



Changing Language Scenario from Literature to Communication: A Critical Study

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Abstract:

In college education, English used to be taught as a compulsory language in all semesters of the first and second years of undergraduate studies, especially for the purpose of being a link language. At the same time, the option of English as a second language or Additional language was also available to the students. In this course, students studied poetry, stories, plays, novels, and various writings with the aim of enriching their language abilities. As a result, the students' language became enriched and they developed taste of literature too. To keep up with the changing times, the New National Education Policy 2020 transformed the mandatory status of English and now English is being taught as Ability Enhancement Course (AEC) only for the first semester of the first year of the degree. It also does not include literature, but maximum priority is given to Communication and Conversation. Although the motto is good yet students are missing out literature. As a result students are missing out the vocabulary – building, literary compositions, syntax, and new ways of expression they are enhanced through the study of literature. Yes, the goal of policymakers is Communicative English. The language of students also needs to be rich for effective communication. Only then does Communication become effective. However, in the New National Education Policy, the approach to language, especially in graduate education, seems to be limited to a communicative one.

Key-words: *Multilingualism, Link Language, Ability Enhancement, Skill-oriented Curriculum, Holistic Development*

Introduction:

Language is not just a subject. It is a window to enter into the new culture. If the students attempt to acquire any link language, their view may broaden. The students may avail uncountable opportunities through acquiring new languages. With specific purposes the policy-makers had included the languages at graduation level. If we wish to make our



new generation able to compete with new and upcoming challenges, they must be multilingual. While completing the degree the learners get chance to acquire three languages but now unfortunately English is limited to Ability Enhancement Course (AEC) and only for commencing semester of the degree. Instead of language in New National Education Policy 2020 it is getting changed the language scenario from literature to communicative having only Two Credits in the first semester of the degree.

Characterization:

The New National Education Policy 2020 emphasizes to provide the education to the students through their mother-tongues. In NEP medium of instruction is primarily the mother tongues of the learners. The policy advocates that the mother tongue ought to be as the primary teaching language in early education to enhance comprehension and reduce dropout rates. It helps the learners build a strong conceptual foundation in a language they are comfortable with before transitioning to other languages. It is really good decision but it does not mean that they should not get English as a Link Language especially when they complete their degrees. English is a link language and we must continue to teach it for undergraduate students as a core language subject. Before this there was Compulsory English for First Year and Second Year of the degree. Now there is only AEC for First Semester and in Second Semester the students have to choose any Indian Language. It means the students cannot study any Indian Language in First Semester and English in Second Semester. Actually they should learn three languages as subjects. Regarding this Infanta Vincy R & Greta D'Souza say, "*The Three Language Formula (TLF) was formulated in 1968 National Education Policy resolution. The TLF recommends that each child should be taught three languages in the school education.*" (p.34)

In NEP it is focused that memorization to skill-based and experiential learning should be provided to the students especially in language teaching. It aims to inculcate critical thinking, to foster language abilities. But that time we must be careful that there is huge gap between language base of remote area students and city students. Ramyabrata Chakrabortya writes,

India's National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 emphasizes a trans-formative shift from rote memorization to skill-based, experiential learning, especially in language education. This approach aims to foster critical thinking and digital literacy, aligning with global educational trends that position English not just as a medium of communication but also as a means of accessing global knowledge and



participating in a digitally connected world (Sinha, 2023). This view supports NEP 2020's integration of digital tools and content into the curriculum to enhance learning outcomes (Ministry of Education, 2020). However, the implementation of this vision faces challenges due to India's pronounced digital divide. Students in rural and under-served regions often lack access to devices, stable internet, and digital infrastructure, hindering the equitable realization of NEP's goals. As Sharma (2022) notes, these disparities create significant barriers to achieving the policy's digital literacy objectives uniformly across the country. (pp.791-792)

To compete with new challenges and to grab the new opportunities syllabus and curriculum have been updated in NEP 2020 but the status of English as a Compulsory Language is transferred to Communicative Language. About this Ramyabrata Chakrabortya notes,

The shift towards a competency-based curriculum has had a significant influence on how English is taught and assessed. NEP 2020 mandates that syllabi and textbooks be restructured to reflect real-world communicative needs rather than abstract grammatical content (MoE, 2020). For assessment, the policy recommends continuous formative evaluation over high-stakes summative exams. Tools such as portfolios, oral presentations, and reflective journals are introduced to evaluate language proficiency in a more holistic manner (Gupta, 2022). This marks a paradigm shift from rote memorization to skill-based learning, aligning assessment practices with the policy's learner-centric philosophy. The aim is to ensure that students not only understand English but are also able to use it effectively in academic, social, and professional settings. (p.790)

