

Linguistic Landscaping in India

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Abstract: India is a land of languages. Hundreds of languages have been flourishing in our country for centuries. The history of development of language in India is remarkable. India has a diverse linguistic landscape. Constitution's Article 8 recognizes 22 major languages in India. Hindi is currently the third most spoken language in the world and its speakers and learners are dispersing over the globe. People may easily be recognised by the language they use, and by listening to their speech one can determine where they come from. The primary tool for influencing the future is language. India's primary topic is linguistic landscaping, which demonstrates the drive and desire to advance the country's progress. We study linguistics, which is the repository of language knowledge. Only with the aid of linguistics it is feasible to examine language in-depth.

Keywords: Evolution, Indian languages, linguistic landscaping, education, globalization.

Introduction: The foundation of human knowledge and communication is language. It bridges the gap between communities, cultures, and individuals. It allows us to express thoughts, emotions and complicated ideas. The evolution of oral communication from prehistoric forms to contemporary languages is constant, adjusting to shifts in society and technological breakthroughs. Through contacts, migration, and culture exchanges, language is always changing. It incorporates customs and tradition from many facets of people's lives.

“Language is a structured system of communication that consists of grammar and vocabulary. It is the primary means by which humans convey meaning, both in spoken and written forms, and may also be conveyed through sign languages.”¹

The primary component of human existence is language. The two main components of our daily activities are communication and languages. We use language from the moment we get up in the morning until we go to bed at night. Humans from caves have moved into multistorey buildings, thanks to their knowledge and communication skills. Man has begun to swim deep into the ocean and fly like a bird. Language is the main factor separating civilized and uncivilized societies. It is the sole thing that allows us to learn about someone's history and level of expertise.

What's important to comprehend in this case is how language has developed. Some trace their roots back to the Neolithic and Palaeolithic periods. The planet is home to a large number of languages. Beyond one or two languages, it is impossible to know every language in the world. Less people are interested in the origins of these languages. According to biblical accounts, after the Lord gave Adam language, the people became arrogant and built the Tower of Babel in an effort to approach Heaven. However, the Lord was a vengeful God, and after he destroyed the tower, the people and their languages dispersed. This is the Tower of Babel Theory and it is found in Bible.

Renowned linguist Noam Chomsky asserts that language has changed over 200,000 years. His hypothesis about the evolution of language is similar to biblical theory in that it notes that a particular mutation occurred in the brain of a single individual—Prometheus, not Adam—and that it was from him that the language spread to all other individuals, forming the world's languages.

“Language acquisition is not a step-by-step process of generalization, association, and abstraction, going from linguistic data to the grammar, and that the subtlety of our

understanding transcends by far what is presented in experience.”²

Another hypothesis of evolution, called the Evolution theory, contends that changes in the surrounding environment are what led to the emergence of language.

According to Hindu belief, the language originated with Saraswati, the wife of Brahma. Both language and humans are created by a supernatural source. In the realm of language generation in India, we must express our profound gratitude to the oldest document ever written in Sanskrit. The mother of all languages in the world is none other than Saraswati according to Hindu Mythology. Saraswati Vandana contains a shloka that attests to her status as the goddess of languages.

मनो मणिमहायोगे वागीश्वरी नमो नमः । वाग्भ्यै वरदहस्तायै वरदायै नमो नमः ॥³

“Salutations to her who is spiritual, a great yogi and Goddess of words,
Salutations to the Goddess of sound who holds a hand in blessing and blesses.”

In India, the language spoken by the people is multilingual. India is home to several language families, including Indo-Aryan, Dravidian, Austro-Asian, and others. According to Article 343 of the Indian Constitution, Hindi written in Devanagari script is the official language of the Union, with English being used for official purposes. Subsequently, The Official Languages Act, 1963, a constitutional amendment, permitted Hindi and English to continue being used in the Indian government indefinitely, until new legislation was passed.

22 languages are listed in the Eighth Schedule of the Indian the Constitution. These languages are known as scheduled languages and are accorded official recognition, status, and support.

In addition, Kannada, Malayalam, Odia, Sanskrit, Tamil, and Telugu have been designated as classical languages by the Indian government. Languages that are autonomous and have extensive roots are granted this classification.

