Journal Homepage: www.ijarpr.com ISSN: 3049-0103 (Online)

International Journal of Advance Research Publication and Reviews

Vol 03, Issue 10, pp 692-698, October, 2026

# English after NEP 2020: Linguistic Capital, Multilingual Inclusion, and the Limits of Language Policy in Indian Higher Education

***Dr. Rajashekhar S. Mulimani***

Assistant Professor and Head, Department of English, Government First Grade College Santhebennur( Davanagere University) Davanagere

**ABSTRACT :**

India's National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) promotes multilingualism, home-language learning, and a stronger place for Indian languages in education. These commitments are sometimes read as a retreat from English, even though English continues to matter in higher education and employment. This article asks how colleges can widen linguistic inclusion without leaving English proficiency to prior advantage. It reads selected NEP provisions alongside scholarship on English language teaching, translanguaging, and linguistic inequality. The literature includes policy analyses, classroom studies, and surveys of student attitudes, whose findings are not interchangeable: the use of multiple languages or favourable attitudes towards it do not, by themselves, demonstrate improved English proficiency. NEP 2020 separates the medium used to teach a subject from the languages students can learn well, but it offers no single institutional model for supporting students with uneven prior access to English. The article argues for explicit English teaching alongside purposeful multilingual scaffolding, assessment tied to stated outcomes, and institutional investment in teachers and materials. It is a critical policy analysis, not an empirical evaluation of NEP implementation.

***Keywords:*** NEP 2020; English language teaching; linguistic capital; translanguaging; multilingual education; higher education; language policy

## 1. Introduction

English in Indian education is neither simply a colonial residue nor a neutral instrument of opportunity. It carries the history of colonial schooling and continues to mark social distinction, yet students also seek it for study, work, research, and wider participation. For students educated mainly through a regional language, English can be both an aspiration and a practical obstacle. These competing realities make it unhelpful to cast the policy debate as a choice between English and Indian languages.

The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) proposes a language policy grounded in multilingualism. It recommends that, wherever possible, the medium of instruction until at least Grade 5, and preferably Grade 8 and beyond, be the home language, mother tongue, local language, or regional language. It encourages bilingual approaches and high-quality teaching of all languages, while explicitly noting that a language need not be the medium of instruction to be learned well (Government of India, Ministry of Human Resource Development [MHRD], 2020, paras. 4.11–4.14). In higher education, it calls for more institutions and programmes to use Indian languages as the medium of instruction or to offer bilingual programmes, partly to widen access (MHRD, 2020, para. 22.10). None of these provisions, read on their own, amounts to a prohibition on English. They instead challenge the assumption that English must be the default language of knowledge.

The policy statement, however, cannot by itself change the conditions in which English is learned. Supporting Kannada or another Indian language as a language of knowledge does not ensure that students receive enough English teaching to meet academic demands. Nor does the value of English require teachers to prohibit other languages during explanation or discussion. The outcome depends on course design, teacher preparation, learning materials, assessment, and the support colleges make available.

This article examines the place of English within NEP 2020's commitment to multilingual inclusion. It asks three questions: How does the policy distinguish between learning a language and using it as a medium of instruction? What happens when English is both a resource for mobility and a marker of unequal access? And what can research on translanguaging contribute to English teaching in higher education? The argument is that NEP 2020 does not displace English, but it leaves colleges with a practical responsibility that is not fully specified: they must support multilingual learning while ensuring that students can develop the English skills their courses require.

The article is a critical policy analysis, not a report of new fieldwork. Its contribution is to connect three discussions that are often treated separately: the policy distinction between medium of instruction and language learning, the social value attached to English, and the use of multiple languages in English classrooms. The article draws attention to the unresolved question of institutional responsibility for English development when English is not the medium of instruction.

## 2. Policy context: English within NEP 2020

One sentence in paragraph 4.11 is especially important: "a language does not need to be the medium of instruction for it to be taught and learned well" (MHRD, 2020, para. 4.11). This distinction allows an institution to use Kannada or another familiar language to teach subject content without treating English instruction as unnecessary. The policy does not prescribe the same medium for every course; it asks institutions to consider language learning and medium of instruction separately. Paragraph 4.14's proposal for bilingual science and mathematics materials supports this reading (MHRD, 2020).

