CHAPTER EIGHT

LANGUAGE POLICY IN NATIONAL EDUCATION: A PANDORA'S BOX
CHAPTER EIGHT

LANGUAGE POLICY IN NATIONAL EDUCATION: A PARADOX'S SKEW

"Language! The blood of the soul, sir, into which our thoughts run and out of which they grow."

C. S. LEWIS

"Language is the armoury of the human mind; and at once contains the trophies of its past and the weapons of its future conquests."

J. T. COLERIDGE

In the world the greatest thing is man and the greatest thing is man in his mind. A language is a vehicle of communication of human thought between different minds. It is language, spoken or written, that endows man with humanity. Language is an indispensable tool of all social existence, human cooperation and development. "Language", said Emerson, "is a city to which every human-being brought a stone." In this world there are about 3000 million people and due to the historical, cultural and geographical factors they speak about 4000 languages and dialects. Language is a differentiating factor par-excellence. It creates distinction between different ethnic groups by erecting communication barriers between them. The language of an ethnic group helps to maintain the group's identity and coherence by replenishing its spirit from the cultural treasure-house of the past and present. India, that is Bharat, is a large country with a polyglot population.

comprising persons of different ethnic groups. With a population of about 600 million, India is a multilingual country of people of diverse racial and demographic origins. Naturally there is a great multiplicity and variety in the forms of speech of the people. According to the Linguistic Survey of India, there are 179 languages and 944 dialects which have been classified by the philologists into four distinct family groups — Indo-Aryan, Dravidian, Austro-Asiatic, and Tibeto-Burman. These groups of people continue to live in a compact mass in the regions of their forefathers and they emotionally cherish their distinct ethnic traditions, cultures, and languages.

CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS ON LANGUAGE:

The language pattern in India is given in Part VII of the Constitution — Articles 343-351. These Articles have been arranged into four Chapters headed as follows:

1. Language of the Union (Articles 343-44);
2. Regional Languages (Articles 345-47);
3. Language of the Supreme Court, High Courts, etc. (Articles 346-49); and
4. Special Directives (Articles 350-51).

In addition to this there is the 8th Schedule in reference to Articles 343 and 351 of the Constitution, which specifies the 'Languages of India' for the purposes mentioned in these two Articles.

Infra, Appendix VIII-8.
Linguistic, educational and cultural rights of the minorities have been protected vide Articles 29 and 30 of the Constitution. The Parliament has recognised and even reinforced the distinctness of different linguistic groups by the creation and establishment of administratively autonomous linguistic States on the recommendations of the State Reorganisation Commission 1966. With the merger of Sikkim, India now consists of twenty-two States1 having distinct linguistic aspects of great significance. The linguistic minorities have become majorities in their respective States and like the ethnic minorities of the Soviet Union, have become at one and the same time, both minorities and majorities e.g., the Sikhs represent a minority in the Indian Union but form a majority community in the Punjab. Similarly the Muslims of Kashmir, Bengalis in Bengal, Tamils in Tamilnadu, Gujaratis in Gujrat etc., are all minority groups in India but majority communities in their respective States, at one and the same time. One of the explicit ideal goals of the Constitution is the emotional fusion and integration of all these linguistic nationalities of the Union into one nation-State. With this goal in view, Article 343(1) of the Constitution provides that:

'The official language of the Union shall be Hindi in Devanagri script. The form of Numerals to be used for the official purposes of the Union shall be the International form of Indian Numerals.'

1Infra, Appendix 1-2.
Therefore, it became perfectly lawful for the Parliament to state as a necessary condition that every citizen of India should study Hindi, as the Lingua franca of the nation. Nevertheless, the distinct indigenous languages and heritages of different nationalities are constitutionally entitled to the respect, development and consideration as the native cultures of the constituent States of the Union, some of them like Tamil may be older and more illustrious even than Hindi. Lenin recognised the great political and educational importance of the language problem in the U.S.S.R. In his political testament he advocated great caution and the utmost tact in teaching and promoting Russian language in the non-Russian Republics of the U.S.S.R. He was in favour of the intellectual assimilation of all the Republics of the Union but gave a warning that people should not be driven into paradise with a stick, advising, "We must always talk to the people in their own languages."¹ Similarly in India the ruling elite have been fully alive to problems of minorities, especially the linguistic minorities. Like Lenin, they understood that forced assimilation would turn away the regional languages from friendship with Hindi, while tolerance and liberalism would strengthen their relations of love and loyalty and their sense of belonging to the nation-State of India and thus involve them all in the nation building activities and adventures. The Constitution of India, vide Article 29(1), guarantees to the linguistic minorities a

