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AN HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE LANGUAGE CONTROVERSY  
IN INDIAN EDUCATION - 1614 TO 1970

by  
Peter Sinnappan

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of  
Loyola University in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Arts

January

1972

## LIFE

Peter Sinnappan was born in Tindivanam, Tamilnadu, India on May 5, 1942. He graduated from St. Ann's High School, Tindivanam, Tamilnadu, March 1958. After taking his Pre-University Class in Sacred Heart College of Tirupatture, India, he joined Voorhees College of Vellore, India, and received the Bachelor of Science in June 1964. From June 1964 to June 1965 the author taught Science and Mathematics at Walter Scudder High School, Tindivanam, India. From June 1965 to June 1966 he served in Dominic Savio High School, Chetpet India, as a Science assistant. He received his Bachelor of Teaching from the University of Madras in April 1967. From June 1967 to September 1968 the author was teaching English and Physical Sciences at Danish Mission High School, Tiruvannamalai, India. He began his studies at Loyola University of Chicago in September 1968 and became a candidate for the degree of Master of Arts in February 1972.

## PREFACE

This thesis has been written with the purpose of analyzing critically the language controversy in Indian education from a historical perspective covering about 350 years. Proposed recommendations for the solution of the language crisis in Indian education have also been treated. It is the felt need of every Indian today that there should be a proper and common language for education in India. Propelled by the same feeling, the writer has attempted to analyze the opinions of the intellectuals who have dealt with the language problem of India. The writer apologizes to these intellectuals if he has in any way misinterpreted their thoughts. Books have been written on the language problem of India both by Indian and foreign authors. But this is the first attempt to put their opinions together and analyze them critically, paying special attention to both the sides of the coin. The problem has been dealt with judgement and not with mere sentiment. The writer has made use of materials from several source-books, articles and personal talks with the educational authorities of Madras University during their visit to Chicago. These authorities were Mr. Sundaravadivelu, the Vice-Chancellor of Madras University, and Mr. Nedunchezian, the Education Minister of Tamil Nadu 1967.

Thanks are due to the writers, the authorities mentioned, and the parents of the writer who helped to a great extent in finding and sending books from India. The writer would like to express his warmest gratitude to Dr. Wozniak and Dr. Gutek for their suggestions and kind guidance in the preparation of this work.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### AN INTRODUCTION

In this thesis the writer has analyzed critically the language controversy in Indian education from a historical perspective. Though this controversy has existed for about a thousand years, the thesis covers the 350 years from 1614 to 1970. A number of books on the language issue has been written by various authors who have given their own personal views. Some of the books focused on the views of the foreign rulers and educational authorities regarding the language medium in education. All these views have been analyzed as objectively as possible.

Throughout history no other country of equal size to India has been occupied by as great a variety of linguistic groups. And today every Indian feels that there should be a common medium of education which would eventually serve as the means of political, social, economic and religious advancement of the country. Of all the problems that India faces today, the language question stands as a primary one. According to the report of the Education Commission 1964-66:

Of the many problems which the country has faced since independence the language question has been one of the most complex and intractable and it still continues to be so. Its early and satisfactory solution is imperative for a variety of reasons, educational, cultural and political.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Government of India, Ministry of Education, Report of the Education Commission 1964-66 (India: Government of India Press, 1966), p. 13.

Unless an adequate solution is devised, the Indian language crisis will have a serious impact on education, culture, political order, and even on national survival. As R. B. Le Page puts it: "It is undoubtedly true, the language is the key to education."<sup>2</sup> "Language barriers are also barriers to international understanding."<sup>3</sup> "Language barriers are certainly barriers to economic progress."<sup>4</sup> "The acquisition of language was biologically the basic requirements for man's survival as a species."<sup>5</sup>

India is one of the socio-linguistic giants, representing languages and cultures of diverse linguistic and ethnic groups. These groups will be identified in the latter part of this chapter. In a country populated by over 547 million speakers, scores of small speech groups consisting of a few thousand people still maintain their mother-tongues in everyday life in various multilingual pockets. This depicts the unique phenomenon of linguistic and cultural tolerance in India's history-

Though theoretically the religion and the caste system are not a major separating force in India, language differences separate the people both theoretically and practically. Linguistic diversity is very much felt in the educational system which is the main force for the advancement of India in all walks of life. This thesis presents the main focus on the critical analysis of the language controversy in the contemporary educational

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<sup>2</sup> R. B. Le Page, The National Language Question (India: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

system. Such a monumental controversy is not a recent one in Indian history, but it goes back some three centuries.

Only the Dravidian languages (listed in the latter part of this chapter) are the inborn languages of India. The extreme educational monopoly of the ancient Brahmin began after the development of classical Sanskrit which differs from Vedic Sanskrit. This development came from the labors of grammarians who wanted to keep the masses from the knowledge of the sacred lore. When there arose the fusion between the Dravidian languages which were confined to central and Southern-India, the different languages and the dialects were born.

Though the number of languages and dialects listed for census purposes runs in hundreds, the principal languages involved in the language problem of Indian Education are only fifteen. These fifteen languages belong not only to the two distinct linguistic families, the Indo-Aryan and Dravidian but also to two separate geographical regions of India. However, the majority of the population of India has been divided into two groups, one favoring English and the other Hindi.

In ancient India, Sanskrit offered a united language for the majority of India for practical reasons. Sanskrit was the language of literate people. Sanskrit had such an important place that the literate group took pride in knowing Sanskrit. As Gopal writes "...despite their (the literate's) rich or poor capacity for expression, (they) considered it an honour to adorn themselves with Sanskrit words; that has been the tendency of writers for a long time."<sup>6</sup> The vernaculars were unstable and were subject to great change.

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<sup>6</sup>Ram Gopal, Linguistic Affairs of India (New York: Asia Publishing House, 1966), p. 45.



The vernaculars, either Indo-Aryan or Dravidian, borrowed many words from Sanskrit. Among the mature languages, only fifteen have been declared as fully developed major languages by the constitution of India. After such a declaration was made, each group of people belonging to the fifteen major languages claims their linguistic superiority in order to have their own language as the National Language. Thus arises the controversy.

In order to understand the language controversy better, it will be helpful to know about the Indian language groups, the number of people speaking a particular language, and the major languages. According to the 1961 Census record, there are 1,652 different languages and dialects, with 211 separate distinct languages and 15 major languages in India. In Madhya Pradesh alone, there were 377 languages and dialects. About 90 per cent of the population speak one or more of the 15 regional languages. The population of India was 439,072,582 in 1961. The major linguistic division in India itself is basically a division of ethnic origin, between the northern Hindus of Aryan stock speaking Indi languages and the Southern Hindus of Dravidian stock, speaking Dravidian languages.

Placing the languages in two different major groups, they can be listed as shown below:

INDIAN LANGUAGES

Indo-European languages  
of the Indic Branch

Dravidian languages

Hindi

Tamil

Urdu

Telugu

Punjabi

Kannada

Marathi

Malayalam

Bengali

Gujarati

Oriya

Assamese

Kashmiri

Sanskrit

According to the philologists, Indian languages belong to four different family groups namely Dravidian, Austro-Asiatic, Tibeto-Burman, and Indo-Aryan. Dravidian, having Tamil as the mother language, is the most ancient and inborn language of India. If there should be one language as the medium of instruction in higher education at the national level other than English, it can not be one but four since the four language groups of India differ basically in their structure and vocabulary. These four language groups have to be put into four different compartments. As Sarker puts it, "There are fundamental differences in structure and vocabulary among these. (the four language groups)"<sup>7</sup> Each of the Dravidian and some of the Indo-Aryan

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<sup>7</sup>Amal Sarker, Handbook of Languages and Dialects of India  
(Calcutta: Kranti Press, 1964), p. XI.

languages have their own distinctive alphabets, which differ significantly in form and appearance. Hindi may be written in either of two different scripts. Breakdown of these languages according to their genetic affiliations on the basis of the 1961 Census is as follows:

Language family	Languages	Speakers (in millions)	Percentage to total population
Indo-European	59	321.5	73.3
Dravidian	21	107.5	24.5
Austro-Asiatic	20	6.2	1.4
Tibeto-Chinese	98	3.2	0.7

In addition, there are 530 unclassified mother-tongues whose affiliations could not be determined, spoken by 63,000 people. There are also 103 languages of foreign origin spoken as mother-tongue by 315,000 people, prominent among them being English. There are as many as 54 languages spoken by more than 100,000 people each: 27 Indo-Aryan, 11 Dravidian, 9 Austro-Asiatic and 7 Tibeto-Chinese.

Fourteen Indian languages, plus English, enjoy official recognition at the administrative level in different parts of the country. At the federal level, Hindi is the declared official language, until non-Hindi speaking regions are equipped to accept Hindi. But the day of acceptance is not in the near future since the language issue has created a great turmoil in the country among the different language groups. As the editor of India News has mentioned, "A great controversy has been going on over the issue of national language or languages among various pressure groups in the country."<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Editorial, India News (July 30, 1970), p. 3.

Though not impossible, it is very difficult to have any Indian language as the national language when there is a strong feeling among the language groups. In 1966 Punjab was divided into Hariyana with the Hindi speaking people and Punjab with the Punjabi speaking people. While stability was impossible for the bilingual state of Punjab, is it possible to think about one Indian language as the national language? As Sachs puts it, "There is very considerable resistance to the adoption of Hindi in the Dravidian language areas of South India as well as in some of the Indo-Aryan speaking areas, especially Bengal."<sup>9</sup>

The Indian constitution lists 15 major literary languages (often called national languages) for developing them as regional media. These include twelve state languages plus Kashmiri, Sindhi, and the classical language, Sanskrit. The population of these languages in 1961 were as follows: (see next page)

In addition to the 18 languages mentioned above, there are over 25 languages in which newspapers and periodicals are published. According to the 1961 census returns, English ranks first among the contact languages with 26 per cent of the total bilingual persons in the country declaring English as their first subsidiary language. The Editor of India News stated that, "English in the present setup still continues to be an important part of the communication matrix of urban India."<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>Moshev Sachs, Asia and Australia (New York: World Mark Press 1963), p. 82.

<sup>10</sup>Editorial, India News (July 30, 1970), p. 3.

Languages	*Speakers in Million	Percentage to total population
1. Hindi	129.2	29.4
2. Telugu	37.7	8.6
3. Bengali	33.9	7.7
4. Marathi	33.3	7.6
5. Tamil	30.6	7.0
6. Urdu	23.9	5.3
7. Gujarati	20.3	4.6
8. Kannada	17.4	4.0
9. Malayalam	17.0	3.9
10. Oriya	15.7	3.5
11. Punjabi	10.1	2.2
12. Assamese	6.8	1.6
13. Kashmiri	2.0	0.5
14. Sindi	1.4	0.3
15. Sanskrit	2,500,	---
Additional Administrative Languages:		
16. Konkani	1.4	0.3
17. Manipuri	0.64	0.2
18. English	0.22	---

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\* Mother-tongue

The presence of vernacular languages, Sanskrit, and English has produced a chain of bitter controversies that have characterized Indian education since the advent of the British in the country. It can be brought out here that after the achievement of independence suggestions have been given to make Sanskrit an official language or at least to make it a compulsory subject of study at the secondary stage of education. This view is not worth commenting on when it is evident that it is a dead language and was spoken by only 2,500 people out of 439 million people in 1961. No doubt Sanskrit has been antique in the past but it ceased to be in use among the people even in such a distant period as the sixth century B.C., for we find the Buddha preaching then to the people, not in Sanskrit, but in the Pali and the Ardhamagadhi languages. But according to Appadurai, "Sanskrit is not only a dead language but one that infects with its own benumbing and death-dealing touch every living language with which it comes in contact."<sup>11</sup> However, being a classical language of India, Sanskrit should be paid some attention.

English is always on the lips of literate persons (including Hindi speaking ones) not involved in politics. Of course, if one language is to serve the purpose of common intercourse in all India and international affairs, one would favor the continuance of English. Often voices from the politicians of various vernacular language groups are heard in order to make their own language as national language which would eventually serve as the medium of instruction in the entire nation. Unless a common language comes to be spoken, written and cultivated, real unity among the people of India cannot be imagined to come forth. It is therefore highly desirable that a serious consideration,

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<sup>11</sup> K. Appadurai, India's Language Problem (India: Tamil India Publications, 1970), p. 66.

free from bias for one's own language, should be given to a careful choice of the kind of language that possesses the indisputable fitness to become the common speech of India.

The Indian language controversy in the field of education, can be historically analyzed, bearing the following questions in mind with the information already given. Is this controversy a recent or ancient one? What is the reason for the controversy in indigenous education? How did it become acute after the involvement of English education? Was the involvement of English a menace to the educational system? What was and is the situation in the Independent India? Should there be a primary language for education? If there should be, which one? Should this language be (a) one of the 15 major languages; (b) a language extraneous to the land (like English); (c) a language used for purposes of literature and tradition divorced of every other relation to the life of the masses (like Sanskrit)? How do the educated people and the politicians feel and differ in their views? How can the solidarity of India be kept stable by introducing a suitable and acceptable language that would serve as a linking force and not a breaking one?

Focusing on these questions as the starting points of our inquiry we shall probe into the matter studying the pros and cons of the language controversy in the field of Indian education from historical perspective.

## CHAPTER TWO

### INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

Prior to the British education, all the educational systems of India had only the indigenous languages as the medium of instruction. Based on these languages, the pre-British elementary schools were classified as Bengali, Persian, Arabic and Persian-Bengali. The Bengali schools had Bengali as the medium of instruction, and the children who spoke the particular language were confined into it. Ultimately there would not have been much chance for this system to share the vast knowledge of the world, and this can be illustrated by the words of Adam who reported on vernacular education in Bengal and Bihar in 1835 and 1836. He says that in the Bengali schools the popular mind was necessarily cribbed and confined within the smallest possible range of ideas and those of the most limited local and temporary interest. While the Persian schools were comparatively better than the Bengali, the Arabic schools were of no use.

Of all, the Persian-Bengali school served best since the majority of the people of the region had Bengali as their vernacular. Since Persian was the language of the court of law, Hindus felt the need for Persian. Generally the Indigenous Educational system can be broadly classified as shown below:



INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

Elementary schools

Schools of Higher Learning

Mactabs  
(Persian  
medium)

Tols  
(Vernacular  
medium)

Pathasalas  
(Vernacular  
medium)

Madrasas  
(Persian  
medium)

Regarding the higher education taking only Hindus and the Muslims into consideration, the Indus had Pathasalas or colleges with Sanskrit as the medium of instruction. This is the main reason why Brahmins who had Sanskrit as their mother tongue were able to dominate educational institutions. In such a situation the Dravidian languages were basically different from Sanskrit. There was of course, a little fusion between the languages with an exception that Tamil which never allowed the fusion of languages.

The Muslims had Madrasas as the school of higher learning and were more organized than that of Hindu schools. Both of the schools were religiously oriented and were organized to preserve and perpetuate the appropriate learning of their faith through the two particular languages mentioned. Gyan C. Sharma puts it:

The main ideal of Brahminical education seems to have been preparation for the future life. Naturally this objective helped to put Brahmin educators more out of touch with the ordinary everyday life of the world and consequently rendered them unfit for moulding the Indian peoples in the paths of progress and general culture.<sup>12</sup>

As Moehlman puts it, "Moslim education brought an emphasis upon the Koran as a basic educational reference."<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>Gyan C. Sharma, Early Brahminic Education (Indiana, U.S.A.: 1926), p. 54.

<sup>13</sup>Arthor Henry Moehlman, Comparative Education (New York: Henry and company, 1951), p. 507.

It seems that both the educational systems were used as a tool to protect the religions and not the people. However the religious authorities were protected by the mask of religion which brought them enough income through mosques and temples.

Analyzing both the Hindu and Muslim higher schools of education, there does not seem to be any link between the two. In order to have higher education, the child would have received elementary education either in Sanskrit or Arabic. In such a situation, the educational growth of a particular group of people should have been stunted. However, the Muslim educational systems were intimately connected and passed almost imperceptibly into each other.

Both the Hindu and the Muslim educational system did not serve the physical needs of the society for they were based on the unchallenged, unquestionable scriptural authority and were taught in languages foreign to the masses who did not have the spirit of free enquiry. O'Malley has written about the systems that, "higher education in India was conducted in languages other than the spoken languages of the people."<sup>14</sup>

The Persian schools had Persian language as the media. Since it was foreign to both the Hindus and the Muslims it threw equal pain on all the pupils. It ultimately avoided the suppression of one group over the other. On the other hand, Hindu education gave exclusive privilege to the Brahmins, the so-called priestly class. The Persian language was not rich enough to serve major educational objectives. People had always felt that

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<sup>14</sup>L. S. S. O'Malley, Modern India and the West (London: Oxford University Press, 1951), p. 184.

