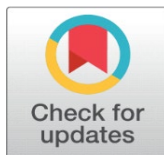


# MOTHER TONGUE AS THE BASIS OF OUR EDUCATION

Dr. Gaurav Ranjan <sup>1</sup>, Dr. Sujeet Kumar <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Assistant Professor, Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, Central University of Odisha, India

<sup>2</sup> Assistant Professor, Department of Mass Communication and Media, Central University of South Bihar, India



## Corresponding Author

Dr. Gaurav Ranjan,  
[gauravholymonu@gmail.com](mailto:gauravholymonu@gmail.com)

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## ABSTRACT

The mother tongue based education has long been contested issue. In the case of India which is most linguistically diverse nation in world, it is important to pay attention for the protection of regional languages and education can play best mean regarding this issue. This paper is focus on importance of mother tongue and mother tongue based education. Further the article will also discuss the new education policy which recommends the mother tongue based education. This research paper is an outcome of ICSSR funded project.

**Keywords:** Mother Tongue, Regional Language, New Education Policy

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Mother tongue is a language which we acquire by birth, it is easiest form of communication for anyone. One's mother tongue is not just a tool of communication, it's much more than that, it is memory of our family, bridge connecting to ancestors and their fairy tales. While speaking and learning in mother tongue one does not need to learn any grammar and rules. According to Fasold mother tongue is "It must be used in everyday life and it must be spoken fluently and with ease by a sizeable proportion of the population." Studies have consistently proven that those who choose to receive education in their own language or mother tongue easily develop stronger cognitive skills, critical thinking, reasoning, logical thinking and creativity. India is a rich diverse country linguistically and India comes on 4th in terms of language spoken (Ethnologue,2019). India has countless dialects and 22 official language. It shows richness and diversity of india. Indian language and dialects are

broadly categorized under following major families Indo-European, Austro-Asiatic family, Dravidian, Tibeto-Burmese. (Grierson, 1927, census India C-16, 2011). Getting education in one's mother tongue increases inclusion and academic performance. Our founding fathers clearly understood importance of mother tongue and that is why the Eight Schedule of the Indian constitution consisted 22 languages such as Assamese, Bengali, Hindi, Kashmiri, Malayalam, Maithili, Sanskrit, Urdu and so on.

According to 2011 census, "There are 19,569 mother tongues in India and 96.71 per cent population uses one of the 22 scheduled languages as their mother tongue and remaining 3.29 per cent choose other languages." Since we can easily understand and communicate in our mother tongue that is why our government is also focusing on to utilizing our mother tongue in Academic affairs. First of all mother tongue enhances our cognitive ability and increases our self confidence. Furthermore students do not have to put extra effort as they have to do for colonial language. India still is a land of village and in village people still communicate in their local languages unlike cities where we have to communicate in Hindi or English. There is a famous saying for India's rich diversity, language and culture "Kosh-kosh par panibadle, charkosh par wani" meaning taste of water changes at every two miles and language changes at every four miles in India. Such is the diversity we have in our country.

## **2. MOTHER TONGUE BASED EDUCATION**

If students get education in their mother tongue it will help in their overall development as they can easily understand the subject without having to translate in their language. Hence it prevents rote learning. It helps in their social and cultural development which can further form a base for moral development. Learning in mother tongue gives students a sense of comfort, encourages them to participate thus students feel that their voice is being heard and prevents delay in learning. The participation of parents and enthusiasm increased in their child's education. They can easily help their child in homework, which results in less dropout. Mother tongue based education tries to include left out groups and their language. This will also include those who historically and socially disadvantaged.

Mahatma Gandhi in *Young India* (1921), stated "The foreign medium has caused brain fag, put an undue strain upon nerves of our children, made them crammers and imitators, unfitted them for filtering their learning to the family or the masses. The foreign medium has made our children practically foreigners in their own land. It is the greatest tragedy of the existing system."

Imposing other language on child at early age will impact the confidence as they have to put extra efforts for language. Many research confirm that "reading in writing in the mother tongue is useful and beneficial to the students in obtaining different subjects and there is no restriction on obtaining another language by same students."

