

EMERGENCE, GROWTH AND APPLICABILITY OF LANGUAGE POLICY IN KARNATAKA

Bhadragiriyaiah.K.C.

*Asst. Professor, Govt. First Grade College for Women, Vijayanagar, Mysore-32
Email: kabhadragiri@gmail.com*

Received: Sep. 2018 Accepted: Oct. 2018 Published: Nov. 2018

Abstract: English educational policies were tailored to suit the Indian students during the British Empire. As it has already been mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, Lord Macaulay and Raja Ram Mohan Roy were the two stalwarts who initiated the motivational roots in the minds of the Indians for the uplift of their not only educational but also political economic progress. 1835, Lord Macaulay's Policy, 1954, Wood's Dispatch, 1882, Hunter Commission, System of Education in Karnataka, The corporate world has fixed its norms of communicative English. Those who want to explore the MNCs (Multi-national Companies) has to be good at English. A recent report in the Indian Express, dated 10 August, 2018, quotes the statements by the political leaders and authorities regarding English education in Karnataka. In 2016, the Government of Karnataka established a wing called Karnataka Knowledge Commission which is otherwise named as: Karnataka Jnana Aayoga, KJA for short, to look after the all-round development of education in Karnataka.

Keywords: History, Growth and development of language policy in India as well as in Karnataka, .Macaulay's Minute... various commissions.. NPE.. Corporate attractions in Karnataka...Essentiality of English.. A new approach.

Introduction: English educational policies were tailored to suit the Indian students during the British Empire. As it has already been mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, Lord Macaulay and Raja Ram Mohan Roy were the two stalwarts who initiated the motivational roots in the minds of the Indians for the uplift of their not only educational but also political economic progress.

Development: Those supporters of the English education system had visualized certain great goals regarding globalization of English. The chronological process of forming acts and policies regarding education in India can be briefed as follows:

I Act of 1813

1. 1813 Education Act by Charles Grant and William Wilberforce who were missionaries. They forced the East India Company to start employing English in spreading education and Christianity. This was practically done.
2. The above Act enabled the English to add a clause in the charter, permitting them the provision of one lakh rupees for the sake of education and English.
3. Raja Ram Mohan Roy established a college in Calcutta with the view to propagate Western Education.

II 1823, General Committee of Public Instruction

This committee was to supervise the function of English and education in India. A contrast in the opinions of the Orientalists and Anglicists was observed regarding English education;

III 1835, Lord Macaulay's Policy

This Act disabled Persian from the capacity of the Court language. Books in English were freely distributed at low prices. In 1849, JED Bethune laid the foundation of Bethune School. Meanwhile, in Bihar, at Pusa, an Institute of Agriculture and in Roorkee an Engineering College were initiated.

IV 1954, Wood's Dispatch

1. This was one of the greatest achievements of the English in India. It is the Magna Carta of English Education'. Its plans were conducive to spreading learning.
2. State-wise responsibility of looking after the spreading of education was assigned to the local people.

3. Its recommendations were reasonable and practical; hierarchy was proclaimed, from the bottom to the top: Vernacular Primary School, Anglo-vernacular High School and Colleges affiliated to the University of Calcutta, Bombay and Madras.
4. English had been recommended as a medium for High Schools and Vernaculars were limited at school.

V1882, Hunter Commission

Evaluation of the work of Wood Dispatch was the duty of the commission under W.W. Hunter.

VI 1883, Sadler Commission

Its formation was to know the grievances of Calcutta University and the following recommendations were given:

- A Course at school should be for 12 years;
- After Intermediate Study, a Degree course of 3 years was preferred;
- An autonomous body of the teaching staff was confirmed at the University level; some of the areas which were encouraged like women's education, technological education and Teachers' Training;

It is clear by now that Modern system of education with the introduction of English as a Second Language began in 1813. The Section 43 was:

“a sum of not less than one lac of rupees in each year shall be set apart and applied to the revival and improvement of literature and the encouragement of the learned natives of India, and for the introduction and promotion of a knowledge of the sciences among the inhabitants of the British territories in India; and that any schools, public lectures, or other institutions, for the purposes aforesaid, which shall be founded at the Fort William, Fort St. George, or Bombay, or any other part of the British territories in India, in virtue of this Act shall be governed by such regulations as may from time to time be made by the said Governor –General in Council;”(23)