Persian was completely a foreign language and were ready enough to take education in Sanskrit rather than in Persian. It is clear from the words of Gopal, "The feeling that Persian was a foreign language persisted and whenever there was option Sanskrit was preferred."<sup>15</sup>

Because of the disabilities inherent in Persian as a foreign language it could not wholly fill the vacuum created by the disappearance of Sanskrit from the official status. In such a situation Persian served as the official language and Sanskrit continued to be the medium of social and cultural intercourse. In the course of time Sanskrit was completely abandoned and Persian became the sole language for the obvious reason that the official language held out opportunities of greater pecuniary gains and social privileges. For about three quarters of a century, after the foundation of British rule in India had been laid, Persian enjoyed an official status along with English in the north. This factor "gave it (persian) a better place among educated people."<sup>16</sup>

Although foreign to Indians, Persian was the court language until 1837. As quoted by Gopal from the Bengali weekly of January 26, 1828, "Persian is now the language of the court all over Bengal. It is now the language of the court. It is not the language (Mother-tongue) of the judges, pleaders, plaintiffs, defendants or witnesses."<sup>17</sup>

In the vernacular (Sanskrit) schools the preceptors taught by rote what they had learned by rote. O'Malley wrote that, "in the Sanskrit schools

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<sup>15</sup> Ram Gopal, Linguistic Affairs of India (New York: Asia Publishing House, 1966), p. 6.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

study by rote has carried on from the time when the vedas were handed down by word of mouth from generation to generation."<sup>18</sup> Though the scarcity of printed matter and writing materials were the reasons for such learning it is also due to the fact that the "understanding" which is essential for learning was missing since the language was alien to the pupils. It was the same condition with regard to the Arabic schools. As the above author wrote, "In the Arabic schools also rote was the rule it is common to meet muslims who can recite large tracts of the Koran without the knowledge of the language in which it was written."<sup>19</sup>

Before the advent of the Muslim education in 1180 the whole educational system was in the hands of the Brahmins. Muhammad of Gohr, who settled in Delhi in 1192 made a great change in the system of ancient Indian education. He replaced temples with mosques and pathsalas with maktabs (primary schools) and madrasas (higher schools) with Persian as the medium. Kutb-Ud-Din, Altamash, Sultana Raziya, Nazirud-Din and Balban encouraged maktabs and madrasas attached to mosques. In the beginning only Arabic was used as the medium of instruction in madrasas. It was during Moghul rule that Persian was introduced. Mudaliar wrote that,

Muslim rulers encouraged the establishment of the madrasas in which the medium of instruction was mainly Arabic. The teaching of Persian seems to have been introduced some time during the Moghul rule.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup>O'Malley, p. 184.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

<sup>20</sup>Lakshimanasamy Mudaliar, Education in India (New York: Asia Publishing House, 1960), p. 21.

Before the British rule actually began in India some of the indigenous schools were established by the English rulers. Thus Warren Hastings established the Calcutta madrassa for the study of Arabic and Persian in 1781 and Jonathan Duncan the Benares Sanskrit college in 1794. Being an European, Warren Hastings founded the Calcutta madrassa not because he felt that he should do something good for the people in the field of education but for utilitarian purposes. As Mudaliar puts it "His (Warren Hasting's) motives may have been partly utilitarian but he helped in 1781 to found the Calcutta madrasa for Islamic studies."<sup>21</sup> Warren Hastings was thoroughly aware of the fact that the major part of the North India was under Muslim rulers and it would have been possible for them to pave the way for the fall of the English rulers if they put their effort together. And of course, the Hindus had little political power. Hastings policies were not only objected to by the Hindus but also by his successor. What Hastings had done for the Muslims, his successor was prepared to do for the Hindus. This is evident by the following words of O'Malley. "We find Lord Cornwallis in 1782 supporting the establishment at the cost of Government of a Sanskrit college in the sacred city of Banaras,"<sup>22</sup> which meant for Hindu studies.

At this period the Sanskrit educational system was not at all welcomed by the majority of the people for it was partial and one sided. Some of the intellectual giants like Ray were against such an educational pattern and thus he said:

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<sup>21</sup>G.T. Garratt, Legacy of India (London: Oxford University Press, 1938), p. 393.

<sup>22</sup>O'Malley, p. 141.

We now find that the Government are establishing a Sanskrit school under Hindu pandits (teachers) to impart such knowledge as is already current in India. The Sanskrit system of education would be best calculated to keep this country in darkness. 23

But this college deteriorated in 10 years since it was unwanted and inefficient. When O'Malley writes about the Banaras college he mentions that, "the Banaras college so far from improving on indigenous institutions of the same kind run at a small fraction of the cost had become by 1804 an object of public ridicule."<sup>24</sup> Of course the madrasas records are not better than that of pathasalas. Its record shows in 1788 grave misconduct, in 1791 disorder, in 1811 and 1815 inefficiency.

If we should say that the sole cause of the destruction of the indigenous education was due to a single person, it was Lord Macaulay who completely neglected the lower class masses of illiterate people. In the Minutes of February 2, 1835, he stated "...all the funds appropriated for the purpose of education would be best employed on English education alone."<sup>25</sup> He further stated in his Minutes of July 31, 1837:

We do not at present aim at giving education directly to the lower class of the people of the country. We aim at raising up an educated class who will hereafter, as we hope be the means of diffusing among their countrymen.<sup>26</sup>

In 1837, Urdu replaced Persian as the court language. Mauli Abdul Haq maintains that "until 1857 Urdu was universally accepted as the most widely spoken common language of the Hindus and Muslims and no one ever

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<sup>23</sup> Gopal, p. 141.

<sup>24</sup> O'Malley, p. 141.

<sup>25</sup> Albert Zellner, Education in India (New York: Bookman Associates, 1951), p. 59.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 60.

protested when in 1837 it was made the court language."<sup>27</sup> He further states "when in 1837 Persian was replaced by Urdu as the court language not a single voice was raised in protest."<sup>28</sup> These statements may be true since Persian (a foreign language) was not a powerful language in 1837. The rulers were Urdu speaking people, and Urdu was spoken by the majority of the population. And besides India was not then free as it is today when people have the right to question. Anyhow this situation was not true when the modern languages began to develop as substitutes for Persian. When Amaranathan Jha writes about this situation he states:

The modern language (like Hindi) began to grow in importance after the decision in 1837 to replace Persian by the Provincial language as the language of the law courts. This was looked upon by the Mohammedans as a serious blow to their prestige.<sup>29</sup>

In 1875, Gordon Young of the civil service was appointed Director of Public Instruction. He and his staff had to fight antagonism against vernacular education. As Zellner quotes, "One of the significant moves he made was to set up model vernacular schools in the backward district. He stressed the training of Gurus. (teachers)"<sup>30</sup> In 1877 there came an important change by putting schools on the vernacular basis. According to Zellner:

Within six years the directors of Public Instruction printed out that the distinction did not hold. Weak English schools dropped into the vernacular class and strong vernacular schools made their pupils eligible for Middle English Scholarships.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> A. A. Ahamad, National Language for India (India: The Allahabad Law Journal Press, 1941), p. 11.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 82.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 186.

<sup>30</sup> Zellner, p. 82.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

With regard to Indigenous schools the Hunter Commission recommended on February 3, 1882, that all indigenous schools, whether higher or lower, be recognized if they served any purpose of secular education. They desired to see a steady and gradual improvement in these schools. The Committee "...stressed the fact that there was little or no recognition of the Pestalozzian principle which requires due and regular exercise of the external senses for the reception of knowledge."<sup>32</sup>

It seems that there were three parallel systems of education existing side by side for almost a hundred years without that interpenetration which is necessary for developing a common look. If at all some Hindus studied Arabic and Persian means that they did it only for economic and political reasons. And so did a Muslim who studied Sanskrit. Of course one who had English education, was screened from the knowledge of tols and maktabs. "The Sanskrit tols and the Arabic maktabs remained separate worlds closed to the men who had studied English."<sup>33</sup>

Many of the indigenous educational systems disintegrated before the advent of the British educational system. In O'Malley's words:

The Indigenous systems continued in a state of feeble animation and one or two public institutions stood to assert the interest of the Government and to reveal the undoubted fact that it had not been exercised to any very useful purpose.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p. 91.

<sup>33</sup> Humayun Kabir, Educational in New India (India: G. Allen and Book Introd., 1953), p. 109.

<sup>34</sup> O'Malley, p. 142.



## CHAPTER THREE

### BEGINNING OF ENGLISH EDUCATION (1614-1857)

About the primary concern of the British, Zeller states, "the British first came to India were traders primarily, and assumed little or no responsibility for the welfare of the people of that country."<sup>35</sup> Perhaps the East India company which appeared in 1600 A.D. for the first time on the commercial stage of India should not be blamed for its reluctance in education for, its main object was commerce and not education. According to Lewis:

the original aim of the East India Company in trade with India was the typical aim of the monopolist Companies of Merchant capital to make a profit by securing a monopoly trade in the goods and products of an overseas company.<sup>36</sup>

During the period of Muslim Education the medium of instruction was purely through a foreign language such as Arabic and Persian and this led to an easy replacement by another foreign language like English for the quick and effective promotion of Western knowledge. English education began early in 1614 when the East India Company recruited Indians for the propagation of the Gospel among their countrymen by imparting an education that would enable them to carry out their work effectively.

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<sup>35</sup>Aubrey Albert Zellner, Education in India (New York: Asia Publishing House, 1951), p. 44.

<sup>36</sup>Martin Deming Lewis, The British in India (Boston: D.C. Heath and Company), p. 42.

Henry Martyn who belonged to Anglican Mission reached Calcutta in 1806. The first Anglican Bishopric of Madras was created in 1835. The American Board of Foreign Missions started sending out missionaries of various denominations as early as 1812. Alexander Duff was the first missionary of the Established Church of Scotland. Doctor John Wilson, a colleague of Duff, founded Wilson college in Bombay. Both Doctor William Miller of the Madras Christian College and Father Francis Bertran of Saint Joseph's College, Trichinopoly, later founded Loyola College in Madras. The Revolt of 1857 brought about a crisis in the fortunes of Indian Christians.

It was the missionaries who paved the way for English education in India and not the East India Company or the British Government. As Zellner puts it:

the idea that it was the duty of the English Government to communicate her intellectual and moral conceptions by the channel of education came from missionaries rather than from statesmen and administrators.<sup>37</sup>

The East India Company did not favor propagating the Bible among Indians because of political reasons. Perhaps the activities of the missionaries were the first step not only in teaching Christianity but also in developing many Indian languages.

A BRIEF SURVEY OF THE WESTERN MISSIONARY EDUCATION  
IN INDIA (BEFORE 1857 A.D.)

Saint Thomas, one of the twelve Apostles of Jesus, who came to India in 57 A.D., is considered to be the first missionary who came to India. Another Thomas landed in Malabar with a group of Christians from Iran about

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<sup>37</sup>Zellner, p. 48.

345 A.D. In the eighth century, King Alfred sent two priests with gifts to the Christians of India in honor of Saint Thomas. In the thirteenth century both Marco Polo and John of Monte Corvino visited South India. Vasco da Gama reached India in 1498 A.D. In 1500 A.D., Franciscan missionaries were sent to India. Goa was created a Bishopric in 1534. Saint Francis Xavier reached Goa in 1542, and spent 10 years in India. Father de Nobili reached India in 1605 and established himself in the ancient town of Madurai. The first book printed in India in an Indian language was brought out in Cochin by the Jesuit Brother John Gonsalves, in 1577. There were three distinct Missions to the court of Akbar from 1580 to 1605, and the Jesuits continued to work in the Moghul empire during the succeeding reigns.

Protestant missionary work began in India in 1705 through Danish Lutheran missionaries. The Baptist Mission was established by William Carey in 1792 at Serampore. Carey mastered Bengali, Sanskrit, Hindi, and Marathi and translated the Bible into these languages. It was from the same Serampore press that the first Bengali newspaper, Samachar Darpan was published in 1818. Nehru has written that, "the desire of the Christian missionaries to translate the Bible into every possible language thus resulted in the development of many Indian languages."<sup>38</sup> Perhaps the richness of the Indian literatures of various languages would not have been brought to light unless the missionaries had entered India with the main object of propagating the Bible in the vernaculars. As Father Jerome D'Souza states, "the contribution of the

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<sup>38</sup>Jawaharlal Nehru, The Discovery of India (New York: The Day Company, 1946), p. 318.

missionaries to the development of the vernacular literatures of India was of exceptional importance."<sup>39</sup>

The propagation of Bible was carried out also in English. The Hindus, who resented the use of the Persian language in the administration of the country, evinced a greater desire for English education, instead of Persian. In 1839, Charles Edward Trevelyan wrote that, "the curiosity of the people is thoroughly roused and the passion for English knowledge has penetrated the most obscure and extended the most remote parts of India."<sup>40</sup> In somewhat exaggerated prose, Kabir states:

The first contact with English about a hundred and fifty years ago dazzled the minds of a section of the Indian people. It swept them off their feet to such an extent that some of them sought to give up their own language and culture.<sup>41</sup>

Until 1765 the missionaries were welcomed but when the East India Company gained political power it began to discourage missionary enterprises. The Company wanted to maintain strict religious neutrality since Christianity was not welcomed by Indians. The relation between Company officials and the missionaries was extremely strained when the government asserted that the Hindus already had as good a system of faith and morals as most people. Company officials asserted that it would be madness to attempt their conversion or to give them any more learning. In 1792, Charles Grant who is referred as the father of modern education in India, fought against this policy and wanted to bring about a great change. He therefore left that the social

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<sup>39</sup>Publication Division, The Gazetteer of India (India: Government of India Press, 1965), p. 491.

<sup>40</sup>Charles Edward Trevelyan, On the Education of the People of India (London: Green and Longmans, 1838), p. 167.

<sup>41</sup>Humayun Kabir, Education in New India (India: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1956), p. 127.

condition could only be improved through English education and conversion to Christianity. Grant believed that the English education would not only regenerate Indian civilization but would also lead the Hindus to embrace Christianity. Grant in his book entitled Observations on the State of Society among the Asiatic Subjects of Great Britain has stated that "Great Britain should effect the regeneration of India by introducing knowledge of the Christian religion, of the English language, and of English literature."<sup>42</sup>

But in 1813, under the influence of Charles Grant and of Wilberforce, Parliament included in the reissuance of the Company's Charter, a clause designed to initiate a regular educational policy. This issue favored indigenous education. According to O'Malley:

It shall be lawful for the Governor-General in Council to direct that a sum of not less than one lakh of rupees (Rs. 7.50 = \$1/-) in each year shall be set apart and applied to the revival and improvement of literature and the encouragement of the learned natives of India and for the introduction and promotion of a knowledge of the sciences among the inhabitants of the British territories in India.<sup>43</sup>

The Committee of Public Instruction in 1813 were personally inclined to encourage Indian rather than English education for the simple reason that they were mostly Indians and the members of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.

According to Siqueira:

...the act of 1813 had ordered the encouragement of the learned natives of India, and the Directors had in 1814 ordered the promotion of Sanskrit studies and the publication of Sanskrit books.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup>L.S.S. O'Malley, Modern India and the West (Great Briton: Oxford University Press, 1941), p. 567.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., p. 142.

<sup>44</sup>T. N. Siqueira, The Education of India - History and Problems (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), p. 33.

The Committee strongly opposed the policy and the pedagogy of the East India Company when the Company tried to impart education through English medium. Siqueira further states that, "The Committee also believed that it was bad policy and bad pedagogy to force Indians to learn the language and literature of a foreign country."<sup>45</sup>

Until 1765 when the Company established its political power the subject of education was not given importance. To consolidate its power in India, to win the confidence of the people, and not to create diversity among Hindus and Muslims, the Company had to establish two different kinds of schools. Among the institutions established to attain these objectives, the Calcutta madarasa for the Muslims and the Benaras Sanskrit college for the Hindus are the most important. As O'Malley states, with the influence of the educational policy of 1813 "the Government for want of anything better to do, were pushing themselves with open eyes along the old blind road and preparing for the establishment of a Sanskrit college in Calcutta."<sup>46</sup> This college was meant for Hindu studies. This new policy naturally favored the missionaries in carrying out their plan of propagating the Bible through vernaculars: "Missionaries were making use of their new freedom, teaching, translating, (and) experimenting."<sup>47</sup> The purpose of the established institutions was to provide a liberal education which might lead to the purification of the Hindu life. English was to be the language of study. As O'Malley views it "now for the first time since Charles Grant proposed it in 1792 we have English

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid., p. 32.