If we think that Literature should be offered only for those students who want to opt it as major subject. It is not good because sometimes intentionally such subjects ought to be given to the students for their future progress. At this age the students think regarding only and only to get good marks but it is moral duty of the policy-makers that they should include such papers in the syllabus which will enhance language abilities of the learners. Prof. Rajesh Zankar writes,

English literature plays a vital role in the development of English language. Literature is not just remain to provide thought, problem, solution or vision only but literature today is understanding the new challenges, terms, coinages, linguistic changes before English. Scholars are focusing on the linguistic approach, socio-



linguistic approach, inter-disciplinary approach and so on of English language.
(p.62)

In NEP medium of instruction is being offered and that is the mother-tongue of the learners. Beside this they may have opportunities to study second and third languages at Secondary and Higher Secondary Levels. It will promote cognitive and cultural abilities of the students. With English as global Language, Local Languages are also the integral parts of the syllabus. Unluckily it is limited to Secondary and Higher Secondary Levels. It should have been continued to Degree Level. Mr. Nilesh Guruchal states,

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020's emphasis on multilingualism acknowledges the importance of multiple languages in shaping a person's cognitive and cultural abilities. By promoting the learning of local languages alongside global ones, the policy fosters linguistic diversity. English, as an international language, plays a crucial role in global communication, but its inclusion in the curriculum must be balanced with local languages to preserve cultural identities. The dual language approach in the policy encourages the use of English in the context of local languages, thus expanding the scope of literature in education. (p.4)

At Higher and University Education Levels, English syllabus has been reformed to be more employ ability-driven and skill-oriented, integrating applied English with practical and experiential learning. Our most of the students try to learn English as a subject not as a language. It is very harmful for the objectives of the Education Policy. Instead of acquiring language they attempt to focus to get only good numbers in the examination. As a result they do not get the satisfaction of acquiring a new language, just they pass the examination. About this Infanta Vincy R & Greta D'Souza opine,

The inevitability of these examinations creates anxiety in the process of learning and repeated failures over the years eventually results in aversion towards learning the language among the students. To respond to the students' immediate needs the teachers plan their classes in the examination point of view and this affects the prime goal of English classroom which is of language fluency and communication development. (p.35)

It is our duty to make the students aware and understand that English is as a Skill-oriented Language not just a subject to only pass and carry on. In India English is also learned as a second language. It means it is alternative to Hindi. It would be really



beneficial for Communicative Approach if Literature is included in AEC. There are the outcomes of the Researches that the language learning landscape is shifting to include technology like AI, IoT and apps, more focus on out-of-classroom, professional use, and incorporated approaches like Content and Language Integrated Learning. It highlights to update English Language Teaching at graduation level. Of course the focus should be skill-based but be cautious that language is well developed through its literature. In support to this Ramyabrata Chakrabortya remarks,

Given India's rich linguistic diversity—with 22 scheduled languages and hundreds of regional dialects—the policy promotes a multilingual model of instruction. It recommends the use of the mother tongue or local language as the medium of instruction at least until Grade 5, preferably until Grade 8, to support better comprehension and cognitive development in early learners (MoE, 2020). Simultaneously, NEP 2020 acknowledges the growing importance of English as a global lingua franca, essential for accessing knowledge networks, participating in international discourse, and competing in global job markets. Therefore, while promoting regional languages at the foundational level, the policy strategically integrates English language learning at higher stages of education to ensure both cultural rootedness and global readiness. (p.787)

Before the implementation of NEP 2020 many times by the government it is clearly said that there is no change in workload but if we observe carefully that time it is understood well that the workload of English and other languages has been reduced due to the communicative approach. Yes, Education must be skill-based but the languages are in the words of Thomas De Quincey 'the Literature of Knowledge'. Changes ought to be accepted but we must carry on the core subjects. It depends that how NEP is implemented. Regarding this Mr. Nilesh Guruchal observes,

The National Education Policy 2020 offers a promising framework for re-imagining the study of English Literature in India. By fostering inclusivity, interdisciplinarity, and skill-oriented learning, the policy aligns the discipline with global standards while retaining its cultural relevance. However, the successful implementation of these reforms will require collaborative efforts from educators, institutions, and policymakers. (p.7)

**Conclusion:**

It is proclaimed that the NEP aims to make a new generation that would be confident in its cultural roots through regional languages while still being globally competent with strong English proficiency and essential skills. The inclusion of papers on useful subjects like Indian Knowledge System, Indian Constitution, etc. in the NEP is a good thing, but it does not seem logical to withdraw the papers of languages. If all the students have English language subject for the first and second years of their degree, it will definitely be helpful for the holistic development.

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