right to conserve their languages, scripts, and cultures; and vide Article 30(1), a right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice; and immunity from any discrimination in respect of financial assistance and grants by the Government to their institutions. These provisions assure the minorities that, as linguistic or cultural groups they can preserve their identity, and as individuals, their dignity and worth. But the creation of linguistic States has unleashed the linguistic chauvinism by which these linguistic States are trying to switch over from English to their respective regional languages for educational and administrative purposes and have, thus, created great disadvantages and dangers for the linguistic minorities. In the current climate of such linguistic chauvinism and fanaticism it is very difficult for the minorities to preserve their languages and scripts.

LANGUAGE POLICY AND EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM:

Language inevitably plays an important part in education but the Indians have failed during the last thirty years of independence to evolve Hindi or some other language as a common national language and national educational policy on the medium of instruction and teaching of languages at different stages of education of the people. However, the Committee of Members of Parliament on Education 1967\(^1\) made the following

recommendations on the problems of language and medium of instruction at various levels of education:

1. Adoption of Indian Languages as Media of Education at All Stages:

The development of a proper language policy can greatly assist in strengthening national unity. The key programme will be to develop all Indian languages and to adopt them as media of education at all stages. Unless this is done, the creative energies of the people will not be released, standards of education will not improve, knowledge will not spread to the people, and the gulf between the intelligentsia and the masses will continue to widen. This change-over should be brought about in five years. Adequate resources should be available for this programme and the willing and enthusiastic cooperation of the academic community should be secured. In implementing this reform, the following important points will have to be kept in view:

a) All-India institutions (i.e., those which admit students from all regions of the country) should use Hindi and English as media of education, having regard to the needs of students. Admission to these institutions should be so planned that the students educated through any Indian language are not at any disadvantage. In addition, all such institutions should maintain special departments which will provide intensive courses to the newly admitted students in Hindi/English to enable them to follow with ease the education given to them.
b) The work of devising scientific and technical terminology should be expeditiously completed. This terminology should be adopted and adapted in all Indian languages.

c) Steps should be taken side by side to ensure that students who have been educated through the medium of Indian languages are not deprived of opportunities of good employment. These would include the adoption of Indian languages for all administrative purposes in the States and their use in the U.P.S.C. examination.

d) Adequate safe-guards should be provided for linguistic minorities.

e) A large-scale programme for the production of necessary literature in all Indian languages should be developed. This should be implemented mainly through the universities but should also be centrally planned, coordinated and financed. The objective should be to produce, within five years most of the text-books required for this programme in all subjects and at all levels.

f) Suitable safe-guards should be devised to prevent any lowering of standards during the process of change-over. In fact, the desirability and success of the change should be judged in terms of the contribution it makes to raising the quality of education. It is meaningful only if it is part of a
policy of determined, deliberate and vigorous action.

2) The Teaching of Language:

   For the teaching of languages,¹ the following principles should be kept in view:

   Classes I-X:

   The parent has a right to claim primary education in the mother tongue of his child. Every effort should be made to meet this demand. At the secondary stage, the regional language should ordinarily be the medium of education. Adequate safeguards should be provided for linguistic minorities. Only one language, viz., the medium of education, should ordinarily be studied in the first sub-stage of school education, covering four or five years. Facilities should be provided, on an optional basis, for the study of regional language when it does not happen to be medium of education. A second language should be introduced, on a compulsory basis, ordinarily at the beginning of the next sub-stage. This may preferably be a language included in Schedule VIII of the Constitution² or English or any other language. The study of this language should be continued till the end of class X. A pupil may begin the study, at his option, of any third language, ordinarily from Class VIII, provided that a pupil who has not studied either Hindi

²Supra, p. 227.
or English in the earlier classes shall be under an obligation to study one of these two languages at this sub-stage. However, it is desirable that a pupil should, before he completes his school education, acquire some knowledge of three languages—regional language/other tongue, Hindi and English or any language.

