



SOME STUDIES ON LANGUAGES AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH LITERATURE IN INDIA

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Abstract

Ever since human beings have invented scripts, writing has reflected the culture, lifestyle, society and the polity of contemporary society. In the process, each culture evolved its own language and created a huge literary base. This literary base of a civilization tells us about the evolution of each of its languages and culture through the span of centuries.

The paper mentions about the relationship between languages and literatures in India throughout history with three parts. 1. Multilanguage issues in India; 2. The national language in Indian context and 3. The relationship between languages and literatures in India.

Keywords: *Multilanguage issues - Indian context - Relationship – Literature*

Introduction

It is difficult to answer exactly what historically has divided people more: color, race, religion or language.

Language is a leading product of culture. With its own characteristics, language can become a distinguishing feature, a barrier more effective than color or race among peoples. In fact, it is on the basis of language that ancient man once divided people into two different groups: one was themselves and the other was other people who did not follow their languages. For example, the Aryans and the Mleccha—“*the other mixed race*” in India; the Thiudas – “*People from our country*” and the Walxas—“*Foreigners*” in Germany; “*The Noble*” and “*The Languageless*” among the Slavs and Niemites in the Slavic-speaking regions...Language barriers are sometimes deeper than rivers or seas, higher than mountains, but man in modern society has quickly overcome those barriers to learn about each other's cultures and languages.

As a legacy of the past, given the fact that some peoples are considered to be more advanced than others in terms of knowledge accumulated in the past to pass on from generation to generation, in some cultures, languages are considered classical - may have

been the result of political policies, we can find languages used as bilingual or multilingual in a different number of countries. Therefore, to understand today's world cultures, we are forced to study some of the languages that are considered classical, such as Latin and Greek in Europe; Sanskrit and Pali in India; ancient Arabic, ancient Chinese in Asia... Besides, we are forced to study the phenomenon that some peoples are using the same language even though it is not their mother tongues like English, French, Spanish, German, Persian or Russian...

It is the inner preservation of the humanistic and religious cultural systems that have been deeply imprinted for many centuries in different countries, many languages today no longer exist in the everyday speech of the people, but have disappeared with their glory in the past history or only exist in academic research... Scholars who wish to study the cultures in the past are forced to become acquainted with the languages considered classical or sacred, such as in the case of Latin or Greek and Hebrew among European cultures; ancient Arabic among the Muslim peoples, Hindi among the Hindus and Pali among the Buddhists of South Asia...

1. Multilanguage issues in India

Language problems in education can be seen in complexities in different countries of the world such as India, China, Malaysia... and one can compare these situations with one another. In India, for a long time, there was not much of a problem with the language, whether in education or in ordinary everyday life. Among the Hindus of India, the upper classes studied and used the Sanskrit language, while the majority of the population in most parts of the country was satisfied with its use in singing and chanting as well as performing religious rites in their local languages¹. The knowledge of languages considered modern today in India are still at the basic level. Those languages began to be used from the 16th century and became widely used only since the mid-19th century, requiring the recognition of Sanskrit on one hand and Persian² and English on the other to become high administrative and cultural languages after the Turks and Afghans ruled India in the 13th century and the British in the 18th and 19th centuries³. Before the introduction of British education into India, boys in high school received an elementary school education in their mother tongues followed by some traditional mathematics. This allowed them to be able to read any handwritten or printed documents that fell into their hands, even though they might not be able to fully understand what was written. Those who wanted to study further during that time were required to take extra lessons in Sanskrit (if he was a Hindu) or Arabic or Persian (if he was a Muslim)⁴. Courses like these have been established in India since the Medieval Ages. Both in form and content, the researchers compared those courses to Latin language courses at Western European universities in the third or fourth year, with the courses taken from classical works and the most complex grammatical structures.

¹ Pollock, Sheldon (2006). *The Language of the Gods in the World of Men: Sanskrit, Culture, and Power in Premodern India*. University of California Press. p. 14. ISBN 978-0-520-24500-6. Once Sanskrit emerged from the sacerdotal environment ... it became the sole medium by which ruling elites expressed their power ... Sanskrit probably never functioned as an everyday medium of communication anywhere in the cosmopolis—not in South Asia itself, let alone Southeast Asia ... The work Sanskrit did do ... was directed above all toward articulating a form of ... politics ... as celebration of aesthetic power.

² Alam, Muzaffar (2003), Pollock, Sheldon (ed.), "The Culture and Politics of Persian in Precolonial Hindustan", *Literary Cultures in History: Reconstructions from South Asia*, University of California Press, ISBN 0520228219, p 134 and 188. "The Persian language in the Indian subcontinent, before the British colonisation, was the region's lingua franca and a widely used official language in North India. The language was brought into South Asia by various Turkic and Afghan dynasties from the 11th century onwards, notable of which were the Ghaznavids, Delhi Sultanate and the Mughal Dynasty. Persian held official status in the court and the administration within these empires. It largely replaced Sanskrit as the language of politics, literature, education, and social status in the subcontinent".

³ Reynolds, Mike; Verma, Mahendra (2007), Britain, David (ed.), "Indic languages", *Language in the British Isles*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, ISBN 978-0-521-79488-6, pp. 293–307.

⁴ Blackwell, Fritz (2004), *India: A Global Studies Handbook*, ABC-CLIO, Inc., ISBN 1-57607-348-3, p.88-90.

