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GLOBALIZATION AND INDIAN LANGUAGES

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ABSTRACT

The term *globalization* and its impact on society and its environs is a current theme that is discussed in local to international fora all over the world. If we go to the internet search engine *Google* and search for the word *globalization* we are provided with 1,550,000 sites or references within 0.31 seconds. This itself indicates its influence on the global community. The impact of this economic force coupled with the technological developments is changing the way people think and live in the world. Hence, it is essential to study its impact on the most important possession of human beings - language, in a Third World multilingual country.

The Indian languages, numbering 1652 mother tongues according to 1961 Census, are identified with various nomenclatures in post-independence India like *Scheduled Languages, Non-Scheduled languages, Regional languages, major languages, minor languages, minority languages, tribal languages*, etc. Before independence, in India, languages were known as English, the vernacular, etc. The Constitution of India empowered many Indian languages by defining the domains of their use. To use the term often used by language planners, the Constitution did the job of status-planning. Also, it did make statements regarding corpus-planning like the "Directive for Development of the Hindi language- . . . secure its enrichment by assimilating without interfering with its genius, the forms, style and expressions used in Hindustani and in the other languages of India specified in the Eighth Schedule, and by drawing, wherever necessary or desirable, for its vocabulary, primarily on Sanskrit and secondarily on other languages." These steps of empowering the languages were subsequently implemented through executive Acts, Orders, Notifications, Circulars, advisory/implementation committees, etc., by the Governments of the Union as well as of the States and Union Territories. Many a time, the parties affected by the promulgation of these orders and provisions did challenge some of these orders before the judiciary. The judiciary gave directions relating to language and law, while adjudicating on the issues brought before it. These language-related decisions have paved a path for development, underdevelopment, and/or non-development of different Indian languages in independent India.

The effect of globalization on Indian Society is felt since 1990s. Gradually, Indians have started to feel the intensity of its effect now. The effect of globalization on economy, media and sometimes on society too are almost regularly analyzed and debated in various fora. But, investigation into the effect of economic globalization on Indian languages

dealing with their status, choice for use in various domains, use pattern, structure and functioning, development etc., are yet to be done.

The linguistic aspect of globalization includes answers to the questions such as, Is globalization creating opportunities? What is happening to Indian languages? What is happening to the speakers of various Indian languages? This paper presents a detailed analysis and inferences based on facts and figures, and looks at both positive and negative impacts of the covert and overt impact of economic globalization on Indian languages.

1. Globalization: An Age-Old Concept and Practice

The UNESCO defines globalization as "a set of economic, social, technological, political, and cultural structures and processes, arising from the changing character of the production, consumption, and trade of goods and assets that comprise the base of the international political economy"¹. Though this term was coined and had been in circulation since the 1980s, "... the concept stretches back decades, even centuries, if you count the trading empires built by Spain, Portugal, Britain, and Holland"².

In the last two decades, however, globalization has made greater strides in combination with technological advances like information technology. When we study the impact of either of them, the influence of one over the other cannot be ignored. Both go together.

2. Five-Year Plans and Globalization

India accepted the principle of planned growth after it became an independent nation. The Five-Year Plans became the tools for development. Broadly speaking, the first seven five-year plans focused on industrialization and increase of agricultural production. The eighth plan that commenced in April 1992 saw the entry and adoption of words like liberalization, privatization, and globalization. These processes became the focal points of growth and development in India. The basic characteristic of these processes is that the markets get unified, and business becomes global. "Globalization is a process, and not a state of being, not an objective... (It) is a series of moves towards a fully integrated world economy."³ The rulers, however, may deny that they are trying to integrate the Indian economy with the world economy, since such "integration" has been always viewed with great suspicion in the consciousness of "patriotic" forces.

3. The Effect of Globalization on Indian Languages

The effect of globalization on Indian Society is felt clearly since the eighth-plan. Gradually, Indians have started to feel the intensity of its effect. The effect of globalization on the economy, industry, media, and some times on society are almost regularly analyzed and debated. But, the investigation into the effect of economic globalization on Indian languages relating to their status, choice of these languages for use in the various domains of life, their use patterns, structure and functioning, and their development, etc., is yet to be done.

This paper presents an analysis of some of the impact of globalization on Indian languages, and presents various inferences based on facts and figures. The paper looks at both the positive and negative effects of the covert and overt impact of economic globalization on Indian languages and their speakers. An attempt is made here to probe into what happens to the speakers of the language and what happens to the status and corpus of the language.