**Class XI-XII:**

At this sub-stage, a pupil shall study at least one language of his choice in addition to the medium of education.

**University Stage:**

While facilities to study languages, on an optional basis, should be adequately provided at the University stage, the study of no language should be made compulsory unless such study is an essential part of a prescribed course.

3. Hindi, the Link Language:

In practice, Hindi is already largely in use as a link language for the country. The educational system should contribute to the acceleration of this process in order to facilitate the movement of students and teachers and to strengthen national unity. The special emphasis on the study of Hindi is also justified on account of the fact that it will become the sole official language in the future when the non-Hindi areas accept it as such. It is also recognised as one of

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official languages of UNESCO, signifying its importance as one of the major languages of wide dissemination in the world.

4. Sanskrit:

India has a special responsibility for the promotion of Sanskrit. Facilities for its teaching at the school stage should be provided on a liberal scale and its study encouraged. Where possible, composite courses of Sanskrit and the regional languages should be provided. A more important programme is to ensure its wide study at the college stage. For this purpose, new methods of teaching should be evolved to enable college students to acquire an adequate and quick command of this language, even though they may not have studied it at school. Universities should also examine the desirability of including a study of Sanskrit in these courses at the first and second degree where such knowledge is essential (e.g., courses in certain modern Indian languages, ancient Indian history, Indology, Indian Philosophy). The traditional system of Sanskrit learning should be encouraged.

The Government of India, the State Governments and the Universities have accepted in principle, these recommendations on language policy and medium of education, and have tried to implement them also in practice. In all-India institutions via Central Schools, Saikik Schools and Central Universities, these recommendations are being fully implemented and practised but in the educational institutions of different States the

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\[1\text{Ibid.}\]
language issues sometimes still pose difficulties and conflicts. The linguistic minorities are not still fully satisfied with the decision on the media of instruction and teaching of languages at different stages of educational process. They have to knock the doors of the Courts when they do not get justice at the hands of the State Governments or the universities in matters of language and media of instruction. An important question has arisen a number of times in different States: Can a linguistic minority impart instruction in its institution in its own language? This question has been answered by the Courts while deciding different cases:

In the case *State of Bombay vs. Bombay Education Society*,\(^1\) the Supreme Court struck down an order of the Bombay Government prohibiting on pain of penalty, admission of Indian students whose mother tongue was not English, into an English-medium school. Despite the Government's contention that the order was issued to promote Hindi, the Supreme Court said that the challenged order, even if affected only those students whose mother tongue was not English, violated the rights to conserve language guaranteed in Article 29(1) which puts no qualification or limitation on the citizen. Relying on a case *Myer vs. Nebraska*,\(^2\) and *Bartels vs. Iowa*,\(^3\) the Supreme Court of India rejected the argument that the minority rights were subordinate

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\(^3\) *Bartels vs. Iowa*, 262, U.S., 404.
to the State Power to prescribe the national language as the medium of instruction in educational institutions. In these two cases the U.S. Supreme Court had held that the challenged legislation prohibiting the teaching of any language to a person and the teaching of language other than English up to the eighth standard violated his liberty protected by the fourteenth amendment. The Indian Supreme Court also held that the minority rights included:

"The right to impart instruction in their own institutions to the children of their own community in their own language. To hold otherwise will be to deprive Article 29(1) and Article 30(1) of the greater part of their contents. Such being the fundamental right, the police power of the State to determine the medium of instruction must yield to this fundamental right to the extent it is necessary to give effect to it."

In Srikrishna vs. Gujrat University case the Gujrat High Court invalidated the challenged provisions of the Gujrat University Act and an order issued thereunder seeking to prescribe Hindi or Gujrat as the exclusive medium of instruction in all the colleges within the jurisdiction of Gujrat University. Mr. Justice Shelat held:

"The right to administer its own educational institutions must, therefore, carry with it the right to choose any particular language as the medium of instruction.... The crux of the protection to the minority given by Articles 29(1) and 30(1)

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1Srikrishna vs. Gujrat University (AIR 1962, Gujrat 88).
is the prevention of a majority from imposing its language, and the right of a minority not to be interfered with in its own choice of medium of instruction."

