

Essay on Language Crisis in India

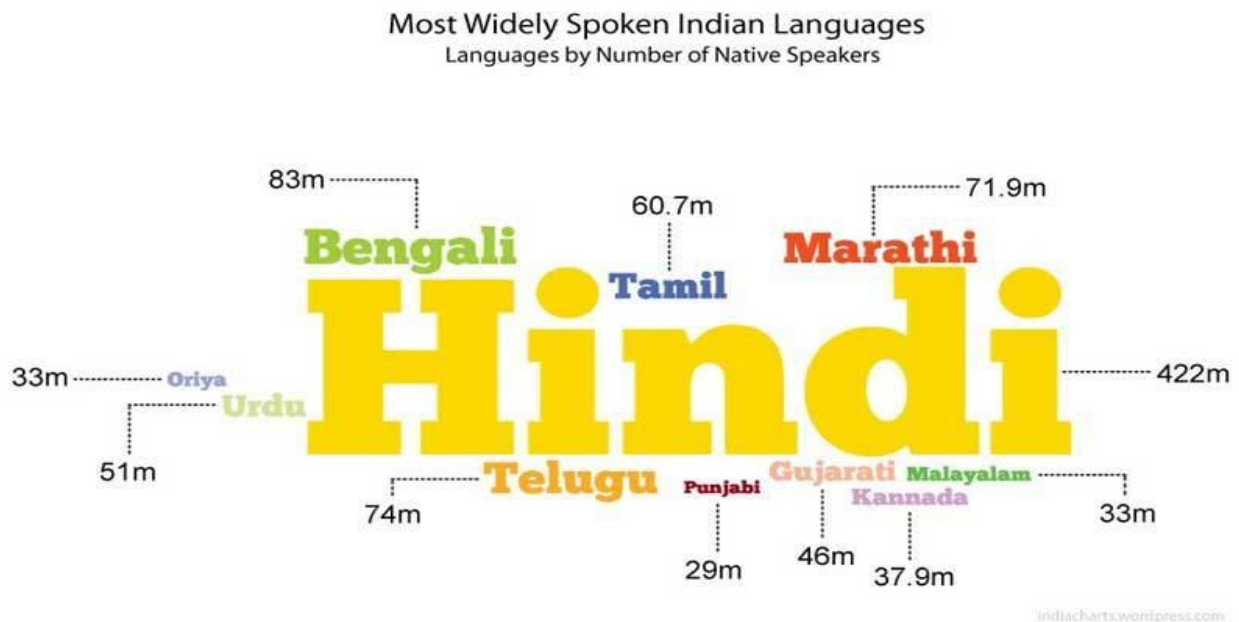
Language is an integrating factor for a nation's unity but it is a matter of regret and concern that language has become a problem tending to be a disintegrating force in India. In accordance with the provisions of our constitution adopted in 1950. Hindi became the official language of the Union Government with effect from January, 25, 1965. However, the proposed switch over from English to Hindi sparked off a row leading to violence in the non-Hindi speaking states of the country. It was an unprecedented but not an unexpected crisis.



Ever since, the subject has kicked off an unpleasant atmosphere of fervent lingual chauvinism and the language problem has hung in the balance. English continues as link language. The crisis has aggravated and reached a stage of deadlock mainly due to the fact that more stress is being laid on the state language than on the national language. This is possibly due to the provision in the constitution, for Hindi is not acceptable to all sections of the population. The states have unnecessarily given the issue a tinge of regionalism and alleged antagonism of the centre towards the states in trying to impose Hindi upon them.

Tribal Languages in India

Obviously, a state language cannot take the place of the national language. It is impossible for any state to either isolate itself, from the rest of the country linguistically or to be wholly homogeneous linguistically. Reorganisation or demarcation of states on linguistic principle was not a very good or satisfying solution as linguistic minorities in a state are always there are just cannot be wiped out. Besides, the problem will only grow with industrialisation and growth in industrial population through the migration of labour and personnel in each state. Also, each state will have an influx of employed from both Central and State Services hailing from other states and linguistic regions. All these factors establish that it is not possible for any state to enforce its language within its own boundaries.



It is also not easy to devise an appropriate formula to meet the requirements of the linguistic minorities if any state wants to enforce its state language. A few factors can be listed in support of the insistence on state language. It cannot be denied that primary education has to be imparted through the mother tongue. The development of a language depends upon the literature it produces. Besides a language is a vehicle of expression and communication. When the bulk of the people know a language, it has to be used.