In 1982, Kochhar, S. K. put forth the two principles which had to guide the General Committee of Public Instruction was announced:

- a) It wanted to win the confidence of the educated and influential classes, by encouraging the learning and literature that they respected.
- b) As the funds at the disposal of the Committee were quite inadequate, it would be best to apply the funds to the higher education of the upper classes as distinguished from the general elementary education of the masses. These people were of the opinion that if leaders were educated, their education would naturally 'filter down' to the masses (pp. 6-7). (24)

The present position of English is that of a medium of instruction other than the MT and also language used in all states of India for inter-state matters too. In the case of Meghalaya and Nagaland, it is the language of the state. It is no exaggeration to say that English is an integral part of education at all stages and grades, may they be higher, graduate or post-graduate levels.

System of Education in Karnataka: It is implied that when there is a regional language in every state of India, Kannada is the focus of educational study among people. Educational polities have been changing from time to time catering to the needs of the students. After the formation of the state of Mysore and later Karnataka, a significant decision taken by the state government is that it has set up 'Education Task Force' and has been keeping an eye on the reformation of the system of education.

It is in this context that the present paper sets out a number of strategies cutting across different subsectors of the system with a view to assisting the Government in shaping the development of education in Karnataka into a vibrant movement contributing to overall social and economic progress. It is important that the state leadership breaks away from the typical “we-are-a-poor-state” syndrome and allocates much higher resources for educational development based on a long-term comprehensive vision. Mere allocation of additional funds will not be enough; however, they must be used wisely and to greater effect. It will need a combination of strong political will, committed leadership and mobilization of a wide range of human talent from within the society. We are confident that the State will rise to this

challenge. The paper does not try to provide a complete set of recommendations because many necessary reforms have already been recognized by the Government. The paper highlights those aspects of the strategic reforms that need more thought and action to further deepen and sustain the reform process. (25)

Karnataka has effectively been facing the forthcoming challenges and at every stage, it has employed reasonable strategies in the confrontation of regional or central educational needs and variations. It has been adopting the structural reformations of the two or three languages policies. It has maintained a middle way in fields of policy making and operation of the functional aspect of education. The following are the objectives and strategies it has been focusing on:

- It guarantees equitable access to high-quality education, formal and non-formal, that would equip the people of the State with the knowledge and skills necessary for economic growth as well as for living in harmony in a diverse, pluralistic society;
- It is based on a world-class curriculum offering global knowledge and enabling the State to compete in an international knowledge-based economy;
- It is strongly built on people's participation and institutional structures which are accountable to the stake-holders and are constantly adapting themselves to the evolving field reality;
- It is organized through strategic partnership between public and private initiatives both for efficient management and for mobilizing adequate financial resources. (26)

In 2016, the Government of Karnataka established a wing called Karnataka Knowledge Commission which is otherwise named as: Karnataka Jnana Aayoga, KJA for short, to look after the all-round development of education in Karnataka. The core components of the volume is to highlight the recommendations of the KJA on Karnataka State Education Policy (i.e. KSEP). It has clearly been mentioned that:

Government of Karnataka has identified Education as a sector critical to promoting growth and development of the state's human resources and thereby accelerating economic development cross-sectorally. The Government constituted a special Task Force on Education which has recommended several innovative policy initiatives directed towards improving school education. Since the State Government also intends to substantially increase investment in education through domestic as well as external financing, its next initiative was a sector report which would provide a comprehensive overview of the sector from pre-primary to tertiary education, viewing the educational process has a holistic process, grounded in social relations which shape the way it is accessed differentially on the basis of caste, class, gender and region. The sector report comprises 9 Sub Sector Studies, which provide a focused, in-depth analysis of various sub-sectors, identify strengths and problem areas, set goals and suggest the strategic interventions required to achieve these objectives. The sub-sectors encompass various stages in the educational process, the principal providers of education services in the state, governance and equity issues.