In other two important cases, O.A.V. College Jullundur vs. State of Punjab\(^1\) and the O.A.V. College Bhatinda vs. State of Punjab,\(^2\) the Supreme Court said:

"Neither the University nor the State can provide for imparting education in a medium of instruction which stifles the language, and script of any section of the citizens. Mr. Justice Jagannath Reddy emphasized that administrative and financial difficulties would not justify infringement of these rights and that the State must either provide also for instruction in the media of these minorities, or if there were other universities then allow colleges (of the minorities) to be affiliated where the medium of instruction was that which was adopted by the minority."

Keeping in view the constitutional provisions and the important decisions and directions of the Courts on the different issues of language, the intelligentsia and the ruling elite of the country must create an atmosphere of good will and peace. There must not be any heat and passion over the issues of language, which is a loom on which the life of a community is woven, so it has no intrinsic consequences in itself, because it is only the loom and not the fabric, it is

\(^1\)AIR 1971, S.C. 1737.
\(^2\)AIR 1971, S.C. 1731.
only a vehicle of thought and not the thought itself; it is only a receptacle of people's traditions, usages and cultural memories but not their substance. All our educational institutions, schools, colleges and universities must aim at providing good and purposeful education which may be through the media of any and every language. Rabindranath Tagore had beautifully described the various linguistic groups in India as petals of a flower. The petals, though they are separate, are an integral part of the flower and together they contribute to the beauty of the flower. Similarly all our languages contribute to the richness of our culture whose main characteristic is its unity in diversity. In a vast country like India, where people have different languages, beliefs, customs and traditions, our emphasis should always be on factors that would bring people closer to one another and foster a spirit of good will and unity.

VIEW OF LEGISLATORS ON LANGUAGE ISSUE:

The Hon'ble Members of the Parliament have expressed their opinions and sentiments with regard to the different issues of language in India.

According to Jawahar Lal Nehru language, after all, does represent some of the deepest urges of human beings and is the vehicle of all our business. He said, "I am perfectly free to say that I will prefer any language, whether English, Swedish or anything, but I am not prepared to see this behaviour in

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the name of language which spoils democracy and creates most extra-ordinary disgusting and disgraceful spectacle in the House, (Lok Sabha) when the Official Language Bill 1963 was placed on the floor of the House to remove the restriction which had been placed by the Constitution on the use of English after a certain date i.e., 1965. Pandit Nehru said, "I think English is a fine language, just as other languages are very fine, too. Any real awakening of the people cannot take place through the English language. When we give up frock coat, top hat and English language in our approach to the people, a tremendous difference is made. We can develop the sense of the masses and reach the people only through the Indian languages which have deep roots in their minds and hearts. That does not mean that we should discard English because I think it is a very important language and it likely to remain in India for a long, long time. It will serve as a vitalizer to our languages. Our languages are fine languages. They are old languages. Most of them, certainly the big languages, Bengali, Gujarati, Marathi and the Southern languages like Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam - are great languages from any point of view. They have produced great books which are rooted in the minds of the people. All our languages, northern languages, apart from the four southern languages, are daughters of Sanskrit and have grown out of Sanskrit. Sanskrit has represented broadly all the thought, culture and traditions of India. I am an admirer of Sanskrit. I admire it
greatly. It would be a great pity if Sanskrit became a completely
dead language in India at any time. That would do great damage
to all that we stand for, in India. Unfortunately, we cannot
make Sanskrit the working language of India today. The learning
of Sanskrit should be encouraged as widely as possible though
it cannot become a language of the common people. It ceased to
be a language of the common people 2000 years ago when Prakrits
came in. It remained the language of the learned and gradually
prakrit developed. Sanskrit gives a certain basis and foundation
for our present day languages, still strengthens them, give them
depth and so on. So should cherish it. If we had only two or
three languages I would have suggested that all of them should
be national languages in the sense that all the three should be
used. They use three languages in Switzerland, and more than one
language in Finland and Canada. In Finland, about 10 percent of
the population is Swedish, but Swedish is also a national
language, in addition to Finish."¹ The makers of our
Constitution were wise in laying down that all the languages
contained in 8th Schedule were to be languages of equal status.
Bengali or Tamil is as much an Indian national language as Hindi.
Therefore, it becomes our duty to encourage all the languages
which are alive and dynamic today. For the growth of our
languages and for making them more and more dynamic and
responsive to the world's needs today, it is necessary for these
languages to establish and encourage easy contacts with the