Only in 1799 did the British begin to teach the languages of the ancient and modern peoples of the East to high-ranking officials whom the East India Company who wanted to be sent to India to carry out administrative tasks at Fort William College, Calcutta, India. Those languages were Arabic, Persian, Sanskrit, Hindi and also Brajhasha, Bengali dialects. As for the Indians, at first the East India Company thought that they should continue to teach traditional subjects such as Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian. So they founded schools like Sanskrit College and Perso-Arabic Madrasah in Calcutta in 1824⁵. But Indian intellectuals, especially those who were working with the British (including Raja Ram Mohun Roy, were among them) - "The Father of Modern India") recognized the value of English and European cultures and in Calcutta, thanks largely to its Indian masters, Hindu College was founded in 1816, the school was later renamed Presidency College of Calcutta. Thomas Babington Macaulay, British historian and poet, went to India as a court official and taught British officials how to behave while communicating with Indians. He wrote books on teaching English and European civilizations in English to Indian boys in order to train a class of Indians who could cooperate closely with British rulers as well as British business firms in all their affairs.

It was in 1835 that the establishment of teaching models in India following the British model began. This model spread in different parts of Bengal since the 1940s, these schools were taught by Indian teachers and supported financially by wealthy Indians. Later, British missionaries also began to open their own schools, often used only to teach Indians. The Hindu College of Calcutta became the most important center of British culture for Indians at that time and its diploma was as valuable as university degrees. Indian boys were eager to learn English and their enthusiasm made them cut off from their native culture with their mother tongues and other so-called classical languages in India as Sanskrit. It was under such circumstances that in India a new class of intellectuals arose known as the "Bengali Boys", a class led by the Hindu College and other schools of its kind. The Duff Colleges of the missionaries dominated Indian culture and education for almost three generations⁶.

In the 30s and 40s of the twentieth century, these intellectuals, so imbued with the English language and literary culture, wanted to anglicize themselves to the point that one of them was self-deprecating in a play performed in 1866: they "speak in English, think in English, and dream in English"⁷.

⁵ Parimala V. Rao, "Modern education and the revolt of 1857 in India." *Paedagogica Historica* 52.1-2 (2016): 25-42. In 19th century India, "English education" meant "modern education". Most taught a curriculum similar to public schools. Britain at the time through English as a medium of instruction, especially those sponsored by missionaries. Some taught the curriculum through vernacular languages with English as a second language. The term "pre-modern" was used for three kinds of schools. The Arabic and Sanskrit schools taught Muslim or Hindu sacred literature, while the Persian schools taught Persian literature. The vernacular schools across India taught reading and writing the vernacular language and arithmetic.

⁶ Naik, J.P.; Nurullah, Syed (1943). *History of education in India during the British period* (PDF). Macmillan & Co. pp. 1–20. Retrieved 10 April 2020.

⁷ Stephen Evans, "Macaulay's minute revisited: Colonial language policy in nineteenth-century India," *Journal of Multilingual and*

It is because of this phenomenon that during the mid-nineteenth century (much earlier than in other countries with similar circumstances), in India, people showed indifference to the mother tongues. The practical economic and political importance of English under British rule led Indians to focus on learning English and English literature, in an increasingly sophisticated education system became so popular in India from the second half of the nineteenth century that there was a Bengali proverb that "One who knows English is like one who has a good horse". It is this situation that led to an odd situation where native speakers greatly underestimated their own culture of writing in their mother tongues and assumed that only English literature and English culture had high value. It was Macaulay who issued a statement to encourage young Indians to learn English that "A single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia!"⁸ The psychological impact on young people of such statements was indeed disastrous during a time when English was valued.

Fortunately for India the top three universities were at Calcutta, Bombay and Madras in 1937 provided a way looking more balanced at language learning and research. These universities were modeled after British schools with an entrance exam for both boys and girls, four years for a bachelor's degree (the first two years for foundation and two years after) to specialize in a bachelor's degree, a year and a half or two years for a master's degree. According to the University of London curriculum, a class of classical languages (Sanskrit, Persian or Arabic) was required to be taken for a certificate when taking the foundation exam (the same as English, Latin or Greek in the UK) and when they wanted to graduate, they were required to take an essay exam in any of these languages. English was still considered a must at the top of universities and high schools: all subjects – with the exception of mother tongue subjects – were required to be written in English and from the foundation curriculum. All teachers' presentations were in English. English became an important instrument of British domination in India, it played a part in determining British domination in this country and the fate of those living under that domination.

But the leading and respected scholars in India as well as patriots refused to accept the dominant position of the English language. Gradually, a patriotic movement associated with mother tongue advocacy brought new importance and height to the Indian languages. During the 70s of the nineteenth century, the promotion

of Indian languages and resistance to the use of English emerged in Bengal⁹.

The movement to liberate India from the English language and culture as well as the economic and political domination of the British was at its height in the first decade of the twentieth century. The fervent love for the mother tongues, which was promoted in India during this period, gave rise to vernacular literature in Bengal and elsewhere in India, but at that time, no one took it seriously to consider banning the use of English in education, or find ways to prevent its use to educate people of whatever level they were, or urge to use only the mother tongues instead of English¹⁰... Cultural traditions British literature had deeply influenced and become an integral part of Indian culture and education in this country.

However, the patriotic movement also exerted certain influences on people of all walks of life: the study of languages, the events of the nation's history and culture were widely appreciated and recognized. In 1918, the examination for a master's degree in Indian languages was held at the University of Calcutta and was widely accepted in other universities in India. In 1941, English was replaced by four languages that were considered to be major in India namely Hindi, Bengali, Assamese and Urdu according to the preference of the candidates. Then, a movement of teaching and learning in ethnic languages up to the highest exams broke out in India. It was debated which of the languages in India should be used to take these exams.

