred of additional language spoken by significant numbers of people.

The evaluation of language use with in government is also evidence in a major document such as the census. Early editions contained a nearly exhaustive list of language option. Its language have become more standardized in recent decodes, certain language with less development written forms.

#### Language Policy under the Constitution

Eight Schedules to the Constitution contains a list of 22 scheduled languages. At the time the constitution was enacted, inclusion in this list means that the language was entitled to representation on the official language commission and that the language would be one of the bases that would be drawn upon to enrich Hindi, the official language of the union. Via 92<sup>nd</sup> constitutional amendment 2003, four new languages i.e. Dogri, Maithili, Santali and Bodo, were added to the 8<sup>th</sup> scheduled of the Indian constitution. In 22 official languages, 15 are Indo-Aryan, Four are Dravidian, Two are Tibeto- Burman, and one is Munda.

Formulation of language policy in any society depends upon the number of competing language, the extent of development of languages, the magnitude of their use and the purpose of planning.<sup>1</sup> The issue of continuing the official language left over by the colonial masters and the choice of alternative in order to have indigenous identity and distinct national image become intricate question amidst complex public opinion and divide view. The choice of language formula in India at the context of making of the constitution was not simple and smooth.

Gandhi ji's View that true Swaraj means, giving of national status to Hindi and of due place to provincial language in the life of the people as a mean of communication education and administration.<sup>2</sup>

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Said, "One language can unite people. Two languages are sine to divide people. This is an inexorable law. Culture is conserved by language." Since India wish to unite and develop a common culture it is a burden duty to all Indians to own up Hindi their official language. Any Indian who does not accept this proposal as part and parcel of a linguistic state has no right to be an Indian.

#### Language of the Union

According to the **343, Article 343 (1)**- "The official language of the union shall be Hindi in Devanagri Script." However, for the period of 1950-1965 the English language shall continue to be used for all the official purpose of the union for which it was being used immediately before the commencement of the constitution. **Art 343 (2)** - The English language

shall continue to be used for a period of 15 year, before such commencement of the constitution.

When, the official Language as a use exclusive domain, it was approaching in 1960 there began in southern state, violate anti-Hindi agitation clamoring for Constitution of the English language for the official language Act. 1963 and it amend the 1967. It provide for use of the purpose of communication between the center and non Hindi States.

For bringing a planned social change in language use at the national level, formation and function of multi-member language commission and parliamentary committee.

#### Article- 344

It state that the, commission and committee of parliament for official language:-

The president shall at the expiration of five year from the commencement of this constitution and thereafter at the expiration of ten year from such commencement, by order, constitute a commission which shall consist of a chairman and such other member representing the different language specified in the English Schedule as the President may appoint and the order shall define the procedure to be followed by the commission.

The commission shall recommend to the president about the progressive use of Hindi Language for the official purpose of the union, restriction on the use of English, the language to be used at court, form of numerals used for specified purpose of the Union about other matter referred by the president.

#### Art 344(3)

In making these recommendation the language commission shall have due regard to the cultural industrial and scientific advancement of India and the just claims and the interests of person belonging to the non Hindi speaking areas in regard to the public services. The concern of the constitution makers to protect the just claim of linguistic minorities clear in this provision. Apart from this parliamentary committee on official language consisting of 30 member (20 from the house of people and 10 from council of state) enact by the respective houses shall be constituted to examine the recommendation of the commission.

#### Regional Languages

The policy that language of masses shall be the official language of the government is adopted by the constitution Assembly to be applicable at the state level of meet the popular aspirations and socio-cultural needs.

#### Article 345

The legislature may by law adopts any one or more of the languages to be used for all or any of the official purpose of that state. However Until the passing of such law, the English language shall continue to be used for those official purposes within the state for which it was being used immediately before the commencement of the constitution vesting of discretion upon state legislature about language policy in the state confirms to democratic value and enables suitable policy for deciding the medium for the state-people relation.

Regarding inter governmental communications, states are not given such a free

hand in view of national interest to be served. According to the **Article 346-** "The Language for the time being authorized for use in the union for official purpose shall be the official language for communication between one state and another state and between a state and the union." However, when two or more state agrees that the Hindi language should be the official language for the communication between such states, that language may be used for such communication.

The linguistic minorities in the state may seek president's interference for getting official status to their language in case their population is substantial. This goes a long way in protection of their interest against majority's policy of harassment of persecution.

#### **According to Article 347**

On the demand being made in that behalf, the president may if he satisfied that a substantial proportion of the population of a state desire the use of any language spoken by them to be recognized by that state, direct that such language shall also be officially recognized throughout the state or any part thereof for such purposes as he may specify.