“One must emphasize that LL (Linguistic Landscaping) is of great significance in India and has even greater potential in many parts of the world and that it will lead to formation of an independent branch through which multilingualism can be portrayed toponymically, politonimically, ethnonymically and social psychologically.”⁴

If linguistic research intends to ascertain language use and choice, it should concentrate on people's behavioural index. Media, industry, and technology should all be included. Social scientists and linguists should be engaged with linguistic landscaping to ensure comprehensive surveys. It is important to note that, in the Indian context, a language barrier does not always lead to conflict with another language group when speakers are either in close or intense contact with one another. In the case of children, for example, they frequently confuse two language families, making it difficult to identify the original language family. This is because, as soon as they begin speaking with other group members, they begin to absorb the linguistic traits of both language families, gradually creating their own unique language system from these linguistic groups. For example, a youngster may begin speaking in Hindi and, when requested to say something, may end up responding in Malvi, Nimadi, or Magadhi, depending on whatever language best suits the initial linguistic tone. People sentimentally get devoted to both of the languages they regard to be their own during this process of linguistic mixing; children who have such views are best defined as intentionally activating their own languages.

“There are essentially two approaches to account for the acquisition of language. The first approach assumes that language is learned like other behaviours. The second approach assumes that language is innate and that no real-life situation is they're of even necessary.”⁵

Now it is also true that the process of economic liberalization has come to its final stage. Economic liberalization has removed obstacles from an economic perspective, propelling developed societies into positions of economic take off rather than merely pulling developing nations into their boot traps. As the world becomes a more manageable and adaptive web of harmonious relationships, the emergence of a global language is obvious. A trend toward the creation of a global community is what we are seeing now. Building a national image is now crucial for a country in order to draw in international corporations. Foreign organizations can be hesitant to invest and might search for an alternative. If the goal of liberalization is to eliminate economic inequality via all available measures, then it should be seen as a way to bring the masses closer together. Mutual understanding and interest in the "give and take" policy should exist between the nations. They ought to hold conferences and seminars with an emphasis on language development. Only through the program of instructors and faculty members switching from one highly regarded institute to another can languages be promoted.

The language that is most frequently used in public spaces is English. Signboards in the majority of stores have English names, such as Aggarwal stores, Neema cloth house, Kothari market, etc. Even trendy names like Shoppe, Boutique, or Parlor have started to be used. Newspaper names have started to be used in English, for example, Hindustan Times. All nameplates in the houses, marriage invitations and other event cards are printed in English.

The Lord Macaulay's Minute of 1835, which produced the English Education Act of 1835, is mostly credited with starting English language instruction in India. This took the place of the current educational and socioeconomic advancement systems. Then came the Woods Despatch Act of 1854, which acknowledged the importance of Indian languages for public education in addition to the dominant function of English education. English education was provided to India during its independence as a legacy of the British. English is the primary language of

education and research and is also viewed as a window on the globe that gives access to scientific and technological knowledge.

At the individual level English is viewed as 'the language of opportunity', 'the language of development' and 'the language of upward social mobility'. jobs that carry status and good pay packet demand a fairly high level of competence in functional English.⁶

Additionally, English plays a significant role in facilitating the social and geographic mobility of average people. In promoting national unification and unity, it has proven instrumental. The sole language of instruction for higher education in India is English. Though English is primarily the favoured language, higher education in the arts and humanities is offered in Hindi, English, or the regional standard. There is a growing demand from the public for children to be admitted to these schools, indicating support for English as a medium of teaching.

CONCLUSION: In a multilingual and pluricultural nation such as India, the marketing domain is shaped by a combination of educational, social, political, cultural, and demographic factors that allocate varying values to languages at different levels and for different reasons. Globalization does indeed allow for the dominance of one language over another. An excessive focus on native tongues may also be harmful. Establishing a wholesale market in a bilingual nation will probably be challenging since different marketplaces will be restricted to their own demographic boundaries. However, this does not imply that the regional languages used in local markets are free. There are standards in place to ascertain the relative worth of languages in the central market, and if citizens uphold these standards, the nation may establish a universal lingua franca or its own wholesale market. Only when local markets shift significantly to follow the rules set out by the central market can there be peace. A national sociolinguistic framework

requires that the languages be understood not in terms of their own meanings but rather in terms of their relative places within the nation's linguistic complex.

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