

Language, Art, and Culture in NEP–2020

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Abstract:

National Education Policy 2020 aims to revise and revamp the education system of India. In NEP 2020 there is a special focus on regional, national and international languages. The new education system, methods and tools will contain videos, dictionaries, recordings of people speaking the language, telling stories, reciting poetry, and performing plays, folk songs and dances, and more. Universities and their research teams will work with each other and with communities across the country towards enriching such platforms. Scholarships for people of all ages to study Indian Languages, Arts, and Culture will be established. Incentives, such as prizes for outstanding poetry and prose in Indian languages across categories, will be given. Proficiency in Indian languages will be included as part of qualification parameters for employment opportunities.

Keywords: NEP-2020, National Education Policy, Languages, Arts, Culture, vocabulary, grammar

Introduction:

NEP-2020 means National Education Policy 2020 which aims to address the many growing developmental imperatives of India. This Policy proposes the revision and revamping of all aspects of the education structure of the Nation. Development of the creative potential of each individual is expected through this policy. 'It is based on the principle that education must develop not only cognitive capacities - both the 'foundational capacities' of literacy and numeracy and 'higher-order' cognitive capacities, such as critical thinking and problem solving – but also social, ethical, and emotional capacities and dispositions.'¹

There is a special focus on the part of Languages, Arts, and Culture in NEP 2020. This paper explains the importance of regional languages as well as National and International languages, different types of arts and culture in the education system of India.

Languages, Arts, and Culture in NEP–2020:

'The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) has emphasised on the use of mother tongue or local language as the medium of instruction till Class 5 while recommending its continuance till Class 8 and beyond. It recommends that all students will learn three languages in their school under the formula. The three languages learned by children will be the choices of States, regions, and of course the students' themselves.'²

Culture in India developed over thousands of years and manifested in the form of arts, literature, linguistic expressions, traditions etc. People from different countries partake in, enjoy, and benefit from this cultural wealth, in the form of visiting India as tourists. They are experiencing Indian hospitality, practicing yoga and meditation, purchasing handicrafts and handmade textiles. They read the classical literature of India. Many of them are inspired by Indian philosophy. They appreciate India's diverse music and art.

'Cultural awareness and expression are among the major competencies considered important to develop in children, in order to provide them with a sense of identity, belonging, as well as an appreciation of other cultures and identities.'³

We know the arts form a major medium for imparting culture. The arts are well known to enhance cognitive and creative abilities in individuals and increase individual happiness. The cognitive development and cultural identity of individuals are important reasons that Indian arts of all kinds must be offered to students at all levels of education, starting with early childhood care and education.

Language is linked to art and culture. Languages influence the way people of a given culture speak with others, including with family members, authority figures, peers, and strangers, and influence the tone of conversation. Culture is, thus, encased in our languages. There is no importance of art, in the form of literature; plays, music, films without language. In order to preserve and promote culture, it is necessary to preserve and promote a culture's languages.

Earlier, Indian languages have not received their due attention and care. We lost over 220 languages in the last 40-50 years. 'UNESCO has declared 197 Indian languages as 'endangered'. Various unscripted languages are particularly in danger of becoming extinct. When senior member(s) of a tribe or community that speak such languages pass away, these languages often perish with them; too often, no concerted actions or measures are taken to preserve or record these rich languages/expressions of culture.'⁴

22 languages of Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India are facing serious difficulties on many fronts. Teaching and learning of languages need to be integrated with education at every level. High-quality textbooks, workbooks, videos, plays, poems, novels, magazines, etc can play important role. There should be continuous updates in vocabularies and dictionaries.

Language plays a main role in schooling children. No doubt, mother tongue is the first language for basic education of children. 'In secondary school, children can opt for the foreign language of their choice which could be French, German, Spanish, Chinese, and Japanese and this will only be an elective and not in place of the three language formula.'⁵

Other than school education there is a need to deliver the higher education in mother tongue. NEP 2020 also throws a light on this issue. 'More HEIs, and more programmes in higher education, will use the mother tongue/local language as a medium of instruction, and/or offer programmes bilingually, in order to increase access and GER and also to promote the strength, usage, and vibrancy of all Indian languages. Private HEIs too will be encouraged and incentivized to use Indian languages as medium of instruction and/or offer bilingual programmes.'⁶

Sanskrit is a language having vast and significant contributions and rich literature. Sanskrit will be mainstreamed with strong offerings in school as well as in higher education including as one of the language options in the three-language formula. It will be taught in innovative ways, and connected to other contemporary and relevant subjects such as mathematics, astronomy, philosophy, linguistics, dramatics, yoga, etc. Departments of Sanskrit that conduct teaching and outstanding interdisciplinary research on Sanskrit and Sanskrit Knowledge Systems will be established or strengthened.