<sup>46</sup> O'Malley, p. 144.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

brought forward as the instrument of reform."<sup>48</sup>

In 1818 a Baptist Mission college was opened at Serampore. A School Book Society and a School Society were found in Calcutta an Oriental college at Agra. Fraser, a member of the Board of Revenue at Delhi, opened and maintained at his own cost a number of schools to teach Persian to the children of the peasantry.

It is not only the Englishmen who were the strongest advocates of English education but also the Indians themselves. For example, Ram Mohan Ray opposed the indigenous educational system especially the Sanskritised type of Education. In Lamb's view, "the Indian reformer Ram Mohan Ray was among the strongest advocates of the English education."<sup>49</sup> He believed that only English education could encourage social reform. Ray, the greatest Indian of the period, insisted upon the importance of English and realized that contact with Western literature and science alone could regenerate Oriental culture, correct its follies, and give it new meaning and direction. Out of enthusiasm, he started an English school in 1816 and maintained it with his own funds. In Ray's view:

The Sanskrit language is so difficult that almost a life time is necessary for its perfect acquisition is well known to have 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.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Beatrice Pitney Lamb, India (New York: Fredrick A. Praeger, 1963), p. 128.

<sup>50</sup> Debafyto Burman, The English Works of Ram Mohan Ray, Part IV, (India: 1910), p. 106.

Sir Thomas Munroe in 1822 proposed that The Government establish in each collectorate two principal schools: one for Hindus and the other for Muslims, based on the vernaculars. But his view was opposed by his successors who preferred only English education rather than vernacular education.

In 1823 Mountstuart Elphinstone who was the Governor of Bombay encouraged the study of English. In O'Malley's view, "Elphinstone was the first of the Governors to encourage the teaching of English."<sup>51</sup> On his retirement, the people of Bombay themselves started a fund ultimately amounting to cover two lakhs of rupees (Rs. 7.50 = \$1/-) as an endowment for three professorships of the English language and the European arts and sciences to be designed the Elphinstone professorships.

An important feature of education between 1823 and 1833 was the increasing popularity of English as a medium of higher education in preference to Arabic or Sanskrit. Hindus felt that education through Arabic was meant for Muslims, and the Muslims thought that Sanskrit education was meant for Hindus. The continuing tension between Hindus and Muslims that created an atmosphere among Hindus that was conducive to English education.

The directors of the East India Company remarked on October 24, 1832 about the Hindu College of Calcutta stating that,

...to an extensive command of the English language the pupils add a complete conversancy with English literature with and modern history with geography and the rudiments of astronomy natural philosophy chemistry and mathematics.<sup>52</sup>

On February 2, 1835, Macaulay produced his famous Minute in which he

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<sup>51</sup> O'Malley, p. 145.

<sup>52</sup> Siqueira, p. 30.



adopted and defended the views of the English party with all weight of his influence and all the power of his pen. Zellner writes that, "perhaps the importance of Lord Macaulay's Minute on education in India has been exaggerated in the history of education as determining the pattern in that country."<sup>53</sup> Of course Macaulay's was not a voice crying in the wilderness that was suddenly heard in the cause of English education. Lord Bentinck who had become Governor General was bent on such a course. On February 2, 1835, Macaulay's Minute on education came out. Promptly on the seventh of the following month Lord Bentinck confirmed the Minute and it became law. However it is ridiculous that the man who did not know the a b c of the Oriental education condemned the whole educational system, advocated a purely western educational system, stopped the grants for Oriental colleges, and further stated that all the funds appropriated for educational purposes would be employed best on English education alone. According to Zellner, "the pity of the matter was that it was penned by an individual who admittedly did not know anything about Oriental culture and was not interested in it."<sup>54</sup>

It seems that Lord Ripon was against the policy of Macaulay and this is made vivid from the speech given by him as quoted by Zellner, "I sympathize with your (Lord Ripon) desire to promote the extension of elementary education among the poor class."<sup>55</sup> These words reveal that Macaulay was strongly inclined to promote only the education of the higher class people through the English medium and not that of the poor mass whom he believed

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<sup>53</sup> Zellner, p. 58.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., p. 59.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., p. 85.

would be enlightened by the other.

Of course, there were many supporters for the Macaulay's Minute who thought that it would really work out. Zellner states that, "Macaulay's dream of giving the same status to the English language in India was as Latin enjoyed in Europe throughout the Middle Ages found many supporters among Indians."<sup>56</sup> When Humayun Kabir writes about the permeation theory (theory based on enlightening the mass by educating a few through English medium) he mentions that:

Since Universities could not function unless students came up from secondary schools, Secondary schools were also established on an increasing scale. They in their turn led to an expansion of primary education.<sup>57</sup>

Thus it seems that the "permeation" theory worked to a certain extent as it was expected. However it is true that the primary and the secondary education never prepared them for a particular vocation but for the Universities. Kabir writes, "Secondary schools concentrated on preparing students for the Universities."<sup>58</sup>

On the other hand when English was introduced as the medium the strong opposition came not only from the vernacularist but also from the missionaries who had a hard time in learning the vernaculars and started teaching the Bible-centered education through vernaculars. As Siqueira puts it:

With the introduction of English...another rival arose...These were championed chiefly by the missionaries who had from the start themselves learnt the spoken languages of the people and taught them in their schools.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>56</sup>Somnath Chib, Language Universities and Nationalism in India (India: The Wesley Press and Publishing, 1936), p. 24.

<sup>57</sup>Kabir, p. 45.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid.

<sup>59</sup>Siqueira, p. 39.

The downward filtration theory was disliked not only by the native vernacularists but also by the British themselves. As Zellner quotes from the Hunter records in Mayo's biography:

If you wait till the bad English which the 400 Babus learn in Calcutta filters down into the 14 millions of Bengal you will be ultimately a Silurian rock instead of a retiring judge. Let the Babus learn English by all means. But let us also try to do something towards teaching the three R's to rural Bengal.<sup>60</sup>

The plan of Macaulay was destructive rather than constructive, revolutionary rather than reforming. It tended to sweep away all that pertained to the past and to start afresh on different lines. The education given has frequently been referred to as a "Godless" one because the government pledged neutrality in religious matters, prevented direct religious instruction in its schools, and ignored character development. McKee felt that, "the foreign nature of the education given tend to denationalize and despiritualize Indian youth."<sup>61</sup> The system was considered by many to be too official, too rigid, and too highly centralized. The whole educational organization has been in many ways as foreign to Indian student as the Western learning it had espoused.

Macaulay's plan emphasized higher education for a few and thus educational preference was given to a limited class of potential leaders rather than to the whole population. The policy of providing a foreign education for a limited group led during the years that followed its inauguration to several undesirable results. It produced a vast gap between educated class

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<sup>60</sup>Zellner, p. 75.

<sup>61</sup>William J. Mc Kee, New Schools for Young India (The University of North Carolina Press, 1930), p. 25.

and the mass by the differences between divergent cultures. As a result many of the educated class were divorced from their homes, their communities, and their racial tradition. According to Kabir:

The increasing preoccupation with English tended to create a gulf between the newly educated classes and the rest of the people. This weakened the strength of social fabric, and showed itself various undesirable stress within the Indian community.<sup>62</sup>

Lord Bentinck supported Macaulay's Minute and strengthened it by his following views: Bentinck said that the great object of the British Government ought to be the promotion of European literature and Science. He further added that all funds appropriated for the purpose of education should be employed on English education alone. And no money should be spent on the printing of Oriental works.

Macaulay's views were endorsed by the Governor-General Lord William Bentinck who issued an order in Council which declared:

...that the great object of the British Government ought to be the promotion of European literature and science among the natives of India and that all the funds appropriated for the purposes of education should be best employed on English education alone.<sup>63</sup>

Perhaps it was only through Lord Bentinck that English education which was a formidable agent of Westernizing influences was initially stabilized in India. In Smith's view "Bentinck...became a major apostle of the West in India."<sup>64</sup> According to Bentinck's issue no stipend was given to Sanskrit college and Muslim madrasas. This caused a bitter resentment among the

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<sup>62</sup> Kabir, p. 125-26.

<sup>63</sup> John Laska, Planning and Educational Development in India (New York: Teachers College Press, 1968), p. 10.

<sup>64</sup> A. Smith, The Oxford History of India (London: Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 650.

students of these organizations. A strong opposition came from the Asiatic Society of Bengal, devoted to researches and studies in Oriental civilization, stating that the company should change its policy completely since such a policy would greatly damage the cause of human civilization.

In spite of its deficiencies, English education achieved a number of noteworthy accomplishments. The introduction of English education eventually paved the way for the breakdown of the evils of the caste system and the tyranny of the higher caste. English education was regarded as the best way of putting an end to the tyranny of the learned caste and bringing modern European knowledge within the reach of many Indians. In his book Vinoba criticizes English education when he states, "Since the advent of the English rule in India people have been divided into two classes."<sup>65</sup> Vinoba, who knows that English divided the people into two classes, neglected to mention the number of classes that India had before the advent of English. He should have said that English reduced the Indian classes to two.

The desire for English education among Hindus began to decline during the years 1835-54. There was only a very slow improvement in the New English education in the country among both orthodox Hindus and Orthodox Muslims due to religious considerations. According to Siqueira "there was inevitably severe opposition from both Orthodox Hindus and Orthodox Muslims who thought their religion was in danger of contamination by foreign languages and culture."<sup>66</sup> But it seems that in the latter period of 19th century the

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<sup>65</sup> Vinoba Bhave, Language Problem (India: Sarvaseve Sanghprakashan, 1965), p. 24.

<sup>66</sup> Siqueira, p. 51.

interest of the people in the indigenous education decreased, and they themselves got into the new system of English education. It is clear from the words of Siqueira. "In 1882 only one in every forty was at such a school (indigenous school) and the old Hindu pathsalas had been abandoned in favor of the new schools."<sup>67</sup>

Because of English education, the Hindus were not able to attach themselves to their religion sincerely. Of course, no man can serve two masters. Macaulay wrote in 1836 "no Hindu who has received an English education ever remains sincerely attached to his religion."<sup>68</sup>

When Lord Auckland succeeded Bentinck as Governor General in 1836, he heeded the formal petition for the restoration of funds by the students of the Government Sanskrit College. Auckland was not worried about the medium of instruction but wanted to experiment with it. As Zellner states, "Auckland did not tamper with the problem of the medium of instruction in the Government schools but he said he was very much interested in the two great experiments."<sup>69</sup> Thus the educational institutions of India became the lab of the untrained technicians of Europe. Auckland recommended English education only for 'Superior Colleges' and retained English as the medium of instruction in the secondary schools. About one fourth of the students in the Oriental colleges were given assistantships.

When Sir Thomas Erskine Perry became the President of Board of Education there was a strong opposition to Auckland's policy, and he supported

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid., p. 65.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., p. 38.

<sup>69</sup> Zellner, p. 63.

only English education. Then arose a strong controversy between Perry and the vernacular party led by Colonel Jervis.

According to Perry's arguments, Indians themselves were interested in studying English. Secondly, English education was definitely superior to education in the vernaculars. Thirdly, the translating books of European knowledge and science into the vernaculars would be extremely difficult. Fourthly, disseminating Western knowledge through the vernaculars would be slow and tedious. Finally he said that in a multilingual country English was destined to serve as the Lingua franca.

There was a very strong controversy between Perry and Colonel Jervis who was an Indian member in the board. When the issue was submitted to Lord Bentinck the policy was changed stating that the Higher Education were to be in English medium and Elementary schools in the vernacular medium.

Lord Hardinge (1844) was one of the great men who showed greater interest in vernacular education than in English education, with an interest for the poor mass. When Siqueira writes about Lord Hardinge he states that, "in 1844 Lord Hardinge started 101 vernacular schools in Bengal alone and got them to teach a fairly high curriculum through the medium of Bengali."<sup>70</sup> Though he was interested in the elementary education through vernaculars, he also gave a strong direction towards English education. He stated in his Resolution that preference would be given to those educated in English schools and thus the sole cause of education became preparation for Government service. "As a result of Hardinge's Resolution the aim of almost the whole

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<sup>70</sup> Siqueira, p. 41.

system of education in India became training for Government service."<sup>71</sup> However he had paid a constant attention towards vernacular education. One of the Government resolutions on education under the viceroyship of Lord Hardinge runs as this: "The continuation schools known as middle or secondary vernacular schools should be improved and multiplied."<sup>72</sup>

In 1854 Wood's Commission came to the stage with a great change. "Wood's Dispatch which came out in 1854 had effects which were far-reaching though not immediate."<sup>73</sup> It stated that the aim of education was to disseminate European knowledge and improve the vernaculars as necessary for the study of Hindu and Muslim law. The Commission further said that, "the medium of education is to be the vernacular languages of India into which the best elementary treatises in English should be translated."<sup>74</sup> However the vernaculars cannot be made the sole medium of education. Hence the dispatch further pointed out that both English and the vernaculars should be used to develop a sound and effective educational system. The above Commission said that, "the existing institutions for the study of classical languages of India are to be maintained and respect is to be paid to the hereditary veneration which they demand."<sup>75</sup> It also inaugurated the Indian University on the model of University of London conducting exams and conferring degrees. It also instituted professorships in Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian and the

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<sup>71</sup> Zellner, p. 65.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., p. 129.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., p. 67.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., p. 70.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.



vernacular languages.

The Commission was not in favor of a pure English instruction and it criticized the whole system of education which can be brought out by its comment on the problem:

Among other disadvantages the use of a foreign language as a medium of instruction for school boys both fetters the discretion of those who prescribe syllabuses and set and correct examination papers and forces undue reliance on textbooks by teachers and pupils alike even to the point of encouraging the latter to memorize whole passages from them.<sup>76</sup>

The Dispatch of 1854 was soon followed by the Mutiny of 1857 causing a vast political change in the administration of the country. As a result of the severe criticism of the Company, the administration was transferred to the British crown.

#### ANGLO-ORIENTAL CONTROVERSIES

In 1765, the Oriental policy, guided by political and religious considerations, emphasized that there should not be any hasty attempt to introduce English. To maintain religious neutrality, missionary activity should not be supported. The safe source would be to follow the footsteps of Hindu and Muslim rulers by encouraging Sanskrit and Arabic. It further stressed that since the ancient traditional education was enough for the practical purposes, that the Company should not disturb political stability. These policies were readily accepted by the Company in 1765. Education reflected Company policy and it remained on traditional lines with Sanskrit and Arabic until the year 1813.

Against the middle road policy of the Government, Macaulay supported

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid., p. 71.

the English party and tried his level best with the power of his tongue and pen to enforce English as the medium of learning. His arguments were that the charter Act of 1813 meant the promotion of European knowledge through the medium of English. The term "Learned man" implied a knowledge of English. Education through Sanskrit and Arabic was unsatisfactory. The vernacular languages were "poor and rude." Lastly the English party believed that, English had a special importance because it was the language of the ruling class and was likely to become "the language of commerce throughout the seas of the East."

In 1839 Lord Auckland tried to effect a compromise between the Oriental and Western parties. He recommended English education - for the Superior Colleges and retained English as the medium of instruction in the secondary schools. One fourth of the students of the oriental colleges were given scholarships. However, the vernaculars did not become the vehicles of education because of lack of encouragement and support from the government. Lord Auckland's significant contribution was to relax Bentinck's resolution in favor of classical learning thereby saving it from complete collapse and extinction.

Charles Grant and William Wilberforce worked together with greater energy in order to disseminate European knowledge through the English medium. The thought that Europeanization could be done only through the missionaries. By their effort the Government relaxed the rules in 1813 and gave a free hand to the missionaries to pursue their activities without the fear of the company's officials. The territories of the company were then divided into three major Presidencies namely Bengal, Bombay and Madras.

LANGUAGE CONTROVERSY IN THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM OF BENGAL

Though the Oriental policy was accepted by the Charter Act of 1813, the company carried out its educational policy in its own way using the downward filtration theory and the theory of engrafting. According to these theories once the influential classes had been educated, learning and culture would seek a downward course and permeate the masses. Thus, European knowledge would be engrafted on that of India.

