CHAPTER - I

LANGUAGE IN EDUCATION

Language, both in the Indian tradition and in the West, has always had a central role in education. In the Indian tradition, language was in effect, equated with school education comprising the study of language and arithmetic. In the ancient Hindu education system "the development of grammar and philology" was made possible by "the care taken to preserve the sacred text from corruption" (Das 1930:14). From among the six subjects, the auxiliary disciplines, the study of which was considered necessary for the reading, the understanding and the proper sacrificial employment of the Vedas, the following four were directly related to language education: Śikṣā (or phonetics), (2) Chhandās (or metre), (3) Vyākarana (or grammar), (4) Nirukta (etymology or explanation of words). 1 Śikṣā and Chhandās were necessary for reading the Veda and Vyākarana and Nirukta for understanding it (See Das 1930:14-15). In the West, too, the focus on language study bequeathed the title of 'Grammar Schools' on the schools there. As a matter of fact, the world over the focus in all the

---

1 Kautilya in his Arthaśāstra confirms this tradition (cf. R. Shāmsāstri's English Translation, Mysore : The New Wesleyan Press 1929:7).
educational systems has been chiefly on the teaching of texts in the classical languages. For instance, in India it was on Sanskrit, just as in England it was on Latin.

It is traditionally recognised that language has a dual aspect: (i) as epistemology, means of knowledge, and (ii) as ontology, object of knowledge. As epistemology it is related to cognition and as ontology to reality. The traditional Indian schools of thought recognised this dual role as it evident from Bhartrhari's characterisation of the Šabda as both the revealer and the revealed (See Vakyapadiya I. 81). The Mīmāṃsā (Enquiry) School, which sought to explain the Vedas, held that every word was the reflexion of an ideal prototype, and that its meaning was eternal and inherent in it. The opponents of this school, particularly those belonging to the school of logic and epistemology, Nyaya (Analysis), subscribed to the view that the relation of word and meaning was purely conventional (See Basham 1968:392).

Both diachronically and synchronically, the language situation in India has always been complex and varied. The Austro-Asiatic, the Tibeto-Burman, the Dravidian and the Indo-Aryan languages have always coexisted in complex though varying patterns. Amongst the earliest languages belonging to the prehistoric period of Indian history, were Andamanese, Yero and Onge of the
earliest settlements of Nigroids or Negritos and Munda and Mon-Khmer of Austro-Asiatic family of Austroloids or Nishadas. These were followed by the Dravidian family of languages of which the four modern variants - Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam --are listed in the eighth schedule of the Indian Constitution. The other significant strand is provided by the tribal languages of the Tibeto-Burman family: Meithei/Manipuri, Boro, Garo, Tripuri, Lushai, Miri and Abor. These tribal and sub-tribal languages, however, are not languages of education, which role is filled by the dominant, generally Indo-Aryan language of the area which happens to be Assamese in this case. This linguistic variety has not only been always reflected in education, but has also posed problems of policy. Thus at any given moment, the Indian student has had to study at least two languages; besides, it has always been difficult to decide between the first language and the second language. In the present-day situation, similarly, though three languages are required to be studied through school education all over the country, in practice, in the North, students mostly prefer to study Sanskrit as a third language (thereby defeating the purpose which was to make the students in the North study a South Indian language and vice-versa). As a result, people in the South who took enthusiastically to the study of Hindi after Independence reacted strongly by opposing Hindi as a national link language.
In this way, the diachronic-synchronic situation of the country has made the language situation very problematic.

After the arrival of the British, English was introduced in the country and it took on the role that Sanskrit and Persian had performed earlier in the Indian society, that is, it became the language of the prestigious domains such as administration, higher education, judiciary etc. Besides, English also became a sort of inter-regional lingua franca. In these roles English came into opposition both with the classical languages and with the national vernaculars. It is this tension between the vernacular, the classical language and English which India's educational planners have been trying to resolve ever since Independence.

It may be noted in a preliminary way that the opposition between native classical languages and English could never be clearly resolved, nor the problem of weightage between English and the native languages sorted out, despite the talk of vernaculars as a medium of study. As a result, English finally permeated the system, both as a medium and as a subject.

One can observe, in retrospect, three clear phases in the history of language education in India:

a. the early phase of Sanskrit and the origin and development of Modern Indo-Aryan languages (upto approx. 12th century A.D.) in which Sanskrit was taught and learnt
as the language of learning, as a lingua franca and as the language of other prestigious domains.

b. the middle Persio-Arabic phase (12th to 19th century A.D.) in which Persian replaced (or supplemented) Sanskrit

c. the modern phase (19th century onwards) of the British rule in India and the period since Independence, in which English has replaced Sanskrit and Persian.

For a greater part of this history the situation in India was always bilingual if not multilingual. The Census of India, 1961 (See Census Report 1961: 437-517) records only 30 million people out of 439 million to be bilingual but this is misleading as the switching of codes between the literary language and the everyday spoken dialect, a pervasive form of bilingualism, has not been taken into account. This is no doubt due to the large number of powerful and rich vernaculars which developed as major languages from roughly 200 A.D. to 1800 A.D.

M.G. Chaturvedi and Satvir Singh (1981:16) have tabulated the development of modern Indian languages as follows:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the language</th>
<th>Family</th>
<th>Period of cultivation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Assamese</td>
<td>Indo-Aryan</td>
<td>1400 A.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Bengali</td>
<td>Indo-Aryan</td>
<td>1000 A.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Gujarati</td>
<td>Indo-Aryan</td>
<td>1400-1500 A.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Hindi</td>
<td>Indo-Aryan</td>
<td>1000 A.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Kannada</td>
<td>Dravidian</td>
<td>500 A.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Kashmiri</td>
<td>Indo-Aryan</td>
<td>1400 A.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Malyalayam</td>
<td>Dravidian</td>
<td>1500 A.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Marathi</td>
<td>Indo-Aryan</td>
<td>1300 A.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Oriya</td>
<td>Indo-Aryan</td>
<td>1300-1400 A.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Punjabi</td>
<td>Indo-Aryan</td>
<td>1700 A.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Sindhi</td>
<td>Indo-Aryan</td>
<td>1700 A.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Tamil</td>
<td>Dravidian</td>
<td>200 A.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Telugu</td>
<td>Dravidian</td>
<td>1100 A.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Urdu</td>
<td>Indo-Aryan</td>
<td>1800 A.D.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus the dominant languages have been either from Indo-Aryan or Dravidian families.

The Aryan languages viz. Sindhi, Lahnda etc. of the North Western group, Marathi, Konkani etc. of the Southern group, Assamese, Bengali, Oriya etc. of the Eastern group, Hindi, Urdu, Gujarati etc. of the Central group, Nepali, Garhwali, Chameali etc. of the Pahari group, are of importance as they are spoken by a vast majority of people all over the country and also
because they have been important in the evolution of Indian humanity in its history, religion, and culture. Of the fifteen languages listed in the VIII Schedule of the Constitution, eleven are from this sub-family.

The Aryans had a cultivated literary language viz. Vedic Sanskrit which became a pan-Indian language in the form of classical Sanskrit. In South India, "Sanskrit replaced Prakrit, as elsewhere, for purposes of administration and culture, and as a spoken language it was replaced by the native Dravidian" (Burrow 1965:62). It became the language of education and was studied as a second language. "The adoption of Sanskrit by the Buddhists, and later the Jains, widened the field of Sanskrit literature, and the Sanskrit language which was thus adopted to new needs did not remain unaltered in the hands of these authors" (Burrow 1965:60). It spread over the whole of Asia just as Latin had spread all over Europe.

