

A Study on C. N. Annadurai's National Official Language Policy 'English Can Serve Admirably as a Link Language'

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Abstract: India is one of the largest multilingual country in the world. Eighth schedule of Indian constitution have recognized 22 languages as official languages in the first census held on 1961 right after states reorganization act 1956. It was recognized 1652 mother tongues spoken by 44 crores of people. As a result of this huge linguistic disparities, one can naturally understand the complication of declaring a language as a 'common official language' for the whole India. Rulers of independent India have gone through multiple debates in parliament to get the consensus on official language policy. Predominantly Former chief minister of Tamilnadu Dr. C. N. Annadurai played a significant role on official language policy. Hence the purpose of this study is to mainly focus on official language policy of C.N. Annadurai and the impacts of his language policy on economic and social growth of India.

Keywords: Official Language, C.N. Annadurai, Impacts of English

1. Introduction

'National concern and energy has often attracted almost nothing else than Language crisis. However New Delhi has no time for anything else in the country.'¹... the issue had become one of first political importance'.² As stated in above statements, no issues other than official language crisis took fierce arguments and underwent more sessions in Rajyasabha. There were series of protests against imposition of Hindi as official language accrued in India. Being solution for this controversial issue in India, former chief minister of Tamilnadu Dr. C. N. Annadurai (hereafter Dr. C. N. Annadurai will mentioned as Anna in this study) strongly recommended English against imposition of Hindi. This study analysed the arguments of Anna on official language crisis and its apparent impacts in the society. The writer apologizes to those all who have dealt with the language problem of India till today, if she has in any way misinterpreted their thoughts.

Sources of Data and Methodology: Present study is mainly descriptive in nature. This study is based on secondary sources available in the form of published and unpublished artefacts like books, journals, periodicals, newspaper reports, bar Acts, on the subject of Official Language and impacts of English from previous research works and electronic resources.

Constitutional provisions on Official Language – Overview: Official language can be defined as, 'The Language in which the Government Business, Executive, Legislative, and Judiciary is transacted'.³ After three years of controversies, at the end of 1949, Indian constitution assembly declared that Hindi (Devanagiri script) would be the official language of India⁴ and for fifteen years English can be used for official purposes by the Article 343. As per Article 344, Language commission could recommend measures to promote Hindi Nationwide and weed out the use of English. Article 345 declared that

Official communication between states and Union would be in Hindi only. Article 348 mentioned English would be used for court proceedings, bills, laws, rules and other regulations of all legal purposes. The government would beholden to advocate Hindi usage and extend all over India (Article 351).

Arguments of Dr. C. N. Annadurai on Official Language policy: It was Anna one of the members among non-Hindi spoken provinces at Rajyasabha to explore that English could admirably serve as an official language. During Rajyasabha Debates, publishing in journals, press meets, interviews on language policy, Anna explored that English can act as a common official language for everyone. From those arguments some of them were briefed here as follows,

- English distributes advantages or disadvantages evenly to every state of Nation. English can be a foreign language to Uttar Pradesh, to Madhya Pradesh, to Tamil Nadu, and to Andhra Pradesh so advantages and disadvantages are evenly distributed.⁵
- English is the most convenient tool to communicate, and most convenient medium. English is not compulsorily imposed on us by foreigners, but we are choosing for our convenience.
- India consists of various ethnic groups, various language groups so only it is termed as subcontinent and that is why common language as far as an official language is apprehensive.⁶
- When officialdom was in English's hand, civil service examinations were held in London naturally Englishmen prevailed in the service. So the same now it's being held in Delhi naturally Hindi speaking province prevail.⁷
- By Pleading for English was not give anything to DMK when British were already gone from India. Already English has taken as compulsory language under three language policy by the constitution assembly which means that we couldn't give up English.⁸