Because of social, economic, and political prestige attached to the language of the rulers of the land, the public in Bengal was rapidly growing in favor of English education. But eventually, there was a controversy within the Company itself; one group favored the oriental policy and another Western knowledge through the medium of English.

The Presidency of Bengal was located in Calcutta. The Society for the Propagation of Gospel in the Foreign parts was also active in Bengal, and the Serampore College was founded in 1818 with the English medium.

In 1819, both the English and the Indian members of the Calcutta school society started English schools to promote English education. Although the prevailing tendency was to concentrate upon English education only in Calcutta, the Protestant missionaries worked hard to spread it far and wide. In 1830, Alexander Duff, a missionary from Scotland, established both elementary and higher educational institutions. Duff insisted upon English as the medium in higher education. According to Father Jerome D'Souza "Alexander Duff was the foremost pioneer in the remarkable work of Christian

missionaries in the field of higher education."<sup>77</sup> Then John Wilson, a man of profound learning, organized an English school on the model of Duff's institution in Calcutta, which developed into an upper school and then a college.

Having the system inaugurated officially by Macaulay and Lord Bentinck in 1835, the General Committee for Education of Bengal insisted on education through the medium of English hoping that Lord Auckland will not be against it. But it should be noted here as it is in the writings of Zellner, "...the instruction which was going on in the vernacular medium in existent schools was not prohibited by the Committee, (general Committee for Education of Bengal)."<sup>78</sup> At the same time, Thomason outside Bengal achieved considerable success in encouraging the development of indigenous schools. The highest education was provided in the College of Calcutta, under Government sponsorship in 1854. O'Malley writes that, "in this college, students might take advanced courses in English or Oriental learning or professional courses in law, medicine, or civil engineering."<sup>79</sup> Perhaps in the nineteenth century, the Hindu college of Calcutta was the best college in India as far as the Western learning was concerned. According to Garratt, "The Hindu college of Calcutta was the premier seat of Western learning in the nineteenth century."<sup>80</sup> This can be further brought out from the words

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<sup>77</sup> Publications Division, The Gazetteer of India (India: Government of India Press, 1965), p. 493.

<sup>78</sup> Zellner, p. 63.

<sup>79</sup> O'Malley, p. 151.

<sup>80</sup> G. T. Garratt, The Languages of India (Bombay, India: 1853), p. 388.

of Zellner that, "in Bengal from 1855 to 1882 English high schools rose from 47 to 209."<sup>81</sup> Only two colleges under private management were found during that time.

According to O'Malley, the policy in 1843 in Bengal was "pursued of establishing an English or Anglo vernacular school at the head-quarters of each district of developing a few of the more progressive of these to the status of college."<sup>82</sup> Bengal which took the lead in English education not only flourished in this field but also in vernacular education. According to O'Malley, "Vernacular literature flourished and attained its highest development in the province (Bengal) in which English education was most advanced."<sup>83</sup> Probably Bengal is the only State that welcomed and took advantage of English education. As Nehru, the late Prime Minister of India, said:

The great difference between the State of Bengal and that of Northern and Central India in the middle of the century is brought out by the fact that while in Bengal the new intelligentsia had been influenced by English thought and literature.<sup>84</sup>

Since only Bengal produced the first English educated Indians, the rest of the country had to use them. As Nehru put it: "Bengal produced the first groups of English-educated Indians, who spread out to other parts of India under the shadow of the British power."<sup>85</sup> Thus the English-speaking Bengali gained prominence throughout India.

The situation in Bengal was similar to that of Madras where English

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<sup>81</sup>Zellner, p. 91.

<sup>82</sup>O'Malley, p. 151.

<sup>83</sup>Ibid., p. 158.

<sup>84</sup>Jawaharlal Nehru, The Discovery of India (America: The John Day Company, 1946), p. 320.

<sup>85</sup>Ibid., p. 314.

education was mostly taken by the Hindus and not by the Muslims who were the ruling class. Nehru writes that, "the Muslims avoided English education... the...rulers...were afraid that the remnants of the old ruling class might give trouble."<sup>86</sup> This situation promoted the English education of the Hindus of Bengal and eventually there was a monopoly of Hindus in Government services. Thus Nehru writes that, "the Bengali Hindus...acquired almost a monopoly in the beginning in the subordinate Government service."<sup>87</sup>

The Committee appointed by Lord Bentinck recommended, after investigating the Calcutta Native Medical Institution, that a new institution be established along European medical lines. The plan was accepted and implemented in short order. As quoted by Zellner, "in time the native type of medical instruction was gradually discarded, (in Calcutta)."<sup>88</sup>

Though Calcutta University was concerned much about the Western thoughts and ideas, it gave a liberal choice to the students with regard to the medium. Thus as Chib writes:

The Calcutta University has taken the lead by the decision to allow candidates at the 1937 Matriculation examination to answer the papers in all subjects in their respective vernaculars.<sup>89</sup>

Most of the students preferred answering in English rather than in their own vernaculars. However, this was objected to by the Inter-University Conference.

#### LANGUAGE CONTROVERSY IN THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM OF BOMBAY

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, vernacular education was

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<sup>86</sup>Ibid., p. 319.

<sup>87</sup>Ibid.

<sup>88</sup>Zellner, p. 63.

<sup>89</sup>Chib, p. 28.

not given importance in Bombay. The missionary educators lacked the needed funds to do so. The first English elementary school was established by American Board of Missions in 1817. In the following years, a few English schools were set up by the Church Missionary Society, the Bombay Education Society, and the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. With the co-operation of the Government, the Bombay Native Education Society established District English Schools and vernacular secondary school in 1822. In 1823, Mountstuart Elphinstone, the Governor of Bombay started the University of Bombay. He insisted upon using English only classically and not as the sole medium of instruction. Elphinstone believed "if English could be at all diffused among persons who have the least time for reflection, the progress of knowledge by means of it, would be accelerated in a tenfold ratio."<sup>90</sup> Francis Warden, a member of the Governor's Council, violently opposed this view.

Until 1840, Bombay Presidency had only the vernaculars as the medium of instruction though English and Sanskrit were included in the curriculum. But in 1840 when control of the Native Education Society was taken by the Board of Education, it followed the lead of Bengal and adopted English as the medium of instruction.

#### LANGUAGE CONTROVERSY IN THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM OF MADRAS

Christian Swartz, a man with a broad intellectual interest who belonged to the Society for the Propagation of Christian knowledge, established a number of English schools between 1772 and 1787 in Madras presidency. Imparting instruction in English began to be considered by Munro in Madras in the years 1822-26.

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<sup>90</sup>O'Malley, p. 145.

Since the Madras Presidency was mainly divided into four major linguistic groups namely Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam, there was an urgent need to have a common medium of intercourse not only for Europeans but also for Dravidians themselves. This need provided additional support for the cause of English education in Madras. In each region, instruction was given in both the regional language and English.

The people of Madras welcomed Western education through English since they had been frustrated under Muslims with the Persian media for a long time. Since English was the language of the rulers, English education was essential to secure decent employment. Thus, the need for employment compelled the people of Madras to seek a higher type of education. Even today the percentage of literacy among Muslims in Madras State is very low. The cause of Muslim illiteracy goes way back to the hostile attitude which these former rulers of India had towards the English education which displaced Persian.

The progress of English education in the presidency of Madras was smooth and unhindered by linguistic controversies of any kind. The idea of Macaulay was accepted to a certain extent and the infiltration theory came to work out. The Educational Dispatch of 1854 (Woods Commission) created the so called "two track" educational system by which English education was given to the intellectual elite and vernacular education for the ignorant multitude in Madras.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### EDUCATION UNDER BRITISH CROWN

India was given into the hands of the British in 1857. India then was not an Empire by herself, but a part of the British Empire as Britain once was a part of the Roman Empire. For the first time in history, India was reduced to the position of a dependency. Eventually Persian had to be replaced by English as a ruling language.

When the Persian language was abandoned, the Muslims were greatly disturbed. They thought that the introduction of English would threaten their language and eventually their religion. According to Zellner: "They became suspicious of the British Government and looked askance to Western education as likely to lead to infidelity to Islam."<sup>91</sup> The attitude of the majority of the Muslims towards English education from the beginning has been already clearly stated in the previous chapters.

In the beginning, the British Government was reluctant to teach English because of political reasons. The so-called Brahman scholars also rejected English as a language of the foreigner. The Brahmans thought that they would be under an obligation to teach Sanskrit, the sacred language, which was learnt only by them, if they happened to learn English. As Nehru puts it, "No Brahman would agree to teach the sacred language to a foreigner

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<sup>91</sup> Aubrey, Albert Zellner, Education in India (New York: Bookman Associates, 1951), p. 37.

and an intruder even though handsome rewards were offered."<sup>92</sup> Thus Sir William Jones, a European was unable to learn Sanskrit until a non-Brahman Vaidya (medical practitioner) agreed to teach "on his own peculiar and stringent conditions."<sup>93</sup>

On the other hand, there was a growing enthusiasm in learning English among groups other than the Muslims and Brahmans, in the middle of the nineteenth century, for two major reasons. As Spear puts it:

There was the practical desire to master English because its knowledge gave good prospects of worldly success. And there was the intellectual desire to master English as the key to the new knowledge of the West.<sup>94</sup>

This enthusiasm became tenfold when English took the place of Persian in the higher law courts in 1957. Again, in the words of Spear:

The principle public professions of the law and Government studies demanded western studies and the further linking of Government service with the University degrees sent very ambitious youth to the new colleges for regular course of study.<sup>95</sup>

English education was much stressed by the rulers themselves. The views of Macaulay were either shared or compelled to be shared by later British administrators. Griffiths wrote:

Ellenborough, an erratic and aggressive Viceroy, so distrusted by the Court of Directors that they recalled him before his time, spoke frankly in 1853 of his belief that the English must continue to rule India.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Jawarhal Nehru, The Discovery of India (New York: The John Day Company, 1946), p. 347.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> Percival Spear, India Pakistan and the West, 4th ed., (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), pp. 105-5.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., p. 124.

<sup>96</sup> Sir Percival Griffiths, The British Impact on India (London: Macdonald and Co., 1952), p. 247.

Lord Ellenborough's dispatch of 1858 stressed the downward filtration theory of Macaulay. However this theory was a great failure for it created only a vast gulf between the elite group and the mass. In a way, English education enslaved Indians in that period.

Although Lord Stanley's dispatch of 1859 supported the downward filtration theory, it also gave emphasis to the elementary education through vernaculars. As a means of provision for elementary education, it suggested special tax on land. The most important object of secondary education was to impart a knowledge of the English language with a view to prepare candidates for the Universities.

During the 1860s, both English and Urdu were alternatively used in any institution. But the language of the High Court was only English. In 1861, the Zamindars and some other inhabitants of Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa submitted a memorial to the Viceroy requesting that the proceedings of the newly created High Court should be conducted in Urdu. According to Ahamad: "Even the British rulers used to deliver their speeches on various public occasions in Urdu."<sup>97</sup>

In 1867 Hindi was made the alternative court language. This stimulated the Hindi agitation in Bihar in the same year. It had its second triumph in 1900 in Utter Pradesh where through the patronage of Sir Anthony Macdonald, Hindi was made the alternative court language.

In the year 1876, the Government decided to discontinue the Benaras college (Sanskrit college). After struggling for thirty futile years, it was determined that the vernacular were not rich enough to promote science educa-

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<sup>97</sup>Z.A. Ahamad, National Language for India (India: The Allahabad Law Journal Press, 1941), p. 239.

tion. The report of 1876 said that the results of a prolonged trial of nearly thirty years were most disappointing. The object of the department, viz., the production of a body of vernacular literature fitted to communicate in a familiar form the results of European research to the people of the country, was never attained.

In 1878 Lord Lytton the Viceroy passed the Vernacular Press Act which aimed at pressing down the expression of Indian sentiment through vernaculars and it was extremely distasteful to the educated Indian. Zellner puts it: "Even though it (the Vernacular Press Act) was not invoked in practice, feeling against the Act was high."<sup>98</sup> Lord Ripon revoked the Odious Vernacular Press Act shortly after he arrived in India.

According to the Raleigh Commission of 1902, a European language examination was compulsory in the Matriculation, Intermediate and Bachelor of Arts level examinations. Madras University, representing South India, was an exception in that it included an Indian language as an alternative. From the beginning, Madras University was very strong in its continued policy of emphasizing vernacular education. As a consequence of these educational arrangements, a new middle class developed as the carrier of the Western culture. Highly westernized graduates of English universities and colleges were convinced of the utter futility of any attempt at imparting higher education through the medium of the vernaculars. The theory of downward filtration of education, the domination of the Universities, the encouragement of English by the Government, and the emergence of a new middle class favorably disposed to Western education were the major causes which were responsible for the steady decay of vernacular languages in the Indian educational system.

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<sup>98</sup>Zellner, p. 83.

The situation was deeply felt by some Indians interested in vernacular education. Thus the Hindi Sahitya Sammelam, an organization to advance the cause of Hindi, was founded in 1910. Gandhi also took active part in the Hindi-Campaign throughout India in the same year.

According to the educational policy of Lord Curzon (1913), the chief defect of education through a foreign medium was a tendency towards cramming and unintelligent learning. However, there was an undeniable fact that:

...it encouraged 'cram' at the cost of real merit or none for originality it invited third class men from England to fill the highest positions in the educational service of the country and place the best native intellect and talent under them to starve and not for want of opportunities.<sup>99</sup>

Lord Curzon said that unless a good vernacular training was given in the schools, the efforts of the University would fail. The vernacular was not given importance in the Universities. However, it became the compulsory subject of study for the intermediate examination and an optional subject for the Bachelor's examination in Madras University. The University of Calcutta followed. Though Lord Curzon's policy appealed to favor Indian Education, the underlying result was different. According to Rai:

Lord Curzon's policy was the tightening of Government control, the strangling of all independence in matters educational, and the eventual weakening of all national movement and national sentiment.<sup>100</sup>

Rai continued that: "The fact that he (Lord Curzon) admitted no Indian to the meeting of the Secret Educational Conference held at Simla when he formulated the Government policy strengthened that idea."<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>99</sup>Lajpat Rai, Young India (New York: Noble Offset Printers, Inc., 1968), p. 156.

<sup>100</sup>Ibid., pp. 157-58.

<sup>101</sup>Ibid., p. 158.

British policy. Gandhi added that it (English) had put a severe strain upon the Indian student nervous energy and had made him an imitator. This statement was made by Gandhi with the intention of displacing English by Hindi. If English with only twenty-six letters of the alphabet, less grammar (comparatively), and known at least to the educated people could have such effects on students, Hindi (the National language of India) with a very complicated design and grammar rules no doubt would leave the whole India in a greater turmoil.

According to Chib: "The National Congress Movement after 1920 wanted to replace English by the vernaculars in schools and colleges."<sup>103</sup> As an opposition to this, the Report of the Punjab University Inquiry Committee in (1932-33) said that "in institutions supported by the State English and no Sanskrit or Arabic should be medium of instruction."<sup>104</sup> The Indian Universities Commission in 1902, the Calcutta University Commission in 1917, the Punjab University Enquiry Committee in 1932-33, and scores of departmental reports have pointed out the inadequacy of textbooks in the vernaculars during these periods. Hence the report of the Punjab University Enquiry Committee had to be accepted at least in the State aided institutions. Appadurai mentions that, "the congress adopted Hindi as the National language in 1922".<sup>105</sup> This was done only as a protest against English and not for Hindi in the contest of the situation in 1922.

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<sup>103</sup> Somnath Chib, Language Universities and Nationalism in India (India: The Wesley Press and Publishing, 1936), p. 26.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> K. Appadurai, India's Language Problem (India: Tamil India Publication, 1927), p. 40.