So, I like to start the analysis of the whole process from two statements. One is the national policy statement made by the former President of India, K.R. Narayanan, and the other a statement by Ninan Koshy. The President in his 2001 Republic Day address said, "Our three-way fast lane of liberalization, privatization, and globalization must provide safe pedestrian crossings for the unempowered India also so that it could move towards 'equality of status and opportunity'." Ninan Koshy, in his book on Globalization states, "Globalization promotes inequality, unrest, conflict ... economic inequality is greening: more conflicts and civil wars are emerging. It is important to see a connection between these two situations."⁴

4. Where do we stand vis-à-vis Indian languages?

For the purposes of this paper, the history of Indian languages in the past one hundred years may be seen as comprising of three stages:

1. Before independence, under the colonial rule.
2. After independence in the era of industrialization for nearly forty years.
3. In the era of globalization for nearly ten years.

4.1. Before Independence

Before independence there were only two categories of languages in India (as perceived by the rulers and submissively accepted by the users), English and vernaculars. All Indian languages were put together under one name, vernaculars.

In spite of their rich heritage, most of the Indian languages had hardly any official status or political power. Some languages such as Panjabi had to wage linguistic struggles to get the recognition and attention of the rulers.⁵ In the case of some languages, the British rulers enabled the speakers of those languages to use them in education and administration.⁶ In some of the languages, spoken by remarkably larger sections of society with geographic contiguity, the process of standardization was initiated through the codification process by writing grammars, preparing dictionaries, and producing textbooks, etc., done mainly to help in the process of language learning.

Gradually, the domains of use for the Indian languages were expanding, and the mass media (the print media), had started to enter the homes of the literate sections of the linguistic community. Since literacy had slowly begun to spread and with the growth of Indian nationalism, people who spoke the dominant languages of the region/society generally opted for their own languages for the purpose of education, whereas the elites

among them continued their preference for English. The National Policy on Education adopted by the Indian National Congress in the 1920s had helped the use of Indian languages as medium of instruction.⁷ Since English was the language of official communication and judiciary, and since government was still the most important employer, English education continued to flourish.

4.2. After Independence

The independent India, in due course, declared its own economic policy, industrial policy, agricultural policy, etc. However, there was no single document that would declare the 'language policy' of the nation.

The Indian language policy has to be culled out from different sources such as the policy information from the Constitution of India, Educational Policy, and the Executive orders and circulars issued by the Government of India and the governments of states and union territories, either directly relating to language or about other matters wherein language issue also came into picture more as a "sensitive problem".

The empowerment of Indian languages took place in two stages since independence: For the first time when they found a place in the Constitution under one nomenclature or the other, and at next stage when the States of the Union were reorganized on the basis of the principle of language use in a geographically contiguous area. So, as a consequence of this, now some of the leading languages have become official languages in various parts of the country, and English assumed the role of an associate official language of the Union. These are acts of empowerment of the Indian languages. They provided a status to selected Indian languages through listings such as Scheduled Languages, Official Language, Regional Languages, Modern Indian Languages, Oriental Languages, Classical Languages, Minor Languages, Minority Languages, and Tribal Languages.

These are not mere vocabulary items. These are loaded words and powerful weapons used to bargain for privileges to the languages and their users.

4.3. Language Development Activities

Automatically, the status provided to the languages with such labeling demanded appropriate corpus development. So, enormous language development activities took place in the case of Modern Indian Languages. Each language spread into new and different domains hitherto unknown to it or less explored. The existing domains of use steadily expanded. Speakers of the 'regional languages' started to establish their right over the use of that language in education, administration etc., and the speakers of the minor, minority, and other tribal languages started to establish their right as minority language speakers or as mother tongue speakers of their languages.

4.4. The Effect of Industrialization

The era of independence and industrialization combined with the new status and privileges obtained by Indian languages had given an impetus to these languages for their use as school languages and as medium of instruction. But, in due course of time, something that should not happen with the growing empowerment of Indian languages at the political and other levels, is happening.

The All India Educational Survey conducted by the NCERT indicates that the number of languages used in the schools have decreased from 81 in 1970 to 41 in the last 25 years or so. Similarly the number of languages used as the medium of instruction also has decreased from 47 to 18 during the same period. Even between the Fifth and Sixth Survey there is a reduction in number of languages used in the schools: Fifth Survey - 44 , Sixth Survey - 41. Similarly between the Fifth and Sixth Surveys, the reduction in the number of languages used as medium of instruction in the schools at different stages is as follows ⁸:

	Fifth Survey	Sixth Survey
Primary Education	43	33
Upper Primary Education	31	25
Secondary Education	22	21
Higher Secondary Education	20	18

4.5. Disenchantment with Mother Tongue Education

This indicates that in the era of industrialization, people were going away from their mother tongue as a language of schooling and as a medium of instruction. If a language is not learned as a mother tongue for wider purposes of communication and governance, there are possibilities that the concerned language will gradually vanish from the society as an effective medium, and will assume the role of an identity marker only. Even the role of a language as an identity marker may not happen in India, because caste, religion, attire, food habits, and even personal names often may provide important identities for the individual or the family or the society. Language may assume a secondary role as an identity marker in such contexts.