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- From above policy Anna questioned about their stand on English and showcased their point of view on importance of English.
- We were accepting Thermal power station at Chennai – Ennore, Nuclear power station at Bombay-Trombay but in the issue of language we dissimulate to more nationalists who don't want to use foreigner's language.⁹
- The reason conveyed for Hindi should be official language because of its numerical superiority. Anna asked that if we had to accept the numerical superiority principle mean while selecting our national bird it would have crow but not peacock, and while selecting national animal it would have rat rather than tiger which is more countless. So this could not accept as the reason to implement Hindi by Numerical superiority.¹⁰
- It was affirmed that Hindi has got official language status because it was spoken by 42 percent of people in India. This population were not dissolved throughout India, 42 percent of people concentrated in some provinces only, as once T. T. Krishnamachari said that 'India is just U.P'. So this 42 percent logic cannot be taken to deliberation.
- Therefore it will be advantage to least provinces and disadvantage to most of other non – Hindi spoken people.¹¹
- Anna expressed his fear that, the repercussion by implementation of Hindi as a common language will produce certain sickening advantage to the Hindi speaking people.
- Also there is a genuine misgiving in the minds of people, that Hindi speaking people to dominate over others.¹²
- Political law must be adapted to confirm that both Hindi and English are governing languages¹³. Anna keep on insisted that this could be only solution to the language problem.
- The reason for three language policy implementation constitution assembly stated that, English to act as a link language between outside world and Hindi can act as link between the states of nation. Anna argued against it wisely that what serve to link us to world can also use to link inside India as well. so why one language for outside world and one language for inside India, it's like boring a smaller hole in a wall for the kitten and bigger one for cat.¹⁴
- Moreover it will become big burden to the children to learn. If a Tamil student should learn three languages then they should learn three different sounds, three different letter types. Tamil, English and Hindi are three different way of languages.¹⁵
- In the debate session on May 1963, M.B.Lal, N.M.Anwar and others jointly raised their voice that he (C N Annadurai) must be given more time¹⁶ to speak at assembly. It shows that the arguments of Anna was not only the voice of Tamilnadu but behalf of all Non- Hindi speaking provinces.

After so many debates and agitations, on August 3, 1965, the former president of India Dr. Rajendra Prasad have assured that¹⁷ as promised by former Prime Minister Nehru, not for fifteen years, English will continue as link language in India till the Non - Hindi speaking people of India wishes¹⁸ and Hindi language will not be enforced on anybody.

Anna thus laid the path towards English being survive in India. As said by Economist Anklesaria Aiyar that he helped to preserve English as India's window to the world.¹⁹

But, the language crisis was again aroused like endless controversial political egoistic issue in India. Its result was accurately expressed by an author of a book 'Annavinmozhikolgai' that, 'Anna failed to prevent Hindi from becoming official language of India. At the same time, Hindi supporters were failed in an attempt to eliminate English'.²⁰

Impacts of survival of English in India

Dr. S. Radhakrishnan reported that 'English should be studied in schools and universities so as to keep ourselves in touch with the stream of ever growing knowledge', as a head of the University Education commission. As per above and ample of reports by Education Commissions so far, also recommended English for the Higher Education and career opportunities of people of India. Viz.,

- The reason for nearly all graduates having an excellent language of English, because of the government Policy-compromise in the late 1950s.²¹
- India has amassed the largest supply of English speaking scientists and engineers in the developing world²² was definitely the cause of survival of English in Indian education system. India also holds distinction of being the largest English speaking nation in the world, larger even than US and UK combined.
- The country's expected achievement as the "Back Office of the World" has become a FrontPage reality.²³ It is not at all negligible that outsourcing jobs made significant changes in most of the Indian middle class families' income and lifestyle.
- According to new survey released From New York, 6 Indian cities Bangalore, Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Hyderabad and Pune – are among the 8 Top Global destinations for Outsourcing services.²⁴
- 80 percent of European and US outsourcing companies chose India as their No.1 destination because of their fluency in English Indians have an advantage over other countries. Gujarati writer Aagarpatel written that, "we have no English and therefore cannot participate in the new outsourcing services created by India's new urban middle class. Protests of Patels in Gujarat will not take place in Bangalore, Chennai, Hyderabad... like cities. Most young people from these cities get these jobs with the help of English in the cities, thereby aligning themselves with the global economy".²⁵
- In Times of India an economist proudly stated that Annadurai was the only root cause to hold English still in India. So only it made possible to move in lakhs of outsourcing jobs to India, and countries like Bangladesh never had chieftain like Anna to preserve English²⁶.

2. Conclusion

It is undoubtedly true that, the language is the key to Education. Language barriers are certainly barriers to Economic progress. Language barriers are also barriers to International understanding. English will inheritably remain an important language to learn and earn, due to the available

resources in the perspective of technology, medicine and present importance of trade in the world. From the study, as per above arguments of Dr. C. N. Annadurai's Official Language policy, it showed that English served as a link language in India in better ways with the references of its impacts. However there were surely disadvantages in every policies according to many researches and surveys, English yet not reachable for all the classes of India, is the bitter truth. But it's necessary to reach everyone without any social imbalance, to see even more productive India.

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