Until the Kanpur session of 1925, English was dominant and Official language of the Congress sessions. But in 1925, the Congress amended Article 33 of its own constitution to read:

"The proceedings of the congress shall be conducted as far as possible in Hindustani. The English language or any provincial language may be used if the speaker is unable to speak Hindustani or whenever necessary."<sup>106</sup>

"The proceedings of the Provincial congress committee shall ordinarily be conducted in the language of the Province concerned. Hindustani may also be used."<sup>107</sup> This, therefore, was the first time in Modern Indian history when English was repudiated. In its place at the provincial level, the language of the province was substituted. At the national level, Hindustani was to be used. Here Hindustani was stressed for the reason that India wanted to be free from the British rule. This did not imply a hatred of English but was part of the freedom struggle. As Kumaramangalam puts it, "It was that the struggle for the adoption of Mother-tongue as the official language became a constituent part of the struggle for freedom."<sup>108</sup> In 1931 the Congress Government strongly supported Hindi in the name of Hindustani. As Ahamad puts it:

The Congress Government following the congress resolution of 1931 apparently supported Hindustani but really furthered the cause of Hindi in the guise of Hindustani.<sup>109</sup>

In April 1936 the first session of the Bharatya Sahitya Parishad was

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<sup>106</sup> Mohan Kumaramangalam, Indian language crisis (Madras: New Century Book House, 1965), p. 11.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., p. 16.

<sup>109</sup> Ahamad, p. 214.

held at Nagpur under the Presidentship of Mahatma Gandhi who declared "Hindi Athwa Hindustani" as the language of the Parishad and by implication as the future language of the country. But Hindi cannot become the language of books. In opposing Hindi as the language of books presiding at the Hindi Sahitya Sammelam, in April 1936, Rajendra Prasad said, "the Hindi which is now a days used in books in the mother-tongue of very few people."<sup>110</sup>

It goes without saying that in order to make education fully fruitful it can be done only through the medium of the vernacular of the child and certainly by no other language. This was brought out by the Government report of 1937-38 in Bengal:

It is reported moreover that the changes in the medium of instruction have brought about a change in the atmosphere of the class. The interest in a lesson is at once noticeable, answers to the question are more assured and interrogation by the boys are intelligent.<sup>111</sup>

In October 1938, the All India Muslim League passed a resolution in favor of Urdu at its Lucknow Session. This resolution was never accepted by the non-Muslim majority.

India is a free country and every one has freedom to discuss language matters. But Dharendra Varma in 1940 said:

What I would like to emphasize is that the problems connected with Hindi language and script should be examined by the Hindi people themselves and that too from the point of view of their own advantages and disadvantages. The opinion of foreigners-specially of such from our own midst who are alien culturally-should be taken with great caution.<sup>112</sup>

Alien is a dirty word which should have been taken from the lexicon long long ago when the world itself is striving for international unity. The view of

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<sup>110</sup> Ibid., p. 245.

<sup>111</sup> Zellner, p. 216.

<sup>112</sup> Z. A. Ahamad, p. 276.



Varma reflects the narrow mindedness of the external forces that misguided him.

In 1944 the Sargent Report came against the downward filtration theory. The Report felt that the primary requisite of any system of public education for a democracy was that it should provide for all its members and not for a few only. At the minimum, it should provide at least such training as may be necessary to make its citizens reasonably good. According to the Sargent report:

The medium of instruction in the basic school as in the high school will be the pupils mother-tongue but for obvious practical reasons while the junior basic school is wholly vernacular, the senior basic may be two kinds - vernacular and anglo-vernacular.<sup>113</sup>

The Sargent Report did not talk about the medium of instruction in the University level since popular opinion was divided. But as Siqueira wrote, "Sir John Sargent whose name is popularly associated with this scheme was not its sole author."<sup>114</sup> It should be noted here that the Sargent plan was approved by the Government of India after independence and most of its suggestions relating to the language of instruction were put into practice.

There was a strong Educational movement in India during these periods in order to replace English by the modern Indian languages. The movement is briefly explained in the following passages.

#### GURUKUL UNIVERSITY OF ARYA SAMAJ (1902)

Arya Samaj in North India was founded by Dayanand Saraswati in 1875.

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<sup>113</sup>Siqueira, p. 232.

<sup>114</sup>Ibid., p. 227.

In O'Malley's point of view: "...it was frankly and avowedly antagonistic to Christianity."<sup>115</sup> O'Malley found:

its...Gurukula at Hardwar, where the study of Hindu literature and traditions and the conduct of a school life on ascetic Hindu lines are influenced by Western educational methods, and its girls' schools have given social reform a religious note sufficiently free from foreign influence to satisfy racial pride.<sup>116</sup>

The Gurukul University of the Arya Samaj, established in 1902, tried to weld together the educated and the uneducated class by encouraging the study of Sanskrit and the vernaculars and to impart moral and spiritual instruction in the spirit of the Vedic tradition. As Saint Thomas Aquinas said, the greatest treason is to do the right thing for the wrong reason. Certainly the educational institutions with this principle are the sole cause for the backwardness of the Indian Universities. It is the Vedic tradition that divided the Indians into different classes. How can the education based on such a tradition "weld" the masses together? Besides this tradition did not consider the status of women.

#### VISVABHARATHI

Tagore founded Visvabharathi in which he introduced education through the medium of vernacular (Bengali) as a reaction against English education.

Shrimalai writes:

The poet (Tagore) after his own personal experience as a teacher came to the conclusion that a foreign language could not become a true medium of education.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>115</sup>O'Malley, p. 315.

<sup>116</sup>Ibid.

<sup>117</sup>K. L. Shrimalai, Education in Changing India (New York: Asia Publishing House, 1965), p. 187.

It was his (Tagore's) firm belief that unless the mother-tongue or the regional language become the medium of education and culture the creative urges and thoughts of our people could not find full and free expression.<sup>118</sup>

Tagore thought that as long as English continued as the medium of instruction that it would be of very little interest to write books in regional languages. But it should not be forgotten that if the regional languages become the medium of instruction there will be no interchangeability of students and teachers from one University to another and this will also make the education narrow and parochial. In Chib's view: "What is distinctive and original about Visvabharati is...where Indian culture would be taught, Indian manners and customs respected..."<sup>119</sup> When its central idea was purely "Indian" it could not have much chance to think about any language other than "Indian" Bengali in particular.

#### OSMANIA UNIVERSITY (1919)

Osmania University was established by the Nizam of Hyderabad in 1919 with the fundamental principle that Urdu should form the medium of higher education in the working of the university. At the same time a knowledge of English as a language should be compulsory for all students. According to Chib the "Nizam of Hyderabad established Osmania University in his state with the avowed object of imparting instruction in Urdu instead of English."<sup>120</sup> Chib continued that "In less than fifteen years they are able to carry on teaching in all arts and science subjects in Urdu."<sup>121</sup> The above statement of

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<sup>118</sup>Ibid.

<sup>119</sup>Siqueira, p. 209.

<sup>120</sup>Chib, p. 32.

<sup>121</sup>Ibid.

Chib is in contrary with that of the association for the Advancement of the National language of India with regard to the mentioned University. The Association said "we cannot think of translating all of them at any rate within half a century and at a cost and effort which would be more or less thrown away."<sup>122</sup> The Radhakrishnan Commission was not at all impressed by the Bureau of Translation which was spoiling the original works. In that period as Siqueira writes, "...the latter (Osmania University) is the only University in India to use Urdu as the medium of higher education."<sup>123</sup> This University after adopted Urdu as the medium of instruction and spent hundreds of thousands of rupees in translation, ultimately switched over to English medium.

#### UNIVERSITY OF ALIGARH

Generally, Muslims were antagonistic to the English which took their positions as the ruling group. However, Sir Syed Ahamad Khan, a Muslim, felt the need for English education as a means of competing with the Hindus. He established a new college on the model of a English University which was eventually to become the University of Aligarh. He felt that education in Urdu would not cultivate intelligence, lucidity of ideas, and force of expression.

#### THE JAMIA MILLIYA ISLAMIA

The Jamia Milliya Ismalia which is otherwise called as the National

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<sup>122</sup> Association for the Advancement of the National Languages of India, Report of the All India Language Conference (Calcutta: Writers House, 1958), p. 4.

<sup>123</sup> Siqueira, p. 92.

Muslim University was founded by Muhammad Ali at Aligarh in 1920 as an expression of the desire of the Muslims to make their education entirely national in character and free from alien influences. It is for sure that this people forgot that it is only that English education that led Indians to be critical in their walks of life. According to Siqueira, "It was contact with the British and the study of English that led Indians to be critical of many of their customs manners and ideas."<sup>124</sup> Jamia was also started as a rival to the Aligarh University of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. Though Jamia was against the British schools, English was a compulsory subject in it. However, the medium of instruction was only Urdu.

#### BASIC EDUCATION

Gandhi was strongly opposed to English Education. It was not that Gandhi hated English but rather that he loved India. He wrote:

It is worth nothing that by receiving English education we have enslaved the nation. Hypocrisy, tyranny, etc., have increased; English knowing Indians have not hesitated to cheat and strike terror into the people. Now, if we are doing anything for the people at all we are paying only a portion of the debt due to them.<sup>125</sup>

He wrote again: "I think that we have to improve all our languages."<sup>126</sup>

Every cultured Indian will know in addition to his own provincial language if a Hindu, Sanskrit; if a Mohamedan, Arabic; if a Parsee, Persian and all, Hindi.<sup>127</sup>

Gandhi agreed: "A Universal language for India should be Hindi with the

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<sup>124</sup>Publications Division, The Gazetteer of India (India: Government of India Press, 1965), p. 573.

<sup>125</sup>Mahatma Gandhi, Sermon on the Sea (Chicago: Universal Publishing Company, 1924), p. 105.

<sup>126</sup>Ibid., p. 106.

<sup>127</sup>Ibid.

with the option of writing it in Persian or Nagri."<sup>128</sup>

Formulated by Gandhiji, Basic Education is based on the Wardha Scheme which was first sketched in 1937 by M. K. Gandhi in the Harijan published at Wardha. He said that the real education is impossible through foreign medium. The scheme of Gandhi was analyzed and a report was made by Doctor Zakir Hussain's committee which recommended the mother-tongue as the medium of instruction at the elementary and secondary stages. It meant to give only a minimum education consisting of practical literacy and a knowledge of some useful handicraft.

In the time-table drawn up by the Zakir Hussain Committee 3 1/2 hours out of 5 1/2 are to be given to the handicraft the rest being divided between civics, music, arithmetic, reading and writing the mother tongue, elementary science and drill.<sup>129</sup>

However, it seems that there is no theoretical originality in this scheme for education through manual activity was already well known since Pestalozzi.

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<sup>128</sup>Ibid.

<sup>129</sup>Siqueira, p. 219.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### EDUCATION AFTER INDEPENDENCE

When the British ruled in India, the administrative units of provinces or Presidencies were either the accidents of history or results of political expediencies. The respective languages of the units played no part in their formation. The three Presidencies of Bengal, Madras, Bombay had under their respective control multi-lingual regions.

India gained her independence on August 15, 1947. As it is shown in the previous chapter, during the pre-independence period, there were a number of educational movements in India with a avowed aim of replacing English by the modern languages. Immediately after Independence, strong steps were taken to make the vernaculars the chief medium of instruction. Eventually, people of different regions started claiming that their own regional language was a proper substitute for English. The major reason for the rapidity in seeking to replace English was that Indian languages had been greatly neglected under the British crown. In the maneuvering to select a right language to replace English, the spirit of nationalism emerged among various linguistic groups. Eventually, this lead to the formation of linguistic states. On 27th November 1947, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru announced his Government's acceptance of the principal of linguistic provinces. Thus the principle of dividing provinces according to their major languages claimed superiority over provincial languages.

After the attainment of independence, there was a natural desire to replace English with an Indian language. While the desire was almost universal, there was no unanimity about the language which would be substituted for English. Some people wanted to replace English because of the simple reason that it was a foreign language. They said it was laborious to learn English. Strictly speaking none of the languages of India are indigenous, other than a few Dravidian languages. In Ahamad's view: "The fact that any language in India is a foreign language to many and must be laboriously learnt."<sup>130</sup>

According to the report of the All India Conference: "The mere fact that it is not an indigenous language is not enough to displace it. Mere sentiment is perhaps the weakest argument for this attempt."<sup>131</sup> The only argument that was persistently used was that English was a foreign language. Again the writer would like to emphasize that the word "foreign" is an improper word that should be taken out of the contaminated hearts of politicians and the academicians who are against English. English had been in India for more than two hundred years and had become the part and parcel of each Indian's life. In such a case, how long would it take to lose its name as "foreign"? How can a language which is spoken and understood by a few million people all over the country, which is used as the medium for the most widely read newspapers, which is the almost exclusive vehicle for all higher work in all branches of knowledge in India, which is the language of business and the

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<sup>130</sup> Z. A. Ahamad, National Language for India (India: The Allahabad Law Journal Press, 1941), p. 282.

<sup>131</sup> Association for the Advancement of the National Languages of India, Report of the All India Language Conference (Calcutta: Writers House, 1958), p. 2.



language of communication between educated people in the whole country be called a "foreign language?" Hence this reason has to be totally ignored.

When arguing against English, Vinoba said:

Were we to attempt to acquire the knowledge of Japan, China, and Russia through English we shall be handicapped by this veil on our eyes and so would not be able to see things in their proper perspective.<sup>132</sup>

Though it is a fact, India has already started its education on the Western line through English. In order to acquire the knowledge of the mentioned eastern countries, only the available translated materials in English have to be used. Vinoba again put a baseless argument saying:

It is an illusion to think that we can maintain international relations only through English. If you go to China and speak there in English you will create a scene! Again speak in English in Russia and see the fun.<sup>133</sup>

In order to find the validity of this statement Vinoba himself has to go to China and Russia and try to create and see, the scene and the fun. His statement is absurd and it does not need any proof that some of the leaders of China and Russia are sometimes better than an English man himself in their ability to speak English. However it is enough if we could communicate with simple English.

It is a fact that due to the attention paid to English education during the past years, the study of the mother-tongue was neglected and its growth retarded. As Kabir wrote, The first effect due to English education was "the neglect of the study of the mother tongue."<sup>134</sup> It was felt that the burden of English hindered the free development of the mind. Again in Kabir's view,

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<sup>132</sup>Vinoba Bhave, Language Problem (India: Tamil India Publications, 1907), p. 20.

<sup>133</sup>Ibid., p. 22.

<sup>134</sup>Humayun Kabir, Education in New India (India: G. Allen and Unwin, 1957), p. 125.

"Another undesirable effect...the study of English was the restriction of opportunity to those who had a high linguistic ability."<sup>135</sup> The greater diversion of interest from the east to the west gave only a partial picture of the world. As Kabir puts it, "Indians have tended to look at the world through English spectacles."<sup>136</sup> By this statement Kabir means that the acquisition of knowledge was only second hand. Some argue that:

It is likely to continue to create a class of educated men out of sympathy with and isolated from the interests and psychological make up of the common man in the street.<sup>137</sup>

The educated class will be created only by the uneducated class. And it is not created by the medium of instruction. However it is impossible (practically) for any country to educate every one, and thereby close the existing gap between the elite and the mass.

The University Education Commission of 1948 too, felt that English was an improper medium. With Doctor S. Radhakrishnan as Chairman, this Commission was appointed by the Government of India on November 4, 1948 to report on Indian education. The Report said that it was educationally unsound to make a foreign tongue the means of acquiring knowledge. While advocating the use of the regional language as a medium, the Report did not define what was the regional language of Madras, Nagpur, or any other region. It did not answer the all important question, whether a University teaching and examining everything in a regional language would be a University in the true sense.

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<sup>135</sup> Ibid., p. 126.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

<sup>137</sup> Appadurai, India's Language Problem (India: Tamil India Publication, 1907), p. 29.

It did not answer whether specialists from another region will no longer be wanted. Eventually the Commission created only parochialism in education.

According to the extracts from the observations of the University Education Commission (1948-49) on general education made by Mathai:

...Science cannot be at its best without the critical study of language. We think largely with the use of words which are symbols for ideas. Unless we learn to use and to organize words clearly and effectively our thinking will lack precision and accuracy. Effective use of language is a powerful help to good scientific thinking and especially to communication in science as well as a necessary in the Humanities. <sup>138</sup>

From the above statements it is clear that for the study of sciences and Humanities an effective language is necessary. This language could be English rather than the regional languages. The above view has been further discussed in the last chapter. When it was felt that no single indigenous language could replace English, the emphasis was placed on the regional languages. Again, it was likely to create problems for minority groups speaking languages other than regional languages. Thus as quoted by the Secondary Education Commission (1952-53), the Central Advisory Board of Education considered in 1949 the case of pupils belonging to certain minority groups whose mother-tongue was different from the regional language and passed the following resolution:

That the medium of instruction in the Junior Basic stage must be the mother-tongue of the child and that where the mother-tongue was different from the Regional or State language, arrangement must be made for instruction in the mother-tongue by appointing at least one teacher to teach all the classes, provided there are at least 40 such pupils in a school. The Regional or State language where it is different from the mother-tongue should be introduced not earlier than Class III, not later than end of the Junior Basic stage. In order to facilitate the switch over to the Regional language as medium of instruction in the secondary stage,

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<sup>138</sup> University Grants Commission, Report on General Education (New Delhi: 1961), p. 33.

children should be given the option of answering questions in their mother-tongue for the first two years after the junior basic stage.