4.6. Higher Education through Indian Languages

Dr. Radhakrishnan Commission for the University Education in its report had stated "that for the medium of instruction for higher education English be replaced as early as practicable by the Indian language which cannot be Sanskrit on account of vital difficulties". Also, "Higher education is imparted through the instrumentality of the regional language with the option to use the Federal language as the medium of instruction either for some subjects or for all subjects" and "that English be studied in high schools and in the Universities in order that we may keep in touch with the living stream of ever-growing knowledge."⁹

Even after 55 years of independence, higher science and technical education is not available in major Indian languages. The presence of Indian languages in some of the sectors of social sciences is more for token identity, than for any functional purpose. The research output disseminated through Indian languages is negligible. For example, a study on National Mapping of Science: Earth Sciences Research in India says that all the publications by the Indian scientists were in English excepting four Russian articles, two Hindi articles, one Japanese, and one French article. It is important to note that the same study indicates that two Hindi articles are of 1990 and that the publication through that language is nil in 1994 and 1998¹⁰.

4.7. Judging Indian Languages: Marginalization of Indian Languages

In the case involving Hindi Hitarakshak Samiti and others Vs Union of India, the Supreme Court held, "It may be that Hindi or other regional languages are more appropriate medium of imparting education to very many and it may be appropriate and proper to hold the examination, entrance or otherwise, in any particular regional or Hindi language, or it may be that Hindi or other regional language, because of development of that language, is not yet appropriate medium to transmute or test the knowledge or capacity that could be had in medical and dental disciplines".¹¹ The Indian languages get marginalized for the reasons stated in the observations of the court. They fail to become languages of opportunities.

5. Globalization: Language as a Commodity

The effect of globalization on the power, status, and use of Indian languages is not immediately visible like its (globalization's) effect on economy, industry, etc. However, on language, globalization has indirect but highly effective and long lasting impact. Education and employment opportunities are directly related. So also are education and language.

As education is a commodity, language that is used to impart instruction also has turned out to be a commodity. Only a saleable commodity remains in the market and others go out of the market. The education sector provides goods - human resources to both market and technology. The market decides employment opportunities, and the employability of the human resource. Now, more than ever, the educated individuals have become a commodity ready for export.

6. Shift of Focus in Education and the Place of Indian Languages

When higher education, as a commodity, is getting privatized, the educational curriculum also is getting tailored to the needs of the private companies. The traditional strongholds of basic sciences do not attract the students. Only technical education attracts the students. There is hardly any body opting for B.A., B.Sc., M.A., M.Sc., etc. and all long for Engineering, Business Management, Computer Science, etc.

There is a total shift in the focus of higher education. The school education is forced to cater to the demands at the higher education level, by preparing the students from that stage itself. Even then, basically the school education is directed more towards social goals, and the higher education is more focused on economic and industrial goals. Thus, a divide that existed even before the processes of globalization were set in motion, is now made much wider. The frenzied preparation of the students at the higher secondary level of education for entrance to the professional courses is symptomatic of this growing divide.

A study conducted by The Asian Age (Jan. 12, 2000) in Bangalore portrays the parents and students choice of language education. According to this study/survey - State of Education: There is a drastic decrease in admissions to the Kannada medium schools in the last 10 years. English medium schools outnumber Kannada medium schools. The ratio of Kannada medium schools to English medium schools is 1:10 in this stage. In Bangalore, for the English medium 900, applications were received for 110 available seats, whereas only 10 applications were received for the available 55 seats in Kannada medium. Earlier in each class there used to be four sections with a strength of about 600 to 700 students. But now, there is only one section in each Kannada medium class with about 30 to 35 students in it. Kannadigas themselves do not send their children to the Kannada medium schools.¹²

People speaking a regional language dominant in a state move towards English, whereas the people who use a non-regional language, that is, the minor and minority languages within the linguistically re-organized state, move towards the regional language or English. Speakers of minor languages, say, Kodagu and Tulu, with widespread and higher rates of literacy opt for the regional or other languages for educational purposes, but they do not go away from their own mother tongue. They make it a point to use for their communicational purposes wherever they are. But, this is not the case with other language speakers. Languages like Kannada, even with all the state support, may fade away because of the movement of their speakers towards some other language, mainly English (or Hindi). The deeper causes for this process need to be investigated.

