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Promotion of Sanskrit Language under Trilingual Policy: NEP 2020

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Human beings are the only species on earth, who with their incredible intelligence have created a language for effective communication, expression and a better understanding. Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing are the integral skills of any language, which also are the primary tools of expression. Other than expression of ideas, thoughts and feelings, language plays a bigger role in understanding self and others, in the social contexts. Language provides a better perception of the world by providing the knowledge that is required to navigate oneself through the maze of this world. Communication is very important in conveying our needs and what we expect from others. Communication happens among all the living beings in one way or the other. There is a particular language for each set of creatures, though not verbally elaborate like humans, which stands exclusive for that category in order to enable them for their survival which formulates the basic instinct of secured living for them. When survival came to humans the coded expressions present in other living beings, have been given a definite form, which is called as language. But the question arises that when non-verbal is able to fulfil the category of survival for animals, then wherefrom comes the need for a particular language for humans.

Language with its varied forms provide humans with an opportunity to express their emotions in a variety of ways and with refinement. It gives definite expression in validating the vague

forms of non-verbal expressions. With the increase in many forms of employability unlike the earlier professions, language becomes inevitable in managing all the interactions. It increases cognition of more information, effective intended expression. It also enables man in influencing others. It helps in better understanding of different cultural backgrounds, aids in easy identification of the common similarities among people. It also helps in problem solving and reasoning ability, combined with ethical and moral values. Hence the language plays a vital role in holistic development of people.

The process of learning language comes into play right from the day a child was born, who communicates through non-verbal means at first, and in the vernacular language further. Most of the life skills and awareness about the world is learnt through this education only. India has great system of teaching through literature, where the child learns through poems. Then verbal forms of language including reading, writing and speaking are learnt at schooling stage. Hence some of the lessons learnt already are reinforced through reading and writing in the primary schooling, which instils the morals and ethics in the child. The student also understands other subjects through the power of language.

There are many languages in India which have kindled and enriched the human brain with innovative ideas for living a secured life when compared to other beings in the world. But irony is that only few languages have gained importance. And more over the prevalence of English as the global language, has casted its shadow over the vernacular languages particularly. They faced a lot of negligence and Sanskrit particularly, which is at the grim of extinction, because of many revolutionary consequences which occurred globally, and also due to the impact of colonialization of India in the hands of Britishers.

The system traditional method of guru shishya parampara faced purposeful oppression of passing of the knowledge to the younger generation of India, with the intention of uprooting the

invaluable treasure from the roots. More than a century of oppression in various forms has proved to have a very drastic effect in the system of education. The establishment of institutions with English as the medium of instruction and changing the curriculum of the subjects which reflected the ideology of the Britishers had a devastating effect on the vernacular languages. No platform was given to the scholars in vernacular languages in the form of employability which further escalated in forming an inferior attitude towards those languages by the young generation. This resulted in knowledge being constricted only with few enthusiastic lovers of language. By this the young generation of the country is not aware of the immense knowledge which is embedded in the vernacular languages. They are not aware of the solutions which are provided to all possible problems plaguing the humanity at present in the form of literature. The enthusiastic students who study language as the medium of instruction are not able to get the desirable jobs which can showcase their knowledge leading to extinction of the language and the knowledge embedded in prose and poetry forms of that particular vernacular language.

A great initiative has been taken by National Education Policy 2020 to facilitate and regain the lost glory of the languages. NEP has recommended trilingual concept, which enables the learner to learn mother tongue along with their choice of other languages. Under this new policy, the student continues his early education in his mother tongue, and then further expands it to learn two more languages of his choice. This trilingual method not only enhances the development of the vernacular languages but also strengthens the roots of the student to connect with the language. This helps to sustain some languages which are almost on the verge of extinction with lack of usage. Extinction of a language also determines the loss of immense knowledge, that was stored in the form of literature also gets lost.

In the modern day, the significance of the classical languages has been neglected. Especially Sanskrit, the Indian traditional

language, which is enriched with the vast treasure of knowledge in oral and written forms, combined with culture and tradition has been overlooked. Sanskrit Language of ancient India stands as the treasure house of knowledge not only for literature, but also for various other fields like Music, Medicine, Politics, Arts, Science, Mathematics, Physics, Astronomy, Astrology, Geography, Computational thinking, Culture, Tradition History etc. Recommendation of NEP for trilingual method of learning, Sanskrit should be propagated which will bring in more exposure to the learners, enabling them to express more clearly through proper phonetics and pronunciation. Through this skill the learner will be able to decode the complexity of the language and understand the treasure of Sanskrit literature. Thus, the knowledge known will be brought into application in daily life.

In Mundakopanishad it is said that the knowledge is divided into Para and Apara Vidya. Para vidya which focusses on the understanding of the higher consciousness or also called as Quantum knowledge. The Apara vidya deals with the knowledge of the worldly affairs, or logical reasoning. Both constitute the pillars of education system in ancient India. Apara vidya consists of four Vedas, Vedangas, Smritis, Upanishads, Epics and Puranas. The four Vedas known as Rik Veda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda, Atharva Veda have an immense treasure of knowledge in the form of sutras. Basically, their objective is to do Yagna. This Yagna proposed in Vedas, should be understood as any kind of work which results in benefit of the universe. The action of performing yagna by offering medicinal herbs to fire in an alter prepared particularly and reciting the Vedic hymns is believed to have global purification of the environment and bestow the right path for the yagna karta (the one who performs) in fulfilling his desires. The activities associated with the performing of yagna, the different materials needed and the remedies in case of any calamities are categorized into branches of learning. These traditional disciplines which are taught in the modern day are contextualized into different

branches of subjects such as physics, chemistry, botany, zoology, social sciences, geography, and mathematics in the present day. These branches give a comprehensive knowledge which ultimately used in the process of performing the Yagna.