Chapter 22 extends this approach to language teaching in higher education. Paragraph 22.7 calls for more experiential language learning and greater emphasis on conversation and interaction, rather than concentrating only on literature, vocabulary, and grammar (MHRD, 2020). This does not make literature or grammar irrelevant; it places them within a broader account of language learning that includes purposeful communication. Paragraph 22.10 encourages institutions to expand programmes taught through Indian languages or offered bilingually. It does not prescribe a single medium for all higher education.

The distinction between a language as a subject and as a medium is easy to overlook in public debate. A student may study economics through Kannada and still need systematic instruction in English; another student may attend an English-medium course and need Kannada or Hindi to clarify an unfamiliar concept. Neither situation settles which language should dominate every activity. The educational question is whether students receive appropriate support to learn the subject and develop the languages required for their academic goals.

These ambitions depend on resources as much as on principle. NEP 2020 acknowledges the need for skilled language teachers, learning materials, translation, and language programmes (MHRD, 2020, paras. 22.6–22.10, 22.14). Without such support, multilingual instruction may rest on individual teachers improvising materials or translating complex concepts without adequate time. A policy that values more than one language needs to recognise this work in staffing, training, and course planning.

## 3. Review of relevant scholarship

Early commentary on NEP 2020 and English language teaching has largely considered what the policy means for classroom practice. Paliath and Dhinakar (2021) discuss the relationship between English and regional languages and argue that some criticism of the policy rests on a narrow understanding of multilingual learning. Gupta and Chatterjee (2023) focus on the implications for English teaching, including more activity- and task-based work. Bhattacharya's (2023) review of first-language use in Indian English language teaching is relevant here because it considers both the possibilities and the limits of using learners' familiar languages. Together, these papers caution against treating English and other Indian languages as mutually exclusive, but they do not remove the need to ask how English development will be supported in different institutional settings.

Nag (2024) examines the policy's account of linguistic inclusion in school education and asks how far its conceptual commitments are carried into a workable model of equitable schooling. Vincy and D'Souza (2023), in a systematic review focused on Tamil Nadu, identify limited use of English inside and outside classrooms and gaps in teacher preparation as continuing concerns. Singh (2025) reviews the implementation of multilingual education and mother-tongue-based instruction nationally, noting resource constraints and social demand for English-medium education. These studies deal with different populations and questions; they should not be treated as interchangeable evidence. Read together, however, they show why the policy's language provisions cannot be evaluated separately from teachers, materials, local conditions, and public expectations.

Research on translanguaging moves the debate from policy language to classroom interaction. García and Li Wei (2014) use the term to describe how multilingual speakers draw on a repertoire of resources, rather than keeping named languages in entirely separate compartments. In education, that perspective can justify planned movement between languages to clarify a concept, compare meanings, or prepare for a task in English. It does not mean that teachers should abandon explicit language goals or assume that any form of language mixing is automatically helpful.

Anderson's (2024) comparative case study examined eight expert English teachers in government-sponsored secondary schools in Maharashtra, Telangana, and West Bengal. All eight used multilingual practices, although the balance between English and learners' more familiar languages differed by classroom. Anderson summarises the pattern as teachers "prioritising learner participation over language choice" (p. 2233). Learners often mirrored their teachers, and multilingual classroom interaction coexisted with examinations that required written English. The study documents practice; it does not establish that the same approach will work in every setting or that it produces higher proficiency. Its focus on expert secondary teachers also limits direct generalisation to undergraduate colleges.

Jha and Dalal (2024) surveyed 177 participants from central universities in North India about translanguaging in English-medium instruction and English language teaching. They report favourable attitudes towards selective use of multiple languages, including perceived benefits for comprehension and inclusion. Attitudes, however, are not the same as measured learning gains. Sarkar and Ahmad (2026) examine translanguaging in English language teaching and English literature programmes at one Indian university, drawing on classroom observations and a questionnaire completed by 130 undergraduates. Their study brings the discussion directly into higher education, but its design does not justify general claims about the effect of translanguaging on English proficiency across Indian universities. These recent studies mean that the research gap cannot simply be described as an absence of work on translanguaging in higher education.