In the original scheme of language in education, the prime of place was for the mother tongue, regional language, Official language of the Union, and then English, generally in that order. Of late, since the process of globalization is set in motion, every state is competing to introduce English from the earliest stage of education. Committees and commissions, etc., constituted to deal with education are recommending the inclusion of English compulsorily in the educational process. The state of West Bengal had abolished teaching of English as second language, post-1977. But it is now re-introduced from the earliest possible class in the schools. In the 21st Century, providing widespread and effective English medium instruction has become an election promise. The National Conference during the 2002 Jammu and Kashmir elections promised that "... all the villages would be provided at least one English medium primary school..."¹³

People's perception of the relation between language and the self is changing. Earlier language was considered a tool for education. Education was a tool for enlightenment and

knowledge. Now, education is considered as a tool for economic prosperity. Here we see what happens when a society is in transition and transformation from the agrarian to the industrial level and into global village. During the period of industrialization, brain drain was considered bad, and was looked upon negatively by the sociologists, economists, and the rulers of the nation, whereas in the era of globalization, brain drain is considered as good.

7. Globalization and English

The relevance of, or dependence on English is reinforced with more vigor during globalization. English was accepted as the associate official language of the Union, since Hindi was not acceptable as the sole official language of India to one and all. English was found to be a neutral language, neutral to over sixteen hundred and fifty two mother tongues (Census of India: 1961). Though Hindi should have replaced English within a period of 15 years from 1950, even now it has not replaced it because people, both from the non-Hindi regions and the ruling classes in the Hindi states, do not seem to have the need for it. With the fast changing scenario of globalization, English also is fast becoming the language of globalization. It may not be possible to replace it with Hindi even after 150 years. Instead, actually English is displacing not only Hindi but also other languages in India, as the statistics given above indicate.

8. Doublespeak

Doublespeak relating to English in India by people with political power is an important cause for its easy entry into every household. To reap economic advantages in the period of industrialization, and now in the period of globalization, Indian families everywhere compete with one another to provide their wards with good English education. Clear functional separation in the choice of language by the public is seen: English for economic progress, and, normally, mother tongue for cultural purposes and as a token of identity.

9. Spread of English

The latest National Readership Survey 2002 conducted by the National Readership Studies Council (NRSC) says that there is sharp growth in the sales of English newspapers in towns with populations ranging from one lakh to five lakhs, whereas growth in Hindi and regional language newspapers is from the towns with populations below five lakhs, English is becoming more popular in the rural areas due to the growth and development of reading skill in English through school. English, thus, is establishing a solid mass base for itself in the rural areas.

10. Global Thinking of the Indian Judiciary

The Indian Judiciary too, as far as language is concerned, has started to think globally. In the State of Karnataka Vs Noble Saint Education Society (1993), the Full Bench of the Karnataka High Court observed, "Having regard to the multiplicity of the languages

spoken and the need to have a link language, it cannot be said that the desire of the parents to impart education to their children in a well-known international language like English can be by-passed, forgetting the realities of life."¹⁴ Now, international "laws" are applied to Indian contexts, and these have overriding power above the Indian laws. The legal discourse about language issues is changing its perception and pattern.

11. Globalization and Legal Discourse Relating to Language Use

The Judiciary in India has adjudicated on the question of what medium of instruction should be employed at different stages of education, and the number and the language(s) to be taught, since decades. The legal discourse during these decades did not go beyond the Fundamental Rights, Minority Rights, and the Rights of the State to make law relating to language issue, etc., as elaborated in the Constitution of India.

For the first time, a High Court in India, the Madras High Court, in its judgment relating to Elementary Education - Tamil as Medium of Instruction in Nursery and Elementary Schools, draws strength also from the Article 26 (3) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and says,

The parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children and that has the force of (law) by virtue of the Government of India's accepting the Convention on December 11, 1992.¹⁵

In this judgment, one may say that this right to choose is placed above the Fundamental Rights and the Right of Minorities. The judgment rather ventures into the economics of language education thus:

Career opportunities: Every one would like to see that his children study well and get themselves fixed up well somewhere, so that they can lead a life at least with minimum necessities, viz., food and shelter. It may not be possible for every one to get a job commensurate with their knowledge and capacity within the State. They may have to go out of the State or even the country to get a suitable job. The students who study in English medium will have an added advantage that the students who study in Tamil medium.

12. Fear of Hindi Domination

The Constituent Assembly debates for the framing of the Constitution of India and the public response to various language provisions in the Constitution centered, and still center, on the possible domination of Hindi, and Hindi gaining an upper hand over all other Indian languages. The changes that have taken place and are still taking place in the country have proved that such apprehensions were not correct. And the English language, which many wanted to be sent back to England along with the British, has gained supremacy over other languages including Hindi.