The Osmania University of Hyderabad began its experiments in recruiting teachers who spoke Urdu, then Urdu became the compulsory language of education in the whole state of Hyderabad although this language was only spoken by 10-11% speakers, the rest spoke other languages: : 48% in Telugu, 26% in Marathi, 11% in Kannanda according to 1931 census¹¹.

After India declared her independence on August 15th 1947, there was a need to replace English as quickly as possible in the administrative, educational, cultural or information systems with a certain mother tongue, people just realized that it was not as simple as they had thought at first. The Indian languages have not yet had a vocabulary suitable for use in all general cases as well as in particular fields. Indian scholars began to engage in endless controversy over technical and specialized problems of the languages but still were unable to come to a general conclusion about an acceptable solution for all interested parties. Even the Indian government has not given clear opinions on this issue. English has been so deeply embedded into all of India's administrative, political and cultural systems that a hasty replacement could turn out to be a disaster. That is why, despite facing many obstacles and complex problems, both in practice and in psychology, English is still an official language in India today¹².

Multicultural Development (2002) 23#4 pp 260-281
doi:10.1080/01434630208666469.

⁸ See "Minute by the Hon'ble T. B. Macaulay, dated the 2nd February 1835", in From: Bureau of Education. Selections from Educational Records, Part I (1781-1839). Edited by H. Sharp. Calcutta: Superintendent, Government Printing, 1920. Reprint. Delhi: National Archives of India, 1965, 107-117. "We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern, a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect". Source: <http://www.mssu.edu/projectsouthasia/history/primarydocs/education/Macaulay001.htm>

⁹ Seal, Anil (1968). *Emergence of Indian Nationalism: Competition and Collaboration in the Later Nineteenth Century*. London: Cambridge U.P. ISBN 0-521-06274-8.

¹⁰ Braj B. Kachru (1983). *The Indianisation of English: the English language in India*. Oxford University Press. ISBN 0-19-561353-8

¹¹ Sarkar, Sumit (1983). *Modern India: 1885-1947*. Madras: Macmillan. ISBN 0-333-90425-7. p. 486.

¹² Guha, Ramachandra (10 February 2011). "Ideas of India (section IX)". *India After Gandhi: The History of the World's Largest Democracy*. Pan Macmillan. ISBN 978-0-330-54020-9. pp. 117-120. "British colonial legacy has resulted in English being a language for governance, business, and education. English, along

Such problems have occurred in Indian literature and culture and are difficult to compare with other countries where the problems of language choice do not arise, where their citizens can obtain the highest degrees while still using their mother tongues.

Language issues are also reflected in Indian education from vocational guidance to those remaining attached to their mother tongues after moving to a new environment such as in French or African speaking communities in South America or North America, Irish speakers in Northern Ireland... For example, a Bengali-speaking writer who has a readership of 60 million still needs to learn more Sanskrit in order to perfect his grammar and vocabulary because the two languages have a long-standing relationship. However, the situation will be different for millions of boys and girls in the "Hindu belt" region. The language we now call Hindi is an Indo-Aryan language spoken chiefly in the Hindi belt region encompassing parts of northern, central, eastern and western India. Hindi has been described as a standardised and Sanskritised register¹³ of the Hindustani language, which itself is based primarily on the Khariboli dialect of Delhi and neighbouring areas of Northern India¹⁴. Hindi, written in the Devanagari script, is one of the two official languages of the Government of India, along with English¹⁵. It is an official language in 9 States and 3 Union Territories and an additional official language in 3 other states¹⁶. Hindi is also one of the 22 scheduled languages of the Republic of India¹⁷. Hindi is the lingua franca of the Hindi Belt. It is also spoken, to a lesser extent, in other parts of India (usually in a simplified variety such as Bazaar Hindustani or Haflong Hindi)¹⁸. Therefore, the language that is considered the norm is only true for about 40 million of the 100 million people who speak Hindi in India from North India to the West Punjab and Bengal in their everyday language, cultures and literature.

We can give an example of the status quo of children's education in Bengal schools before 1947 as follows:

1. Before 1947, the child may have learned the alphabet at home.
2. Given the complexity of reading and writing in Bengali, it took a child about two years to become fluent in reading and writing in Bengali. During that time, the child also learnt the basics of math.

with Hindi, is one of the two languages permitted in the Constitution of India for business in Parliament. Despite the fact that Hindi has official Government patronage and serves as a lingua franca over large parts of India, there was considerable opposition to the use of Hindi in the southern states of India, and English has emerged as a de facto lingua franca over much of India".

¹³ "Constitution of India". Archived from the original on 2 April 2012. Retrieved 2nd March 2022.

¹⁴ "Central Hindi Directorate: Introduction". Archived from the original on 4 May 2012. Retrieved 18 February 2022.

¹⁵ "Constitutional Provisions: Official Language Related Part-17 of The Constitution Of India". Department of Official Language, Government of India. Archived from the original on 13 January 2017. Retrieved 15 February 2022.

¹⁶ "Hindi and the North-South divide". 9 October 2018.

¹⁷ "PART A Languages specified in the Eighth Schedule (Scheduled Languages)". Archived from the original on 29 October 2013.

¹⁸ "How many Indians can you talk to?". www.hindustantimes.com.

3. From third grade, children would start learning English with the First Book of Reading by Peary Churn Sircar.
4. From the age of seven to eight, the child had to learn English instead of the mother tongue.
5. In higher grades, the child had almost no trouble learning in English, and the opportunities to learn with native speakers were rare¹⁹.