The question also concerns how languages acquire value. Bourdieu's (1991) account of linguistic capital shows that linguistic competence is rewarded within particular social settings; its value is not inherent in the language itself. Ramanathan (2005) analyses the English–vernacular divide in relation to postcolonial language politics and educational practice, while Advani (2009) connects English, schooling, and the making of national identity. Sharma (2022) considers the tension between the instrumental value of English for social mobility and its implications for identity. Pennycook (1998) cautions against treating English as politically neutral. These perspectives do not make English learning reducible to colonial history. They help explain why the language can be a genuine resource for students and, at the same time, a means through which existing advantages are reproduced.

The literature already establishes that NEP 2020 is more complex than a simple choice between English and Indian languages; that multilingual practices are present in Indian English classrooms; and that institutional resources and assessment shape what teachers can do. It also includes recent university-level work on translanguaging. The narrower question pursued here is how the policy's distinction between medium of instruction and language learning

translates into institutional responsibility for English development. Put differently, once English is no longer assumed to be the medium for every course, what support should colleges provide so that students are not left to acquire it unevenly on their own?

## 4. Theoretical framework: linguistic capital and translanguaging

The analysis draws on two complementary concepts: linguistic capital and translanguaging. Bourdieu (1991) argues that language use occurs within social fields in which some forms of linguistic competence are more readily recognised and rewarded than others. Applied to education, this perspective directs attention away from an abstract question—whether English or an Indian language is intrinsically superior—and towards the institutional conditions under which a language becomes valuable. English may function as linguistic capital when command of it is associated with access to particular courses, credentials, professional networks, or employment opportunities. The value is neither universal nor evenly distributed; it depends on the relevant social and institutional setting.

The concept of linguistic capital helps explain why a formal commitment to multilingualism may coexist with persistent pressure to acquire English. If students and families believe that English proficiency improves later opportunities, they may continue to seek English-medium schooling even when the actual quality of English teaching varies. Students whose earlier schooling provided extensive access to English may enter college with an advantage that later classroom reforms do not automatically erase. A critical policy analysis should therefore distinguish between supporting English as a useful skill and treating English as a proxy for intelligence or academic worth.

Translanguaging provides a complementary account of the resources learners bring to classroom interaction. García and Li Wei (2014) use the concept to challenge a rigid separation of named languages in multilingual experience. For an English classroom, the pedagogical implication is not that every task should move freely across languages without purpose. Rather, a teacher may invite students to discuss a concept in a familiar language, compare meanings across languages, annotate a text bilingually, or use peer explanation before producing an English response. Such activities can support access to meaning while keeping the learning objective in view.

The two concepts answer different questions. Linguistic capital makes visible the unequal social value attached to English; translanguaging helps analyse the practical ways multilingual learners work with English and other languages. Used together, they prevent two simplifications. The first is the claim that English should be privileged because it is valuable in the labour market. The second is the claim that recognition of multilingualism, by itself, resolves inequality. The article instead asks what institutional arrangements can make English learning more accessible while refusing to devalue students' other linguistic resources.

## 5. Methodology and scope

The method is qualitative critical policy analysis combined with a purposive review of selected scholarship. The primary document is NEP 2020, with close attention to paragraphs 4.11–4.15 on multilingualism and bilingual materials, and paragraphs 22.6–22.10 on language resources, teacher preparation, and bilingual higher education. These passages are treated as statements of policy intention, not as proof that the recommendations have been implemented.

The literature was selected for its relevance to four themes: English language teaching under NEP 2020; multilingual and translanguaging practices in Indian classrooms; language, inclusion, and inequality; and barriers to implementation. The selection includes policy commentary by Paliath and Dhinakar (2021), Gupta and Chatterjee (2023), and Bhattacharya (2023); work on school inclusion and implementation by Nag (2024), Vincy and D'Souza (2023), and Singh (2025); and classroom or student-perspective studies by Anderson (2024), Jha and Dalal (2024), and Sarkar and Ahmad (2026). Bourdieu (1991), García and Li Wei (2014), Pennycook (1998), Advani (2009), Ramanathan (2005), and Sharma (2022) provide the conceptual and historical context. Records were checked against accessible journal, publisher, ERIC, NCERT, and institutional repository pages.

