

**FUTURE OF ENGLISH IN INDIA**

**OR**

**LANGUAGE PROBLEM IN THE COUNTRY TODAY**

**OR**

**SHOULD ENGLISH BE ABOLISHED AS A SUBJECT OF STUDY?**

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India is a vast country inhabited by people speaking different languages. Languages has, therefore, been a very controversial issue right since India became free. Different political leaders and educationists have been expressing different opinions on the subject. Even today the issue remains as unresolved as it was half a century ago.

English was introduced in our schools and colleges by the Britishers. It gradually took firm roots in the soil of our hand. India is a vast country. English played an important role in the freedom struggle. The contribution of English in this respect cannot be undermined.

It was believed that after the departure of the English from India, English would also be discarded. But, in reality, this language has continued to occupy an important place in the country. It was laid down by our Constituent Assembly that Hindi, our national language, would replace English within 15 years. All felt that the common language of the country must be some Indian language. But circumstances took such a shape that English had to be recognized as the second official language of the country.

India is trying to become a powerful nation in all spheres. The economic, social and political life of the nation is to be changed. It is an uphill task. Progress is possible only if the people of India freely interact with their counterparts in other developed countries of the world. The world is becoming smaller day by day. People in other countries are making rapid progress in numerous fields of knowledge. English is our life-line of contact with the outside world. It is an important bridge for the traffic of thought between the East and the West. English continues to be an important language used by computers and commercial establishments in major parts of the world. In India too it continues to be a mark of education.

Advanced knowledge in various science and the latest researches can come to India through the medium of English. We cannot read every book through translations in Hindi or in any other regional language. By depriving ourselves of this language, we shall be missing the glorious works of Shakespeare, Shelley, Keats and Byron. English has a literature of love and freedom, nature and adventure. Even some renowned Indians have produced their best work through the medium of this language. Authors like Nehru, Radhakrishnan, Aurobindo Ghosh, Mulk Raj Anand, Sarojini Naidu and Gandhi wrote their books in English. In fact, English is an important international language.

Regional languages have not yet fully developed. Some universities have taken steps to develop the regional languages fully. But it will take a long time before regional languages are in a position to replace English.

Recently, some Southern states in India have been expressing fears regarding the imposition of Hindi on them. The Government has assured them that English would continue to stay and to be used along with Hindi. English is, therefore, essential for national unity. There is little doubt that English has come to stay in this country as an important language. Almost every new private school being opened in the country is an English medium school. English has come to be recognized not only as a mark of education but also as a mark of status and prestige.

The lovers of English will, however, have to accept a subdued place for English in the changing state of affairs. It is being increasingly realized that English should be developed and taught more as a library language than as a language of refined literature and rich thought. Moreover, English can no longer continue to remain the only language of opportunity. Only recently the Central Government allowed the use of regional languages as medium of examination in all competitive examinations for class I and II posts. This shows that English may never have its pre-1947 status in times to come. It will, however, have to be used along with Hindi and the regional languages of the country for all times to come.