A new pattern of language use was accepted throughout the country. Sanskrit, an educationally acquired but extensively used language, became an inter-regional and inter-communal language at the upper level of the society with a number of regional and social dialects at the lower level. The Vedic Sanskrit absorbed innumerable elements from the various non-Aryan dialects and sociolects and contributed a number of new
features into their structure as well as in their vocabulary. "This explains how India became a linguistically well-integrated country by accepting a type of bilingualism as a general social norm with Sanskrit as a general second language learnt through an educational system" (Chaturvedi and Singh 1981:8). The modern Indian literary languages were cultivated languages and used primarily for literary purposes.

In the middle phase, the supremacy of Sanskrit was disturbed with the introduction of Arabic and Persian as official languages (See Report of the Official Language Commission, 1956: 21). However, Sanskrit and other modern Indian literary languages continued to be used and taught and learnt in several educational institutions. The Muslim period also saw the development of Hindi, with its dialect Brajbhāṣā and its stylistic variety to be known later as Urdu.

The indigenous educational institutions around this time according to Nurullah and Naik (1971:21) were of the following four types:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indigenous institutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Schools of learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pathshalas of the Hindus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madrassahs of the Muslims</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persian Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools teaching through the modern Indian languages</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The medium of instruction in both Hindi and Muslim schools was a classical language, Sanskrit in the former and Persian in the latter.

The schools of learning provided the highest instruction consisting of mostly religious instruction. Though they correspond to the college of our days (they catered mainly to the needs of the priestly class and were thus passive in character. The indigenous elementary schools, on the other hand, were far more eclectic and were chiefly responsible for the spread of mass education. "The curriculum followed was very narrow and consisted of reading, writing, arithmetic (both written and oral) and accounts" (Nurrulah and Naik 1971:23).

On the pattern of the bigger elementary schools, where senior pupils were assigned to teach junior ones, the Monitorial or Madras system was developed and introduced in England by Dr. Bell, the Presidency Chaplain at Madras "as a cheap and efficient method of educating the poor" (Nurrulah and Naik 1971:23). The curriculum in these schools was language based and consisted of reading, writing, arithmetic and accounts. It is ironic that the indigenous schools of India which contributed to the spread of primary education among the poorer classes in England between 1801 and 1845 were of no avail in spreading mass education in India herself. These indigenous elementary schools, which could have provided
a sound foundation to the modern educational system in India, however, suffered from neglect on account of the British policy.

The modern phase which begins with the establishment of English settlements in India can be divided into four main periods. Mukherji (1957:5) lists these as follows:

1. from the early days of British rule till 1812;
2. 1813 to 1853;
3. 1854 to 1920;
4. 1921 to 1947.

The first two phases saw the conflicts in the formulation of language policy; the third phase saw the inception and consolidation of English education and the last phase saw a partial revival of interest in the vernaculars. Though in the first period till 1812 the East India Company pursued a policy of indifference and non-interference with education, the British did encourage oriental research. Hastings, appointed Governor of Bengal after Clive, in 1772, encouraged three scholars, Sir Charles Wilkins, Sir William Jones and H.T. Colebrook to study Sanskrit. Jones, in 1784, founded the Asiatic Society of Bengal and two years later said: "the Sanskrit language, whatever may be its antiquity, is of a wonderful structure; more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either, yet bearing
to both of them a stronger affinity, both in the roots of verbs and in the forms of grammar, than could possibly have been produced by accident; so strong indeed, that no philologer could examine the Sanskrit, Greek, and Latin without believing them to have sprung from some common source, which perhaps, no longer exists" (Robins 1967:134). In 1794 Jones translated the Law Book of Manu which to Hindus is what the book of Leviticus is to Jews. In 1797-98 Colebrook produced 'A Digest of Hindu Law on Contracts and Succession' in four volumes. Wilkins also translated 'Bhagavada Gita' into English. The Calcutta Madrassaha was founded in 1781 by Warren Hastings with the object "to qualify the sons of Muhammadan gentlemen for responsible and lucrative offices in the State, even at that date largely monopolised by the Hindus". 2 Also, the Sanskrit College was founded at Benares around that time in 1792, by Jonathan Duncan.

The establishment of the two colleges showed the support of the British Government of the time to the Oriental system of education. Jonathan Duncan, the Resident at Benares, in his letter of 1st January 1792 to the Earl of Cornwallis stated that the object was firstly to endear "our Government to the native Hindoos; by our exceeding in our attention towards them and their systems" and secondly, to preserve and disseminate "a knowledge of the Hindoo Law"; and thereby provide a nursery of future

---

2 Arthur Howell, Education in British India as quoted in H.Sharp 1920:7.
doctors and expounders thereof, to assist the European judges in the due, regular, and uniform administration of its genuine letter and spirit to the body of the people" (Sharp 1920:10-11). Another reason for the support was the policy of the East India Company. The East India Company which was favourable to missionary enterprise prior to 1765, by about 1800 opposed all attempts at proselytization as it wanted to consolidate its position as a political power. As a result of the Orientalist policy in education between 1781 and 1791, mission schools lost the sympathy and support of the Company enjoyed so far. In 1783 by an Act of Parliament the missionaries were banned from entering India without license. The resolution was repeated in 1793.

The missionaries' attempts, in particular of Wilberforce, a philanthropist, at the instigation of Charles Grant, later a Director of the Company, to have a clause inserted in the Company's Charter of 1793 for permission to missionaries to serve as "schoolmasters, missionaries, or otherwise" (Richter 1908:150) met with opposition from the opposite party in the Court of Directors of the Company led by Dundas. They argued "that the Hindus had as good a system of faith and of morals as most people and that it would be madness to attempt their conversion or to give them any more learning or any other description of learning than what they already possessed" (Sharp 1920:17). Consequently, Wilberforce's proposal was not accepted by the British Parliament.
They succeeded only 20 years later by inserting in the East Indian Company Act of 1813, clause 43, which provided that "persons desirous of going to and remaining in India for purposes of introducing useful knowledge and religions and moral improvement" (Sharp 1920:18) could seek permission for the same from the Court of Directors who in the event of refusal would refer it to the Board of control for final disposal.

1813 thus marks the beginning of the second period of the modern phase. A special provision was made under the East India Company Act for a lac of rupees to be spent on education annually. The Directors of the Company instructed that the money was to be spent in the publication of books in the classical languages, as well as in books on Law, Ethics, Medicine etc. The General Committee on Public Instruction, set up in 1823, was given the task of regulating the expenditure of Rupees one lac earmarked for education as from 1813 there had been a lull in the educational activity and no clear policy for language in education had been formulated. This Committee undertook the printing of Sanskrit and Arabic books and translation of English books containing 'useful knowledge' into Oriental classical languages.

The Oriental system also got support from voluntary bodies like Calcutta School Book Society founded in 1817 "with a view to the promotion of the moral and intellectual improvement
of the natives," and the Calcutta School Society "formed in 1819 for the purpose of establishing native schools" (Sharp 1920: 185). They had Company's servants as members and received grants from Government and produced literature for indigenous vernacular schools and established their own schools with the local language as the medium.