The Sahitya of Sanskrit consisting of prose, poetry and drama forms. Many important works like Siddhanta Siromani, which promotes complex mathematical concepts. Naishadiya charitam which give knowledge about alchemy, chemistry, botany, geography and other art forms. *Abhijnana Shakuntalam*, *Megha Sandesham* of Kalidasa gives deep knowledge about geography, astronomy, environmental changes and about the natural disasters, botany and zoology. *Shishupala Vadham* of Magha, *Arthashastra* of Kautilya gives knowledge about Political Science, Economy, Finance and administration of the state. These are only few glimpses, there is an enormous treasure of knowledge, which remains largely unknown to the world.

The present system of education divided into various categories have been developed, with the objectives modified according to the present context and to the requisition of the society. In the process of teaching the subjects at the curriculum base has been constricted focusing only on the aspects which give monetary and physical benefits in present society, unlike the earlier way of education system which was based on knowledge with morals. The absence of ethical aspect associated with subjects is probably one of the reasons for demoralization of values in present society.

The other major aspects of Sanskrit language are in the form of Indian knowledge systems consisting of Dharshana Shastra which give comprehensive knowledge about the existence of universe. According to Dharshanas, Astika and Nastika who accept the existence of God are called asthikas and does not believe in god's existence are called as Nastikas. But the scholar's perspective is, the one who believes in Vedas are called Astikas and who does not believe in Vedas are called nastikas. Nyaya, Vaisheshika, Sankhya, Yoga, Poorva Mimamsa, Uttara Mimamsa are six astika

darshanas. Charvaka, Jaina, Bouddha are nastika dashanas. There are other fields of learning like Vyakarna, Agriculture, Engineering, Astronomy, Chemistry, Shilpa shastra, Vaastu, Natya, Sang-eeta, Sahithya, Avadhaanam, Indian holistic medicine therapies in the form of Ayurvedam, Yoga, and Meditation are found in Sanskrit. To have a glimpse of these shastras and imbedded knowledge present in them primarily requires knowledge of the Sanskrit language.

Teaching of language if promoted at young age, by the time the student comes to higher education he/she will have a fair amount of knowledge, helps them to easily understand other subjects. Moreover, the induction of Sanskrit language at higher education may ignite a spark in some of the students, which may lead to further research in interested areas using Sanskrit language as tool to revive the lost knowledge. If the younger generation has slightest exposure to the insights of Sanskrit language, that can stir the curiosity of the learner to dwell into the subject for more discoveries which are lying deep inside the palm leaves and other resources. As we all know that the tradition of knowledge preserved through memorization of sutras in Sanskrit. Now that with invention of modern technology and usage of English language at large, the vernacular languages are losing their shine. In fact, they are the base of strong ethical values and the traditions which should be practised and kept intact for the future generations to come. The concept of trilingual policy enabling the students to learn in their mother tongue, along with the option of two other languages, will surely help the students in expressing themselves with more clarity. This will also enable them in goal setting and the approach in reaching their goal.

The major drawback teaching Sanskrit language has been the lack of efficient teachers, since it was the vocal transmission of knowledge. To this scenario of English language domination in all the activities of daily life also led to eclipsing of the Sanskrit language. But with invention in technology, there has been a drastic

change in dwelling into the ancient texts for the solutions in all the technology related fields. The scientists are amazed at the repository embedded in sutra form waiting for decoding. These ancient sutras are unraveling the mind-blowing facts leading to great discoveries in all the areas. With the invention of many portals and sites, many organizations have actively participating propagation of Sanskrit. And also, the availability of e-resources at the learner's pace and time increased the access to the ancient resources, and the learning and teaching has become more attractive and easily accessible. The inclusion of the language at the schooling stage will enable the teacher to empower the student with the required language skills.

Sanskrit learning should be introduced in primary education as basic language, which enables the student in learning through listening, reading and writing from a tender age. Then it becomes easy for them to pick the complexities associated with Sanskrit. Sanskrit grammar should be included in the curriculum at secondary level of education, which increases the level of understanding and usage of grammar, construction of sentences etc. And slowly more complex terminologies should be introduced, as the student goes further to higher secondary classes. By this the student acquires proficiency by the time he completes higher secondary schooling, perfect with the aphorisms and the application of grammar etc., which makes the journey further easy. At intermediate level literary works along with higher grammar should be introduced. And then in graduation level basic knowledge of Indian knowledge systems should be introduced. This will give them deeper insights of ancient Indian knowledge system. Thus, having gained basic language skills like reading writing one can easily delve into higher philosophical, scientific, analytical and logical aspects of Sanskrit scriptures at their post-graduation level and can go further into research in specific areas of interest. Ivy league universities in other countries have established Sanskrit departments and research centres and providing courses to the people.

Many scientists in NASA are trying to decode the secrets of scientific aspects in ancient Indian scriptures. India now has to look forward in this regard and encourage study of Sanskrit language.

Introducing Sanskrit as a third language or second language should be mandatory in secondary education. Then scholars who want to learn and teach Sanskrit get employability, having got secured and full-time job, one can chose to study Sanskrit and build their career in that regard and can propagate Sanskrit language to the next generations. Hence the policy makers should look into this matter and encourage Sanskrit study through trilingual study proposed by NEP-2020, by which the greatest language is being survived from its extinction and Indian knowledge systems are revived. The ancient Indian knowledge systems always enunciated the importance of harmonious coexistence of human beings with all the other animate and inanimate objects of the universe; Human beings must identify themselves as a part and parcel of the larger cosmos and vice versa, which reduces the atrocities, the greed, the violence and the suffering in the world and makes it a better place to live in.

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