The analysis had three stages. First, policy statements were grouped by their treatment of language as a medium, a subject, or a resource for inclusion. Second, the selected studies were compared by population, method, and the type of claim their evidence could support. Third, the tensions between policy ambition and reported practice were interpreted through linguistic capital and translanguaging. This approach supports a critical synthesis; it does not estimate the impact of NEP 2020.

This is not a systematic review, meta-analysis, or empirical evaluation of NEP implementation. The selection is purposive rather than exhaustive; the studies differ in educational stage, geography, method, and participants. Where a full text was not available, interpretation was limited to the accessible abstract and bibliographic record. The article therefore offers an argument about the policy and selected scholarship, not a claim that its findings represent all Indian higher education. Its contribution should be assessed as conceptual synthesis, and its propositions require testing in specific institutions.

## 6. Analysis and discussion

### *6.1. The policy does not abolish English; it challenges linguistic exclusivity*

The policy does not instruct schools or colleges to eliminate English. Paragraph 4.11 recommends using the home, mother, local, or regional language as the medium of instruction wherever possible, while also saying that all languages should be taught well and that a language need not be the medium to be learned well (MHRD, 2020). Paragraph 4.14 envisages bilingual science and mathematics materials through which students can think and speak in a home language and in English. Paragraph 22.10 encourages the expansion of Indian-language and bilingual higher-education programmes. These provisions support multilingualism; they do not establish an English ban or a single medium for all institutions.

For English teachers, this means that the choice of medium and the quality of language teaching should be treated as related but separate questions. A college can expand the use of Kannada or another Indian language for subject learning and still provide planned English instruction. Likewise, a class

taught through English need not prohibit students from using other languages to test an interpretation or clarify an unfamiliar concept. What matters is whether each language choice serves a learning purpose and whether students continue to develop the English skills expected of them.

The policy leaves the practical arrangements largely to institutions and states. It does not set out one model for combining regional-language instruction with sustained English development across disciplines, nor does it specify how colleges should respond to students with widely differing levels of English. These choices depend on syllabi, teacher preparation, workload, course materials, and the academic demands students face. That is an implementation problem rather than proof of a contradiction in the policy.

### *6.2. English as linguistic capital: access is not evenly distributed*

English remains unequally distributed as an educational resource. Bourdieu's (1991) idea of linguistic capital helps explain why: a language skill becomes valuable partly because institutions recognise and reward it. In college, prior experience with English can affect a student's access to lectures, reading, assignments, presentations, and interviews. Such experience varies with school type, region, family resources, and the opportunities available to practise English outside the classroom.

Denying English instruction in the name of equality would be counterproductive. It could leave the advantage with students who have already had years of sustained exposure while limiting access for those who have not. The question is whether colleges treat English as a private responsibility that students must bring from home, or as a skill that institutions also have a duty to teach. That duty involves time for speaking and writing, feedback that helps learners improve, suitable materials, and assessment that makes expectations clear.

Pennycook's (1998) analysis of English and colonial discourse is a reminder that language is tied to power, not simply to communication. Historical critique, however, should not dismiss the reasons students seek English today. They may want to read research, apply for jobs, pursue postgraduate study, or take part in conversations that cross linguistic boundaries. English can offer real opportunities while its unequal distribution continues to reproduce social advantage. A useful policy response has to acknowledge both facts.

This is where the question of institutional responsibility becomes visible. NEP 2020 offers a rationale for reducing dependence on English as the medium of every subject, but the policy discussion does not establish a common mechanism for ensuring that students still acquire the English required for academic participation. Colleges could start by identifying the language demands of first-year courses, offering low-stakes diagnostic activities, integrating academic English support into subject teaching, and giving students repeated opportunities to draft, speak, receive feedback, and revise. Such provision would make English development part of the institution's work rather than a test of what a student has already acquired.

### *6.3. Translanguaging as pedagogy, not as the absence of standards*

The evidence reviewed here does not support a blanket requirement that every classroom interaction take place in English. Anderson (2024) observed multilingual practices in all eight of the expert secondary teachers' classrooms he studied. Jha and Dalal (2024) found favourable student attitudes towards selective translanguaging, while Sarkar and Ahmad (2026) examined its use in a university English programme. The studies differ in design and cannot be combined into a single estimate of effectiveness. They do, however, show that multilingual practice is an existing feature of English education and a legitimate subject for systematic evaluation.