The Missionaries' efforts can be traced back to Charles Grant who in 1792 in his first blueprint on English language and education titled 'Observations on the State of Society among the Asiatic subjects of Great Britain, particularly with Respect to Morals; and the Means of Improving it' (Richter, 1908:146), argued for the English language, education and Christianity. He quoted the example of the Moghuls who had earlier imposed their language upon their subjects. He wanted English to be the medium of instruction in a Western system of education and the official language of the Government. Grant's 'Observations' were published in 1797 in the form of a book and provided a basis to the agitation against the Company's policy in favour of Orientalist education. The agitation achieved success when 850 petitions laid on the table of the House of Commons at the time of renewal of the Charter of the Company in 1813 helped them to get permission to carry on their proselytizing and educational activities in the manner they liked. Thus the permission that was refused in 1783 and 1793 was granted in 1813. Grant's suggestions for
English as medium of instruction and official language of the Government had a far-reaching effect on the issue of language in education and put paid to the opportunity hitherto afforded to the Oriental system of education.

The crucial controversy on the medium of instruction has a long history and in the course of the debate almost all the theoretical issues involved in the choice between English and the mother tongue were raised at one time or another. In the earliest phase this issue was debated among the European officials of the Company and as Nurullah and Naik (1971:52-53) report, it spawned three schools of thought:

(i) The first school consisted of the older officials of the Company in Bengal. They believed that the policy of Warren Hastings and Minto was the last word on educational statesmanship and advocated the encouragement of Sanskrit and Arabic studies and suggested that Western science and knowledge should be spread in India through the medium of these languages.

(ii) The second school consisted of men like Munro and Elphinstone. They believed in encouraging modern Indian languages as the medium and argued that this was the only way in which Western knowledge could reach the mass of the people.
(iii) The third school believed in the wisdom of Grant's advice and advocated the spread of Western knowledge through the medium of English. This school included the missionaries and the younger civilians in the employment of the Company and their voice, though insignificant during the earlier period, became of paramount importance at a later date, when Macaulay came to India and assumed their leadership.

The approval of the Board of Directors of the Company to the proposals of the various schools of thought led to different educational experiments being tried simultaneously between 1823-1853 in the five Presidencies and Provinces of Bengal, Bombay, Madras, North-Western Provinces and Punjab, into which the British territories in India were divided in 1853. In Bengal, Oriental learning received encouragement through measures like publication of Sanskrit and Arabic books on a wide scale and translation of English books into classical languages. Later on as the demand for English education grew, two groups, the Orientalists and the Anglicists came to be identified. In Bombay the Government simultaneously encouraged the study of Sanskrit, English and modern Indian languages. Elphinstone, the Governor of Bombay, vide his Minute dated the 13th December 1823 stated that the objective was "to improve the mode of teaching at the
native schools and to increase the number of schools" (Basu 1952: 197). In Madras, Munro, the Governor vide his Minute dated 25th June, 1822 stated that it was not his intention "to recommend any interference whatever in the native schools" (Basu 1952:177). Further, Munro vide his Minute dated the 10th March 1826 proposed that the Government establish two principal schools in each Collectorate, "one for Hindoos and the other for Mahomedans" (Sharp 1920:74). Through the indigenous schools he hoped for the education of the masses. But these never got going and English education was more successful though as Munro admitted in his Minute "the state of education, here exhibited, low as it is compared with that of our own country, is higher than it was in most European countries at no very distant period" (Sharp 1920:73). In North-Western Provinces, Thomason tried to build up a system of mass education on the foundation of the indigenous schools. In Punjab, the only school at Amritsar had Hindi, Persian, Arabic, Sanskrit and Gurumukhee departments.

We tabulate below the information about the medium of instruction in the different Provinces according to the three schools of thought and their principal supporters:
## Medium of instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School of thought</th>
<th>First School</th>
<th>Second School</th>
<th>Third School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Hastings and Minto)</td>
<td>(Munro and Elphinstone)</td>
<td>(Grant and Macaulay)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standpoint</td>
<td>encouragement to Sanskrit and</td>
<td>encouragement to Modern Indian Languages</td>
<td>encouragement to Western knowledge thorough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td></td>
<td>medium of English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td>Bengal</td>
<td>Bombay, Madras, North-Western Provinces,</td>
<td>Bengal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bombay</td>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>Bombay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Madras</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Though to begin with the classical languages or modern Indian languages received encouragement in the Provinces of Bengal, Bombay and Madras, these very Provinces later developed the demand for Western knowledge through the medium of English. Elphinstone, the Governor of Bombay, for instance, in his Minute dated August 5, 1832 argued for encouraging the study of English and held that "few things will be so effectual in enlightening the natives and bring them nearer to us" (Basu 1952:299), a stand which represented a shift from his earlier position. This demand got support from Indians as well, prominent among whom was Raja Ram Mohan Roy in Bengal. He supported the cause of the Anglicists by declaring that "the Sangscrit system of education would be best calculated to keep this country in darkness". He vouched for the promotion of "a more liberal and
enlightened system of instruction, embracing mathematics, natural philosophy, chemistry and anatomy, with other useful sciences" (Sharp 1920:101). Thus he looked up to Science, English Literature, English Language, English history and English Culture in preference to religion and mathematics. He considered grammatical niceties and distinctions of little use to the possessors or to society and went to the extent of opposing the establishment of a Sanskrit school under Hindu Pundits as he believed that for the "perfect acquisition" of Sanskrit "a life time is necessary" and that it had been "for ages a lamentable check on the diffusion of knowledge; and the learning concealed under this almost impervious veil is far from sufficient to reward the labour of acquiring it" (Sharp 1920: 99-100).

The acceptance of English in Indian education was further facilitated by the fact that conservative Hindus, too, though opposed to any change in Hindu religion and society, had an open mind on the question of education and language. They evinced keenness in English education and English language and accepted the language of the ruler just as they had accepted Persian in the case of Moghul rulers. It may be suggested that Raja Ram Mohan Roy's argument for English language, a modern language, as against the classical languages was misconceived and fallacious if we keep the British history itself in mind.
The British people in their home country had favoured English and the local languages such as Welsh over Latin which was the language of learning all over Europe during the Renaissance. The argument was the same - Latin would benefit only the elite classes. The position of the English language in the sixteenth century England was thus similar to the position of the vernaculars in the nineteenth century India. The vernaculars were the modern languages that needed encouragement as in the Indian situation acceptance of English could be compared to the acceptance of Latin in England. Perhaps just as Latin had been rejected English ought to have been rejected in the Indian situation. Thus Raja Ram Mohan Roy's acceptance of English because it was a modern language appears, in retrospect, to have been ill-motivated. If England could reject Latin, a classical language, of much cultural importance, India too, could have rejected English which ultimately was destined to cut off the masses from the elite. In a remarkably modern argument for the Indian vernaculars, Colonel Jervis vide his Minute dated 24th February, 1847, said practically this while arguing for the propagation of the vernacular languages in the controversy between the Orientalists and Anglicists when he said that "general instruction cannot be afforded, except through the medium of a language with which the mind is familiar". He said that in the endeavour to make the knowledge of English
among the natives so prominent and essential a qualification
the benefit of three hundred years experience in Europe was
being neglected. He thought that this would lead to a situation
similar to medieval Europe, when "knowledge, both spiritual
and temporal was confined to a few Monks, a few Divines - a few
Men of Letters". This argument even goes beyond since Latin
was at least part of the European tradition, and was embedded
in the mind as a part of the English sensibility unlike English
which was not a part of the Indian tradition. Neither was
English sensibility a part of the Indian ways of thinking and
feeling (See Tulsi Ram, 1983: 161). In a similar vein, Prinsep
in his note dated 15th February, 1835, written in response to
Macaulay's Minute of 2nd February, 1835 reacted to the argument
that study of English would promote the vernacular literatures
just as the study of Latin and Greek had encouraged vernacular
European literatures by pointing out the fallacy in this
analogy— "Latin and Greek were to the nations of Europe what
Arabic and Persian are to the Mooslims and Sanscrit to the
Hindus of the present population of Hindoostan and if a native
literature is to be created it must be through the improvements
of which these are capable" and he rightly went on to point

3 Jenis as cited in J.A. Richey 1922:12.
out that to the great body of the people of India English is "...not the language of the erudite of the clergy and of men of letters as Latin always was in Europe and as Arabic and Persian are extensively in Asia" (Sharp 1920: 121-122).