¹Lok Sabha Debates, on the Official Language Bill 1963,
April 24, 1963.
outside world through foreign languages, English, French, Russian, German, Italian, Spanish etc. According to Jawahar Lal Nehru we are an introspective and self-centred people. Language is a medium of the thought of the people, and our language becomes static if our lives are static. English has made our languages more dynamic and has brought new forms, the novel, short stories, a new kind of drama, science and technology and so many other things. We must use English for higher, scientific and technological studies. Language is something bigger than offices and clerks. If we take the example of Urdu we can prove that "no great encouragement has been given to Urdu and yet, such is the vitality of this language that today Urdu is growing faster than many other national languages of India. If we judge it from the number of literary books that are published - that is a good test - it is extraordinary how fast Urdu has grown. This is because Urdu is a dynamic language. If Hindi is really to grow very fast, it should ally itself with Urdu, ally itself in the sense of vocabulary etc. It will get vitality from Urdu while retaining its own genius and nature. Urdu is vital and it has a strange capacity for adaptation and drawing from other languages. Urdu has drawn from English, Persian, Arabic and from the Turkish languages. It is this adaptation that makes a language strong. The tendency of living in a narrow linguistic circle and coining words from ancient Sanskrit or Pali does not help because these words which you have coined have no
reality behind them, have no emotion, have no history.” Pandit Nehru had no doubt that we would do more and more of our work in education, administration etc. in the regional languages.

Prof. H. H. Mukherjee was of the view that we have had a fixation or a vested interest about English, that automatically separates us from those who do not know English. In this country of many castes, the most hardened caste is the caste of the English-knowing, English-namored people. It is a terrible caste. It is a bad thing because it puts tremendous barriers between us and the mass of the people. The growth of India in the sense of a common language can only take place by cooperation among the languages and not by conflict among them. Hindi has been suggested by our Constitution as the link language for central and official purposes. We have to consider Hindi as a link language for the simple reason that it is most feasible for the purpose of a link language, apart from its being widespread. All the steps the Education Minister may take in regard to the spread of Hindi, do not go as far as the influence that Cinema has had on the spread of Hindi. All scientific and technical terms should be as far as possible in line with international usage, not only in Hindi but in all the languages of India. The adoption of three language formula will lessen the gap between the different languages. The language problem can only be dealt with by a large measure
of consent and consultation. It is good and encouraging that the Government is trying to establish a Central University in Pondicherry with French as the medium of instruction. The Government of India wants foreign languages to be windows of India on the outside world.\(^1\)

According to Jawaharlal Nehru, itself is an amalgam, a synthesis of various languages; it is about 75-80 percent Hindi and about 25 percent of the words come from other languages, may be Persian, Arabic and Turkish. It is quite clear that when two languages come together, they strengthen each other. Rigidity stops growth. We require a wisdom and capacity for flexibility. The growth of our languages is essentially tied up with the growth of the nation.

While the Reports of the Education Commission 1964-66 and the Committee of Members of Parliament on Education 1967 were under discussion in the Lok Sabha, the Members of the Parliament expressed their views on the language problem and medium of instruction. A brief account of the same is as follows:

Shri Baghurir Singh Shastri said, "When some people oppose the adoption of Indian Languages as media of instruction it gives the smell that they are trying to keep the doors of the educational institutions, shut for the masses. A time has come when the armed gate-keeper of English must be removed from the educational institutions so that the doors of the institutions are happily opened for the masses."\(^2\)

\(^1\)Lok Sabha Debate, Official Languages (Amendment) Bill, November 20, 1967, cc. 1432-1433.