Classical language institutes will aim to be merged with universities, while maintaining their autonomy, so that faculty may work, and students too may be trained as part of robust and rigorous multidisciplinary programmes. Universities dedicated to languages will become multidisciplinary. A new institution for Languages will be established.

For each of the languages mentioned in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India, Academies will be established consisting of some of the greatest scholars and native speakers to determine simple yet accurate vocabulary for the latest concepts, and to release the latest dictionaries on a regular basis. The Academies would also consult with each other and take the best suggestions from the public.

Despite various measures being taken, there has been a severe scarcity of skilled language teachers in India. Language-teaching must be improved and to focus on the ability to converse and interact in the language and not just on the literature, vocabulary, and grammar of the language. Languages must be used more extensively for teaching-learning and conversation.

To enable the key latter initiatives, a number of further actions will be taken. First, an excellent team of teachers and faculty will have to be developed. Strong departments and programmes in Indian languages, comparative literature, creative writing, arts, music, philosophy, etc. will be launched and developed. The programmes will, in particular help to develop a large cadre of high-quality language teachers - as well as teachers of art, music, philosophy and writing - who will be needed around the country to carry out this Policy.

Outstanding local artists and craftspersons will be hired as guest faculty to promote local music, art, languages, and handicraft, and to ensure that students are aware of the culture and local knowledge where they study.

Different quality based programmes and degrees will also be created in Translation and Interpretation, Art and Museum Administration, Archaeology, Graphic Design, and Web Design. To preserve and promote art and culture, high-quality language materials, develop highly qualified individuals to curate and run museums and heritage or tourist sites, thereby also vastly strengthening the tourism industry.

The knowledge of the rich diversity of India should be imbibed first hand by learners. This would mean including simple activities, like touring by students to different parts of the country, which will not only give a boost to tourism but will also lead to an understanding and appreciation of diversity, culture, traditions and knowledge of different parts of India.

Creating such programmes and degrees in higher education, across the arts, languages, and humanities, will also come with expanded high-quality opportunities for employment that can make effective use of these qualifications. There are already hundreds of Academies, museums, art galleries, and heritage sites in dire need of qualified individuals for their effective functioning.

Now India will expand its translation and interpretation efforts in order to make high-quality learning materials. Important written and spoken material will be available in various Indian and foreign languages. For this, an Indian Institute of Translation and Interpretation (IITI) will be established.

All languages in India, and their associated arts and culture will be documented through a web-based platform or portal in order to preserve endangered and all Indian languages and their associated rich local arts and culture. The platform will contain videos, dictionaries, recordings of people (especially elders) speaking the language, telling stories, reciting poetry, and performing plays, folk songs and dances, and more. Universities and their research teams will work with each other and with communities across the country towards enriching such platforms.

Scholarships for people of all ages to study Indian Languages, Arts, and Culture will be established. Incentives, such as prizes for outstanding poetry and prose in Indian languages across categories, will be established. Proficiency in Indian languages will be included as part of qualification parameters for employment opportunities.

Conclusion:

1. NEP 2020 proposes the revision and revamping of all aspects of the education structure of India. Development of the creative potential of each individual is expected through this policy. There is a special focus on the part Language, Art, and Culture in NEP 2020. It recommends that all students will learn three languages in their school with the choices of States, regions, and of course the students' themselves.

2. Culture in India developed over thousands of years and manifested in the form of arts, literature, linguistic expressions, traditions etc. The arts form a major medium for imparting culture. The cognitive development and cultural identity of individuals are important reasons that Indian arts of all kinds must be offered to students at all levels of education.

3. Language is linked to art and culture. There is no importance of art, in the form of literature; plays, music, films without language.

4. Sanskrit will be mainstreamed with strong offerings in school as well as in higher education including as one of the language options in the three-language formula. Departments of Sanskrit that conduct teaching and outstanding interdisciplinary research on Sanskrit and Sanskrit Knowledge Systems will be established or strengthened.

5. There has been a severe scarcity of skilled language teachers in India, despite various measures being taken. Language-teaching must be improved and to focus on the ability to converse and interact in the language and not just on the literature, vocabulary, and grammar of the language.

To enable the key latter initiatives, a number of further actions will be taken. Outstanding local artists and craftspersons will be hired as guest faculty to promote local music, art, languages, and handicraft, and to ensure that students are aware of the culture and local knowledge where they study. Different quality based programmes and degrees will also be created in Translation and Interpretation, Art and Museum Administration, Archaeology, Graphic Design, and Web Design. The knowledge of the rich diversity of India should be imbibed first hand by learners. Creating such programmes and degrees in higher education, across the arts, languages, and humanities, will also

come with expanded high-quality opportunities for employment that can make effective use of these qualifications.

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