The varieties of Hindis (Awadhi, Banjari, Bhojpuri, Braj Bhasha, Bundelkhandi, Chambeali, Chattisgarhi, Garhwali, Haryanvi, Kangri, Kulvi, Labani, Magahi, Maithili, Marwari, Mewari, Pahari, Rajasthani, Sadri, Sugali, etc.) combined to form the Hindi of post-independence era helped in the unification of the Hindi-speaking population for demographic purposes (statistical majority), and not for the development of communicative pan-Indian Hindi as envisaged by the framers of the Constitution. Due to the expansion of media network in the past decade, pan-Indian Hindi is developing mainly through the audio-visual mass media. The Hindi thus developed has a greater impact on non-Hindi speaking states. This could lead to a position where pan-Indian Hindi assumes some of the functions of non-Hindi major Indian languages.

A secondary globalization process, thus, may help Hindi, and may not help the other major Indian languages.

13. Globalization and Language in Education: A Case Study of Karnataka

In this context, a recent World Bank (Report No. 24208) India-Karnataka: Secondary Education and The New Agenda for Economic Growth, June 13, 2002) available at the World Bank website, needs to be analyzed.¹⁶ This status report presents an analysis of economic conditions, employment market and their relation to language education scenario in the schools of Karnataka. This can be taken as a sample study. This study functions like a prototype and it generally reflects the scenario in other states and the regional languages. This report debates elaborately on each issue with statistical evidence, interviews, and sample study to prove its points. This presents dismal failures of mother tongue medium schools. The salient points are as follows:

(1) Economy and job opportunities

- a. Due to economic changes, fiscal constraints are in place: 'Recruitment in the public sector, which used to absorb the majority of educated new entrants into the workforce, has virtually come to a standstill (Between 1990 and 1998). The number of public sector jobs had declined, both in government and in public enterprises. For example, overall employment in the Indian Telephones Industries Ltd. (ITIL) had declined from 18,000 to 8,000 in the past few years. Although the company has enrollment quotas for apprenticeship training, no ITI graduate has been absorbed after apprenticeship. Recruitment for government jobs has all but ceased, except for posts of teachers and police constables'. Also, the small-scale industries that offered apprenticeship training for the ITI candidates have closed down due to changes in the market.
- b. Employment growth in the unorganized sector has been very modest, in contrast to the rapid growth in employment in the private organized sector (where the number of jobs has almost doubled between 1994 and 1998).
- c. Also the number and nature of jobs in the manufacturing sector have changed in the last decade due to changes in the economic environment.

(2) Language education

- a. The students who have studied using the Kannada medium at the primary level are at a disadvantage at both the SSLC and PUC levels. English-medium instruction at the elementary school level had a positive effect on passing SSLC examination. About 45% of the SSLC students who passed the exam in the first attempt had studied in the English medium classes. Over 85% of those who have passed on repeat attempts and over 90% of those who failed studied in the Kannada medium schools.
- b. It may be noted that, normally, education in the government schools is through the Kannada medium and in private schools it is through the English medium. English language teaching in the government schools is reportedly of poor quality. The status of the school, whether it is a government or private school, has an impact on the examination results of the students. Among the SSLC students, who passed in the first attempt, only one fifth belongs to the government schools and two thirds belong to private or aided schools. About 85% of the students who studied in the government schools at the elementary level, and about 13% who had studied in the private schools, failed in the SSLC exam. Similarly about 71% of the students who failed in the PUC had studied in the government schools at the elementary stage.
- c. English-medium education at the secondary level influences the likelihood of students continuing further studies for both SSLC and PUC. After passing the PUC, humanities subjects are chosen by 33%, commerce 29%, and engineering by 22% of the students.
- d. The limited aspirations of students in government high schools affect the morale of the teaching force, lower their expectations of student performance, and negatively impacts the quality of teaching.
- e. According to the heads of the educational institutions, many students in government institutions either do not graduate from high school at all, or pass with very low marks, or, therefore, are not able to continue into higher education. Employment options for these students are very limited because many SSLC students were found to lack the ability to apply what had been taught - for example, to take measurements, comprehend a paragraph, or draft a letter. Language teaching is particularly poor and many students cannot easily write a sentence even in Kannada. Students, especially those from rural and Kannada-medium schools, lack oral communication skills and a functional knowledge of English, which are required for work in the modern industrial sector.
- f. The existing policies to encourage participation of students from the Scheduled Castes, or Scheduled Tribes, or agricultural families in higher education, including financial incentives and reservation of seats in institutes of learning, have not been entirely successful in ensuring equitable outcomes at the secondary level. This, in turn, affects the chances of such students in continuing their education. Specifically, students from rural and poor backgrounds do not have the skills needed to compete in the global economy.