After 1947, English was still a very useful language for school-goers, even though nationalist movements emphasized a lot on the national languages. In Bengal, for example, this was a great period of Bengali literature such as the short stories, novels and poetry of Rabindranath Tagore or Prabhat Mukherji and others. It was during this period that writers, poets or students could speak in a bilingual environment: English enriched its vocabulary as well as its ideas and psychological and philosophical depth of their culture and aesthetics. Students even set up clubs to speak pure Bengali without borrowing words and expressions from English²⁰. In families that refused to be bilingual, the sad situation was that they only spoke English to each other and used a poor Hindi language of the lower classes (like their servants)...Rabindranath Tagore once described such families in his writings: "You are in a ridiculous situation: you have forgotten Bengali, and you still don't seem to be very fluent in English. How can you communicate with people?"²¹

The state of caste division also contributes to the gap between different language regions:

A Bengali Brahmin who established his career and settled down in states like Uttar Pradesh could only let his children marry in a Bengal Brahmin family, and a Marwari family of Vaisya caste was forced to marry in the same line as the mother's lineage. However, in the present time, everything changes in a faster direction. Faster travel has made communication easier among people in general, and different languages in particular. Families are increasingly migrating to new places more often due to business needs, so they also have an easier and more frequent settlement in other languages. Due to the need to communicate, they are forced to mix with the local residents both in terms of language and society of the surrounding people.

Therefore, language policies in India require the government to be concerned about both the settlement of the population in a certain region and the issues of castes in society. As long as these issues are not given due attention, there is a risk that bilinguals will forget their native languages and will be in a state of mental anguish for forgetting their own origins and met with disapproval from people in the area they moved to²².

Today, many Indians are still dreaming that they can be hired at all levels of government agencies if they are fluent in their mother tongues. Since 1948, with the expansion of education to the

¹⁹ "Milestones in India's Freedom Struggle". Online Educational Resource Collection. 2006. Retrieved 10 May 2015

²⁰ Thompson, Hanne-Ruth (2012). Bengali (Paperback with corrections. ed.). Amsterdam: John Benjamins Pub. Co. p. 3. ISBN 978-90-272-3819-1.

²¹ Isaiah Berlin, *Rabindranath Tagore and the Consciousness of Nationality, The Sense of Reality: Studies in Ideas and Their History* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1997), p. 265.

²² Bhatia, Tej K and William C. Ritchie. (2006) *Bilingualism in South Asia*. In: *Handbook of Bilingualism*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, pp. 780-807.

common people, students began to complain that they had difficulty in listening to lectures and taking notes in English, and in many schools, mother tongues have been allowed to teach and do assignments, then English tended to decline in many regions. Sometimes they felt humiliated to depend so much on a foreign language. This psychological factor led to a psychological conflict as to what one should do with pride²³ but not to pass up an opportunity to expand international cooperation and friendship with other countries in English, because everyone knows that this is a great communication tool to approach the world cultures nowadays. That's why a compromise has been born: the mother tongue could be used at the highest levels, but English was a must for the elite intellectuals.

2. The national language in Indian context

There is another factor also affecting the imagination and thinking of many Indians. This factor has a lot to do with how the educational and political policy of India is implemented a national language policy nationwide.

2.1. Official languages in India throughout the history

The official languages of British India were English, Urdu and later Hindi, with English being used for purposes at the central level²⁴.

The origins of official Hindi usage traced back to 1900, when MacDonnell issued an order, which allowed the “permissive — but not exclusive — use” of Devanagari for Hindustani in the courts of North-Western Provinces²⁵.

The Indian constitution adopted in 1950 envisaged that English would be phased out in favour of Hindi, over a fifteen-year period, but gave Parliament the power to, by law, provide for the continued use of English even thereafter²⁶. Plans to make Hindi the sole official language of the Republic were met with resistance in many parts of the country. English and Hindi continue to be used today, in combination with others (at the central level and in some states) official languages.

The legal framework governing the use of languages for official purpose currently is the Official Languages Act, 1963, the Official Language Rules, 1976, and various state laws, as well as rules and regulations made by the central government and the states.

Today, there is no national language in India²⁷. However, article 343(1) of the Indian constitution specifically mentions that, "The official language of the Union shall be Hindi in Devanagari script.

²³ Joseph, Manu (17 February 2011). "India Faces a Linguistic Truth: English Spoken Here". The New York Times, wrote that due to the prominence and usage of the language and the desire for English-language education, "English is the de facto national language of India. It is a bitter truth."

²⁴ Mollin, Sandra (2006). Euro-English: assessing variety status. Gunter Narr Verlag. ISBN 978-3-8233-6250-0, p. 17.

²⁵ Rai, Alok (2001). Hindi Nationalism (tracks for the Times). Orient Blackswan. ISBN 978-81-250-1979-4.

²⁶ Kanchan Chandra, "Ethnic Bargains, Group Instability, and Social Choice Theory", Politics and Society 29, 3: 337–362.

²⁷ See "Report of the Commissioner for linguistic minorities: 50th report (July 2012 to June 2013)" (PDF). Commissioner for Linguistic Minorities, Ministry of Minority Affairs, Government of India. Archived from the original (PDF) on 8 July 2016. Retrieved 17 September 2016.

The form of numerals to be used for the official purposes of the Union shall be the international form of Indian numerals."²⁸ The business in Indian parliament can only be transacted in Hindi or in English. English is allowed to be used in official purposes such as parliamentary proceedings, judiciary, communications between the Central Government and a State Government. There are various official languages in India at the state/territory level. States within India have the liberty and powers to specify their own official language(s) through legislation. In addition to the official languages, the constitution recognizes 22 regional languages, which include Hindi but not English, as scheduled languages.