It is submitted in resolving the majority-minority tussle in the matter of language at the regional level arising from limitations of languishes organization of states, this provision is instrumental. It helps in ensuring bilingual policy especially in the borderlands of linguistic states in case the dominant linguistic community of the state does not bother about the interest of linguistic minority.

#### **Language in Court**

The major policy in the matter of language in court and authentic version of legislation is continuation of the pre-constitution position. All the proceedings, order and judgments of supreme court and required to be exclusively in English. Although with the previous consent of the president Hindi or any other language may be used in the transaction of High Court, in practice such use been insignificance: - Article 348

#### **Special Directives**

States positive duty towards language development, social harmony and protection of just interest of the linguistic communities has been contemplated by the constitution maker as a fair public policy in a series of directives. Some right also flow from these directives since there is no provision that maker the directives not enforceable in court of law.

#### **According to Article 350**

"Every person shall be entitled to submit a representation for the redress of any grievance to any officer or authority of the union or a state in any of the languages used in the union or state as the case may be." Basically, this has the purpose of removing linguistic barrier between individual and the administration especially when he is aggrieved, and is desirous of getting remedies through lawful mean.

#### **Article 350 (A) State**

A compels that the states to provide facilities for instruction in mother tongue at primary stage of education, about which elaborate discussion will be done later.

A mechanism for investigation, supervision and promotion of linguistic harmony at state level has been framed in the constitution.

#### **Article 350 (B) Provide**

There shall be a special officer for linguistic Minority to be appointed by the president.

It shall be duty of special officer to investigate all matters relating to the safeguards provided for the linguistic minorities under the constitution and report to the president upon those matters as such intervals as the president may direct, and the president shall cause all such report to be laid before each House of Parliament, and sent to the governments of the states concerned. A permanent body called commission for linguistic minorities has been established whose members are appointed for limited terms from time to time.

An Ideology of developing competent and acceptable language was in the mind of constitution makers owing to the influence of Gandhian thoughts and aspirant for national identity through a national language, development of Hindi language is planned in Article 351.

#### **Article 351 Provides**

"If shall be the duty of the Union to promote the spread of the Hindi language to developed in so that it may serve as a medium of expression for all the element of the composite culture of India and secure it enrichment by assimilating without interfering with its genius, the forms, stale and expression used in Hindustani and in the other language of India specified in the Eighth schedule and by drawing where-even necessary as desirable, for its vocabulary, primarily on Sanskrit secondary on other languages.

#### **Education Rights**

Apart from the above policies under part XVII of the constitution, there are the clear provision under part-III conferring specific advantages and protection to the linguistic minority.

#### **Article 29-States**

No Citizen shall be denied for any educational right on the ground of race, religion, language or any of them. "Right to conserve culture, language and script under this Article.

#### **Art. 30**

States that Right of minorities to established and administer educational institutions.

Right to equality and non-discrimination on irrational grounds, which includes language based discrimination, make, significance contribution towards linguistic Justice.

#### **Article 51-A(e)**

State there is fundamental duty on the part of all citizens "to promote harmony and sprit of common brotherhood transcending the religious, linguistic, and regional diversity."

Welfare of the all association of Society without regional disparities contemplated through state action under part IV of the constitution also mitigates bitterness arising from language based differences.

#### **Conclusion & Suggestions**

Language is the most important medium of communication and education. The choice of language formula in India at the context of making of

the constitution was not simple and smooth. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar said, "One language can unite people. Two languages are sine to divide people". India being a developing nation is currently facing many challenges and the language policy is being one of them. In a multilingual federal democracy like Indian languages right and policy attains a great significance as it has wider dimension of human rights. The Indian constitutional policy on language has shown adequacy of strength to deal with language problems by keeping away forces of linguistic chauvinism at comfortable distance at both union and state (regional level). The interplay between public opinion and public policy making could stand above the emotional cleavages and produced a rational framework. We do need a national language because there are too many languages and we cannot communicate with another person unless we have a common medium of expression. Various steps have been taken by the Indian government to implement the use and familiarization of Hindi extensively. Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha headquarter at Chennai was formed to spread Hindi in south India states. Regional Hindi implementation offices at Bengaluru, Thiruvananthapuram, Mumbai, Guwahati, Bhopal, Delhi and Ghaziabad have been established to monitor the implementation of Hindi in Central government offices and PSU's. Annual targets are set by the department of official language regarding the correspondence being carried out in Hindi. All Central government offices and PSU's are to establish Hindi cells for implementation of Hindi in their offices. It has been the policy of the government of India that

progressive use of Hindi in the official work may be ensured through persuasion, incentive and goodwill.

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