(3) Recommendations

- a. The results have significant implications for educational policy and suggest that an integrated approach to language of instruction at different levels is required if equity in educational outcomes is to be promoted.
- b. If English-medium education at the primary level increases the chances of passing at the secondary level, but is provided only in private schools that are accessible to higher-income and more privileged groups, students from poor and disadvantaged groups are denied equitable opportunity to complete secondary education with satisfactory quality.
- c. There is a mismatch in the content of education between the primary and secondary levels. Students apparently require proficiency in English at the secondary and higher secondary levels (even if they are studying in Kannada) but English language teaching in government schools begins only in class 6 and is reportedly of poor quality.
- d. The policy options to improve the outcomes of the poor and disadvantaged students are to strengthen English language teaching in government schools at the primary level, improve instruction at the secondary level in Kannada medium schools, especially in science and mathematics (through teacher training, books, and materials), or enable more students to attend private schools. These options need to be considered carefully and they are not all mutually exclusive.
- e. The medium of instruction at the ITIs is English, which may also hamper the performance of students, especially those from rural backgrounds. In fact, the technical vocabulary in any trade is relatively limited (about 1,000 words) and it may be preferable, in the opinion of the employers, to teach this as an English technical paper along with English communication skills, while ensuring that the basic concepts and skills are taught in Kannada.
- f. The specific areas that need attention are oral and written communication skills, in both Kannada and English, and improving the teaching of mathematics and science, especially the practical applications of these subjects in the world of work.
- g. Karnataka needs to improve equity in the outcomes of secondary and higher education, in particular, for the SC/ST students, those who are from poorer and less educated family backgrounds and those studying in government institutions (especially at the high school level). In order to do this, it needs to improve the quality of primary education, including issues relating to the language of instruction and the mismatch in curricular content between different levels,

14. Indian Mother Tongue Teaching Methodology

During the past half a century or so, we have failed to evolve a mother tongue teaching methodology which is unique to Indian languages, a methodology that would focus on exploit the special characteristics of the structure and vocabulary of Indian languages, taking advantage of the immense similarities between Indian languages. The methodology we have been using is more a mimic of or copy of English teaching methodologies evolved in ideal language learning and teaching situations. Where we have tried to evolve our own strategies, we failed to appreciate the needs of the learners.

For example, in our enthusiasm to ensure a pan-Indian status to the Devanagari script, several courses teaching major Indian languages tried to use that script as the common medium to write the Indian languages at the initial stages of teaching languages like Tamil, Kannada, Bengali, etc. The usefulness and effectiveness of such materials was drastically reduced.

Mother tongue instructional materials focused more on the less powerful and less productive exercises such as fill in the blanks, use in sentences, synonyms, antonyms and polysemy, paraphrasing, and interpretation of the metaphors and similes, etc. Functional and free writing were mentioned, but the linkages between language textbooks and the content and the textbooks of other subjects continued to be very weak.

Excessive dependence on technical terms derived from classical Sanskrit has not helped the easy expression of concepts in a manner understood easily. Sanskritization of Indian languages continues unabated. That it is possible to express our thoughts in our mother tongues effectively, efficiently, and elegantly in a simple and spoken idiom is yet to take roots in the styles adopted in school textbooks.

15. Change in English and Indian Language Teaching Strategy

In formal schooling curriculum, the emphasis of teaching English was on using English literature. While this approach may not have really helped learning English for day-to-day purposes, there was no doubt that it helped broaden the perspective of the students. But now the emphasis has changed. Our focus is only on communicational purposes. A similar trend is set for the teaching of Indian languages as well.

The politicians in power have claimed that this change would help improve our performance in Indian languages and help establish these languages as languages of power even in our economic activities. However, as I explained earlier, English as the language of industrialization and globalization will continue to dominate, despite the claims to the contrary. Only through a clear conscientization process matters relating to national identities, language use, and language identity and retention may be resolved. Since the ruling classes have embraced industrialization and globalization, there is only one possibility, that of hybridization of Indian languages and their use.

16. Hybridization of Language Use

Industrialization has further complicated the language use. Code-mixing, especially mixing of English in Indian language utterances, rather hampers all our effort in expressing our thoughts in Indian languages. The processes of globalization will further increase this tendency towards code-mixing and code replacement. As our students and common men and women become more familiar with the computer keyboard that is in English, and as the use of computer for all forms of communication becomes more and more popular, a benefit of the globalization process via technology advancement, Indians will shrink from using their own languages for even interpersonal written communication.

The day has come wherein the movies are trying to attract the audience with full English titles or their hybridized titles such as H2O, Friends, Duet, Police Story, Lockup Death, Super Star, Ek Chotisi Love Story, etc. Hybridization of Indian expressions has a long history. Sanskrit always enjoyed the distinct advantage of being the most prestigious and standard language. The notions of Devabhasha and the consequent downgrading of the common idiom or the vernacular started long time ago. Buddhist arguments began well with an emphasis on the use of the dialects for effective communication, but, soon, they strengthened the processes of hybridization. From this stage of hybridization encouraged in the past, we moved over to the hybridization caused by the use of English. It looked for a brief period as if this hybridization would cease with the emphasis on Indian languages. However, indeed, the process has been accelerated with the changes in emphasis, or the preference of English as the most preferred medium of instruction throughout the country.