2.2. Bitter debates have arisen in India

- A large Muslim community in North India prefers to use Hindi while Urdu is chosen by most Muslims; some Bengalis intend to promote their language;
- The national language is agreed upon by many Indians in principle and has a relatively complete vocabulary to be able to describe almost all problems of human life in comparison to other languages in India.
- Urdu with its Arabic script and words with Persian and Arabic roots and Hindi and Sanskrit vocabularies has gained a relatively strong foothold among the languages of Northern India such as Bengali, Oriya, Assamese, Bihari, Kosali, Marathi, Gujarati or East Indian Hindi, Western Hindi and Standard Hindi. In other words, it makes a place for itself in other southern Dravidian cultural languages such as Telugu, Kannada, Tamil, Malayalam and even in some ethnic minority languages such as Mundari, Khasi, Manipuri and Newari.
- There also have even been scientists who have suggested the use of an English combined with Sanskrit, for instance Professor F. W. Thomas at the British University of Oxford²⁹.

He suggested that Sanskrit had been used in Indian culture for the past thirty centuries and achieved so much that it should be used as a national language³⁰. Many scholars consider it a viable ideal initiative because Sanskrit is the source of nourishment and cultural flows for all the languages in India, the main means of transmission of this civilization (including Dravidian languages), like Latin for the languages of the Romans. Sanskrit can be considered "the most Indian" while other modern languages such as Bengali, Marathi, Assamese, Telugu, Gujarati, Malayalam and others, even Hindi are only regional or state languages. But the problem lies elsewhere: the grammar of the Sanskrit language is not very suitable for the technology industries that are rapidly advancing in India and the Indian Muslims - not a small

²⁸ PTI (25 January 2010). "Hindi, not a national language: Court". The Hindu. Retrieved 20 November 2018 and "Constitutional Provisions: Official Language Related Part-17 of The Constitution Of India". Department of Official Language, Government of India. Retrieved 1 July 2015.

²⁹ A. J. Arberry, 'Thomas, Frederick William (1867–1956)', rev. J. B. Katz, Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, Oxford University Press, 2004.

³⁰ A. J. Arberry, 'Thomas, Frederick William, rev. J. B. Katz (2004), Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, Oxford University Press.

population³¹ does not find this language suitable and attractive to them.

- Hindi is the later language supported by a large number of Indians who use it or in its trajectory such as Gujarati, Maharashtrian, Oriya, Bengali and Assamese... This language represents a modern language of India, understood by the majority of Indians, written in a script similar to present-day Sanskrit. At the same time, it also shares a lot of similarities with such languages as Gujarati, Marathi, Nepali, Kannanda, Telugu, Oriya, Bengali and Assamese...

If selected as the National Language of India, Hindi can be considered to bring about the common strength and solidarity of the entire nation. Thus, many Indian activists and scholars have gone to great lengths to give Hindi its rightful status in the Indian education system. Many people agree to make Hindi a compulsory language in Indian schools from primary to secondary; praising its contribution to the diversity and unity of the social community, wants to bring it to develop in parallel in different regions of India along with other languages in the regions where the language has influenced.

However, from 1937 to 1973, there was a marked change in the attitude of people in areas where Hindi was spoken or influenced by this language, they have a hostile attitude towards Hindi. It was due to the fanatical treatment and national hatred of some powers in India³². That is why English is used more voluntarily in Indian offices and is officially used in education - especially higher education to avoid unnecessary incidents. We can recall the resurrection of the Hebrew language in the Palestinian region and the Irish language in the Irish region in the same context. Therefore, the use or not of Hindi is influenced by many factors, this is a problem beyond the language, it reveals a separatist trend in politics in India.

From a political point of view, Hindi can be considered as the National Language as it has been the language of education, literature, and social life of more than 342 million native speakers³³ and 250 million other people who use it to communicate at work, naturally or as necessary, it has become the third language in the world after Chinese and English in terms of number of users³⁴. On the international stage, Hindi is more accessible to Indo-European speaking peoples such as English, French, German, Spanish and Russian and to the language of its immensely great next-door neighbor – Chinese. Hindi has become one of the seven languages in the world with the largest number of speakers³⁵.

³¹ Islam is the second-largest religion in India, with 14.2% of the country's population, approximately 172.2 million people identifying as adherents of Islam in 2011 Census. ("Religion PCA – India". 2011 Census of India. Retrieved 26 October 2021. "Religion PCA". Census of India Website: Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India. Retrieved 1 September 2021.)

³² Rai, Alok (2001). Hindi nationalism. Orient Blackswan. ISBN 978-81-250-1979-4. p. 110.

³³ Gangopadhyay, Avik (2020). Glimpses of Indian Languages. Evincepub publishing. ISBN 9789390197828. p. 43.

³⁴ "Abu Dhabi includes Hindi as third official court language". The Hindu. 10 February 2019 – via www.thehindu.com.

³⁵ Pillalamarri, Akhilesh. "India's Evolving Linguistic Landscape". thediplomat.com. Retrieved 22 December 2019.

The current problem related to learning English is the career opportunities that this language opens up to its learners. After many hardships, learners, in addition to improving their own knowledge, have a better chance than those who do not have knowledge of English in finding a job and moving up the social ladder.

To avoid politically sensitive issues and religious or ethnic conflicts, a compromise model has now emerged in parts of India. In Bengal for example, besides secondary schools taught in English, there are also "Vernacular Schools", where students learn in their mother tongue for the first four years, then enter secondary schools like other students. They often outperform high school students in English-taught schools in subjects such as Bengali, History, Geography, Mathematics and Basic Science and only have more difficulty in English. Therefore, there are many educators and scholars in India who suggest that the mother tongues should be taught in primary schools and then English in the upper classes³⁶.