The sub-sectors are:

- a) Early Childhood Development
- b) Elementary Education
- c) Secondary and Pre-University Education
- d) Collegiate Education
- e) Technical Education
- f) Teacher Education
- g) Equity in Education
- h) Role of Private Sector in Education
- i) Structure and Functions of Educational

Management & Decentralization (27): In the Foreword to the Karnataka State Education Policy, the Member-Secretary of KJA, Mukund Kadursrinivas Rao, has specified the job of the Karnataka Jnana Aayoga as: Karnataka Jnana Aayoga (KJA) is a professional body established by the Government of Karnataka and has experts and professionals from all walks of society as Members. The KJA mainly

involves in policy definition and innovative knowledge interventions/studies to various problems of governance and of society.(28)

In the Preface of the Recommendation of the Karnataka Knowledge Commission, the two Co-Chairpersons named Prof. K.S. Rangappa and Mr. Mohandas Pai T.V., have presented the induction and intention of the Task Group:

KJA constituted a Task Group (TG) on Karnataka State Education Policy at the behest of Hon'ble Minister for Higher Education, Government of Karnataka. The members of the TG were experts in various domains of education, who brought their vast experience into the preparation of this report. The TG held focused meetings, and consultations by invitation, which were facilitated through 10 Research Committees, set up for the purpose. The TG had 10 Meetings, 5 Research Group Consultative Meetings and 3 Review Meetings by Chairman, KJA, in the process of drafting these recommendations.

The TG has reviewed the present education system in the State from a policy perspective and identified critical areas that are in need of reform. It has studied the different education models of other countries, of other states within the country, assessed the future development scenario in the State and made comprehensive recommendations towards a Vision 2030. The special needs of the State have been kept in mind as also the need to correct regional imbalances within the state. The TG has attempted to make recommendations that will remain relevant for the next 15 years or more and we expect that these will have far reaching impact, if implemented in totality.(29)

The aims and objectives of the educational policies of the Karnataka State Government are as follows expressed by Dr. K Kasturirangan, the Chairman of Karnataka Jnana Aayoga, in his message:

In this endeavor, Karnataka needs to chart a new course in Education that is tailored to future needs of rapid technological, social and economic progress and that commits to empower students with the best and quality knowledge and skills. The state needs to commit to a uniform, renewed education agenda that is holistic, ambitious and inspirational.

The main goal must be to ensure 12 years of compulsory high-quality education as a fundamental dimension of human, social and economic development of every child. The goal must also to be build higher education institutions of par-excellence with best of teaching and facilities. Karnataka needs to make all the investment it can in this direction –bringing together the force of public and private enterprises for this common goal of Education. It is this that the Karnataka State Education Policy (KSEP) emphasizes and outlines.(30)

The work of Karnataka Jnana Aayoga has innovatively designed the educational policies that are conducive to the schools and colleges in the state. It has not ignored the requirement of the democratically traditional approaches that have been the breath of the educational system of the state. It has always been a supporter and follower of a Holistic Look, may it be at the school level or collegiate level. It has preferred to emphasize the growth of medical, agricultural and legal areas. It has been endeavoring towards the advancement of technological progress in the field of education.

English Education System in Karnataka: It is a fact that Karnataka is one of the multilingual states in the southern part of India. Its official language is Kannada. People who speak other languages also have settled here. Their languages are Urdu, Hindi, Marathi, Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam, Tulu, Konkani and Gor Boli.

Classes from I to X are managed by the Department of School Education, under the Deputy Director of Public Instruction (DDPI) at the district level and from XI to XII controlled by a separate body called Pre-University Education Board. Different syllabi are followed at schools, for instance, CBSE (i.e. Central Board of Secondary Education, ICSE (i.e. Indian Council of School Education and the State syllabus prescribed by the Department of Public Instruction, Government of Karnataka.

Coming to the medium of instruction, there are several methods depending on the three-language formula like First Language, (L₁) Second Language (L₂) and Third Language (L₃). This topic of mandatory and optional languages has been dealt with in the previous paragraphs also in the context of education in India. However, it is an undeniable truth that English as a medium of instruction has been fascinating parents and students which resulted in neglecting the mother tongue or the regional language.

Three sorts of schools are there in Karnataka too: Government Schools, Aided Schools, and Private Schools. Who does not know about the migration of students from Government and Aided schools to Private schools with the view to studying through English?

