Marathi in the Current Educational System

In Maharashtra, Marathi is the regional language and it is used by the majority of people in their everyday life. Standard Marathi is simply the link language between regional and social dialects. In 12th and 13th centuries, at the time of the Yadavas Marathi was the state language. Then in the period of Bahamani and Adilshahi Kingdom Persian became the state language. Then King Shivaji introduced Marathi as a state language and tried to develop it. The British rulers broadly assigned administration at the district and lower levels to the regional language. In Maharashtra Marathi was used in local administration. After independence also Marathi was not a state language. The question of accepting Marathi as a state language came to a head in 1960. Various encouragements were given by the State for the development of Marathi, but it was not accepted practically as a State Language. The Marathi Rajabhasha Bill was passed in 1965. Technical terminology, Padmanam Kosh etc. were prepared for accepting Marathi as a medium of instructions. (Dhongde R.V. *The State of Marathi. Deccan College Bulletin, Vol. 49, 1990.)

Now a days in most of the schools and universities Marathi is the medium of instruction. And State administration also uses Marathi language. It occupies an important place in Maharashtra as a first language.
COMPREHENSION OF POETRY

In Maharashtra Marathi is the first language in the syllabus of the schools and colleges. It is the mother tongue of the majority of students. The study of first language or the mother tongue is important. It is the foundation on which the child's further education is based. It enables the child to widen the horizon of his knowledge about social and natural environment around him. An adequate command over the mothertongue is necessary for learning.

The study of the mothertongue leads a child to understand and appreciate thoughts, feelings and ideas set down by others. It opens to him the world of wisdom, beauty and inspiration. It provides the child with an effective medium of self expression and communication. It helps in developing the personality of a child. It fulfils the objective of national and emotional integration. It develops a tolerant and liberal outlook towards language, culture, country and religion.

At the primary level the aim of teaching Marathi is to develop skills, that is abilities to express adequately, correctly and clearly, ideas, thoughts and feelings orally, to read clearly, fluently with correct pronunciation, proper intonation and expression, and to express ideas in writing in a correct language logically and effectively and to write a good legible hand. (Syllabuses for Standards I - VII, Govt. of Maharashtra : 1968). It helps pupils to have a good acquaintance with the basic structures of his mother tongue, the important elements of its grammar and idioms. Thus the study of the mothertongue should lead to the formation of good habits in correct speech, writing and reading.
COMPREHENSION OF POETRY

The aim of teaching Marathi in Maharashtra is to make a child feel its nearness with the larger society, its culture, solidarity and national integration; to develop appropriate speech and comprehension, listening and reading, to comprehend literary passages in its various aspects. The aims and objectives of teaching Marathi as the first language are to help the pupils to increase comprehension, develop oral expression, reading, and writing skills and to know the cultural heritage. In Maharashtra the state Govt. has framed these aims and objectives of the first language learning in the syllabuses of schools and colleges. According to the three language formulae of the Central Government the State Government in Maharashtra has included Marathi as the first language and English and Hindi are regarded as second languages in the syllabuses of schools and colleges.
Teaching of English in India began as an act of charity by the British and American missions. In 1835-36, Macaulay laid down the fundamental principles of the British educational policy to create an English educated class, who would be the interpreters between the British and the millions whom they governed. (Nemade Bhalchandra, "Against Writing in English: An Indian Point of View", New Quest, 49-55, 1985). Thus English became an important language in India. It was a medium of instruction in schools and colleges. This is called a historical accident by some people. After independence though regional languages became mediums of instruction in some schools and colleges, English also remained an important language among the people. It was a medium of contact among the people in the country and outside the country.

All successive education commissions have emphasized the linguistic superiority of the English language, over all the native languages. At the time of independence it was no longer regarded as a foreign language but the official language. The entire native tradition of the ancient civilization evolved by ethnic groups over centuries appeared in view of a permanent need for English in India. Thus English became a pathetic necessity for Post Independence Indians. It has a special position in relation to the National development. This position is a result of historical events going back well over a century.