In summary, language is still an unresolved problem in India. Many contradictions and conflicts can only be resolved through a patriotic attitude combined with an international vision and educational effectiveness. There needs to be definitive solutions, but depending on the situation, compromises must still be accepted in this very important, very urgent and very sensitive process³⁷.

In the context of globalization and a world civilization taking shape, Indians are having to be very skillful in every move to keep up with the progress of mankind without losing their glorious national identity and their precious resources, contributing to the development of their nation according to the trend of the times and enriching the cultural life of all mankind. Language is one such problem for this country.

3. The relationship between languages and literatures in India

So far, Indian literature has come to us mostly through Sanskrit (except for the part written in English in modern times), however, the concept of Indian Literature and Sanskrit literature do not coincide. The history of Indian literature is a concept that encompasses not only a long historical period, covering a large region, but also made up of many languages.

The Indian languages belong to the Indo-Germanic family and have gone through three different stages of development, sometimes successive but sometimes parallel.

3.1. Ancient India

The language of the oldest literary monuments, songs, *suttas* and magical formulas of the Vedic period is often called ancient Indian, sometimes it is called Vedic Sanskrit. The German researcher Maurice Winternitz suggests that we should call the language "noble ancient Indian language"³⁸ as Rhys David calls it in the

³⁶ Rao, S. (2008). *India's language debates and education of linguistic minorities*. Economic and Political Weekly 6 September 2008.

³⁷ "Scheduled Languages in descending order of speaker's strength - 2001". Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India. Retrieved 1 July 2015.

³⁸ Maurice Winternitz, *A History Of Indian Literature*, Volume 1, Published July 1st 1987 by Motilal Banarsidass, India, p.234.

book *Buddhist India*³⁹. Because although this language is rooted in oral language, it is not used every day, it has become a literary language that is preserved from generation to generation in a very strict, reverent manner. The dialect under which this "noble ancient Indian language" originated with the Arian living in northwestern India, was very closely related to the ancient Persians and the ancient Bactrians and is not far different than the base language of Iranians⁴⁰. In studying this language, scholars have found that it is indeed closer to "noble ancient Indian" than to the later Sanskrit and Pali languages of India. The Vedic language differs from the Indian Sanskrit not in phonetics but in the number of words and their grammatical forms and chronology⁴¹. For example, the "noble ancient Indian language" has void words that Sanskrit does not or has dozens of suffixes of verbs similar to the ancient languages but not like in the later Sanskrit.

We can classify this "noble ancient Indian language" in its relation in literature as follows:

1. The language of divine songs and *Mantras*, especially the *Rig Veda*.
2. The language of the divine songs and the *Mantras* of the other *Vedas*, the *Brahmana* and the *Sutra*.

The relationship of the Sanskrit languages is different:

1. *Ancient Sanskrit*, the language of the Vedic prose works, including the *Mantras* and the language of Panini.
2. *Sanskrit of epics*, the language of popular epics - a language that is less governed by grammatical rules to be able to reach a wide audience of listeners and readers.
3. *Classical Sanskrit*, the language of classical Sanskrit literature, after Panini (around the 4th century AD, the grammatical rules laid down by Panini became the template and governed the development of the exports. publication in this language). Even today, Sanskrit is not a "dead language" in India⁴². There are a lot of magazines in India and business negotiations are still using writing in Sanskrit. Many poets in India still compose their works and scientists still discuss their scientific topics in Sanskrit⁴³.

Sanskrit is perhaps the only language that transcended the barriers of regions and boundaries. From the north to the south and the east

³⁹ Rhys David (2012), *Buddhist India*, Publisher CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, ISBN-10 1480057231 and ISBN-13 978-1480057234.

⁴⁰ Ramat, Anna Giacalone; Ramat, Paolo (2015). *The Indo-European Languages*. Routledge. ISBN 978-1-134-92187-4. pp. 26–31.

⁴¹ Uta Reinöhl (2016). *Grammaticalization and the Rise of Configurationality in Indo-Aryan*. Oxford University Press. pp. xiv, 1–16. ISBN 978-0-19-873666-0.

⁴² Annamalai, E. (2008). "Contexts of multilingualism". In Braj B. Kachru; Yamuna Kachru; S. N. Sridhar (eds.). *Language in South Asia*. Cambridge University Press. pp. 223–. ISBN 978-1-139-46550-2. Some of the migrated languages ... such as Sanskrit and English, remained primarily as a second language, even though their native speakers were lost. Some native languages like the language of the Indus valley were lost with their speakers, while some linguistic communities shifted their language to one or other of the migrants' languages.

⁴³ "Searching for Sanskrit Speakers in the Indian Census". *The Wire*. Retrieved 9 February 2021.

to the west there is no part of India that has not contributed to or been affected by this language. There have been many great literary works in Sanskrit, which marked the golden era of Indian literature such as 'Abhijanam Shakuntalam' and 'Meghdoot' by Kalidasa, 'Mricchakatika' by Shudraka, 'Swapna Vasavadattam' by Bhasa, and 'Ratnavali' by Sri Harsha. Some other famous works are Chanakya's 'Arthashastra' and Vatsyayana's 'Kamasutra'.