Thus the acceptance of English, was a mark of slavery just as Latin would have been for the British. Besides, it created a cleavage between the rulers and the ruled. The pedagogic inadvisability of introducing English was also highlighted by some of the Orientalists. Jervis in his Minute, quoted the observations of one such Orientalist, Horace Wilson who had argued that the people of India can be 'enlightened' not by the English language but "only through the forms of speech which they already understand and use" (Richey 1922:13).

The neglect of the vernacular and the education of the masses facilitated the policy of the British Government to make English gradually and eventually the language of public business all over the country. As Bentick later stated to the Committee on Public Instruction, the policy was to link moral and intellectual improvement of the Indians, the official language of the Government and English language in education. Bentick in 1829 repeats Grant's 'Observations' and anticipates Macaulay's position. For Grant, English had been more a language of administration than of education. He also wanted, as Macaulay later stated
in his famous Minute dated 2nd February, 1835, to produce
"a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English
in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect" (Sharp 1920:
116). Macaulay in his Minute made the entire controversy to
bear on the question of medium of instruction. Macaulay recommended
English as a proper medium of higher education. He questioned
the usefulness of oriental languages and literature and considered
expenditure on them as wasteful. He said that no Orientalist
"could deny that a single shelf of a good European library was
worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia" (Sharp 1920:
109). Bentick who approved Macaulay's Minute rejected the pro-
posals of Adam who had been appointed by Bentick himself to make
a survey of indigenous education of some districts of Bengal
and Bihar. Adam in his third report had favoured the revival of
the indigenous educational system. Though he wanted European
knowledge to be the chief subject for instruction, he proposed
that the medium of instruction, should be the vernaculars and
not English. Bentick in his approval of Macaulay's Minute also
overruled the shortcomings that H.T. Prinsep as Secretary to
the Committee of Public Instruction had pointed out in Macaulay's
Minute vide his own Minute dated 15th February, 1835. Macaulay's
Minute which, however, superseded Adam's suggestions and Prinsep's
objections sought to

(1) promote European literature and science among the natives,
(2) impart knowledge of English literature and science through
the medium of the English language
(3) supersede branches of native learning by more useful studies, and,
(4) stop expenditure on publication of oriental works and spend funds only on English education (See Sharp 1920: 109-117).

The attack of Macaulay on the Orientalists and Sanskrit resulted in a very different stand from that taken in the Charter Act of 1813. The Charter had defined the educational policy in broad and ambiguous terms without making any reference to the medium of instruction or the type of educational institutions to be established. The oriental education had not been disturbed. The Minute of Lord Macaulay sought to withdraw the encouragement that had been provided under Hastings to the vernaculars and Sanskrit. As Macaulay stated in the Minute: "I would at once stop the printing of Arabic and Sanscrit books. I would abolish the Mudrassa and the Sangscrit College at Calcutta" (Sharp 1920: 116). The Minute apparently sought to undo the mischief played upon the Indian people by Grant's blueprint of 1792, although it only compounded the mischief. The Minute sought now to teach what was termed as strictly 'useful', through English language, literature and culture. However, the 'useful' (i.e. science) could have been promoted even through translations into the vernaculars. But for Prinsep's strong objections Oriental education would have faced complete
extinction with the abolition of the Mudrassa and Sanskrit College.

It was Lord Auckland, the then Governor-General of India who through his Minute dated 24th November 1839 put an end to the Orientalist-Anglicist controversy by earmarking additional funds for the development of both the Oriental and the English education. Auckland favoured the promotion first of oriental instruction, and only thereafter of the English classes whose principal aim would be "to communicate through the means of the English language, a complete education in European Literature, Philosophy and Science to the greatest number of students who may be found ready to accept it at our hands" (Sharp 1920:157). Auckland's verdict thereby went in favour of English and as the Indian Education Commission, 1882, noted in its Historical Review of Education in India "since that time education in India has proceeded upon the recognition of the value of English instruction, of the duty of the State to spread Western knowledge among its subjects" (Report of the Indian Education Commission 1883:9).

In the third period of the modern phase (1854 to 1920), the Macaulayan course of language and education underwent a review in Wood's Education Despatch of 1854, described by some as 'The Magna Carta of Indian Education'. It reviewed the past educational policies and outlined a policy for the future. The
occasion for this was provided by the renewal of the Company's Charter in 1853. The Indian Education Commission supported the Despatch of 1854 in its stated goal of improvement and wider extension of education, both English and vernacular, and made a specific recommendation towards the study of English, that "the English language is to be the medium of instruction in the higher branches, and the vernacular in the lower. English is to be taught wherever there is a demand for it, but it is not to be substituted for the vernacular languages of the country" (Report of the Indian Education Commission 1883:22-23). The Despatch itself had stated: "We look, therefore, to the English language and to the vernacular languages of India together as the media for the diffusion of European knowledge, and it is our desire to see them cultivated together in all schools in India of a sufficiently high class to maintain a schoolmaster possessing the requisite qualifications" (Richey 1922:368). The Despatch also rejected the Downward Filtration theory. The Despatch, thus rejected what according to the British was a retrograde policy as approved by Lord Auckland. Nevertheless, it failed to resolve the basic tension that existed between English and Indian languages. Although the traditional role of classical languages was recognised, the choice of English as medium of instruction in the highest branches of learning, and the spread of modern knowledge and education, could hardly give the vernaculars the importance and position which could
help them grow and develop. The practical situation whereby English education helped secure a government job also came in the way of the choice of the medium being placed on the vernaculars.

The Despatch could well have founded a national system of education though as the Indian Education Commission (1882) noted there were only four high schools imparting instruction through the mother tongue as against 181 through English. English education continued to be in great demand and knowledge of the English language and a University degree a substitute for real education. "The educational objectives of Wood's Despatch therefore remained pious intentions only. The real objectives being subservient to the British Government's political and commercial purposes, the Despatch deserves to be called the Magna Carta of colonial education, and, better still, the language department of the Imperial Trade" (Tulsi Ram 1983:143).

The Despatch of 1859 that followed stood out as the other 'fundamental' Code "on which Indian education rests" (Report of the Indian Education Commission 1883:24). It noted that "while the European managers of schools have freely accepted grants-in-aid from Government.... no great alacrity appears to have been shown by the natives.... for securing the aid of Government.... for the promotion of vernacular education" (Richey 1922:440). Thus as the Indian Education Commission noted "the native
community have failed to co-operate with Government in promoting elementary vernacular education" (Report of the Indian Education Commission 1883:23). This is so not withstanding the fact that the opportunity provided to the vernaculars was merely theoretical and in reality English as the language of the Government got preference.

