

PROMOTION OF MOTHER LANGUAGE ACT: PUNJAB VS UTTAR PRADESH

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Abstract

In September 2021, the education systems in Uttar Pradesh (UP) and Punjab in India were characterized by some similarities and differences. Punjab is a region in South Asia, divided between India and Pakistan. It has a rich cultural heritage and a diverse linguistic landscape. In the Indian state of Punjab, Punjabi is the most widely spoken language. It is an Indo-Aryan language and is written in the Gurmukhi script. In the Pakistani province of Punjab, Punjabi is also spoken, but other languages such as Urdu, Saraiki, and others are also prevalent. Punjabi is a vibrant language with a rich literary tradition and is known for its expressive and lively nature. The main language of the Indian state of Punjab is Punjabi. Punjabi is widely spoken by the majority of the population in the state and is also the official language of the state. It holds significant cultural and historical importance in the region and has a rich tradition of literature, art, and music. Punjabi is also spoken by a substantial diaspora in various parts of the world, particularly in countries with significant Punjabi communities. The primary language spoken in Uttar Pradesh, a state in northern India, is Hindi. Hindi is the official language of the state and is widely used for communication in various domains, including government, education, and business. Additionally, several other languages are spoken by specific communities within Uttar Pradesh, including Urdu, which is also widely used, especially in the cities and among the Muslim population. Several regional dialects and languages, such as Braj Bhasha and Awadhi, also have a presence in different parts of the state. In this research paper a researcher explains how Punjab and Uttar Pradesh promote their mother language.

Keywords: Mother Language, Punjab's mother language, Uttar Pradesh mother language, Promotion of mother language.

Introduction

Language is an integral part of a community's culture and identity. Promoting the mother tongue helps preserve unique cultural practices, traditions, folklore, and historical narratives that are embedded within the language. Children who learn in their mother tongue tend to have better cognitive development, improved learning outcomes, and higher academic performance. It aids in better comprehension, critical thinking, and overall cognitive abilities. Proficiency in one's mother language ensures effective communication within families and communities. It facilitates the transmission of knowledge, values, and societal norms from one generation to the next, fostering a stronger sense of belonging and understanding. Many literary works, poems, songs, and art forms are deeply rooted in specific languages. Promoting the mother language encourages the flourishing of literature,

arts, and creative expression, contributing to the enrichment of global cultural heritage.

Punjab

Punjabi Language: Punjabi is an Indo-Aryan language spoken by over 100 million people worldwide, predominantly in the Punjab region of South Asia. It is the native language of the Punjabi people and the official language of the Indian state of Punjab and the Pakistani province of Punjab. Punjabi is also spoken in various other parts of the world, including significant immigrant communities in countries such as the United Kingdom, Canada, the United States, and Australia.

Punjabi has a rich history and a diverse cultural heritage, with influences from Persian, Arabic, and English, among other languages. It has a unique script known as Gurmukhi, which is used to write the Punjabi language. Gurmukhi is written from left to right and has a distinct appearance with a variety of characters and symbols. The Punjabi language has a rich tradition of literature, music, and arts, with a strong emphasis on oral traditions such as folk songs, folk tales, and Sufi poetry. Punjabi music, including Bhangra and Giddha, is popular worldwide and has contributed significantly to the global recognition of Punjabi culture. In recent years, efforts have been made to promote and preserve the Punjabi language and its cultural heritage. Governments, community organizations, and educational institutions have taken various initiatives to ensure the continued use and development of the Punjabi language, including the establishment of educational programs, cultural events, and media platforms dedicated to the language. Additionally, the Punjabi diaspora has played a vital role in promoting Punjabi culture and language internationally, contributing to its global recognition and appreciation.

Promoting the mother language, often referred to as the mother tongue or native language, is important for preserving cultural heritage, fostering communication, and ensuring linguistic diversity. The government of Punjab, a state in India where Punjabi is widely spoken, has taken several measures to promote the Punjabi language. These measures may vary in different regions with Punjabi-speaking populations. Punjab promotes the Punjabi language through various initiatives, such as implementing it as the medium of instruction in schools, organizing cultural events, and encouraging the use of Punjabi in government communication. Additionally, there are efforts to preserve Punjabi literature, music, and arts, which play a significant role in sustaining the language and its cultural heritage. In 2022, the Punjab government in India has been taking various initiatives to promote the Punjabi language. These initiatives have aimed to preserve and revitalize the language, ensuring its widespread use and recognition. Some of the common strategies that governments use to promote their regional languages:

(i) Official Status and Support: Giving Punjabi official status within the state, ensuring its use in government communications, and providing resources for its development and preservation. The Punjab government promotes the use of the Punjabi language in official communication by employing it in official documents, public announcements, and government websites. Additionally, the government encourages the use of Punjabi in public service interactions, ensuring that it remains a primary medium of communication for administrative purposes. This helps in fostering a sense of cultural identity and inclusivity among the people of Punjab.

(ii) Education: Incorporating Punjabi into the state's education system, with a focus on teaching the language in schools and universities, producing textbooks, and conducting programs that encourage its learning. In Punjab schools, the promotion of the Punjabi language often involves making it a compulsory subject in the curriculum, creating dedicated language programs, and organizing cultural activities like Punjabi poetry recitals, storytelling, and traditional music performances. Additionally, the use of Punjabi literature in educational materials and the training of teachers proficient in the language are also part of the efforts to promote Punjabi within the education system.

(iii) Cultural Programs: Organizing cultural events, festivals, and competitions that celebrate the language, literature, and arts of Punjab. These events help in fostering a sense of pride and identity among the Punjabi-speaking community. In Punjab, cultural programs are organized to promote the Punjabi language by showcasing traditional music, dance, theater, and art forms. These events often celebrate Punjabi festivals, historical events, and prominent figures in Punjabi culture. Additionally, cultural institutions and organizations often host workshops, seminars, and exhibitions to create awareness about the importance of preserving and cherishing the Punjabi language and heritage.