17. Globalization and IT Revolution: English Vs Indian Languages

English is the epicenter of good education now. It is also the epicenter of information technology. The study conducted by the Manufacturers Association of Information Technology (MAIT)¹⁷ sheds light on the usage patterns of English and Indian languages software in India. The highlights of the study are:

1. The presence of a de facto business language, English, has been the proverbial last straw, contributing to the slow pace of growth of multilingual computing. English has become the common standard across the States.
2. Many important sectors like telecom sector have no demand for local language software.
3. Small and medium businesses in the manufacturing sector have low or limited need for local language software, and many have indicated that there is no scope for application in bilingual form.
4. Printing and publishing is the only major industry seeking Indian language software.
5. The returns from Indian language software are low. The parallel market sells the pirated versions for nearly 20% of the original cost (grey market).
6. Lack of universally accepted standards.
7. Absence of familiarity of user interface.
8. Lack of support for multilingual software at the level of operating systems.
9. Users do not know that the Indian language software exists.
10. The current IT market for multilingual computing is between Rs.14 to Rs.16 crores. Hindi and Tamil account for Rs.5 crores. This will grow to Rs.120 to 125 crores in 4 to 5years, etc. Then Hindi and Tamil will be for around Rs.38 crores, etc.
11. Between the year 1999 and 2002, the number of adults accessing Internet has grown from 1.4 million to 6.02 million in the country. Among this 10 metropolitan cities have found growth from 0.9 million to 2.9 million. Accessing the Internet from cyber cafes during the same period has grown by 43 percent and at work places it has dropped from 45.8 percent to 23 percent.

12. The IT can reach masses only through their mother tongues. If it does not happen, masses will try to acquaint themselves with English.

18. Maintaining the Growth and Use of Indian Languages: Against the IT Tide

Another major user of computer technology is the administration wherein the Official language of the Union and the states come into picture. After the promulgation of the Official Language Acts in the decades immediately following the independence, 12 languages (Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Oriya, Punjabi, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu) became Official Languages in various states and union territories of the country. Later, three more languages (Konkani, Nepali, and Manipuri) were added to the list of scheduled languages.

The development of these languages as fit vehicles for education and administration was at different stages from infancy to 6 points in a 0 to 10 scale of growth. Many languages were making faster strides and some were limping. At this juncture, technology came in and hampered their continued all-round and total development. It is a paradox, but it is true. As of today, the Indian language technology has failed to catch up with the fast developing technology. We do not have any robust software that can help the use of Indian languages for administrative purposes or governance. Hence, those Indian languages that had made great strides in their use in administration are unfortunately giving place again to the increased use of English. People who led this revolution in some states and those who argued for its continuance feel helpless with the pervasive technology. Only way in which the Indian languages can fight such technology is by absorbing it in the same speed at which it is developing. This is not taking place as said in the study reported above.

19. Natural Language and the Language of Technology

In this context, a characteristic of natural language and the language of technology may be discussed. The natural language abounds with variation. Variation is the life-line of any living language. It is the critical character. Here, variety gives strength, and adds richness. Unfortunately, the characteristic of variation itself is an impediment for the growth of information technology, as seen in the above-cited report. Uniformity is the much-desired goal here. There is a danger when natural languages absorb technology. They tend to be more standardized or homogenized because the technology becomes easier only with standardization. Moreover, technology at times finds it difficult to capture all the intricacies of a linguistic expression and convention, and opts for things that may not really reflect what the user wants to communicate. To cite one such example, spelling variation is one of the major and natural features that have grown along with the natural languages spoken by groups of people in wide geographical areas. But when a spell check is developed for a language it fails to capture and cater to all such variations present today. The suggestions offered as corrections sometimes make one to laugh. However, it is possible that one-day variations would be taken care of through more sensitive software. And yet the fact remains that technology irons out variation in the name of uniformity.

Since English is the default language of Internet, it gets diffused in the Indian society now with greater speed. We use it in a different way while communicating content and messages. A new form of English, a new genre of Internet English, is fast developing on-line. This is the English that present day students are learning and using. Can we think of any of the Indian languages as a language of Internet, the way English is today? It may take a long time for such a new genre to develop in any Indian language.

In order to control the damage being done to Indian languages due to globalization and information technology, the concept of localization of technologies is advocated. However, even this so-called localization may not percolate down to languages other than Hindi and some major Indian languages. In all the Indian languages, however, a different kind of digital divide is developing. On the one hand, the level of literacy in the mother tongue/regional language is on the increase because of the accelerated effort from the non-formal and informal sectors, and, on the other hand, in the formal sector of education, literacy in mother tongue is losing value in the context of demand for English and computer literacy.