The Indian Education Commission (1882), appointed to enquire into the manner in which effect had been given to the Despatch of 1854; and to suggest such methods as it might think desirable, with a view to more completely carrying out the policy therein laid down observed that there was no uniform pattern in respect of the medium language -

(1) the mother-tongue as a medium of instruction was neglected since a child studied the mother-tongue for periods varying between two to four years after which he read English, thus widening the gap between the Anglo-vernacular and the Vernacular schools;

(2) English was studied as a subject for 2-3 years and then used as a medium thereby leaving scope for improving knowledge of English before its adoption as a medium;

(3) at High School English was invariably the medium of instruction;

(4) the highest instruction in the vernacular was upto the middle stage except in Punjab;
(5) throughout the secondary course, English was employed as the medium of instruction.

A comparison of the standard of middle schools in the Provinces of Madras, Bombay and Bengal as regards the teaching of English and vernacular languages has been made in the Report of the Indian Education Commission (1882) -- see pg. 30.

The Commission, too, however, favoured the use of English. About the medium of instruction at the middle school stage, though the Commission noted that "in Calcutta...it is found that all the great middle schools of the city are purely vernacular; and that a large majority of the pupils in the Hindu schools... come from vernacular and not from English schools" (Report of the Indian Education Commission 1883:210). Most importantly, Bengal's experience bore out "the marked superiority, at the entrance examination, of those pupils who had joined the high school with vernacular, compared with those who came with English scholarship" (Report of the Indian Education Commission 1883:210).

Thus, the Indian Education Commission did not make any recommendation to help the study of modern Indian languages or decrease the dominance of English. Hence, English brought about a more drastic change in the Indian linguistic situation than it may appear. It took on the role of several languages and language families. Its introduction was even more radical a step than that of Persian. Its position can be likened to
Initial Standards of Instruction in Secondary Schools


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBJECTS</th>
<th>MADRAS</th>
<th>BOMBAY</th>
<th>BENGAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. English</td>
<td>Standard of the 3rd* class of English Schools</td>
<td>Standard of the 3rd* class of Middle Schools</td>
<td>Standard of the 5th* class of Middle and High Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Third English Reader; writing, dictation and grammar; translation into English and the vernacular; dialogues in the Reader to be learnt by heart; knowledge of English to be tested by sentences outside the text-book.</td>
<td>Third English Reader; writing, dictation and grammar; translation into English and the vernacular; recitation of poetry.</td>
<td>Fourth English Reader; dictation and grammar; translation into English and the vernacular; recitation of select pieces of poetry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Vernacular language</td>
<td>Fourth Reader, and short poetical passages not previously studied; dictation and grammar; recitation of poetry.</td>
<td>Prescribed portions of standard authors, in prose and poetry; dictation and grammar; recitation of 100 lines of poetry.</td>
<td>Prose and poetical Reader; dictation and grammar.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The classes are reckoned from the bottom of the school.
that of French in England following the Norman Conquest. In
India, English was spoken by the elite classes, and the verna-
culars by the common folk, just as the elite classes after the
Norman Conquest in England spoke French and the common people
spoke Anglo-Saxon.

The object of the secondary course in 1882 was to spread
a 'knowledge of English' and 'not European knowledge of a less
high order' through English as well as through the mother-tongue
as laid down in the Despatch of 1854. The effect of this was
that Indian languages came to be neglected. Also, the dominance
of English in the secondary course grew unabated so much so
that its study was begun even before the pupil had obtained a
good knowledge of his mother-tongue and often students felt
burdened by the difficulties caused by the medium of instruction
and examination (See Report of the Indian Universities Commission
1902:24).

A significant change in this policy was first mooted
between 1902 and 1920, that is, between the appointment of the
Indian Universities Commission and the transfer of education
under Indian control. This forms a distinct phase in the period
between 1854 and 1920. Lord Curzon, the Viceroy of India
(1898 to 1905), a pervasive and powerful influence during
these years and a protagonist of the development of modern
Indian languages, summoned, during this phase, in 1901 to be exact, the first All-India Conference of Directors of Public Instruction. The deliberations of the Conference were a great help to him in planning his educational reforms. Whereas in higher education he was for the improvement of the quality of education, in Primary education he was for its expansion together with its improvement and at High School he supported the extensive use of English. Regarding Primary education, particularly education of the children in the vernaculars, he noted among other things, how wrong it was to teach young children a foreign language when they were not given an opportunity to extend and deepen the knowledge of their own mother tongue. His observations are so important that they merit a complete reproduction:

Four out of every five Indian villages were found to be without a school; three out of every four Indian boys grow up without any education; only one Indian girl in every forty attends any kind of school. These figures are of course less appalling in a continent of the size, the vast population, the national characteristics, and the present state of advancement of India than they would be in a western country; but they are important as illustrating, if not the inadequacy of past efforts, at any rate the immensity of the field that remains to be conquered. We found Primary Education suffering from divergence of views as to its elementary
functions and courses, and languishing nearly everywhere for want of funds. In Secondary Education we found schools receiving the privilege of recognition upon most inadequate tests, and untrained and incompetent teachers imparting a course of instruction devoid of life to pupils subjected to a pressure of examinations that encroached upon their out-of-school hours and was already beginning to sap the brain power as well as the physical strength of the rising generation. Inferior teaching in Secondary Schools further has this deleterious effect, that it reacts upon College work, and affects the whole course of University instruction, of which it is the basis and starting-point. We found these schools in many cases accommodated in wretched buildings, and possessing no provision for the boarding of the pupils. As regards the vernaculars, which must for long be the sole instrument for the diffusion of knowledge among all except a small minority of the Indian people, we found them in danger of being neglected in the pursuit of English, and in many cases very bad English, for the sake of its mercantile value. By all means let English be taught to those who are qualified to learn it; but let it rest upon a solid foundation of the indigenous languages, for no people will ever use another tongue with advantage that cannot first use its own with ease.⁴

⁴Lord Curzon in India (Being A Selection from His Speeches As Viceroy and Governor-General of India) 1906:68-69.
Evidently, Curzon's observations about availability of education, the quality of education, the contexts of education in terms of the physical environment and more importantly the rampant learning of bad English and motivations for it remain relevant and pertinent even today.

Lord Curzon also attached great importance to the task of University reforms and consequently appointed on 27th January 1902 the Indian Universities Commission (1902). The Commission submitted its report in the same year adopting the model of London University as modified by the Act of 1898.

The Indian Universities Commission, 1902, did not commend the Madras University example where a modern Indian language was allowed as an alternative to a classical language but the Bombay University example which did not allow a modern Indian language at any examination except optionally at the Entrance examination and also since 1901, at the M.A. level. It also did not commend the Punjab University example where modern Indian languages had been adopted as the media of instruction. The Commission instead emphasised the need for the better teaching of English at School. In higher education it recognised the extension of European knowledge through the medium of English. Indian Universities were designed to serve this purpose - "The proper teaching of English must for this reason be regarded as the most important matter in the curriculum of the higher
schools and of the Universities" (Report of the Indian Universities Commission 1902:24). The Commission was against the early adoption of English as a medium before students could understand the language. It made specific recommendations regarding class size and proper training of teachers especially in English expression and elocution.

It is interesting that very subtly a case was made for beginning the study of English even earlier than was the case. The continuation of English as a medium was not objected to while insisting on its study as a subject only when a student was prepared for it. The objective obviously was to introduce the study of English early. Even for the teaching of English, Indians were not easily considered well qualified.

As the Calcutta University Commission later pointed out: "In 1902 as in 1857, the policy of London seemed to be the latest word of educational statesmanship" (Report of the Calcutta University Commission (1917-19)Vol. I Part II 1919:65). The subject of Secondary education was outside the purview of this Commission just as the subject of University reform was outside the purview of the Indian Education Commission (1882).