3.2. Languages and Dialects in Medieval India

3.2.1. *With the development of the Sanskrit language, the local languages were naturally used by the Indo-Europeans in parallel with it.* When we speak of languages and dialects of medieval India, we do not mean that their origins were drawn directly from Sanskrit but also from other common Indo-European languages which were based on the use of the upper classes of Indian society and those closely related to them. Not surprisingly, with the migration of speakers of Aryan languages from the West to the East, dialects also flourished and diversified. Archaeologists have found medieval manuscripts in languages other than Sanskrit as evidence of the rich diversity of languages spoken at that time in India. Some of these languages later became literary languages⁴⁴.

The oldest literary language of the Medieval Time was Pali, the language of Buddhist literature in Sri Lanka, Burma and Siam (present-day Thailand). It is in this language that the oldest collections of Buddhist manuscripts were created and preserved for us till date. It was the Buddhists who told us that unlike the Brahmins who always preached in Sanskrit, "the Buddha spoke to beings in their own language"⁴⁵. And because the Buddha spoke first in Magadhi, Magadha (a language in Southern Bihar), Pali also has many similarities with Magadhi. However, many researchers believe that this is not true, but it is possible that Pali is an amalgamation of languages and that the basis of that mixing is Magadhi. The Pali word means "argument", "order", "direction" or "law"⁴⁶.

2.2.2. *Besides literature in Pali, there is also Buddhist literature written in Sanskrit.* Today, Buddhist works are often poetry written in Sanskrit while individual pieces of text are found called "gatha" or song, often written in a medieval dialect⁴⁷.

⁴⁴ Colin P. Masica (1993). *The Indo-Aryan Languages*. Cambridge University Press. ISBN 978-0-521-29944-2., p. 55: "Thus Classical Sanskrit, fixed by Panini's grammar in probably the fourth century BC on the basis of a class dialect (and preceding grammatical tradition) of probably the seventh century BC, had its greatest literary flowering in the first millennium AD and even later, much of it therefore a full thousand years after the stage of the language it ostensibly represents."

⁴⁵ Stargardt, Janice. *Tracing Thoughts Through Things: The Oldest Pali Texts and the Early Buddhist Archaeology of India and Burma*, Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, 2000, page 25.

⁴⁶ Hazra, K. L. (1994). *Pāli language and literature: a systematic survey and historical study*. Emerging perceptions in Buddhist studies, no. 4-5. New Delhi: D.K. Printworld. ISBN 81-246-0004-X, page 19.

⁴⁷ Nariman, J.K.; Introduction to the Early Buddhist Texts in Sanskritised Prākrit from Literary History of Sanskrit Buddhism, Ch 1-6. <http://www.ancient-buddhist-texts.net/Reference/Early-Buddhist-Texts/02-EBT-Sanskrit-Canon.htm>.

However, *gatha* is also sometimes written in prose, and there are a few works in completed verse that have also been found by researchers. In addition, sometimes one finds some works written in the local language that imitate the grammatical structure and style of literature written in the Sanskrit language. That is why researcher Senart has called these works "Mixed with Sanskrit"⁴⁸.

3.2.3. *Similar to Buddhists, Jains also have had their own language to write their scriptures and thoughts, which is commonly called Prakrit:*

- a. *Jaina-Prakrt (also called Ardha Magadhi or Arsa)*, the language of the oldest Jain writings⁴⁹.
- b. *The Jaina-Maharastri language*, the language of the critical and poetic works of the Jains.

3.2.4 *The Maharastri language, the language of the land of the Marathas.* Researchers often consider this to be the best Prakrt language in general, now when Indians want to refer to Prakrt, it is usually to refer to this language. This language is often used in romantic and lyrical poems and passages in plays.

3.2.5 *In addition, there is another language that is often used in drama and is often spoken by people of a lower caste, Paisaci.* Paishachi (or Paisācī) is a largely unattested literary language of the middle kingdoms of India mentioned in Prakrit and Sanskrit grammars of antiquity. It is generally grouped with the Prakrits, with which it shares some linguistic similarities, but is still not considered a spoken Prakrit by the grammarians because it was purely a literary language, but also due to its archaicism⁵⁰. A famous work of folk tales was also written in this language by the author Gunadhya-Brhatkatha.

The canonical Buddhist literature is best represented by the "Tripitakas", that is, three baskets -*Vinaya Pitaka*, *Sutta Pitaka* and *Abhidhamma Pitaka*. *Vinaya Pitaka* deals with rules and regulations of daily life. *Sutta Pitaka* contains dialogues and discourses on morality and deals with Dharma while *Abhidhamma Pitaka* deals with philosophy and metaphysics. It includes discourses on various subjects such as ethics, psychology, theories of knowledge and metaphysical problems. The non-canonical Buddhist literature is best represented by the *Jatakas*. *Jatakas* are the most interesting stories on the previous births of the Buddha.

The Jain texts were written in Prakrit and were finally compiled in the sixth century AD in Valabhi in Gujarat. The important Jain works are known as *Angas*, *Upangas*, *Prakirnas*, *Chhedab Sutras* and *Malasutras*. Among the important Jain scholars, reference may be made to Haribhadra Suri, (eighth century AD) and Hemchandra

⁴⁸ Alfred C. Woolner (1986). Introduction to Prakrit. Motilal Banarsidass. p. 6, context: 1–10. ISBN 978-81-208-0189-9.

⁴⁹ Hazra, K. L. (1994). *Pāli language and literature: a systematic survey and historical study*. Emerging perceptions in Buddhist studies, no. 4-5. New Delhi: D.K. Printworld. ISBN 81-246-0004-X, p. 423.

⁵⁰ Pollock, Sheldon I. (2006), *The language of the gods in the world of men: Sanskrit, culture, and power in premodern India*, University of California Press, ISBN 978-0-520-24500-6.