\(^2\)Lok Sabha Debate, December 16, 1967, cc. 7478-7674.
According to Samir Guha, as a result of Aryan influence Sanskrit developed as a national language. Similarly, after two hundred years of creative and purposeful role played by the English language, it has also earned like Sanskrit or Hindustani the right to be naturalised as an Indian language. He opposed the charge that English has created a sophisticated and privileged class, in the country. According to him it is not the English-knowing people but the brahmans, the kshatriyas, the caste landlords who created the privileged class, the sophisticated class and caste and class distinctions. In fact, it is the English-knowing people who represent the vanguard for advocacy for abolition of caste and class in India, more than any other sections. It is an irrefutable historical fact that it was the English-knowing people who first identified themselves with the Indian masses, aroused them to patriotic fervour, led them to participate in the freedom-struggle and ultimately became the forerunner for upholding the banners of democracy, socialism and social justice. He considered that the statements of Goramji Desai, and the Education Minister - 'that 90 percent of the people in India do not know English but 30 percent of the people know Hindi', were not correct. The Census Report of 1961 says that only 30 million people of the Hindi-speaking area know to read and write Hindi and 70 millions all over India know to read and write English. While 20 laks people read Hindi newspapers, 1 crore people read English newspapers. Any attempt to banish English or switch over to regional
languages in administration and education will dangerously disturb, disarray and dislocate the mechanics of this progress and stunt its dynamics too. From Patiliputra to Indraprastha, which is inhabited only by 30 percent of the total Indian population, they may be speaking Hindi but from Kansup to Kanyakumari, more than 60 percent of the people are provided the most important nexus for national unity by English. In the present condition of our national development, the slogan 'banish English' should be discarded as anti-progress, anti-unity and even anti-national, which stands for stagnation, backwardness and balkanisation of India and disintegration of the image of Indian Unity.

Hindi must grow gradually in an atmosphere of natural and national acceptance. Mother tongue is the most suitable media for spontaneous understanding, natural assimilation and effective expression of educational ideas, but any attempt to hasty and over-zealous switch-over to the mother tongue within a stipulated short period will:

1) dangerously dislocate the present system of education and administration and create a tendency to regionalise it;
2) stunt all-India mobility of teachers and students;
3) all vehicles of inter-communication will be jeopardised;
4) standard of all-India examinations will be downgraded with a tendency to lean on corrupt practices of regional favours.
5) undermine the present high morale and principles of equity of Indian judiciary;
6) seriously retard the rate of national progress and create deadlock in science, technical engineering, medical and legal education;
7) create extreme difficulties for want of requisite and standard textbooks;
8) hurl back the wheel of Indian progress and jeopardise technological, economic and industrial growth; and
9) lastly, most perilously aggravate the present hysterical mood of lingual chauvinism and erode the very foundation of Indian unity.¹

Shri Shri Narain was of the view that Sanskrit is the mother of all languages and we should pay attention to its teaching and learning. We should give up our mental slavery of foreign languages. He welcomed the three-language-formula.²

Shri M.P. Kasani did not want to join in the battle of languages. According to him the Government and Parliament have no right to interfere with, or legislate in regard to the medium of instruction in universities and at other educational institutions, vide Article 30 of the Constitution which he read in the House. The medium of instruction is a voluntary matter between the parent, the child and the teacher in which government

¹Lok Sabha Debates, November 29, 1967, cols. 1447–1453.
²Ibid., col. 1456.
or Parliament has no right to interfere. The University Grants Commission and the Education Ministry should not try to influence or pressurise universities into determining their medium of instruction.¹

Shri Onkar Lal Bohra was of the opinion that if we really want to remove illiteracy and expand education then the medium of instruction should be the regional languages or mother tongues. The people who say that English is the only window of knowledge have English mentality. All the languages of the world like the Japanese, Russian, German and all Indian languages are the windows of knowledge. If we are honest and faithful to our voters then we must talk to them in their own languages.²

According to Shri Frank Anthony the Kothari Education Commission and the Emotional Integration Committee (Samourmanand Committee) have recommended that English should continue to be used as a medium of instruction at the university level for intellectual excellence. Hindi is an agglomeration of dialects varying from region to region and therefore, it cannot be the common medium of instruction in all universities. Only the Hindi people have traded in hate. 'Angrezi hataoo' movement will provoke a 'Hindi hataao' movement. That is the tragedy today : The angrezi hataoo movement on the one side and the Hindi hataoo movement on the other side! Both the movements are tearing the country, emotionally, educationally and psychologically. English is