The question of determining the stage at which English study must begin and the adoption of modern Indian languages
at the middle school stage assumed great importance. The 'Government Resolution on Educational Policy', 1904, emphasized the importance of mastering the vernacular before the study of English was begun. Thus English was not recommended for study at the Primary level except for large cities like Madras where like Urdu it served the purpose of a *lingua franca* to some extent. Furthermore, premature introduction of English as the medium of instruction before achieving comprehension in it was criticized. The Resolution reminded of the principle affirmed in the Despatch of 1854 that Indian vernaculars were to bring European knowledge within the reach of all classes of people. It was thus thought necessary to correct the practice of learning English for its commercial value and relegate the study of the vernaculars to the background.

Curzon was well-meaning in the changes he desired which is proved by the fact that he sanctioned large non-recurring grants to Primary education resulting in an increase in the number of primary schools and pupils. Realising the responsibility of the Government of India towards providing education, he created the post of a Director-General of Education in India, in support of which he said:

I do want some one at headquarters who will prevent the Government of India from going wrong, and who will help us to secure that community of principle
and of aim without which we go drifting about like a deserted hulk on chopping seas.\textsuperscript{5}

Among the contributions of Curzon to the cause of education in India, his encouragement to the study of modern Indian languages is significant. The later Viceroy, though they reversed many of Curzon's policies, did not completely abandon his educational policy. This is reflected in the statement of the Calcutta University Commission, 1917-19, which stated:

We are emphatically of opinion that there is something unsound in a system of education which leaves a young man, at the conclusion of his course, unable to speak or write his own mother tongue, fluently and correctly. It is thus beyond controversy that a systematic effort must henceforth be made to promote the serious study of the vernaculars in secondary schools, intermediate colleges and in the University.\textsuperscript{6}


\textsuperscript{5} Lord Curzon in India (Being A Selection from His Speeches As Viceroy and Governor-General of India) 1906:54-56.

increased from five to twelve. New universities were added at Mysore in 1916, Patna and Benaras in 1917, Osmania in 1918 (with Urdu as the medium of instruction), Aligarh, Lucknow and Dacca in 1920.

As the distinct achievement of this phase, consequent to Curzon's direction, modern Indian languages came to be used by and large as the media of instruction at the middle school stage, notwithstanding the use of English as the medium at the high school stage and in the universities. Opposition also developed to European domination in Indian education. Gokhale tried his utmost to have "elementary education free and compulsory throughout the country" (Karve and Ambekar 1967:73) and introduced a resolution on 18th March 1910 and later on 16th March 1911 in the Imperial Legislative Council. The Bill despite its rejection succeeded in focussing the Government's attention towards Primary education.

Taken as a whole, the period 1854 to 1921 saw a large expansion of the modern system of education at the expense of the traditional system. The Primary schools increased from 2,810 to 1,55,017 and Secondary schools from 281 to 7,530. The increase in scholars in recognised institutions was from 1,35,079 to 73,96,560 and increase in expenditure on education from Rs. 9,99,898/- to Rs. 17,35,88,099/-. Still, only 20% children
received education. As against this, the indigenous system of education, whereby each village had a school, disappeared and despite the increase in the number of pupils, schools and universities, education reached only a small minority. Also, inspite of the efforts for teaching of modern Indian languages, the medium of instruction still remained English and the craze for English education continued to spread and dominate the Indian education scene.

The European domination in Indian education was attacked by Mrs Annie Besant also whose standpoint on national language and literature was subsequently questioned by Lala Lajpat Rai who argued that in our need to become modern and to be able to shed the illogical constraints on our thought and society we must learn the modern sciences, the modern literatures and consequently European languages and literatures. As he said:

We do not want to be English or German or American or Japanese: true, we want to be Indians, but modern, up-to-date, progressive Indians, proud of our past and aspiring to a greater and a nobler future.7

Thus, Lala Lajpat Rai is in the tradition of Raja Ram Mohan Roy. However, Mahatma Gandhi belonged to the other school. He argued that the dominance of English over vernaculars is

unnatural, particularly its use as the medium of instruction at the earliest age possible. This linking of English in the schools to the development of English as a lingua franca is also not natural and is in fact contrary to the facts of the situation which point out that Hindi as a lingua franca suits all the provinces except the Madras Presidency. "In view of this advantage in favour of Hindi and in view of our present national consciousness, how can we accept English as our lingua franca?" (Gandhi 1924:450). Gandhiji asks.

The transfer of education to Indian control took place in the fourth and final period (1921 to 1947), that is, the period immediately preceding the end of British rule in India, though even the provincial governments differed in their opinions and had certain reservations on the subject. The system that came into force as a result of the reforms suggested by the Government of India Act, 1919, is known as 'Diarchy' or the rule of the two, one where the reserved departments were administered by the Governor with the help of some Executive Councillors and secondly, the transferred departments, which were administered with the help of Ministers responsible to the Provincial Legislature and not the Secretary of State for Indian Affairs as in the first case. Around the same time the opposition to English, particularly as medium of instruction, was strongly expressed by Mahatma Gandhi who ridiculed the fake 'elitist' values attached to the learning of English.
Though he was for the cultures of all lands he also argued for the development and growth of the vernaculars and education through the mother-tongue on the grounds of maintaining our cultural identity:

I want the culture of all the lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any..... But I would not have a single Indian to forget, neglect or be ashamed of his mother-tongue or to feel that he or she cannot think or express the best thought in his or her own vernacular.\(^8\)

Mahatma Gandhi blamed the British rulers for making India more illiterate than it was a fifty or a hundred years ago because the British administrators began to root out things instead of taking hold of them as they were. A statement to that effect made in 1931 at the Round Table Conference in London sparked off the Hartog-Parulekar controversy. Sir Philip Hartog challenged the view of Mahatma Gandhi while Shri R.V. Parulekar defended the position. The Hartog Committee or the "Auxiliary Committee of the Indian Statutory Commission" complained of the lowering of the standard of English when the non-official circles were sore on the dominant position of English

---

\(^8\) Mahatma Gandhi 1924: 482-84.
at school and college level. They were for making English an optional subject and introduction of a national language, the Hindustani, in place of English.

As important achievement of this period till 1937 was that modern Indian languages were adopted as the media of instruction at the secondary stage. For instance, in Madras fifty-one per cent of the schools adopted this changeover and in Bombay almost cent per cent. However, in most states both continued. This was so since competitive examinations were in English and at the University stage, too, English was the medium.

In 1937, the Government of India Act, 1935 came into operation in eleven provinces of India putting an end to the diarchical system of administration. Elected members, by and large, began to govern Provincial Administration under a Ministry responsible to the legislature and this raised the hopes of educational advance though the hope was later belied.

Between 1936-37 and 1946-47 several changes took place: the number of University students almost doubled though in the Secondary education expansion was neither so extensive nor so rapid. It was as a matter of fact slower than in the earlier periods. However, in the matter of medium of instruction and
text-book production there was a change for the better since the mother-tongue was adopted as the medium of instruction. It came to be realized that English could not continue to hold the dominating position in the Secondary course. The regionalization of the medium at the Secondary stage was implemented without making the necessary provision for the teaching of English language. The hours of English study and its use were reduced though the instruction in the Universities largely continued to be in English. Only the Benaras Hindu and Hyderabad Universities introduced Hindi and Urdu respectively as medium of instruction. Thus, the study of English in the Universities remained at the same level. There was no provision to ensure that reduction in level of achievement did not take place. As a matter of fact, a deterioration in the standards of higher education did set in—the medium overshadowing the actual course content. By and large this situation remained unchanged till 1947.