Suri, (twelfth century AD). Jainism helped in the growth of a rich literature comprising poetry, philosophy and grammar.

3.3. *Early and Modern Indian Languages*

From the tenth century onwards was the third stage of development of the Indians and of the languages of this country. From the 12th century onward, these languages began to introduce their own literatures either as independent or partially dependent on Sanskrit.

The most important languages related from the medieval Indian dialects still extant and used in literature are:

3.3.1. *The Indo-German languages*

Sindhi, Gujarati, Panjabi, Western Hindi in Western India; Garhwali (spoken between the Ganges and Sutlej river deltas); Kumaoni (spoken between the Ganges and Gogra river deltas); Kashmiri and Naipali (language of Nepal) in Northern India; Marathi in South India and Bihari, Bengali, Oriya and Asami in East India. Besides, there is also Urdu and Hindustani which are Hindi but mixed with elements of Arabic and Persian⁵¹. This language was born in the 12th century in the land around Delhi, the power center of Mohammed, in the barracks (Urdu) so it was later named Urdu. In the sixteenth century, people began to produce literary works from this language. Today, it is widely used in communication in India⁵².

Finally, there is the Sinhalese language, the language of the Ceylon region (in present-day Srilanka)⁵³. It is also an Indo-German language developed in medieval India. Through the introduction of Buddhism and Buddhist literature through Pali into the Ceylon region, literature was established in this language which was originally intended solely for the interpretation of Buddhist scriptures. For the next several centuries, researchers believe that this literature was heavily influenced by poetry written in the Sanskrit language⁵⁴.

2.3.2. *Dravidian languages*

All of the above mentioned Indian languages belong to the Indo-German language family. However, we also need to keep in mind that there are many other languages that do not belong to this family of languages in South India. The researchers have called these languages "Dravidian languages". They also speculate that these languages were also common in Northern India because the Indo-Aryan languages appear to have been heavily influenced by Dravidian languages⁵⁵. The most important languages are Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Kannanda. Although these languages were not of the Indo-German family, numerous elements of Sanskrit were present in them and even the literature written in these

⁵¹ Dua, Hans R. (1994). "Hindustani." p. 1554 in *The Encyclopedia of language and linguistics*, edited by R. E. Asher. Oxford: Pergamon Press.

⁵² *Ethnologue: Languages of the World, Seventeenth edition, Urdu*. Ethnologue. Retrieved 5 March 2013.

⁵³ Gair, James (1998). *Studies in South Asian Linguistics*. New York: Oxford University Press. ISBN 978-0-19-509521-0.

⁵⁴ Gananath Obeyesekere ((2003): 46), "Buddhism, ethnicity and Identity: A problem of Buddhist History," in "Journal of Buddhist Ethics", 10, <https://blogs.dickinson.edu/buddhistethics/files/2010/04/Obeyesekere.pdf>

⁵⁵ Edwin Bryant, Laurie L. Patton (2005), *The Indo-Aryan controversy: evidence and inference in Indian history*, p. 254

languages was influenced by the culture. Writings in Sanskrit in South India were also very powerful⁵⁶.

2.3.3. *English*: In fact, literature written in English or translated into English is also becoming more and more popular in India. Besides, the acceptance of readers and critics for authors of works written in English is also increasing. This has changed markedly over several periods⁵⁷.

At first, many writers who wrote in English were often seen as cross-bred, unrooted. Later, sometimes writing in English became fashionable, many people consider it to be the standard of modernity, fashion, and civilization. After Independence, there was a long period when English was seen as evidence of British colonialism, the authors of works written in this language were seen as lacking in national spirit. However, the use of English has become so widespread and has many achievements that it is difficult to deny it every day.

Gradually, the teaching of English to Indians and the great influence of English literature on the hearts and minds of Indian students was not as harmful as one might at first seem to have proved in real life.

One thing that is clear in India is that until recently, it was the authors who had been trained in the English-language education system who provided most of the achievements - both quantitatively and qualitatively - to the world. Bengali and other Indian literatures. Those who had received an English education were not separated from his native language, not isolated by his language when writing, but on the contrary, they themselves were very anxious, efforts in protecting the linguistic heritage of their people.

A series of valuable works of Indian literature written in English were born and were widely distributed around the world such as Raja Rao with *Kanthapura*-1938, *The Cow of the Barricades* - 1947 and *The Serpent and the Rope* - 1960, *The Cat and Shakespeare: A Tale of India* - 1965; Arundhati Roy with *The God of Small Things* ... as well as many other writers and poets in India.

Conclusion

As mentioned- above, we can understand the importance of languages for creating the Indian literatures in particular and Indian civilization in general. Language is a medium through which we express our thoughts while literature is a mirror that reflects ideas and philosophies which govern our society. Hence, to know any particular culture and its tradition, it is very important that we understand the evolution of its language and the various forms of literature like poetry, drama and religious and non-religious writings. Thanks to this process, we can understand the role played by different languages in creating the composite cultural heritage that characterises India throughout history.

⁵⁶ Caldwell, Robert (1856), *A comparative grammar of the Dravidian, or, South-Indian family of languages*, London: Harrison; Reprinted London, K. Paul, Trench, Trubner & co., ltd., 1913; rev. ed. by J.L. Wyatt and T. Ramakrishna Pillai, Madras, University of Madras, 1961, reprint Asian Educational Services, 1998. ISBN 81-206-0117-3.

⁵⁷ M.K. Naik (1980), *A History of Indian English Literature*, Sahitya Akademi, p.7-11.

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