If, however, the number of pupils speaking a language other than the Regional or State language is sufficient to justify a separate school in any area, the medium of instruction in such a school may be the language of the pupils. Such arrangements would, in particular, be necessary in Metropolitan cities or places where large population speaking different languages live or areas with a floating population of different languages. Suitable provision should be made by the provincial authorities for the recognition of such schools imparting education through a medium other than the Regional or State language.<sup>139</sup>

The Secondary Education Commission appointed by the Government of India in terms of their Resolution No. F. 9-5/52-B-1 dated 23rd September 1952 was inaugurated by the Minister of Education Maulana Abul Kalam Azad on the 6th October 1952 in New Delhi. When the Commission pointed out the defects of the then existing educational system it said that:

...until comparatively recently English was both the medium of instruction and a compulsory subject of study. Students who did not possess special linguistic ability were therefore greatly handicapped in their studies. If a student did not fare well in English he could neither pass the School Final Examination nor find any post in Government service. The other subjects which were psychologically and socially important or congenial were not given greater attention.<sup>140</sup>

The Commission further said:

In view of the development of regional languages in the different parts of the country and the languages spoken in such areas it may not be practicable or desirable to attempt to lay down a uniform policy for the whole country.<sup>141</sup>

The Commission classified the languages into five different groups: (1) The Mother tongue; (2) the Regional language when it was not the mother tongue; (3) the official language of the center more commonly called the Federal

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<sup>139</sup> Ministry of Education, Report of the Secondary Education Commission (October 1952-June 1953) (Madras: The Jupiter Press Ltd.,) p. 62.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid., p. 21.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid., p. 59.

language; (4) the classical languages, Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian, Latin, etc., and (5) English, which was recognized as an international language. It should be noted here that in those areas where the regional language was the mother-tongue and the language of the Union was the same, the number of languages to be taken into consideration were limited to three. As quoted by the Commission:

The constitution lays down that the official language of the Union shall be Hindi and that for a period of 15 years from the commencement of the Constitution English language shall continue to be used for all the official purposes of the Union, for which it was being used immediately before such commencement.<sup>142</sup>

From a careful study of the above provisions in the Constitution it may be inferred that two objectives were kept in view:

1. that Hindi will eventually be used by the Union Government in all official correspondence with the States and for communication between one State and another or between a State and the Union.
2. Hindi should be developed so that it may serve as a medium of expression for all the elements of the composite culture of India.<sup>143</sup>

Viewing the then existent problem of language in education, the Commission recommended:

1. The mother-tongue or the regional language should generally be the medium of instruction throughout the secondary school stage subject to the provision that for linguistic minorities special facilities should be made available on the lines suggested by the Central Advisory Board of Education.
2. During the Middle School stage every child should be taught at least two languages. English and Hindi should be introduced at the end of the Junior Basic stage subject to the principle that not two languages should be introduced in the same year.<sup>144</sup>

According to the first recommendation of the Commission the child had started

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<sup>142</sup> Ibid., p. 60.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid., p. 73.

learning either through the regional language or through its own mother-tongue. This system affected the child when it tried to get into the Higher education where two different mediums were not easily available. Uniformity of education not even in the regional level was thought of. According to the second recommendation the child had to learn English and Hindi during its junior basic stage. This recommendation decreased the burden of the Hindi speaking child who was already fluent in Hindi.

The Education Commission of 1952 made a greater emphasis on the regional languages as the medium of instruction in the University level. Regarding the medium of instruction in the University level the Commission said:

As a part of the development of education in the country we have to move energetically in the direction of adopting the regional languages as media of education at the University stage that careful preparation should be made for the purpose that both the manner and the time of transition would have to be left for decision to the University system.<sup>145</sup>

The above emphasis of the Commission did not favor the child started learning through mother-tongue which may be different from regional language. When talking about the place of Hindi, the above Secondary education Commission of 1952 said:

It is expected to become the lingua franca of the country. It is therefore stressed that Hindi should be made a compulsory subject of study in the school course as otherwise those who do not study Hindi may be handicapped at a later stage if they wish either to enter service or to communicate more freely with those parts of India where the language is commonly used.<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>145</sup> Government of India, Ministry of Education, Report of the Education Commission 1964-66 (India: 1966), p. 58.

<sup>146</sup> Ministry of Education, Report of the Secondary Education Commission (October 1952 - June 1953) Madras: The Jupiter Press), p. 63.

When dealing with the attitude of the students towards Hindi the above Commission said:

It was also brought to our notice that in certain areas, the introduction of the study of Hindi as a compulsory subject had provoked opposition and steps had to be taken to modify the rules framed thereunder. When however, it was made optional, study of Hindi was taken by a large number of students.<sup>147</sup>

From the above statement it is clear that freedom of choice is quite important in education. When writing about the freedom in education Le Page mentions: "Improving the National language without freedom of choice in the schools would lead to serious inter racial strife."<sup>148</sup> Since the national language (Hindi) is always racially connected it is sure to produce tension among different races of the country.

A Conference of Professors of English of Indian Universities convened by the Government in New Delhi on the 23rd January 1953 recommended "that English should continue to occupy an important place in the curriculum of secondary schools."<sup>149</sup>

The Official Language Commission of 1956 submitted its report to the President on 31st July 1956, which was laid on the table of parliament on August 12, 1957. A three language formula was submitted by the Commission and according to the formula all the school children are supposed to take three languages (including Hindi) in the non-Hindi speaking regions. Children belonging to Hindi speaking regions were to take any Indian language besides Hindi and English. This formula:

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<sup>147</sup> Ibid., p. 61.

<sup>148</sup> Le Page, The National Language Question (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 76.

<sup>149</sup> Ministry of Education, Report of the Secondary Education Commission 1952-53 (Madras: The Jupiter Press, Ltd.), p. 68.

established equality with regard to the study of languages between the Hindi and the non-Hindi areas by recommending that as against the third language Hindi which pupils in the non-Hindi areas have to learn another Indian language (besides Hindi and English) should be studied by pupils in the Hindi areas.<sup>150</sup>

According to the Report of the Education Commission of 1964-66, "...the three language formula has led to several difficulties and it has not been very successful."<sup>151</sup> While the Commission stressed this formula on non-Hindi regions, the same emphasis was not given in the Hindi speaking areas. As Kumaramangalam put it:

In the non-Hindi speaking areas the regional language shall become the official language of the State, the language of the courts, and the medium of instruction in all educational institutions. The second language shall be English and the next shall be Hindi. For instance in Tamilnad, Tamil, English and Hindi shall be the three languages. In the Hindi speaking areas Hindi, English and any other Indian language shall be the three languages. On this basis the utilisation of three languages shall contribute to the unity of India, shall help replace English inside each State by the regional language in the country.<sup>152</sup>

From the above statements of the Commission it is clear that the third language of the child belonging to a non-Hindi speaking region will compulsorily be Hindi. But a Hindi-speaking child will have the third language according to its own freedom of choice.

Again the Commission felt that a compulsory requirement, to learn a non-Hindi regional language, was improper. It seems the national integration of the country was not felt by the Commission. It did not compel the Hindi regions to have another Indian language as it was in the case of non-Hindi

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<sup>150</sup> Ministry of Education, Report of the Education Commission 1964-66 (India: 1966), p. 191.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

<sup>152</sup> Mohan Kumaramangalam, India's Language Crisis (Madras: New Century Book House, 1965), p. 38.



regions. As Kumaramangalam put it:

The Commission in coming to this conclusion ignored the importance of the Hindi students studying another Indian language from the point of view of national integration, from the point of view of bringing together all the peoples of our country, from the point of view of making Hindi student also learn that he was a citizen of a multi-lingual country and not a citizen of a country where Hindi alone was spoken.<sup>153</sup>

All the fifteen major regional languages had been accepted as fully developed languages. Educated people considered that these languages are quite developed in order to be used for higher studies. But according to the statement of the language Commission on University Education medium:

Universities should have the freedom to decide for themselves whether they would adopt the regional language or Hindi as the general medium in their respective Universities.<sup>154</sup>

This does not emphasize the fact that each language has developed adequately enough to be the general medium in the Universities:

In its report however the Commission put forward vague proposals which far from emphasizing that in every region the medium of instruction in the University should be the regional language.<sup>155</sup>

Following the Official language Commission of 1956, the Education Commission of 1964-66 recommended a modified three language formula, which runs thus:

Apart from the study of mother-tongue the child has been given an option to study either English or Hindi as second language and a modern Indian language or a foreign language not covered by the first and the second languages as third language.<sup>156</sup>

According to the modified formula, the following languages are required:

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<sup>153</sup> Ibid., p. 40.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid.

<sup>156</sup> Government of India, Ministry of Education, Report of the Education Commission 1964-66 (India: 1966), p. 34.

(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 and (3) a modern Indian language not covered under (1) and (2) and other that used as the medium of instruction.

The geographical representation of the three language formula framed by the Education Commission of 1964-66 is reproduced below:

THE STUDY OF LANGUAGE AT SCHOOL

(CLASSES I-X)

Mother-tongue  
Hindi

Mother-tongue - Regional Language  
(other than Hindi)

SCHOOL CLASSES	X			M.							
	IX			I.							
	VIII			L.							
	VII	H	E			R	E	H	R	H	E
	VI	I	N			E	N	I	E	I	N
	V		G			G	G		G		
	IV		L			I	L		I		
	III		I			S	I		S		
	II		S			H	S		H		
	I		H								

The Figure was taken from the Government of India, Report of the Education Commission 1964-66. (India: Government of India Press, 1966) p. 194. M.I.L. Modern Indian Languages

The first group (from the figure) represents the child belonging to the Hindi speaking region with Hindi as its mother-tongue. The second and the third group represent the children belonging to the non-Hindi speaking regions.

According to the figure the child belonging to the first group learns Hindi from the first grade, English from fifth and any modern language from the eighth grade. This child has more opportunity to master Hindi which is the more powerful language, since it is the national language. The child will be almost equally fluent in the associate official language (English) too. The children belonging to the II and III group learn only through the regional medium. These children have been given the choice to learn English or Hindi at fifth grade and to learn the one not chosen, from the eighth grade. The children belonging to the II and the III group having a mother-tongue different from the regional language will have to learn four languages instead of three.

Regarding the language formula at the University level the Committee said that "in higher education the study of a language should not be compulsory."<sup>157</sup> This freedom will allow the college student to choose a language of his choice. Eventually the three language formula is no more in effect, during higher education. Then why should there be such a formula?

#### NEW THREE LANGUAGE FORMULA FOR INDIAN SCHOOLS

The Central Board of Secondary Education announced a new three language formula in July 1970. Under the formula only one of the three languages need be studied at the higher level and the other two at lower levels. All recognized Indian languages and some foreign languages are included in the new

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<sup>157</sup> Ibid., p. 196.

formula. Hindi, as before, will remain the compulsory subject at the lower or higher level. Explaining the implications of the new formula: "the chairman of the board, Dr. P. S. Shakla said there is now greater flexibility and freedom of choice to the students."<sup>158</sup>

Until around the 1950's, English was used as the medium of instruction in some of the secondary schools. When the Indian constitution recognized fourteen languages as major languages, the medium of instruction was completely switched over to the regional languages. However, the medium in the colleges remained the same (English) until recently. This switch over of medium in secondary schools created greater problems. The pupil who had his education through the regional medium up to high school has to have English as the medium when he gets into college. Thus, a high school student became lost when he entered higher education. As Kabir put it:

...pupils who study through an Indian language in a secondary school are suddenly confronted with English as the medium of instruction in the colleges and Universities.<sup>159</sup>

At this stage the multiplicity of the recognized fourteen languages as the media not only weakened the then present education but also the sense of national unity. Regarding the conduct of the Union Public Service Commission Examination and departmental examination the working committee of the Congress passed a resolution on April 5, 1954 which ran as follows:

The working Committee recommend that progressively the examinations for the all India services should be held in Hindi, English and the principal regional languages and candidates may be given the option to use any of these languages for the purpose of examinations.<sup>160</sup>

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<sup>158</sup> Editorial, India News, Aug. 7, 1970, p. 3.

<sup>159</sup> Kabir, p. 49.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid., p. 44.

The Government of India approved this resolution through a statement made by the Home Minister of the Government in Parliament on the 2nd May 1955.

Following this resolution, the mentioned Committee suggested that the alternative of Hindi medium in addition to the existing English medium may be introduced after due notice. The committee also suggested that when other regional languages become media of instruction in the Universities up to graduation stage, those languages can also be considered as mediums of examinations for the all-India services.

Here again, the seeds of future discord were laid. The transition from English to other languages, including Hindi, as media for examination would have to be simultaneous. The earlier change over to Hindi alone, in comparison to other languages would give the Hindi student a decisive advantage over the students from other states. In Kabir's point of view: "It is impossible to avoid commenting that these conclusions are heavily charged with bias in favour of Hindi."<sup>161</sup>

The Report of the Official Language Commission was referred by the President of a Committee consisting of twenty members of the Lok Sabha and ten members of the Rajya Sabha. On the question of recruitment to All India Services, it specifically recommended that English should be brought in as an alternative medium. It further recommended an expert committee be appointed to examine the feasibility of introducing various regional languages as media without using any quota system.

The University Grants Commission appointed a Committee of experts in 1958 to go into the whole question of general education in Indian universities.

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<sup>161</sup> Ibid., p. 45.

The report of the committee was completed in November 1960 and was submitted to the University Grants Commission:

The Committee is aware of the fact that even the best general education programmes will be useless if the students have not developed adequate language skills by the time they enter the university. Enough attention is probably not given to this in schools.<sup>162</sup>

When Mathai made a recommendation on this problem he said, "...the pre-university class should be used for improving language skill in English and in the regional language."<sup>163</sup> The Committee recommended:

...in view of the increasing importance of the regional languages as a medium of communication at the local and regional levels the student should also have a greater experience of the regional languages.<sup>164</sup>

A team under Govindarajalu was formed in 1957 in order to study "Language studies" in other countries. This team visited the United States in 1957.

According to the decisions arrived at by the Govindarajalu team on behalf of the University Grants Commission:

1. that if on account of the language load it was difficult to find time for courses in areas other than that of specialization, the possibility of utilizing part of the time set apart for languages to serve the double purpose of improvement of the use of the language and study of one of the general education courses might be explored.
2. that in the pre-university year there should be courses covering all the three areas besides teaching language as a language (that is known in American universities as communication).<sup>165</sup>

The Guru Committee which visited the United States of America with the same purpose, in 1958, under the auspicious of the University Grants Commission,

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<sup>162</sup>University Grants Commission, Report on General Education (New Delhi: 1961), p. 18.

<sup>163</sup>Ibid.

<sup>164</sup>Ibid.

<sup>165</sup>Ibid., p. 40.

stated very strongly that "every student must have courses in literature, in an Indian language as well as in English."<sup>166</sup> On the other hand the Education Commission of 1964-66 emphasized only the regional languages and Hindi. It said:

We are convinced of the advantages of education through the regional languages. We regard the development of regional languages as vital to the general progress of the country and as an important step towards the improvement of equality in education. To avoid any misunderstanding we would emphasize that this does not mean the shutting out of English or other world language. In fact we will profit from these languages all the more when our education becomes more effective and useful.<sup>167</sup>

It further stated that:

It is however equally obvious that English cannot serve as the link language for the majority of our people. It is only Hindi which can and should take this place in due course. As it is the official language of the Union and the link-language of the people all measures should be adopted to spread it in the non-Hindi areas. The success of this programme will largely depend on the extent to which it is voluntarily accepted by the people of these areas.<sup>168</sup>

The above Committee proposed that:

the knowledge of another foreign language (especially Russian) besides English should be a requirement for a doctorate degree.<sup>169</sup>

It further proposed that:

the country will need in increasing numbers a small but extremely proficient group of persons in important foreign languages and their literature. From this point of view it would be necessary to establish a few schools which will begin teaching right from an early age important foreign languages referred to above and use them also as media of education. The admission to these schools should be on a selective basis and there should be an adequate provision of scholarships.<sup>170</sup>

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<sup>166</sup> Ibid., p. 43.