¹Ibid., cc. 1462-1473.
²Ibid., cc. 1474-1482.
legally an Indian language. For the Anglo-Indians, English is their cherished mother tongue. This position has received the final imprimatur of our courts in the dicta of Chief Justice Chagla in the Bombay Schools case when he observed, "In eye of Constitution no distinction is made between the English language and the languages spoken by other Indian minorities.... In the Constitutional sense, and that is the only sense we are concerned with, English is as much an Indian language today, as much recognised by the Constitution and as much entitled to protection as any other language spoken by any other section or community in this country." All the Committees, all the Commissions, have said without peradventure, without qualification, that English may continue for every reason, and why? Because English over a period 200 years has permed the educational pattern evenly. Unlike Hindi, it is an all-India language. It is indeed, from the educational concept, the only all-India language; it gives no advantage to any region or any particular section of the people. As Pandit H.N. Kunzru asked, who imposed English? Nobody imposed English. It was a statesman, a visionary like Raja Ram Mohan Roy who insisted that India should abandon the curtain of ignorance drawn around it up to 1816 and every Indian should be given the advantage of a liberal education through the medium of English. India has been interpreted to the outside world through the medium of English. It is only through English that India jumped from mediævalism into the modern age.¹

¹Ibid., cc. 1482-1493.
Professor R.C. Shrama was of the view that "no country can become great unless it has a language of its own which it can speak, which it can write and in which it can find a better instrument of expression. The battle of languages goes on in every country of the world. But the course of wisdom lies in this that we must hold on fast and strongly to our own languages. They may be 14, 16 or 18 but they must be made the media of instruction. Unless that is done we will be the born slaves of some Imperialist power. We will be living in cruel bondage. Our children will have their brain power shackled, hands tied up and legs manacled. They will not be able to go forward. Therefore, the language of our country, whether it be one or two or many, should be given the pride of place in this country." 1

According to Shri Vasudevan Nair we fail to realise that education has to go down very soon to the large masses, to the people down below. Our regional languages must be made the media of instruction as well as the media of administration at all stages. We must fix a time limit, for this change-over. Unless we fix a time limit, nothing will happen, and these things will drift as they drifted for the last twenty years. We do not realise what a wastage there is as waste of energy on the part of our children when learning something in a different language, from their mother tongue. 2

1Ibid., cc. 1497-1499.
2Ibid., cc. 1900-1907.
In the opinion of Shri Bakar Ali Mirza the claim that English is the unifying force is really an absurd proposition. English has divided us. English has made life impossible for us to live as a people. Dr. Zakir Hussain Committee recommended that education should be in the mother-tongue and it should be craft-based. For 30 years, all the clubs of the ICS bureaucracy ridiculed that idea. All the departments of education dared not go against it because Mahatma Gandhi's name was linked with it, but they did everything possible to see that it was neglected and the scheme did not progress. Now after 30 years, we have a new Commission which says, there should be social service, and education, even in universities, should be in the mother-tongue etc. It is a recognised principle of education that education of children should be in their mother-tongue. ¹

Shri Prakash Vir Shastri suggested that our universities in the South must make arrangements for the teaching of languages of the North and the universities of North must make arrangements for the teaching of languages of South India. But the easiest and most suitable path which we must adopt is the one that Devnagri should be adopted as a common script for all the languages of the country. We should not neglect Sanskrit which is the basis of all our languages. ²

¹Ibid., cc. 1307-1311.
²Lok Sabha Debate, November 21, 1967, cc. 1712-1717.
According to Sushila Nayyar language is simply a means of expressing our ideas and thoughts. Therefore, importance should be given to thoughts and not language. She suggested that Hindi should be accepted as the common medium of instruction in all the universities of India because if mother-tongues of different States were used by different universities, then it would not be possible for students of one university to migrate to another university, nor the teachers would be able to go from one State to the other State. This would not only damage our educational system but also it would harm the sentiments of national unity. In the U.S.S.R. regional languages are used as medium of instruction in different universities but Russian is also used as a medium of instruction in all the universities. As a result of this only three percent people learn through regional languages and 97 percent learn through the Russian language as medium of instruction. Switzerland which is a small country, makes use of four languages namely French, German, English and Italian on equal basis for all official purposes. In India also we should not feel perturbed if more than two languages are used as link languages on all-India basis.¹

Shri C.K. Bhattacharya moved a Bill in the Lok Sabha on November 22, 1963 for amendment of Article 343 of the Constitution by adding the word “and Sanskrit” after the word “Hindi” in Clause (1) of the Article. Discussion on this Bill took place on