The level of introduction of English: The visible impact of this presence of English is that it is today being demanded by everyone at the very initial stage of schooling. The English teaching profession has consistently recommended a relatively late (Class IV, V, or VI), introduction of English, and this is reflected in spirit in policy documents. The dissatisfaction with this recommendation is evident in the mushrooming of private English-medium schools and the early introduction of English in state school systems.(31)

At the schools where English is allowed to opt from the initial level, the situation is found to be in different states. Familiarity with English is supposed to be a prestige by the parents of the wards even at the lower classes:

English at the initial level: Building familiarity with the language: A pre-literacy curriculum Regardless of the particular class in which English is introduced (Class I–III or Class IV, or Class V–VI), the aim at the initial levels (the first, or first two years of English) is to build familiarity with the language (through primarily spoken or spoken-and- written input) in meaningful situations, so that the child builds up a working knowledge of the language.(32)

Reality and Essence of English in Karnataka: Reality is that English has been a favourite language of both pupils and students. What triggered is that when English spread all over the world to become 'Language of the World' or in other words, Global Language, on one hand and on the other it is the language of the computer and the Net. Corporate world has fixed its norms of communicative English. Those who want to explore the MNCs (Multi-national Companies) has to be good at English. A recent report in the Indian Express, dated 10 August, 2018, quotes the statements by the political leaders and authorities regarding English education in Karnataka. The caption and the news item were:

Friday, 10 August, 2018 Karnataka: Debate over place of English as medium in government schools Students in state government schools at present learn English from Class V.

Forced by protests from writers and intellectuals, the Karnataka government has gone slow on its proposal to introduce 1,000 English-medium government schools as a pilot project. But the debate over the place of English in the state's education continues. Mahesh, who represents BSP in the coalition government, said, "There was a proposal to introduce a section in existing schools, which would teach in English as a medium. It was meant to attract many parents who have moved away from government to private schools (because) even in rural areas, the daily wage-earner also wants English education for his child. This is true of disadvantaged communities...Dalits, especially." He added that Chief Minister H D Kumaraswamy has "assured protesting members of the Kannada Development Authority (KDA) that he will reconsider it". Mahesh also said he is considering introducing spoken English classes in government schools. Students in state government schools at present learn English from Class V. Earlier this year, a study by the Mysuru-based Grassroots Research and Advocacy Movement (GRAAM) analyzed government data to conclude that the number of students in classes I to X in government schools has come down by 9.96 lakh over the last seven years — from 54.5 lakh in 2010-11 to 44.5 lakh in 2017-18.

In the same period, the number of students in private institutions went up by nearly 11 lakh, GRAAM reported. Krishnamurthy Chamaram, founder-president, Bahujan Vidyarthi Sangh, said, "We are also

Kannadigas, but not teaching English at the primary level is something that seriously hampers students from the rural and disadvantaged communities as they grow older.”

He said the demand for English education from class I had been made earlier too but Kannada language activists had shot it down. KDA chairman S G Siddaramaiah, who met Chief Minister Kumaraswamy to protest this decision, said he is not opposed to English being taught in schools, but of its use as a medium of instruction. “If that happens, Kannada will disappear. There is no doubt...” he said. Those who oppose English as a medium of instruction in government schools argue that several studies have shown that children learn best in their mother tongue in early years. “That is absolutely true and proven.... children at this age — Grade 1 and below — have an immense capacity to learn multiple languages,” Anurag Behar, CEO of Azim Premji Foundation, said.(33)

References:

1. English Language is a link language in Social Strata: A Critical Review
Ms. Neelam, Institute of Technology and Management, Aligarh, UP, INDIA, Vol. 2(5), 30-38, May (2013), International Research Journal of Social Sciences, p 34
<http://www.publishyourarticles.net/knowledge-hub/essay/essay-on-the-importance-of-English-language-in-india.html>, (2011)
2. Ibid
3. Ibid., 57
4. Techniques In English Teaching As A Second Language Inthe Kumaun Region Of Uttarakhand: Past Trends & Future directions, A thesis by Ankur Upadhyya, H.N.B. Govt. P.G. College, , Khatima, U.S.Nagar, Uttarakhand, P 1, 2012
5. Techniques In English Teaching As A Second Language Inthe Kumaun Region Of Uttarakhand:Past Trends & Future directions, A thesis by Ankur Upadhyya, H.N.B. Govt. P.G. College, , Khatima, U.S.Nagar, Uttarakhand, P 4, 2012
6. A Study of Current Status Quo of English as a Second Language in India Study Done on West Bengal Schools, Sagnika Banerjee, National law university, Assam, 2nd Year III semester, P 480, International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications, Volume 6, Issue 8, August, 2016