<sup>167</sup> Government of India, Ministry of Education, Report of the Education Commission 1964-66 (India: 1966), p. 14.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid.

When Hindi became the official language of the Indian Union on 26th January 1965 and English was reduced to a subsidiary position, it aroused the greatest resentment among the students. During the past few years, they had been brought up to look upon English as the passport for their advancement in life. As a matter of fact there were many casualties in non-Hindi States, such as Madras State in particular, connected with this language issue. Though the different States (non-Hindi States) vary in their opinion regarding the language issue, they all agree that English is the only weapon with which the Hindi offensive can be met.

A seventeen point resolution on national education policy was adopted by the Union Cabinet on July 17, 1968 based on the report of the Education Commission of Vice-Chancellors of Indian Universities in 1957. According to Sarkar, "This is the first educational policy resolution after India attained freedom."<sup>171</sup> Accordingly (1) The regional languages are already used as the media of education at the primary and secondary stages. Urgent steps were now taken to adopt them as the media of education at university stage, (2) Three language formula: In the Secondary level, the students have to study Hindi, English and one of the South Indian languages in Hindi speaking areas. And Hindi, English and the regional language in the non-Hindi speaking areas. Hindi or English courses will be available in the University level also.

• EDUCATION THROUGH REGIONAL LANGUAGES

The Commission of 1964-66 tried energetically to introduce the regional languages in universities. But the Commission felt that:

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<sup>171</sup> Sarkar, (Editor) Hindustan Year Book and Who's Who (India: Supriya Sarkar at Bose Press, 1969), p. 179.



the tendency of regional language to become the media for university education though desirable in many ways well lead to the isolation of such universities from the rest of India unless there is a link in the shape of an all-India language.<sup>172</sup>

If the regional language is adopted as the media in the Universities:

Teachers and students will not be able to migrate easily from one university to another and the cause of education will suffer for lack of a common link between universities in different linguistic areas.<sup>173</sup>

Unless otherwise the regional languages can stand by itself in imparting education and scientific and technical subjects in particular it is impossible for those languages to become the medium of instruction in the University level. In Gopal's view:

The changeover to the regional languages as a medium of education will only be effective when such language has adequately developed for the purpose of modern education and especially for scientific and technical subjects.<sup>174</sup>

In order to enrich the regional languages, scientific and technical subjects have to be translated from other languages, English in particular, since it is comparatively easier. However the translation will not be effective.

As Sharma mentions:

Malaysia has already proved by changing the national language from English to Malay that the standard of translation from English to other language will not be effective.<sup>175</sup>

About the university textbooks of Malay, Sharma mentions:

Hardly any Malay textbooks exist at the University level for the science and the faculties of science, Engineering and Medicine in the university of Malaya.<sup>176</sup>

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<sup>172</sup>Ram Gopal, Linguistic Affairs of India (New York: Asia Publishing House, 1966), p. 133.

<sup>173</sup>Ibid.

<sup>174</sup>Ibid.

<sup>175</sup>Page, p. 75.

<sup>176</sup>Ibid.

In spite of many experiences:

at their (Vice Chancellors of the Universities) meeting in April 1969 the Vice Chancellors of the Universities in the country urged the need for such a reform (teaching through regional languages in the higher education) in our educational system.<sup>177</sup>

Though this system will definitely improve the educational standard of each region individually, each system is going to be an iron curtain that is going to be fixed at the borders of each region, avoiding everyone in sharing the ideas and thoughts and the social mobility. As what Ramaswamy said,

Those who want more and more linguistic States to be created are local politicians because such politicians can become Ministers and enjoy power and wealth. It is this selfish mentality of the politicians that has kept the demands for new linguistic States alive. Unless the linguistic States are totally abolished and the country is divided on zonal basis the dream of national integration, progress and peoples prosperity will remain a mirage for ever.<sup>178</sup>

Madras State started switching over the medium of education in universities from English to Tamil in 1960. As of 1970, most of the Government colleges had only the Tamil medium. Sri Bhaktavatsalam, the then chief Minister of Madras, said that the dictum that the colleges should switch over to Tamil as the medium of instruction by 1962-63 was not a practical proposition. He said that it was not in the interests of national integration, not in the interest of higher education, and not in the interest of the students themselves.

When the writer interviewed Mr. Sundaravadivelu, the Vice Chancellor of Madras University on Sept. 12, 1970 during his visit to the United States

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<sup>177</sup> Editorial, Indian Express (Bombay: Feb. 1970)

<sup>178</sup> Ibid.

he was told that the Vice Chancellor himself would prefer to have a two way track rather than one by Tamil medium alone. However, the end of such a decision will be determined mainly by the ruling party. It seems that each State is vigilant enough to introduce its regional language as the medium of instruction in its corresponding universities:

Out of the 86 Indian Universities about 52 Universities have already introduced its regional language or Hindi as the medium of instruction.<sup>179</sup>

Such a system of regional languages as the medium, has created "regionalism" uniting the people speaking a common language. This system overlooks the right of linguistic minorities, compelling them to get educated through regional languages alone. Naturally every one tends to claim the superiority of their own regional language over the other. It is sure that such undue effects can considerably be taken out of the Indian society only when English be continued as the medium in Indian education.

In the finalized Fourth Five-Year Plan, (1970-75) education has been allocated a sum of Rs.8400 million (Rs.7.50 = \$1) or 5.8 per cent of the total plan outlay. It seems that the Government has to spend large amounts of money only for the promotion of the language rather than for the education itself.

The annual report of the Ministry of Education and Youth Services for 1969-70 says that one of the highlights of the year's activities was the development of languages.<sup>180</sup>

However further amendment is seriously needed if the Indian unity is given the primary importance and thereby achieving a lasting and permanent solution. But it seems that:

the leaders of the Congress are neither united nor prepared to make an honest and searching analysis of the causes of this crisis that burst upon our country...<sup>181</sup>

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<sup>179</sup> Editorial, "Thinamani" (Madras: Dec. 4, 1969)

<sup>180</sup> Editorial, India News (April 24, 1970), p. 3.

<sup>181</sup> Kumaramangalam, p. 94.

## CHAPTER SIX

### THE NATIONAL LANGUAGE

Hindi became the Official language of the Union on 26th January 1965, and English was reduced to a subsidiary position. The National Government may try to introduce and try to develop Hindi but its development is purely left to the people. Unless there is the will, there will not be any way. As Chib wrote, "A national government could develop it but what is more important is whether the people want to develop it or not."<sup>182</sup> That the people of South India will certainly not have the will to learn Hindi in their lifetime is made crystal clear by the statistics of the Hindi Prachar Sabha of Madras which indicated that only 250,000 had attained a working knowledge of Hindi during the years 1918-58. This is only a small percentage of the population of the non-Hindi speaking States. As Nehru said, an "attempt to force the growth of a language in a particular direction is likely to end in distorting it and crushing its spirit."<sup>183</sup>

As Ahamad quotes: "the problem of creating a national language arises out of our National History and is entirely the result of the desire to create national solidarity."<sup>184</sup> If this is the aim of the people who strive for a

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<sup>182</sup> Somnath Chib, Language Universities and Nationalism in India (India: The Wesley Press and Publishing, 1936), p. 58.

<sup>183</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru, The Unity of India (New York: The John Day Company, 1948), pp. 242-43.

<sup>184</sup> Z. A. Ahamad, National Language for India (India: The Allahabad Law Journal Press, 1941), p. 107.

national language then the language should be such that it has to be commonly accepted by all the people of India and not only by the North or South. The national language belongs to the whole nation, it is literally "Sabki Boli" everybody's language; it should be molded by public opinion and will adopt itself to public need and convenience.

Most of the arguments of the politicians for the languages to be the Lingua Franca and thereby the medium of instruction in the higher level of education seem to be unsound and sentimental:

As for a lingua franca that should help India's nationality the name of Hindi has long been in the lips of many people. In the earlier days Bengali and Tamil were spoken of as possible rivals to Hindi. Urdu on account of Muslim support, English on the principle of status quo and Sanskrit on account of the partiality shown for it among the vested interests and the priestly classes have since been pushed up as alternatives to Hindi.<sup>185</sup>

The statisticians, erroneously persuaded by the politicians, commit a grave mistake by giving false statistics which state that Hindi is spoken by the majority of the people and thereby should be the lingua-franca of the country. They mistakenly put Hindi, Hindustani, Urdu and the dialects of these languages in the same category of Hindi, which of course is incorrect since there are vast differences among these languages. According to Appadurai:

Moreover Hindi is more often employed as a vague term to denote all the rural dialects of the three languages Bihari, Eastern Hindi and Western Hindi.<sup>186</sup>

The politicians of the North and the South who are in favor of Hindi want to call these three languages as one only to increase the intensity of acceptance

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<sup>185</sup> K. Appadurai, India's Language Problem (India: Tamil India Publications, 1907), pp. 66-67.

<sup>186</sup> Ibid., p. XIV.

of Hindi as a common language. As Appadurai put it:

The object of calling the three by one name may be to exaggerate the prevalence of a single dialect and mislead the people to adopt it as a common tongue.<sup>187</sup>

From the fact that the Indian constitution includes Hindi and Urdu in its article 344(1) and 351 as two different major languages it is clear that there are major differences between these languages. "They (Hindi and Urdu) are two of the 14 languages recognized in our constitution."<sup>188</sup> Hence for statistical purposes Hindi and Urdu should not be put together. Sindi was included as the 15th major language only recently.

Hindi has been taken as the national language among the fifteen languages with an assumption that it is the language spoken by forty percent of the population. But Mr. Annadurai, the late Chief Minister of Madras State had pointed out the fallacy of this statistics. "Mr. Annadurai rejected the argument that Hindi was spoken by 40% of the people."<sup>189</sup> According to the last available statistics (1961) which took the then fourteen languages and the fifteen major states into consideration, the number of Hindi speaking people were 120,792,275 against 247,685,587 people who spoke the rest of the 13 languages. "It does not seem to be a sound judgement to take number alone into account in such a vital matter."<sup>190</sup> Although Hindi is spoken by the

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<sup>187</sup> Ibid., p. XV.

<sup>188</sup> Vinoba Bhave, Language Problem (India: Sarvaseva Sangh Prakashan, 1965), p. 16.

<sup>189</sup> Amal Sarker, Hand Book of Languages and Dialects of India (Calcutta: Kranto Press, 1964), p. 91.

<sup>190</sup> Appadurai, p. XIII.

largest single group of people in India it is not the vast majority:

Hindi indeed is spoken by the largest single group of people in India. But those who speak it naturally are a minority in relation to the whole of India.<sup>191</sup>

Of course in the quantitative point of view Hindi has got some value. But it is an undeniable fact that Hindi does not have the quality at this time though it may acquire it in the far future which is beyond our control. As Chaudhuri puts it:

No speaker of Hindi will claim cultural superiority over the rest of India and regard to political power the speakers of Hindi have only quantitative and not qualitative superiority.<sup>192</sup>

The language issue has produced a heavy language thrust in non-Hindi speaking States, especially in Tamilnad (Madras State) which has opposed the imposition of Hindi from the very beginning. People of Tamilnad feel that: "One should congratulate the students of Madras for protesting against the heavy language load thrust on them in the Tamilnad colleges."<sup>193</sup> In Kannan's point of view, "This threat of Hindi domination is hanging as a Damocles' sword over the non-Hindi states particularly Tamilnad."<sup>194</sup>

#### ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE NATIONAL LANGUAGE

Hindi was made the national language with English as a subsidiary language. The views of the political and educational leaders regarding the

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<sup>191</sup> Association for the Advancement of the National Languages of India, Report of the All India Language Conference (Calcutta: Writers House, 1958), p. 117.

<sup>192</sup> Nirad C. Chaudhuri, "The language issue" The Times of India (Bombay, Sept. 11, 1967), p. 11.

<sup>193</sup> To the Editor, The Indian Express (May, 1970)

<sup>194</sup> Mr. A. T. Kannan, To the Editor, The Indian Express (April, 70)

validity of Hindi will be analysed in the following pages of this chapter.

### HINDI IS IMMATURE

A National language should be full fledged, matured, and sufficient for all purposes. Modern Hindi is still in the incubation period and has not yet attained its full growth. As Ahamad says, "It was only at the beginning of the 19th century that Modern Hindi started its career."<sup>195</sup> Again Ahamad says, "A study of the origin and growth of Modern Hindi can lead only to one conclusion namely that the language is only 135 years old."<sup>196</sup> A journalist of the Indian Express wrote:

The official language propagated by the Government is a very much Sanskritised Hindi which some complain is not understood even by the Hindi-speaking people themselves. This language is known as 'Khari Boli' Hindi which had no existence prior to 1850 A.D. The very well known Indologist Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji says Khari Boli Hindi with which we are concerned had no existence prior to 1850 A.D., which may explain its existing state of development and the greater development of languages like Tamil, Malayalam, Marathi and Bengali.<sup>197</sup>

### HINDI IS NOT RICH IN ITS LITERATURE

In order for a language to be really rich enough to be used as a medium of instruction, it first has to have a well developed literature. If we analyse it from this point of view, Hindi does not have a considerable impressive literature. As Lamb puts it, "Hindi is a relatively new language with a less impressive literature."<sup>198</sup>

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<sup>195</sup> Ahamad, p. 141.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid., p. 143.

<sup>197</sup> K. C. S., "Education and Language" The Indian Express, Bombay; (Sept. 9, 1970)

<sup>198</sup> Beatrice Pitney Lamb, India (New York: Fredrick A. Praeger, 1963), p. 168.



Only a language which has grace and style can become the medium of instruction. It is insufficient if it is solely a means of communication.

Hindi does not have much grace and style:

Hindi is a language which does not have much grace and style. Language is after all a means to an end and the end is to facilitate the acquisition and transmission of thought with efficiency and ease not forgetting grace and style.<sup>199</sup>

#### HINDI IS INADEQUATE FOR SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL STUDIES

Hindi is at present inadequate for the proper expression of modern scientific, political, economic, commercial and sometimes even cultural ideas. The Governor of Madras, Sardar Ujjal Singh, when addressing the technical students of Guindy, said that "any hasty replacement of English would amount to putting the clock and retard the progress already achieved."<sup>200</sup> He further pleaded "for the retention of English as medium of instruction for scientific and technical education."<sup>201</sup> According to the Kothari Commission: "In a world based on science and technology it is education that determines the level of prosperity of the people."<sup>202</sup> Hence for scientific and technical education an adequate medium is necessary.

#### THE DEMAND FOR HINDI IS PURELY POLITICAL

Hindi has been demanded as the national language for the political reason that it is the language of the capital and nothing else. According to

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<sup>199</sup> Association for the Advancement of the National Languages of India, Report of the All India Language Conference (Calcutta: Writers House, 1958), p. 1.

<sup>200</sup> Editorial, Indian Express (May 5, 1970)

<sup>201</sup> Ibid.

<sup>202</sup> Suresh Bhatnagar, Kothari Commission (Meerut: International Publishing House, 1967), p. 10.

Humayun Kabir as quoted by Ahamed, "the language of the capital tends to radiate on all sides."<sup>203</sup> The language problem has been for a considerable length of time one of the worst sources of political mistrust and dissensions. As quoted by Ahamad, Abdul Haq said, "The problem of language has not been able to escape the influence of politics which dominates every aspect of our national life today."<sup>204</sup>

The politicians do not want to place the language issue into the hands of academicians since they are aware that most academicians favor English. However, this is not true with a few Hindi speaking academicians. The warning of Gandhiji as quoted by Kumaramangalam stands as an evidence for it:

"...this matter should not be left to the 'academicians' to decide for they have a sort of vested interest in the retention of English."<sup>205</sup>

Mahatma Gandhiji wrote, "Not that I hate English but I love Hindi more. That is why I am beseeching the lettered classes of India to make Hindi their common language."<sup>206</sup> This view is purely sentimental and does not have enough justification to make Hindi as the national language.

In a democratic country like India, there is no such a thing as ruling language. Persian, French, and English came to India to rule and not to serve. These were purely of political nature paying only a little attention towards education. It is the same today that the political leaders want to

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<sup>203</sup> Ahamad, p. 283.

<sup>204</sup> Ibid., p. 82.

<sup>205</sup> Mohan Kumaramangalam, India's Language Crisis (India: New Century Book House (P) Ltd., 1965), p. 67.