Using more than one language is not, on its own, a pedagogy. The teacher needs to decide what the activity is meant to achieve and how it leads students towards the learning outcome. A lecturer might ask students to discuss an argument in Kannada or Hindi, compare key terms across languages, and then produce a short English summary. In a literature class, bilingual annotation can help students develop an interpretation before they support it with evidence from the English text. In both cases, the other language opens a route into the task; it does not remove the need to learn English.

Without preparation, translanguaging can become an empty recommendation. A class may contain several home languages, so asking everyone to use one regional language can exclude students who do not know it. Teachers need a range of options: pair explanation, visual aids, bilingual glossaries, short written checks, and peer discussion. They also need time to plan and review whether these practices help students move towards the stated outcome. Inclusion cannot depend on an assumption that all learners share the same first language.

The evidence does not yet justify a broad claim that translanguaging always improves English proficiency. Anderson documents classroom practice; Jha and Dalal report student views; Sarkar and Ahmad combine observations with questionnaire responses in one university context. None of these designs alone establishes a general causal effect across institutions. Stronger claims about attainment require direct measures of learning, careful comparison over time, and reporting of the context in which an intervention is used. The defensible position is to evaluate multilingual support against explicit English-learning outcomes rather than declare it universally superior or dismiss it in advance.

### *6.4. Assessment can preserve the very hierarchy pedagogy tries to soften*

Assessment is one place where the gap between classroom practice and institutional expectations becomes visible. Anderson (2024) notes that multilingual classroom interaction can coexist with formal examinations centred on written English. A student may be allowed to test an idea in more than one language during learning, yet be judged at the end only on a narrow written performance. Whether that is appropriate depends on what the assessment claims to measure.

When English is the learning outcome, students should be assessed on their ability to read, write, listen, and speak in contexts relevant to study and work. The problem is not assessment of English itself; it is unclear assessment. If an examination is meant to measure disciplinary knowledge, language demands should not hide the student's understanding. If it is meant to measure academic English, the rubric should specify the relevant features of performance instead of treating surface polish as a proxy for intellectual ability.

Colleges can keep clear English standards and use more than one form of evidence while students are learning. Short drafts, oral explanations, presentations, peer feedback, and revision reveal different aspects of development. In English courses, rubrics can make expectations for organisation,

intelligibility, vocabulary, grammar, and task fulfilment explicit. In subject courses, multilingual discussion can help students work through difficult content, while the final assessment remains aligned with the subject's stated outcomes. The point is to align teaching and assessment, not to lower the standard.

Students and teachers quickly learn what examinations reward. If a syllabus praises multilingual communication but high-stakes tests reward memorised forms alone, classroom priorities will tend to follow the tests. Any serious implementation plan should therefore include assessment design and teacher support, not just statements about language choice.

### *6.5. Higher education needs a bridge between language access and academic participation*

The transition to college often makes differences in language experience more consequential. Students may need to read demanding disciplinary texts, write extended assignments, use digital platforms, and discuss unfamiliar ideas in academic registers. Some arrive with years of practice in English; others may have encountered it mainly as an examination subject. Changing the medium of instruction cannot by itself bridge that gap.

Indian-language and bilingual programmes can widen access for students who find subject learning difficult through an unfamiliar language. But such programmes do not automatically provide the English skills some students will need later. The opposite arrangement—English as the dominant medium without additional support—can turn previous advantage into a barrier to participation. Institutions need to consider how students move across languages throughout their studies, not treat the choice of medium as a complete solution.

A college offering a programme through a regional language should still provide strong English instruction and academic-literacy support. Where the medium is English, teachers should be prepared to use multilingual scaffolding without weakening disciplinary expectations. Bilingual glossaries, parallel readings, and academic-writing resources can help connect students' existing knowledge with English-language conventions. Such support is likely to be more useful when it is built into first-year courses and assignments than when it is confined to an isolated remedial class.

The underlying issue is who bears responsibility for language learning. If English proficiency is treated as an attribute students must arrive with, existing advantages remain largely untouched. If colleges teach English deliberately and draw on students' multilingual repertoires where useful, access becomes a matter of educational design rather than prior privilege.