Indian Tribes and Their Languages

A person employed in another state has to know the language of the state for facility of work. But, it is pertinent to raise the question, whether at the government level the state language should be used to the exclusion of all other languages. From a realistic and practical point of view the answer is firmly in the negative. It is the national language which should be the language at the government level in High Courts and in Universities or else, true national and emotional integration of the country would continue to be illusory. Linguistic division of India cannot be a permanent solution and could also be detrimental in the long run.



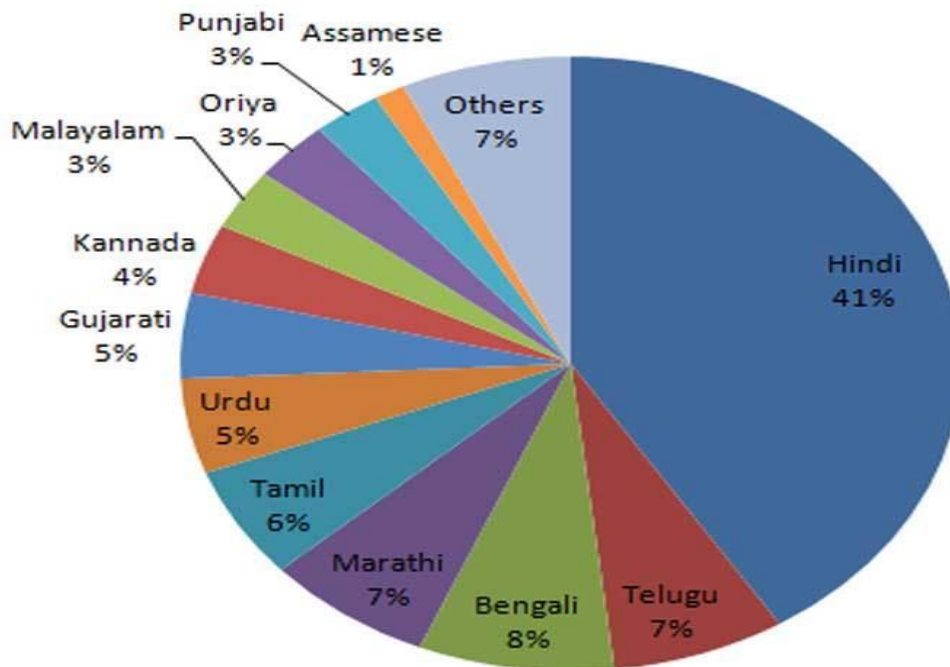
Inter Communication among the states, exchange of students and teachers among universities. Contact among the High Courts and the Supreme Court and such measures would go a long way in cementing the cause of national integration.

There can just be no question of forcible imposition of Hindi and until Hindi is not acceptable to all the states. English has to continue at the level of inter stated communication and other higher levels. Inter departmental communication too, will ultimately have to be through the national language with the continuance English for the time being. All high-ranking officials and personnel are not from one state arid furthermore. Inter-departmental communication is linked with the communication with the centre and other states. All this calls for evolving a national language.

Number Of Tribal Languages In India

It is pertinent to note that as English is presently accepted as the language for inter-departmental work, there is no difficulty in communicating with linguistic minorities in their own language at local levels. As a matter of fact, there are provisions in the civil procedure code and in the criminal procedure code that empower the state governments to determine the language to be used in each court within the territories administered by, such governments. In many states there is more than one court for the convenience of the linguistic minorities. Similarly, the Government may determine in what language correspondence with Panchayats of particular areas will be carried on.

Language Distribution in India (2001 Census)



Coming to the English language one has to carefully consider its role in our national life. For a century and a half English has been the official language of the government in the states as well as the centre and the -medium of higher education, technological and scientific research as also industry and commerce. It has been one of the most efficient instruments for all modern development. English was also responsible for making India a unilingual region for administrative and commercial purposes. It is unrealistic to at once break way from English.

Indian Tribes and Their Languages

It will lead to a breakdown in the sphere of administration justice education. Scientific research and economic activities and bring serious deterioration in our national life. Besides, national solidarity will be shattered in the absence of an alternative to English. English therefore has to continue to be a link for intercommunication in the higher fields of administration technology. University education and scientific research. There should be no problem in making Hindi the link language at the popular level. Some even suggest the simple solution of the status queue and continue English in its former position at the centre and in the states.



Another solution advanced replacement of English by Hindi all over the country. Many favour the three language formula. It is beyond doubt that for national

integration the graduates of all Indian universities and technological institutes should form a single intellectual pool. A national language should evolve and develop on a universal scale. But a realistic and rationalistic policy is called for in connection with the issue of national language. At present the issue is fraught with emotional over tones and unrealistic attitudes and no solution to the crisis will please all.

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