November 22, 1963 and December 6 and 20, 1963. The Resolution was lost, but Members of the Parliament expressed their views. Considering the anti-Hindi stir in the South and the violent turn it took resulting in enormous loss of property and considerable loss in human lives and looking in retrospect, one feels, had this resolution been adopted the events which happened would not have happened at all. By making Hindi as an official language, the Southerners fear that the North will dominate the South. Sanskrit is regarded as the fountain-head of almost all the Indian languages without it being a regional language of any particular State, and all the Indians have a reverence for it whether they understand it or not. Religious rites of all the Hindus of the North and South are performed through it. Sanskrit presents the greatest common measure of agreement amongst the languages of India, not only in their vocabulary but also in their spirit. The South would have had no objection to it.¹

Even when English ceases to be a medium of instruction in Indian Universities, it would be necessary for a long time to provide that the graduates emerging from our Universities, especially in the scientific and technological subjects, are equipped with a sufficient command of English to serve as a 'key' to the storehouse of knowledge not yet available in Hindi and other Indian languages because English is the 'window'

¹N.C. Das Gupta : Lok Sabha Debates, Sanskrit, Calcutta-20.
to the knowledge and rapid progress of technology and science that is constantly taking place in the world. There must be a gradual elimination of English as the medium of instruction but adequate provisions and standards for imparting its knowledge as the foremost language of the world, must be maintained at appropriate stages and appropriate faculties of Indian Universities.

According to Dr. Gobind Das democracy in this country cannot be successful in a foreign language but only in an Indian National Language i.e. Hindi. If in U.N.O. five languages can be used why can we not use our fifteen languages in our vast country? Even after 175 years of English rule in India only two percent people can understand English properly.¹

Shri S.K. Sambandhan was of the view that language to anybody in this country or elsewhere is as delicate and as precious as one's own life itself. It is really regrettable that the Government which proposes democratic socialism and which preaches democratic socialism has not brought about an equality between languages even within this country. "As far as the language issue is concerned nothing less than an amendment of the Constitution will be just to the non-Hindi speaking people of this country; so I request the Government not to hesitate to bring forward legislation to restore equality among all the Indian languages. English is also the language of

Anglo-Indian Community of a sizeable number and it should be recognised for all purposes which it deserves as an Indian national language.¹

Shri Humayun Kabir was of the view that Urdu has been a subject of dispute for a number of years, ever since independence, and no party in India has been more vociferous in the support of Urdu than the Congress so far as speeches were concerned, but when it came to the matter of action, perhaps no party had been so pusillanimous, no party had been so hesitant as the Congress Party.

On January 8, 1976 Prime Minister Indira Gandhi assured that there was no desire or effort on the part of the Centre to force Hindi on anyone who did not want it. Referring to a remark by ADMK leader K. K. M. Manoharan about surreptitious attempts to impose Hindi on Tamil Nadu, she said that this was not true and that in her view, it would be better for the people to have a working knowledge of an Indian language. She pointed out how those speaking English constituted a small minority in the country and it could not be the link language. But there was no question of Hindi affecting the development of other Indian languages like Tamil, Bengali, Kannada which were all ancient with a rich literature. She observed that the Government were doing everything to

¹Lok Sabha Debate, April 3, 1967.
encourage the growth of these national languages. She
called the three language formula and emphasized the
need for children to learn as many Indian languages as
possible.¹

More attention should be paid to the development,
promotion and popularisation of Hindi, than the negative
attitude of replacing English or the other national
languages of India. Hindi is a strange if not foreign
language to non-Hindi speaking people and it is
unpsychological and hence educationally unsound to make it
a compulsory medium of instruction for them. The children
can express themselves and comprehend others with ease and
facility only in their own mother language. There should
be no case of rivalry or conflict on the issues of languages.
We must work for the national integration and emotional
unity of all the linguistic groups of the country. This
unity cannot be a kind of uniformity, but it should be a
unity in diversity. The people of non-Hindi areas must not
be given the least impression that Hindi is being imposed
on them, because Hindi speaking population is itself a
minority, being 42 percent of the total of Indian population
and it is 46 percent of the total population of all persons
speaking the languages mentioned in the 8th schedule of the
Indian Constitution.

¹Lok Sabha Debate, January 8, 1976.