### *6.6. The implementation problem is institutional, not just individual*

NEP 2020 recognises that multilingual education depends on trained teachers and learning materials (MHRD, 2020, paras. 22.6–22.10). Yet policy ambition does not create those resources. Teachers need preparation, time, and access to appropriate materials; colleges need to recognise the workload involved in producing and maintaining them. It is unrealistic to expect individual lecturers to translate complex texts informally, particularly when students use several languages or when technical terms lack agreed translations.

Language policy also has to be considered alongside the practices through which universities assign status. English may remain dominant in recruitment, research publication, conferences, and academic administration even where institutional documents endorse multilingualism. English has practical value in these settings; the difficulty is that students and staff may have few supported opportunities to acquire the proficiency being rewarded. A serious multilingual policy must address not only the languages of teaching, but also the languages through which knowledge is assessed, circulated, and recognised.

The barriers will not be identical across states or institutions. Some languages have a wider supply of textbooks and terminology than others; colleges vary in staffing and funding; and students' repertoires differ even within the same region. Local diagnosis is therefore preferable to a single national prescription. Institutions can begin by reviewing English syllabi, first-year language demands, assessment rubrics, student language backgrounds, and the support currently available. This would make implementation easier to evaluate and comparison between colleges more meaningful.

Multilingualism becomes an educational practice when teachers can use linguistic resources deliberately, students can obtain sustained English instruction, and assessment reflects clearly stated learning goals. A declaration of linguistic diversity is a beginning, not an implementation plan.

## 7. Implications for English language teaching and policy

The policy and research reviewed above point to several practical priorities for higher education. These are recommendations derived from the literature, not results of a new classroom intervention.

English syllabi should state what students are expected to do with the language: read critically, write for academic purposes, present ideas, take part in discussion, and understand spoken English. Those outcomes need to appear in the tasks students complete and in the feedback they receive. Explicit teaching of grammar and vocabulary remains useful, but it should be connected to the language work students are asked to perform.

Teacher education should prepare lecturers to use multilingual resources with a clear purpose. Training can cover ways to elicit prior knowledge, support comprehension, design bilingual tasks, and move students from discussion towards English-language production. It should also address the limits of this approach: language choice must be considered in relation to the task, and no student should be excluded because the teacher assumes everyone shares the same home language.

Assessment should distinguish subject knowledge from English proficiency when the course outcomes call for that distinction. A content-course rubric can make clear which aspects of language affect the mark; an English-course rubric can assess language development directly through writing, speaking, interaction, and revision. Transparency helps avoid penalising students for language issues that are irrelevant to the outcome, while preserving meaningful English standards where proficiency is the goal.

Colleges need usable multilingual resources: glossaries, parallel readings, audio material, writing guides, translated summaries, and digital repositories. These materials should be reviewed for accuracy and updated as courses change. Translation is a form of academic and pedagogical labour; it should not become an unrecognised task added to an already full teaching load.

Implementation should be evaluated rather than assumed to work. Studies can track student writing over time, observe classroom interaction, compare clearly designed interventions, and interview students from different school-language backgrounds. Researchers should separate reported confidence from measured learning and describe the local context in enough detail for readers to judge whether findings may apply elsewhere.

Policy communication should avoid presenting English and Indian languages as rival choices. English can expand educational and professional options; Indian languages allow students to participate in knowledge-making through languages they know and use. The institutional task is to make English development available to students who have not had earlier advantages without implying that their other languages are obstacles to learning.

## 8. Limitations and directions for further research

The analysis has clear limits. It relies on NEP 2020 and a purposive selection of published scholarship; it does not include interviews, classroom observations, or student assessment data of its own. The studies reviewed also cover different educational stages and use different methods, so their findings cannot be treated as directly comparable. Finally, evidence on how specific post-2020 practices have affected undergraduate English development remains limited. These limits mean the article can identify a policy problem and propose lines of inquiry, but it cannot measure NEP's effects.

Future research could address these limitations through multi-site studies in government colleges and universities. One design would compare English syllabi, assessment schemes, and support provision across institutions while interviewing students who entered higher education through different school-medium pathways. Another could examine an explicitly designed translanguaging intervention and assess changes in comprehension, writing, oral participation, and English proficiency. A third could analyse how university policy, hiring, publication practices, and language-medium choices shape the perceived value of English and regional languages. Such studies should identify both benefits and limits rather than assume the efficacy of any single pedagogy.