Mahatma Gandhi outlined the problem of the medium of instruction while outlining the scheme for compulsory Basic Education course of 7 years by proposing the imparting of education through useful and productive craft. His proposal later developed into what came to be known as the Wardha Scheme of Basic Education. The proposal, presented through a series of articles written in 1937 and published in the Harijan made the
following crucial observations about the deleterious effect of early education through English:

English having been made the medium of instruction in all the higher branches of learning, has created a permanent bar between the highly educated few and the uneducated many. It has prevented knowledge from percolating to the masses. The excessive importance given to English has cast upon the educated class a burden which has maimed them mentally for life and made them strangers in their own land. 9

Even immediately after Independence Gandhiji made a passionate plea for "banishing English as a cultural usurper as we successfully banished the political rule of the English usurper" (Gandhi 1947).

The first conference of Basic National Education at Poona in October 1939 noted the ill effect of introducing English in the course of studies. Realising the disadvantage of a foreign language as the vehicle of instruction it recommended the teaching of English only after a regular education for seven years through the mother-tongue.

Adult literary work also improved substantially between 1937-47 though the magnitude of the problem was such that only the tip of the iceberg could be touched. In 1938 the National

Planning Committee under the chairmanship of Jawaharlal Nehru prepared a plan of educational reconstruction in India. A plan for 'Post-War Educational Development in India' commonly known as the 'Sargeant Report' was also prepared in 1944.

The Sargeant Report recommends the mother-tongue as the medium of instruction in High schools and English as a compulsory second language along with other modern languages. In the form of a long-range plan defining a target to be achieved in forty years (1945-84), it based itself on the educational system of England which was not an appropriate model. It has been argued by Nurullah and Naik (1951:848) that for models India would better look towards the East, to countries like China or Egypt or Turkey or in western agricultural countries like Denmark or Soviet Russia, all of which had problems similar to those of India, and which in a very short time have been able to achieve splendid results.

However, even the more positive of the recommendations of Sargeant's Report regarding the mother-tongue as the medium of instruction in High schools and English as a compulsory second language were not adopted. The policy was not uniform and in Universities, too, the position varied from State to State.

In the post-Independence era, effort was made, or at least intended, to make a break with the existing system.
However, as Jawaharlal Nehru observed at the All India Educational Conference in 1948, any plan for education in India tended to maintain the existing system with slight modifications. He cautioned against this tendency and said the changes in the country must be reflected in the education system. He was for revolutionising the entire basis of education.

With the British leaving India in 1947, the problem of English education attained new dimensions. The Government of India Act, 1935 was replaced by the Constitution of India. Article 343 of the Indian Constitution declared Hindi in Devanagri script as the official language of the Union and this officially rendered the bilingual situation in the country trilingual. An integrated language policy became all the more necessary "for a variety of reasons, educational, cultural and political" (Report of the Education Commission (1964-66) 1966:13). The specific problem was the need to introduce the vernacular and change the medium also to the vernacular, and yet retain English for a variety of needs - as a library language, as a medium at the higher levels of education, as a link language and as the official language. This required excellence in English, but the weightage given to the study of English had to be reduced. This led to deterioration in the standard of English both in Universities as well as schools. The language issue led to several controversies and various education commissions, language
commissions and study groups appointed by the Government of India devoted their deliberations to find a solution. While looking at some of their recommendations we do not propose to examine here the merits and demerits of the position taken.

The University Education Commission, 1948-49, under the Chairmanship of Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, made recommendations to facilitate the timely switchover to a national medium. They recommended the development of:

1. a federal language through the assimilation of words from various sources;
2. development of international, technical and scientific terminology;
3. replacement of English as the medium of instruction by an Indian language;
4. development and promotion of regional languages, and
5. at the same time retaining English to "keep ourselves in touch with the living stream of ever-growing knowledge".

The Secondary Education Commission, 1952-53, recognised that "a great deal of controversy exists about the place of English in the scheme of studies". They recommended the adoption
of the vernacular as the medium of instruction throughout the Secondary school stage and teaching of at least two languages during the Middle school stage. Introduction of both Hindi and English was suggested at the end of the Junior Basic stage but two languages were not to be introduced in the same year.

This bilingual situation was modified by the Central Advisory Board of Education in 1956 and a 'three-language formula' recommended. The Conference of Chief Ministers approved the formula in a simplified version in 1961. The Education Commission, 1964-66, recommended a "graduated three-language formula to include:

1. the mother-tongue or the regional language;
2. the official language of the Union or the associate official language of the Union so long as it exists;
3. a modern Indian or foreign language not covered under (1) and (2) and other than that used as the medium of instruction" (Report of the Education Commission (1964-66) 1966:192).

One of the important distinctions was now highlighted which represented a recognition of the changed goals. The Commission stated that "a distinction has to be made between the teaching of English as a skill and the teaching of English literature". It also stated that "as English will, for a long
time to come, continue to be needed as a 'library language' in the field of higher education, a strong foundation in the language will have to be laid at the school stage" (Report of the Education Commission (1964-66) 1966:197). As Bruton explained "there can simply be no argument that the average Indian student of today needs English for certain very specific purposes: to be able to follow a lecture given in English, to be able to read text books in his subject in English, and on occasion to be able to express his ideas in English. That is to say that he needs English primarily of a factual nature" (Bruton 1961:20). The position of English, on the other hand, has been made secure by the Parliament passing the Official Language (Amendment) Bill on 10th January 1968 even though its status has changed from that of an 'Official language' to one of 'Associate official language'. English will now continue to be used until all the states agree to its replacement solely by Hindi.

With the change in the status of English, a new concern for its standards became evident. This concern had been expressed even earlier by Jawaharlal Nehru who in 1963 had stated that "if we are going to keep up English, we must try to keep up certain standards in English" (Nehru 1963:6).

Two study groups were also appointed in 1965 and 1969 respectively by the Ministry of Education and Youth Services,
Government of India, to enquire into the current state of the teaching of English in India and to recommend a necessary programme of reorientation to suit the demands of the regionalization of the medium. Both the groups were headed by Prof. V.K. Gokak, the first Director of the Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages, Hyderabad. The reports of these groups mark a major watershed in the history of English teaching in India.

The major issues that occupied the 1965 group's attention were:

(1) the position of English as it would be when the medium of instruction at the University level is regionalized;

(2) the degree of attainment a student should have at the end of the Secondary and University stages;

(3) the reorientation of courses;

(4) the problems involved in the teaching of English in schools, viz., the class at which the teaching should commence, the methods of teaching to be employed, the preparation of adequate materials and the proper training of teachers, and

(5) improvement in the standards of instruction at the secondary level to cope with the difficulties of the transition stage.
As a preliminary but necessary exercise, the group reviews the history of the teaching of English in India and as a medium of instruction from the perspective of the educational policy. They point out that the importance of the modern Indian languages as envisaged in Wood's Educational Despatch was never sufficiently realised in practice. The regionalisation of the medium in schools had posited a contradiction between the media in schools and colleges and this has to be resolved immediately. Though the regionalisation of the medium at the University has to be planned and carefully phased, the group recommends that "modern Indian languages should be firmly established as media in most of our universities before 1975, the last year of the Fifth Five Year Plan" (Report of the Study of English in India 1967:64).

However, the Group feels that it is necessary to preserve the interstate mobility of teachers and students and this can be done by according a particular position to English inspite of the regionalisation of medium. And further, as English will continue as the 'associate-official language' of the country after 1965, the study of English as a second language becomes all the more important.