## **3. INDIAN CONSTITUTION AND LANGUAGE**

The Indian Constitution provides protection of mother tongue/regional language through various articles. Under fundamental rights of Indian Constitution article 29 provides "All citizens have right to conserve their language and prohibits discrimination on the basis of language."

Article 305A of the Indian Constitution provides that "It shall be the endeavor of every state and of every local authority within the state to provide adequate

facilities for instruction in the mother tongue at the primary stage of education to children belonging to linguistic minority groups.” Here we can see our Constitution provides protection and promotion of education in mother tongue /regional language.

According to Article 305B of the Indian Constitution “The president should appoint a special officer for linguistic minorities to investigate all matters relating to the constitutional safeguard for linguistic minorities to investigate all matters relating to the constitutional safeguard for linguistic minorities and to report to him. The president should place all such reports before the parliament and send to the state government concerned.”

The Supreme Court of India in its verdict in the case of English student parents association V. State of Karnataka and Ors. Recognised the importance of education in mother tongue. As well as in Associated managements of primary and secondary schools in Karnataka V. The state of Karnataka by its secretary department of education and ors.

#### **4. NEW EDUCATION POLICY AND MOTHER TONGUE.**

In india education comes under concurrent list of the constitution, which means that both Union and States can make law regarding education. The new Education policy (NEP) 2020 emphasis on education in mother tounge /local language, as envisaged under para 4.11 of NEP 2020, that “whenever possible, the medium of education will be the mother tounge/regional language until at least grade five, but preferably until grade Eight and beyond,” both in public and private schools. The NEP 2020 is the biggest reform in Indian education system after the National Educational Policy 1986. The NEP 2020 recommends that in school students will learn two native language out of three language. The three language formula of NEP will promote cross-sectional understanding,the interaction between parents and child increased as parents can involve themselves in their child education and provide assistance with home work. Teaching in mother tongue helps teachers to explain complex concept easily. The NEP would bring employment to rural and remote areas and can easily cover the inadequacy of staff by hiring locals as both teachers and students largely belongs to similar locality, it will creat friendly environment in schools and could also impact the dropouts. Education in mother tongue preserves the local language hence it preserve culture and generates pride and respect for one’s culture. As language plays most imporant role in any culture and by giving education in mother tounge, it will also helps in building a connection to one’s ancestry and history.

Using mother tongue impact children’s attendance and it increased higher rates of participation. On the one hand it will prevent language based discrimination whereas on the other hand it will create opportunities for the less advantaged communities. The promotion regional languages are sine qua non (absolutely necessary) for strengthen equity and cultural development of India.

Language also preserve traditions hence the extinction of culture can be prevented by giving mother tongue based education. It helps in addressing the poor educational performance. However section 29 (f) of chapter v under the Right to Education Act, 2009 states “ Medium of instruction shall, as far as practicable, be in child’s mother tongue.”

According to United Nations Educational,Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), that mother tongue during early stage of school is beneficial for pupils. YaredSeid research on Impact of learning in mother tounge in early grades suggests

that students who completed early education (primary education) in mother tongue learns English better after they switch. It shows the ability to adopt other language and their learning skills. Even the former Director-General, Irina Bokova believes on the importance of mother tongue in education. She stated that "Mother language in a multilingual approach are essential components of quality education, which is itself the foundation for empowering women and men and their societies." Professor Jim Cummins has emphasised on the importance of mother tongue in education. This research is based on the relationship between child development and mother tongue.

Mahatma Gandhi stated "If the English educated neglect, as they have done and even now continue, as some do, to be ignorant of their mother tongue, linguistic starvation will abide." The existing literature has unanimously believes that mother tongue based education beneficial for children. The regional language and mother tongue plays important role in educational advancement and reminder to understand the one's root and historical significance. Language plays role of catalyst for inclusive growth and development. Thus the removal of language barrier in education creates great opportunity for student belongs to rural background.

### **CONFLICT OF INTERESTS**

None.

### **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

None.

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