## 9. Conclusion

NEP 2020 does not call for the abolition of English. It challenges the assumption that quality education requires one language to serve as the medium of all knowledge. Its support for home-language learning, bilingual materials, experiential language teaching, and Indian-language programmes can widen access, but those commitments do not by themselves change the uneven conditions in which English is learned.

What remains unresolved is how to connect multilingual access with sustained English development. The distinction between medium and subject is useful, but students still need opportunities to read, write, speak, and listen in English if their further study or work requires it. The studies reviewed here document multilingual classroom practice and positive student attitudes in particular settings; they do not establish a universal effect on proficiency. Their value is that they challenge the assumption that English must be taught in isolation from other languages and invite more careful evaluation of how different approaches work.

An equitable policy would support Indian languages as languages of education and knowledge while ensuring that English is taught well enough for students to use it when needed. Colleges cannot control every inequality students bring with them, but they can decide whether English development is treated as a shared educational responsibility or as a skill students must acquire before they arrive. That is the practical test of the multilingual promise: students should be able to build strong English skills without being asked to regard their other languages as a disadvantage.

**REFERENCES**


- Advani, S. (2009). *Schooling the national imagination: Education, English, and the Indian modern*. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198062752.001.0001
- Anderson, J. (2024). The translanguaging practices of expert Indian teachers of English and their learners. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development, 45*(6), 2233–2251. https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2022.2045300
- Bhattacharya, N. (2023). Research on L1 use in ELT in India: Advancements and limitations. *Journal of English Language Teaching, 65*(4), 3–10. https://doi.org/10.66121/bwbddz08
- Bourdieu, P. (1991). *Language and symbolic power* (J. B. Thompson, Ed.; G. Raymond & M. Adamson, Trans.). Harvard University Press.
- García, O., & Li Wei. (2014). *Translanguaging: Language, bilingualism and education*. Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137385765
- Government of India, Ministry of Human Resource Development. (2020). *National education policy 2020*. https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NEP_Final_English_0.pdf
- Gupta, D. S., & Chatterjee, J. (2023). Transforming English language teaching: A study of the National Education Policy 2020. *Journal of English Language Teaching, 65*(4), 11–17. https://doi.org/10.66121/b65vqe07

- Jha, A., & Dalal, G. (2024). Needs analysis for incorporating translanguaging in EMI/ELT classrooms: Exploring multiculturalism in NEP 2020. *Journal of Indian Education, 50*(1), 167–203. https://ejournals.ncert.gov.in/index.php/jie/article/view/4387
- Nag, S. (2024). Language as a tool for inclusive and equitable school education: A critical review of NEP 2020. *Contemporary Education Dialogue, 21*(2), 208–222. https://doi.org/10.1177/09731849241253398
- Paliath, G., & Dhinakar, R. (2021). Scope of English language teaching in National Education Policy 2020. *Elementary Education Online, 20*(5), 2447–2450. https://doi.org/10.17051/ilkonline.2021.05.266
- Pennycook, A. (1998). *English and the discourses of colonialism*. Routledge.
- Ramanathan, V. (2005). *The English-vernacular divide: Postcolonial language politics and practice*. Multilingual Matters.
- Sarkar, I., & Ahmad, Z. (2026). Translanguaging strategies in the development of English language learners' second language skills at an Indian university. *International Journal of Multilingualism, 23*(3), 1544–1564. https://doi.org/10.1080/14790718.2025.2587820
- Sharma, A. (2022). English as a facilitator of social mobility in India: The instrumentality vs. identity debate in language policy research. *English Today, 38*(2), 88–91. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0266078420000164
- Singh, A. K. (2025). From policy to practice: Challenges and pathway for advancing multilingual education through India's National Education Policy 2020. *Policy Futures in Education, 23*(4), 746–765. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1470283
- Vincy, R. I., & D'Souza, G. (2023). English language education scenario in India: A systematic review for developing policy recommendations. *Journal of English Language Teaching, 65*(4), 27–38. https://doi.org/10.66121/w7fqje13