

India is a vast country inhabited by people speaking different languages. Language has, therefore, been a very controversial issue right since India became independent. Different political leaders and educationists have been expressing different opinions on the subject. English was introduced in our schools and colleges by the Britishers. It gradually took firm roots in the soil. English played an important role in the freedom struggle. In this context, the contribution of English cannot be undermined. It was believed that after⁸⁰ the departure of the English from India, English would also be discarded. But, in reality, this language has continued to occupy an important place in the country. It was laid down by our Constituent Assembly that Hindi would replace English within 15 years. All felt that the common language of the country must be some Indian language. But, circumstance took such a shape that English had to be recognized as the second official language of the country. India is trying¹⁶⁰ to become a powerful nation in all spheres. The economic, social and political life of the nation is to be changed. Progress is possible only if the people of India freely interact with their counterparts in the developed countries of the world. The world is becoming smaller day by day. People in other countries are making rapid progress in numerous fields of knowledge. English is our lifeline of contact with the outside world. It is an important bridge for the²⁴⁰ traffic of thoughts between the East and the West. English continues to be an important language used by computers and commercial establishments in major parts of the world. Advanced knowledge can

come to Indian through the medium of English. We cannot read every book through translations in Hindi or in any other regional language. By depriving ourselves of this language, we shall be missing the glorious works of various writers. English had a literature of love, freedom, emotions, nature and³²⁰ adventure. Some renowned Indians have produced their best work through the medium of this language. In fact, English is an important international language. Regional languages have not yet fully developed. Some universities have taken steps to develop the regional languages fully. But, it will take a long time before regional languages are in a position to replace English. Recently, some Southern States in India have been expressing fear regarding the imposition of Hindi on them. The Government has assured them⁴⁰⁰ that English would continue to say and to be used along with Hindi. English is, therefore, essential for national unity. Every new private school being opened in the country is an English medium school. English has come to be recognized not only as a mark of education but also as a mark of status and prestige. It is being increasingly realized that English should be developed and taught more as a library language than as a language of refined literature and rich thought.⁴⁸³