20. Globalization and the Language of Media

Mass media is the major user of Indian languages. In 1987, newspapers were published in 92 Indian languages, whereas, in 2000, newspapers are published in 101 languages and dialects. In addition to this increase in the number of languages used for the publication of newspapers, we also notice dramatic changes: languages are used in hitherto unused contexts by the newspapers, and they constantly and consciously try to use a form of language that communicates in more simple and subtle ways. Historically, notions of prestige and effectiveness in Indian language traditions were more in favor of language styles associated with factors other than ease of communication. This trend will be further strengthened with the globalization and access to new technology.

21. The Changing Directions of Indian Linguistic Research

Earlier, the language developmental activities such as providing a script for a language that does not have any script, preparing learning materials for use by children and adults in minor Indian languages, researching for the preparation of grammars and dictionaries, etc., were pursued for the sake of making these minor languages effective means of communication, and fit vehicles as medium of instruction. In the post-independence period, the Central and State governments established many institutions of languages as a means to develop all the Indian languages as fit vehicles for communication. Along with the developments in technology and to make best use of the same, efforts are now pursued to record and digitize the languages in order to preserve these languages as cultural entities, for archival purposes.

22. To conclude

Offence is the best form of defense. When the era of Indian industrialization began, associating patriotism and nationalism with the development and use of Indian languages

functioned as a strong shield of protection for the Indian languages. Globally, among the nations that were freed from the colonial yoke, there was a resurgence of patriotism, nationalism, and a desire to retain ethnic identities via language identity. However, in the current era of globalization, almost all the Indian languages have been cornered to a position of helpless defense, because the shield is lifted away from them. How they are going to defend their own territories and continue a meaningful existence is the question that we should ponder in the near future.

Whether positive or negative, the effect of globalization on all languages is not uniform. It varies from language to language. It is dependent on the status ascribed to that language. The effect on the different domains of language use in a language is also different. Some kinds of language use get more benefit from the processes of globalization and industrialization, but other kinds of language use may not benefit at all. Language use in the domain of mass media, for example, is bound to benefit, but, as I explained earlier, the language use in the area of medium of instruction may be threatened by these developments. Industries that began to use Indian languages will soon give up their effort, because they may not find any need for it. Or these industrial concerns may change hands or even be closed down. For example, the pride of Karnataka, NGEF in Bangalore, developed operational manuals, and glossaries in Kannada for use in their factories. Now the company is closed, and there is none to use the same. The language development activity so far achieved will be no more in demand.

The much talked about global village (of which we are ultimately going to be members) has only English. English is the dominant language in the Internet. English is the language of cyberspace in India. Since it is the language of globalization, it already has the well-defined or allocated status of the global language. It will be the lingua franca of that village. All other languages, irrespective of their status today in their countries, will be local languages in that "glorious global village". Pluralism is now at stake at the international level too.

What is the linguistic response to globalization in India? Succumbing to the pressure or remolding its planning with a rational outlook? Along with economic reforms, do we need language reforms too? We may have to have a second look at the status and functioning of Indian languages. The languages have to workout their own survival strategies. What we had in the era of independence is society-centered language planning. Now we will have an economy-centered language planning. It is necessary for the language planners to look at language issues from a different perspective like the economists looking at economic issues from a different angle. Both negative and positive policy options exist for language planning. Attempt of the Governments of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu not to grant permission to English medium schools is a negative policy option. Making all efforts to provide good education in Kannada or Tamil medium and creating proper economic avenues to students from this medium is an affirmative policy option. The strategies adopted by Tamil and Kannada lovers are to retain their hold through halting the progress of English. These are defensive measures. But, as I said earlier offence is the best form of defense. And this comes from a conscious and deliberate positive action in favor of Indian languages as a community activity. Do we

need laws to preserve our languages? Language legislations have not really helped in the past in India.

A person who popularized the Darshani cult 'less expensive small eateries' in Bangalore said that availability of these small eateries has prevented the entry of multinationals like the Kentucky Fried Chicken and MacDonal'd's in a big way in Bangalore, though Bangalore is as cosmopolitan as the other big cities in the country. We may have to take a cue from him.

In the digital society that has a knowledge-based economy, all Indian languages are endangered, if they do not cope up with new language planning strategies. I do not think that liberalization, privatization, and globalization are going to provide any safe pedestrian crossings for Indian languages and for the users of Indian languages. It will not create or provide any equality of status and opportunities for these languages. Globalization actually expands and reinforces inequality among them.

We celebrate multilingualism and pluralism. We accepted it, and tried to preserve it. What we have to do now is to start practicing and promoting the same in all domains. With globalization, plurality is endangered. So, we should address ourselves to link economic growth to multilingualism and plurality, and take concerted steps towards that. We have to think about Indian languages in the international age from a global perspective.

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