The Group suggested a detailed programme for the teaching of English in schools. From class I to V the regional language will be used and from class V upto the Higher Secondary level
English will be taught in addition to the mother tongue/regional language. However, if English is studied as the mother-tongue in Hindi speaking areas, then Hindi will be taught as the second language.

After class X, the Group recommends two different courses—one for those who like to continue their studies at the University and the other for those who will stop their study after the higher secondary. Accordingly, there will be two kinds of courses in English with different objectives and contents. The higher course is meant for those who will read English either as the subsidiary or principal subject at the University. The lower level course is meant for the average University student. The higher level course gives more emphasis to the skill of expression while the lower level course is mainly intended to train the student in comprehension. For both the higher and lower level courses, the Group recommends structural syllabi and specifies the degree of attainment intended in terms of vocabulary (active and passive) and the number of structures to be learnt. Further they specify that aural-oral tests are necessary at both levels.

The 1969 Group also worked with the same objective. Some of the assumptions of the Group relevant for our study were:

(1) by the end of class X every pupil will have studied English for at least 3 years,
(2) the utilisation of the higher secondary stage for equipping the student for work at the University,

(3) continuance of English as medium of instruction at some all-India institutions and

(4) the importance of English as a library language.

According to the study group the teaching of English should not start earlier than class IV. It should be an examinable subject. This and other related questions are discussed by the Group in the last section entitled "courses". Many of the recommendations are modifications of those of the earlier Group. The Group lays emphasis on the teaching of English in the transitional stage, that is, during the two years at the higher secondary level. Another point of importance is the use of English as a library language. Courses should provide for the development of comprehension and reference skills. Having assumed that English has to continue as medium of instruction at certain post-graduate centres and all India institutions the Group recommends courses specially designed for the students who seek admission to those institutions and special courses for those who wish to become teachers in English or who wish to study English language at the University level.
While most of the specific proposals of these groups—establishment of the State institutes of English language teaching, the Summer institutes, the bridge courses, the various courses designed to cope with variations in standards, etc.—were not implemented, in practice, the situation is that English is being taught in addition to the mother-tongue/regional language upto class XI/XII as recommended by the 1965 Group. However, an integrated national policy on English education which the Group envisaged is not yet in sight for obvious reasons. There is much variation in practice, particularly from class I to class V.

The regionalisation of the medium at the University had also not yet been fully accomplished. In 1973 among the 74 universities, 52 still had English as medium of instruction while 12 other universities gave option for writing the examination in English. Among the 30 universities which have only one medium of instruction, 17 have English, 12 have Hindi and one has Urdu. Again, the enrichment of the regional language has also not been adequately achieved. In 1971 the translation from English to Indian languages amounted to 364 books only. Among the 208 technical periodicals published in India in 1971, 174 still continued to be in English.

An important point, one that is relevant for English teaching and is hotly debated, concerns the proper stage at
which the study of second language can be introduced in the
curriculum. An early introduction of the second language might
hamper the students' ability to gain mastery over the mother-
tongue. However, if the second language is introduced late,
as in India (around 11 years) it has to be ensured that the
teaching is intensive and adequate. Since English is introduced
at this age, generally, one would repeat such intensive work.
However, one notices no special effort in this direction.

Most importantly, as already mentioned, efforts to
develop one ideal policy and a national syllabus have not been
successful. In fact, it is doubtful whether a serious effort
has at all been made. Such a syllabus has to accommodate regional
varieties of English, a possible Indian standard, and variations
in the conditions and practices of English teaching and a wide
variation in the needs to learn English - a gigantic task no
doubt.

For effective teaching of English, the Group has made
recommendation for the adoption of modern language teaching
methods and proper testing and evaluation techniques. It has
suggested the employment of class-room aids and practices and
maintenance of the right teacher-student ratio in the class rooms.
But in the conditions that prevail in a poor country like India,
such recommendations, quite understandably, have not been put
into practice even with the best of intentions.
The practical realisation of the various courses outlined in the study group report of 1969 seems highly improbable. Even after 18 years, the bridge course itself has not been made available. Such attempts, if any, have been made in urban areas alone. The courses in Spoken English, Written English and Communicative English are in most of the States, left to private institutions of dubious ability.

An important change which has not been considered by the study groups at all is the evolution of better teacher-student relationship in the learning process. The example of China during the cultural revolution might serve at least as a provocation to thought. The teaching process induces much of dialectical interaction between the teachers and the students - the classes often resort to the pattern of Socratic discussions. Criticism is a key principle in such a system. Course outlines are decided through discussions between teachers, students and officials. Though such steps need a radical reorientation of the whole educational system, the method of discussion and criticism can be employed with useful results in the class-room. Much of the failure of the language learning in India accrues from the passivity it presupposes of the students.

The study groups also did not solve the problem of creating a functionally relevant model of second language learning in India. Perhaps what we need is a poly-model concept.
With the innumerable variations in background, attainment and objectives there has to be flexibility in the realisations of any model. The creation of a model which can be practically interpreted in relation to the learner's actual experience, real necessities, and socio-regional background becomes imperative in the Indian context. The evolution of such a model has been and will be impeded by so many factors innate to the present educational system itself. But such a model will involve more meaningful participation of the learner in the learning process and a considerable decentralisation of the organisational processes involved.

To sum up - it appears that the recommendations made by different groups were not always realistic - not related to the conditions prevailing or obtaining in the country.

On 31st January 1984, Mrs. Shiela Kaul, the then Union Minister for Education, in an address at the Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages, Hyderabad, as its Chairperson, regretted that there was a "general decline in the standards of achievement in English" and came up with one more proposal — "The Education Ministry had evolved a plan of action to meet the situation. It included the setting of district centres for saturation level training of school teachers of English, curriculum development units in universities, strengthening of
the existing State Regional Institutes of English and the establishment of such special institutions in the state, where they do not exist" (The Hindu 1984). Four years have already gone by. No such promised Centre has yet come into being. The late Prime Minister, Smt. Indira Gandhi, too, while addressing a gathering of Sanskrit scholars, eminent writers, academicians and journalists at the National Museum, New Delhi, on 7th November 1983 had expressed concern at the falling standard of English in the country and emphasised the need for English as it "had become a vital international link language" (The Statesman 1983).

The situation is that while the statutory position of English has been becoming more and more strong, its learning and quality has been weakening. Considering the national importance of English, its role particularly in north-south dialogue, it is important that the study of English is made meaningful as well as accessible to those who desire proficiency in it.

In a country like India where the resources are so scarce that advanced educational technologies are not likely to become widely available and where any radical change is not only resisted but also difficult to implement on the large scale of the country, we have to take a pragmatic view and make improvements where it is possible to make them without
involving much cost or many people. Also, we will be well advised to work in the perspective of our own tradition of language teaching if we want definite results. Traditionally, languages have been taught in India through a grammar and a suitable text. What we need to do, therefore, is to put intensive research into development of appropriate English texts; secondly, we should stop being lured into vague kind of Western behaviouristic educational principles which treat language as a habit divorced from thought and revert to the grammar method of learning-teaching the language. Chiefly, however, we must realise that in our large class-rooms, an overwhelming percentage of which are not equipped with teaching aids, text is the prime instrument for teaching the language. In the fascination for new ad-hoc theories we have gradually diluted the quality and the role of texts and this has been the chief reason for the decline of English standards in the country.

In the next chapter we will review the syllabus to show how the role of text has changed progressively and their quality suffered.