Rashtra Bhasha (National Language) Conundrum: A Novel Multi-Languaging Method

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Before Delving into the Nitty-Gritty, It May Help to Orient as to, What is Multi-Languaging/Multi-Alphabetics in a Nutshell?

- > As is well known, India has "so many" languages, but no national language.
- Multi-Languaging/Multi-Alphabetics applies identical content across multiple languages and across multiple alphabets to study them in parallel.
- ➤ It advocates and facilitates learning multiple languages simultaneously in a relational and correlated manner.
- The method importantly preserves the diversity of language, critical to its relevant culture and to mutual understanding.
- This approach has been developed as an alternative to linguistic homogenization that advocates using one or other language, be it Hindi or English, as the national language.

It is a very complex subject, and I would divide my talk as in the next two slides and will be flashing chapter orientation slides as I go along.



Organization of the Talk Presentation of the Existing Problem – Part 1

- 1. Title/Introduction/Organization (Slides 1–5)
- 2. A Few General Considerations (Slides 6–10)
- 3. India's Rashtra Bhasha Conundrum What is it? (Slides 11–15)
- 4. Anglophilia Benefits, and Losses (<u>Slides 16 –24</u>)
 How It Became a Pandemic Causing Unprecedented and Irrecoverable
 Destruction Across the World and India and How to Mitigate the Losses
- 5. India's Ethical Paradox What to do? "Bite the Bullet" (Slides 25–28)
- 6. Demystifying the Sanatana Dharma (Slides 29–31)
- 7. A Cell Biologist's View of Sanatana Dharma (Slides 32–35)
- 8. Why Am I Investigating Into Sanatana Dharma? (Slide 36)
 To See How the Three Giant Problems (Rashtra Bhasha, Anglophilia, and Ethical Paradox) May be Intertwined and How We May Strive for One Integrated Solution

Organization of the Talk Presentation of the Proposed Solution – Part 2

- 9. Multi-Languaging Concept/Method How It Works (Slides 37–57)
- 10. Multi-Alphabetics Concept/Method How It Works (Slides 58–65)
- 11. One Sample Monolingual *Rhyme* Teaching the Mother Language Keywords (Slides 66–69)
- 12. Three Sample Penta-Lingual *Vignettes* Teaching the "Other" Language Keywords (Slides 70–74)
- 13. A Short "Silent" Movie Presentation of a Dharmic Tale Teaching the Sanatana Dharma to Young Children in Their Formative Years (Slides 75–78)
- 14. Sanskrit the Leading Beneficiary of the Multi-Languaging Program So What? Why Learn Sanskrit? (Slides 79–83)
- 15. Past Achievements and Future Goals of the Multi-Languaging Project (Slides 84–86)
- 16. An Executive Summary of the Talk (Slides 87–89)

Q&A Session – Part 3

A Few General Considerations

On the Nature of Scientific Research Problems

Research problems may be fitted into two types.

One is – An outstanding or long-standing, open research problem. proven to be a "hard nut to crack" that everybody knows about, sometimes earning the notoriety of being a "conundrum".

The other is – A not-so-obvious, hidden research problem. It requires researching the field, identifying, and defining the problem, and solving it.

As you have seen, India's national language problem or Rashtra Bhasha Conundrum is one of an outstanding problem, much talked about and on which pretty much everybody opined about but nobody found a solution, if I may say so.

On Problem Solving

When it comes to India's Rashtra Bhasha Problem:

This is what I prefer not to do:

Worry how we landed here and how we inherited this conundrum.

We all know India is a country with an ancient history and the size of a continent with all its unfathomable diversity.

Wish the problem did not exist! That's running away from the problem.

This is what I prefer to do as a scientist:

- Okay, here we are, there we want to reach, and so what is the route?
- Think like a GPS and act like a GPS. Does GPS ever complain? No.
- ➤ Took a wrong turn, no problem! Start from wherever you are.
- > That is to say: attack the problem head on.

With that mind-set I worked at India's Rashtra Bhasha conundrum and produced Multi-Languaging as a possible solution.

I mention this because I am an outsider to the field, as you can see in the next slide. Sometimes it IS an advantage.

SPEAKER'S BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

- ➤ Osmania Medical College, Hyderabad MBBS & Internship 1970–1977 Gold Medal for First in Medicine
- ➢ Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore
 Graduate Student in Biochemistry
 Completed the required coursework (CGPA 3.9/4.0)
 and the comprehensive examination
- Moved to the USA Pursued postdoctoral studies based on medical doctoral degree Completed four years of residency in Pathology at Yale University Board-certified in Anatomic & Clinical Pathology; Immunopathology; and Hematopathology
- ➤ Served as a hematopathologist for 25 years

 Held professorships at University of Rochester, NY, University of South Florida, and University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA)

My Specific Research Background, As It Might Be Relevant

- India's language problem has always been at the back of mind since a high school student as I witnessed street-level agitations against Hindi.
- > I then became a doctor, a biomedical researcher, and a University Professor.
- My academic career involved many years of research:
- On pluri-differentiated progenitor/stem cells that simultaneously express properties of multiple cell types, and
- In the fields like proteomics and genomics in which we simultaneously study thousands of proteins and genes, giving me important insights.
- It is unlike in conventional biochemistry and molecular biology, in which we study one gene, one protein at a time.
- These intense biomedical research and technical experiences gave me the understanding to address the issue of the India's language problem, like a scientist or a biologist would look at in trying to find a solution.
- I investigated the issue of languages more like one would study molecules and cells, without being emotionally attached − producing a tangible result.