<sup>206</sup> M. K. Gandhi, Hindi and English in the South (India: Navajivan Publishing House, 1958), p. 12.

have Hindi to be the ruling and not the serving language. Mr. Rajagopalachari, one of the founders of Swatantra Party wrote that:

every Indian boy should equip himself with (a) a knowledge of his mother tongue for contact with the people (b) of Hindi for his All India Contacts (c) of Sanskrit or Arabic or Persian for the sake of his religious or cultural benefit and lastly (d) of English for international purposes.<sup>207</sup>

Perhaps, Rajagopalachari thinks that students are the slaves of politicians. Perhaps, as Appadurai wrote, "the root cause of many language controversies seems to be the disregard of elementary facts of the role of language in social and individual life."<sup>208</sup>

### THE LANGUAGE ISSUE IS DIVISIVE

Quite often voices come from the political stages for emotional integration without the way being paved for it. Emotional integration can only be brought about if all Indians feel that they have genuine equality of opportunity. If the non-Hindi regions feel that the speakers of Hindi are being favoured, there can be no emotional integration. There will be only bitterness, envy and ultimately hatred. The language issue should be settled by the will of the people and not by a few politicians. Unless there is the will there is no way at all. The unnatural way of learning the language will have its drastic effect on non-Hindi speaking people. As Nehru said,

Attempts to force the growth of a language in a particular direction are only to end in distorting it and crushing its spirit.<sup>209</sup>

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<sup>207</sup> Appadurai, p. 24.

<sup>208</sup> Lachman Khubchandani, "Language Situation in India" Indian and Foreign Review Vol. 7 # 17 (June 15, 1970), p. 18.

<sup>209</sup> Ahamad, p. 47.

As Jawaharlal Nehru said in the Lok Sabha (Lower House of Parliament) on 24th of April 1963 "Whenever an attempt has been made to suppress a language or coerce the people into some other language there has been trouble."<sup>210</sup>

THE LANGUAGE ISSUE IS AGAINST THE WILL OF THE SOUTH

The Hindi speaking areas have already been strengthened in all fields in comparison to the rest of the country since the majority of the political leaders since independence have been Hindi speaking. Furthermore, the adoption of Hindi in the future will create a worse situation. According to the report of the All India Language Conference:

The Hindi speaking community is already strong politically, economically, and otherwise. Their position will become nearly unassailable if Hindi comes to be adopted as the sole official language of the Indian Union.<sup>211</sup>

Since independence, it has been the common feeling among South Indians that the North dominates the South. It is a fact that most of the political leaders have Hindi as their vernacular. As Sir Ivor Jennings said in 1949:

If Hindi were the National language the Hindi-speaking peoples of the North would become as dominant a class as the English-speaking are now. English is at least neutral a language which all can learn on equal terms. Hindi would give a preference to some and so would be anathema to others.<sup>212</sup>

Shri Borah still stresses the point saying:

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<sup>210</sup> Kumaramangalam, p. 82.

<sup>211</sup> Association for the Advancement of the National Language of India. Report of the All India Language Conference (Calcutta: Writers House, 1958), p. 118.

<sup>212</sup> Mahanbhihai Desai, Our Language Problem (India: Navajivan Publishing House, 1956), p. 56.

Not only that people whose mother-tongue is Hindi will always get undue advantages over others in all spheres. It is natural that they will lead the country.<sup>213</sup>

The language problem is not only associated with political rivalries but also with economic opportunities. As Lamb put it:

The language problem of course is closely associated with political rivalries and economic opportunity...people whose mother tongue is not Hindi will undoubtedly be at a disadvantage in securing Government jobs....<sup>214</sup>

Nehru himself was not in favor of imposing or compelling anyone to take Hindi. In addressing the Congress workers at Anand Bhavan on July 19, 1953 he said "We must not try to impose on others our will in social matters or in matters of language."<sup>215</sup> As Chaudhuri quotes the words of Gandhi "English is not the mother-tongue of Tamilians so they should forget it."<sup>216</sup> If Tamilians have to forget English which has already been learnt, how is it just to say that they should learn Hindi which is not their mother-tongue? It would be laborious for the southern people of India to learn Hindi because there is a large difference between the northern and southern languages. Smith felt that, "The grammar and structure of the Dravidian speech (Southern speech) differ wholly from the Aryan type (Northern speech)".<sup>217</sup> As Annadurai, the late Chief Minister of Madras State quoted the words of Miss Meera "to go from North right down to the South of India is like entering another world."<sup>218</sup>

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<sup>213</sup> Ibid., p. 59.

<sup>214</sup> Beatrice Pitney Lamb, India (New York: Fredrick A. Praeger, 1963), p. 168.

<sup>215</sup> Desai, p. 185.

<sup>216</sup> S.C. Chudhuri, Lingua Indica Revealed (Calcutta: Thacker Spink & Co., 1933), p. 140.

<sup>217</sup> A. Smith, The Oxford History of India (London: Oxford University Press, 1941), p. 140.

<sup>218</sup> C.N. Annadurai, Annavin Thathuvangal (Madras: D.K.D. Publications, 1962), p. 69.

Whenever the politicians and the people in favor of Hindi talk about the medium in the colleges, they stress education only through the regional languages and not in the National language. Desai says, "Surely a university must have a medium; and if it is sound principle that it should be the mother-tongue."<sup>219</sup> This policy will lead the people of the Non-Hindi speaking regions to have their education through the vernacular with very little or no knowledge of Hindi. And in such a case they will lose even the slight possibility of participating in the political activities.

According to the Constitution all the fifteen major languages have been given equal status. In such a situation it tempts every educated man to say that "if they are adequate and capable each of them there is no reason why all of them should not have equal scope."<sup>220</sup> A common language which will be the National language is meant for the literate and it can continue as English rather than anything else. According to the Report of All India Language Conference, "The question of language does not affect the common man. Nowhere in the world does the common man speak the language of the books."<sup>221</sup>

As the above mentioned Report stated:

We have been using English for nearly 200 years and for at least a century it has permeated all the intellectual classes of society, the classes for whom a common language is mostly necessary.<sup>222</sup>

The above views of the political and educational leaders regarding the validity of the National language clearly show that there is a greatest opposition towards the adoption of Hindi as the National language.

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<sup>219</sup> Desai, p. 73.

<sup>220</sup> Association for the Advancement of the National Language of India, Report of the All India Language Conference (Calcutta: Writers House, 1958), p. 2.

<sup>221</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### CONCLUSION

From the analysis made so far in various periods of Indian educational history, it was found that the language problem has been always connected with religion, politics, regionalism, socioeconomic mobility, linguistic groups and national unity. People who oppose English argue that it is an alien language and hence should be replaced. But history shows that it is practically impossible to replace English by any other Indian language. When Indian languages such as Sanskrit, Arabic (which is one of the Indian languages though not indigenous), and Urdu became official languages of India, these were not accepted whole heartedly by all the people of India. There had been always instability in the educational field. Since one's language is alien to another, a language alien to all has to have official status in order to throw an equal burden on every one. This can be no other language but English, on which the Indian Educational system has been already established. Further than that, education through English will certainly be advantageous and will advance Indian society in all walks of life.

The unity and oneness of India cannot be thought of in terms of spoken languages, skin colors, social classes, religions, political parties and trade union movements. This can be done only through a common education with a common medium of instruction. This is especially true in the case of higher education. A summary of the arguments for English made by

educationalists and politicians is given in the following passages.

ENGLISH CANNOT BE DISCARDED

It is impractical to discard English entirely in Indian education. English has become part and parcel of Indian education, due to the long occupancy of the British. English has intermingled with most of the languages of India. Any act against English will be in vain. As Zellner put it:

In a reaction to the enforced use of English as a medium in her schools during the long occupancy of the British, India must realize that it would be impractical to discard English entirely.<sup>223</sup>

ENGLISH FOR PHYSICAL SCIENCES.

For the further advancement of India, there should be a uniform scientific and technical education throughout the country. Only through English can this be done without too much difficulty. Doctor Vira argues that "English is a bad medium for science. It is a bad medium for the Englishman himself."<sup>224</sup> Though this statement is not worth commenting on, no other testimony is necessary to make these words invalid other than the present advancement in science of countries having English as the medium. English is in no way inferior to Russian, Chinese, and Japanese though these are also used as mediums for science. Dr. Vira further says that "research men will still learn English...But why should the masses?"<sup>225</sup> Who is a research man? Does he not

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<sup>223</sup> Aubrey Albert Zellner, Education in India (New York: Bookman Associates, 1951), p. 126.

<sup>224</sup> Vira Raghu, India's National Language (New Delhi: Raj Art Press, 1965), p. 192.

<sup>225</sup> Ibid., p. 191.



come from the masses? Or should he learn English only when he becomes a research man? Is there any brand of people who are born as research men? Then who has to learn it? Doctor Vira hereby unconsciously reveals the fact that English cannot be taken away from India. Vinoba who strongly opposed English agreed himself saying "at present advanced scientific studies are possible only through English, French and German."<sup>226</sup> Shrimalai wrote:

This Committee (Committee of Parliament on Official language 1955) was of the opinion that in the field of science and technology there should as far as possible be uniformity in all Indian languages and the terminology should approximate closely to English and international.<sup>227</sup>

Which means that a pure translation of technical words is impossible and it has to depend upon English. An attempt to divorce the internationally accepted terminology will create a great gulf between India and the scientific world:

Any attempt to divorce it from internationally accepted terminology will be suicidal for the development of sciences in India for no nation can today make any progress in the scientific field if it cuts itself adrift from the world stream.<sup>228</sup>

Shrimalai further stated:

While all these efforts...enrich the form and content of the various languages of India at the same time...the efforts are not co-ordinated and are thus calculated to lead to a chaotic state of affairs.<sup>229</sup>

Shri Kher in his Poona address on November 5, 1965 mentioned, "the eventual displacement of the English language from its present position in our society

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<sup>226</sup> Vinoba Bhave, Language Problem (India: Sarvaseva Sanghprakashan, 1965), p. 25.

<sup>227</sup> K. L. Shrimalai, Education in Changing India (New York: Asia Publishing House, 1965), p. 249.

<sup>228</sup> Ibid., p. 251.

<sup>229</sup> Ibid., p. 250.

should be made."<sup>230</sup> But in contrary to what he mentioned, he added that we should have:

sufficient command of English and...to serve as a key to the store-house of knowledges not yet available in the Indian languages and as a window to the rapid progress of technology and scientific knowledge.<sup>231</sup>

When English is the window of scientific and technical knowledge how can English be eventually displaced. For India's rapid improvement science and technology is quite essential. Since English is the suitable window for this knowledge, English should not be discarded. According to Fernando:

An ambitious technician, a skilled architect, an earnest research scholar, a nuclear physicist, or chemist, or a medical doctor, or even a clever administrator who wished to go outside his region or wants to advance in knowledge will realize far more sharply than any one the inescapable necessity of English as a window to world cultural and scientific progress.<sup>232</sup>

#### ENGLISH FOR SOCIAL SCIENCES

Not only in the field of physical sciences but also in social sciences is knowledge of English seriously needed:

Despite the effort made by the central and State Governments to promote indigenous languages it (English) still remains the most important vehicle of higher thought in science and the humanities.<sup>233</sup>

It (English) became the great vehicle through which modern ideas not only in the physical sciences but also in literature and intellectual matters and even the matters spiritual flowed into India.<sup>234</sup>

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<sup>230</sup>Maganbhai Desai, The Hindi Prachar Movement (India: Navajuvan Publishing House, 1957), p. 209.

<sup>231</sup>Ibid.

<sup>232</sup>Singarayer Fernando, The Teaching of English in Madras' secondary schools before and after Indian Independence. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation. Loyola University, (Chicago, 1960), p. 50.

<sup>233</sup>Publications Division, The Gazetteer of India (India: Government of India Press, 1965), p. 410.

<sup>234</sup>Ibid., p. 411.

In Chib's view:

The chief vernacular literatures in India Bengali, Urdu, Hindi, Gujarati, Marathi and Tamil have been deeply influenced by English drama and fiction during the last thirty years.<sup>235</sup>

According to Garratt, "Previous to the nineteenth century none of the vernaculars except Urdu had a secular literature."<sup>236</sup> In Garratt's view, "The English language has given them access not only to the literature of England but through translations to that of India."<sup>237</sup> The Vice Chancellor of the South Gujarat University urged at the Gujarat Economic Conference that "a good knowledge of English is a must for advanced studies and research in economics."<sup>238</sup>

#### ENGLISH FOR POLITICS

Again English plays a greater role in the political field. It is impossible to displace English by any other language in the field of legislature, Federal court, and other interstate gatherings. As Professor Jha says:

English cannot be the language of the masses but for the central legislature and Federal court and other interprovincial gatherings it can continue as it so long as continued to be a convenient medium of expression.<sup>239</sup>

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<sup>235</sup> Somnath Chib, Language Universities and Nationalism in India (India: The Wesley Press, 1936), p. 53.

<sup>236</sup> G. T. Garrat, Legacy of India (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1938), p. 389.

<sup>237</sup> Ibid.

<sup>238</sup> C. N. Vakil, The Sunday Standard (April 19, 1970)

<sup>239</sup> Z. A. Ahamad, National Language for India (India: The Allahabad Law Journal Press, 1941), p. 16.

## ENGLISH FOR BUSINESS

If English is taken away from the general education of India, the business education achieved will not be communicable among its neighboring countries. Often it is through English that the business men of the world communicate with each other. According to the British council:

English is now the main language of salesmen from Germany and Japan, of Soviet and Chinese propagandists and of Asians and Africans who seek mutual communication.<sup>240</sup>

India has to depend upon English for her advancement in various fields. To displace English with an indigenous language at this stage would be like an amputee who discards his crutches and tries to walk by himself with insufficient training.

## STUDENTS THEMSELVES ARE INTERESTED

In addition to the many advantages of English in various fields of education, the students themselves are interested in studying English. When a minister of the Gujarat Government was asked why the Government did not make the English medium optional, he was reported to have replied, "then every one will go in for English."<sup>241</sup> From the personal experience of the writer, it was noted that students are interested only in English education. In Madras State the colleges started operating both in the English and the

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<sup>240</sup> Reuter London: (Nov. 27, 1970), p. 4.

<sup>241</sup> D. D. Karve, "Media of Education and Study of Languages." The Education Quarterly, Ministry of Education (India: January 1963), p. 12.

regional language mediums in the year 1960. It was found that students were interested only in the English medium sections. Some of the students were rather compelled to join the regional medium sections to fill up the classes. Although the writer can cite only the example from Madras State, it is his opinion that the feeling of the students are the same in the nation.

### IT IS A QUESTION OF TIME

It is impossible to replace English throughout India with a new common medium in the area of Higher Education. However, the provincial languages can replace English in the provinces. As Ahamad says, "Our (Indian) system of education and public work must therefore be based on the provincial languages."<sup>242</sup> Hence the possible solution is to have education based on provincial languages up to the secondary education and English in the higher education. If English should be the national language certainly it is not going to be the language of the masses until a generation has passed. Ahamad argues that "English cannot develop into an all-India language known by millions."<sup>243</sup> This statement cannot be absolutely a correct one. It is time to make English the language of the masses in India. When English is continued as the medium of Higher Education it will be necessary to make English a compulsory language in High schools. Time will come when everyone gets a minimum of high school education. A free and compulsory education up to the age fourteen is already in force in some of the states. The

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<sup>242</sup>A. Ahamad, p. 49.

<sup>243</sup>Ibid., p. 50.

achievement of literacy in India has been slow but it is steady. College education is slower. If there will be a change in the medium it will further reduce the momentum.

India is like a vast garden with various plants bearing beautiful fragrant flowers. If all the plants grow and blossom without encroaching on each other's nourishment the garden will rise in splendour. If a few start living at the expenses of others, they may themselves blossom more but they will render many branches barren and ugly. Even so if India wants the garden of its languages to flourish and to remain evergreen, Indians shall have to keep bringing into it a new plant (English) allowing all of them to grow in beauty side by side.

As Chesterton, a great English writer puts it, man is always between the choice of two evils and he has to choose the lesser evil. For an Indian, it is to take English and keep the solidarity of the democratic country with the rest of the blessings rather than to take Hindi and undergo the consequences of it forever. The past experiences have showed that no indigenous languages can become a National Language. Something that cannot be mended should be ended.

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APPROVAL SHEET

The thesis submitted by Peter Sinnappan has been read and approved by members of the Department of Education.

The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the thesis is now given final approval with reference to content and form.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

October 18, 1971  
Date

Donald Lee Tuttle  
Signature of Advisor