(iv) Media and Literature Support: Encouraging the production of Punjabi literature, music, films, and television programs. Supporting Punjabi newspapers, magazines, and online content can also contribute to the language's visibility and popularity.

(v) Preservation Efforts: Establishing institutions, such as language authorities and academies, to preserve and develop the Punjabi language. These institutions work towards standardizing the language, documenting its history, and promoting its usage in various fields.

(vi) Language Promotion Campaigns: Launching public awareness campaigns to emphasize the importance of preserving and promoting the Punjabi language. Organizing Punjabi language competitions, workshops, and seminars.

(vii) Digital Initiatives: Promoting the use of Punjabi on digital platforms, creating digital content in Punjabi, and providing technological support for the language's usage on the internet and in various digital applications.

(viii) Inclusion in Administration: Ensuring that government services are available in Punjabi, such as issuing official documents in Punjabi, conducting government exams in Punjabi, and making government websites available in the language.

(ix) Community Participation: Encouraging community participation and involvement in language promotion activities, including the formation of community groups, clubs, and organizations that work towards preserving and promoting Punjabi.

(x) Bilingual Education: Implementing bilingual education programs where both Punjabi and a national language (such as Hindi or English) are taught to ensure students are proficient in both.

Uttar Pradesh

Uttar Pradesh is a state located in the northern part of India and is known for its rich cultural heritage and linguistic diversity. The most widely spoken language in Uttar Pradesh is Hindi. Hindi serves as the official language of the state and is used in government, administration, education, and media. However, there are various other languages and dialects spoken in different regions of the state, reflecting its diverse cultural landscape. Apart from Hindi, some of the other languages spoken in Uttar Pradesh include: Urdu, Bhojpuri, Awadhi, Braj Bhasha, Kannauji etc.

Uttar Pradesh (UP) is one of the most populous states in India, with a rich linguistic and cultural heritage. The state is home to a diverse range of languages and dialects, including Hindi, which is the official language of the state. The UP government has taken several initiatives to promote and preserve its mother languages, including Hindi, and other regional languages spoken in the state. Some of the strategies employed to promote the mother languages in Uttar Pradesh include:

(i) Education Initiatives: UP government introduce mother languages, including Hindi and other regional languages, as a medium of instruction in schools, colleges, and universities. Developing and maintaining a comprehensive curriculum for teaching Hindi, including textbooks, workbooks, and educational materials. Developed curriculum and textbooks in regional languages to ensure that students have access to quality education in their mother tongue. Providing training and support for teachers to improve the quality of Hindi language instruction. Promotion of research and academic programs focused on the study and development of regional languages.

(ii) Cultural Programs and Events: Encouraging and supporting cultural events, festivals, and organizations that celebrate Hindi language and culture. Establishing cultural centers and museums to showcase the rich heritage of Hindi-speaking regions. Organizing cultural events, festivals, and programs that celebrate the linguistic and cultural diversity of the state. Supporting and funding cultural organizations and institutions that work towards the preservation and promotion of regional languages and cultural heritage.

(iii) Media and Communication: Encouraging the use of regional languages in government communication, including official documents, announcements, and campaigns. Promoting the use of regional languages in state-run media channels, newspapers, TV, radio stations and digital content.

(iv) Government Support: Using Hindi as the primary language for government communication, official documents, and public administration. Promoting the use of Hindi in government-run media outlets, publications, and websites. Providing financial assistance and resources to initiatives aimed at the preservation and promotion of regional languages. Establishing language academies and institutions dedicated to the study, research, and promotion of regional languages.

(v) Digital Initiatives: Developing and promoting digital content in regional languages to

increase their accessibility and reach. Supporting the development of language-specific digital tools, applications, and online resources to facilitate learning and communication in regional languages.

(vi) Support for Local Communities: Providing funding and support to local Hindi-speaking communities and organizations dedicated to language preservation.

(vii) Linguistic and Cultural Heritage Preservation: Supporting initiatives that preserve linguistic and cultural heritage, such as traditional art forms, literature, and historical sites.

(viii) Bilingualism and Multilingualism: Promoting bilingual education to ensure that individuals are proficient in both their mother tongue and a common language, such as Hindi or English. Encouraging the use of multiple languages in public spaces, institutions, and communities to foster a multilingual environment.

(ix) Collaboration with Academia: Collaborating with universities and academic institutions to conduct research on the Hindi language and culture.

(x) Promoting Hindi Script: Efforts to promote and preserve the Devanagari script, which is the script traditionally associated with Hindi.

(xi) Awareness Campaigns: Launching public awareness campaigns to highlight the importance of preserving and promoting regional languages. Encouraging public participation and engagement in language-related initiatives and programs. These efforts, when implemented effectively and in collaboration with local communities and language experts, can significantly contribute to the preservation and promotion of regional languages in Uttar Pradesh. The active involvement of educational institutions, cultural organizations, and the general public is essential for the success of these initiatives.

Conclusion

Language is not just a means of communication but also a source of emotional connection. A strong connection to one's mother tongue fosters a sense of emotional well-being, confidence, and self-esteem, contributing to a positive self-identity and a sense of belonging. Indigenous languages often encapsulate valuable traditional knowledge about the environment, agriculture, medicinal practices, and other local wisdom. Protecting and promoting these languages helps safeguard this unique knowledge for future generations. Thus, by recognizing the importance of mother languages and supporting their promotion, societies can foster cultural richness, intellectual growth, and social inclusivity, contributing to a more vibrant and harmonious global community.

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