After independence English is being used in National communication and transportation systems. English is the
primary language of the Indian Air Lines, the Railways, the Postal, Telegraph and Telephone systems; the Military establishment and Indian Civil Services.

The English language press is more influential on a national scale. It is used in scientific and technical research. Higher education in science and technology is predominantly imparted through English. Lower level training is generally in English whenever it is done on a National Scale. Scientific and technical publications in India are almost completely in English. English is the principal medium of teaching and study at the Indian Institute of Technology, the Indian Institute of Science and other special institutions. English is the principal language used by Indians in International communications whether diplomatic, professional, military or commercial.

English is the only European language whose literature serves as a core element in liberal education. It is the only non indigenous language in which Indians have produced significant contemporary literature. Much of the English used in India is learned outside the educational system - natural language acquisition in real communication situations. Before and after independence the changes that occurred in the position of English language in India are pointed out by many writers and commissions.

Some of them have pointed out that after independence the increasing shift from the English medium to the mothertongue medium in primary and secondary education and the enormous expansion of the educational system have now led
to a very different position for English in the educational system. English is regarded as a language of prestige in society. It has become an inseparable part of the Indian community.

After independence many commissions were appointed from time to time to study and determine the place of English in the Indian community. Almost all the commissions, seminars and conferences of the English teachers have strongly recommended that English should be taught as a compulsory subject in the universities and colleges. In the primary and secondary education also English is taught as one of the compulsory subjects for seven years that is beginning from the fifth standard. The Maharashtra State has introduced English in Standard five making it a seven years' study in school. This shows a widespread desire to strengthen the teaching of English at school. In colleges English is taught as one of the compulsory subjects upto the degree level. In some universities the medium of instruction is still English.


Thus the historical background of English and the present situation of English in India lead us to think that we must do our best in the learning and teaching of English.
III. Place of English in the Current Educational System

In Maharashtra the syllabuses prepared by the Government of Maharashtra for schools, the syllabuses prepared by the Higher Secondary Certificate Board for secondary schools and the syllabus prepared by the University of Poona for College level classes, contain the following aims and objectives of teaching English in the schools, colleges:

1. To understand English used in conversation and in lectures and talks delivered in fairly simple English on themes within the range of the pupils' experience.

2. To read with a fair degree of ease and understanding, a wide range of reading matter both informative and literary.

3. To express themselves in speech and writing in simple correct English on the everyday situations of their life and on topics within the range of their work.

The aims and objectives in most of the syllabuses framed from time to time insist on the development of language skills of listening, speaking, reading, writing, to enable the child to widen his horizon of knowledge about the social and natural environment around him. The syllabuses insist that at the primary level the English language should be introduced through oral work, arising out of lessons about home, school, market etc. Then reading and recitation should be taught. By using various devices the language should be taught to the student to develop language skills.
English provides a common link to inter University communication and contact not only within India but also between India and other countries. The syllabuses insist that every student should acquire an adequate knowledge of English at the secondary stage as well as at the University stage.

The University student's ability to understand and use English language is so essential for the maintenance of standards, that a high priority is to be given to its teaching in our academic programme. Such opinions are expressed by the Committee members in their report on the standards of University Education 1965.

The reports of various commissions, conferences insist on the inclusion of English in syllabuses as a compulsory subject. They have recommended the time of six to eight periods per week to be devoted to the teaching of English language to college students.

The reports of these commissions clearly indicate the importance and place of English in the present educational system. It shows that it has become a part and parcel of the Indian social, cultural and political life. The three language formulae prepared by Government of India recommends that English should be included in the syllabuses as the second language. At present in Maharashtra English is taught as a second language in almost all the schools and colleges as a compulsory subject. In some Universities it is used as the medium of instruction while other universities use regional languages as a medium of instruction.