India's Rashtra Bhasha Conundrum – What is it?

The Conundrum

"Notitia linguarum est prima porta sapientire"

"Knowledge of languages is the first gate to wisdom" — Roger Bacon

Reference: Bacon, R. (2012). Opus Tertium. In J. Brewer (Ed.), Fr. Rogeri Bacon Opera quædam hactenus inedita (pp. 3-310). Cambridge University Press.

In that case,

- ➤ India has <mark>22</mark> official state languages.
- ➤ More than 19,500 mother languages or dialects.
- ➤ That would make India the golden gate to wisdom.
- ➤ However, India has no national language.
- The languages are venerated with near-religious fervor, as they define peoples' customs, culture, and heritage and are matters of core identities.
- ➤ This makes India a minefield of languages instead of a goldmine.
- A minefield because of the tendency of some languages to dominate/ overshadow others—like Hindi in Southern India, and English throughout India causing periodic outbreaks of tensions among different linguistic communities.



What Makes India's Rashtra Bhasha Conundrum, a Conundrum?

It is not an isolated "clean" puzzle but a complex puzzle yearning for a clean solution.

It is intricately directly or indirectly intertwined with:

- Centuries of colonization with heartless suppression of Indic systems of knowledge, with foreign languages like Persian and English sitting at the helm for 800 + 200 years, undermining the national confidence and pride.
- Anglophilia and the tsunami of globalization.
- Emphasis on STEM education without a parallel emphasis on Humanities, massproducing "unthinking" technicians instead of thoughtful citizens.
- > The habit of invoking and perpetuating unsubstantiated myths instead of learning/recognizing India's true greatness which in fact is in abundance.
- Lack of recognition and practice of Sanatana Dharma the crown jewel of Indic civilization (many present-day Indians probably never heard of it).

I will partially touch upon the above topics before presenting my proposed solution, which is my focus. I take full responsibility for my views and opinions.

What is So Great About India?

Over many millennia, India has been a beacon of light for the world in many ways.

Its unparalleled greatness comes from its inherent unmatched diversity of people, languages, and cultures, and ultimately wisdom, since its ancient past.

India's motto Vividhatayam Ekata (Unity in Diversity), and Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (The World Is One Family).

They are not new slogans; they existed since antiquity.

So, we should do everything in our capacity to preserve India's diversity, its people, languages and culture.

That's the challenge!

The Destructive Effects of <u>Linguistic Homogenization</u> Can be Far Worse than Any Foreign Invasions May Have Caused to India

- In these rapidly changing times, the desire to homogenize India, for lack of an alternative until now, by using one or other language (be it Hindi or English) is the single greatest threat that India faces today, in my opinion.
- Its destructive effects in the long run will be far worse than any foreign invasions may have caused to the country.
- We complain all the time about the destruction and mutilation of idols and temples by foreign invaders.
- But where is the outrage about the loss of languages and the wholesale demolition of the very cultures they support that is happening right now?
- It may have happened then and is surely happening now with our own welcoming and participation. Does it sound familiar to you from history?
- ➤ We are complicit in this silent destruction of cultures. There will be nobody else to blame later, but us all collectively this time around.

Anglophilia

Anglophilia – Benefits

English language is here to stay. Its benefits are evident to everyone.

Its position in today's world is well acknowledged. Its vocabulary has remarkably reached the remotest corners of the world and is being used by literate and illiterate people, alike.

English being itself a hybrid language, in turn "vengefully corrupted" every language in the world. Mixed language speech is the fashion of the day, you take any country.

It elevates the individual's "social status" and employability in today's global village.

Above all, English is the international lingua franca of science, which "apparently" ensures its preeminent position.

Anglophilia – Losses

It tends to be forgotten that language is more than a mere means of communication and that each language carries a unique culture.

Multilingual learning imparts multicultural understanding.

The loss of an indigenous language threatens that culture.

If so, a language lost, is a culture lost.

When "philia" "love" (as in Anglophilia) becomes "mania" "obsession" (as in Anglomania) – It becomes a disease.

It is like a pleasant "Breeze" turning into a lethal "Category 5 Hurricane."

My "Tribute" to English Language A Short Poem by Emily Dickinson

"A Thunderstorm"

The wind begun to rock the grass With threatening tunes and low, – He flung a menace at the earth, A menace at the sky.

The leaves unhooked themselves from trees And started all abroad;

The dust did scoop itself like hands And throw away the road ...

Nobody is spared from its havoc, as it hits home, as you see in the next slide.

English Mania – As It Has Become A Global Menace, A Pandemic of Unprecedented Magnitude, Even Affecting the UK

It is one thing to read about the French elite complaining, "Académie Française denounces rise of English words in public life" (https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/feb/16/academie-francaise-denounces-rise-of-english-words-in-public-life).

Is it quite another matter to read about the English professors bemoaning, "UK students are abandoning language learning, so we're looking for a more creative approach", "ten modern language university departments have closed, while a further nine have been significantly downsized (https://theconversation.com/uk-students-are-abandoning-language-learning-so-were-looking-for-a-more-creative-approach-202078)."?

"What goes around comes around," as they say in English!

The situation in India is even more existential

Consider the Telugu-speaking states of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh.

English-medium students are offered the option to study Telugu, Hindi, or Sanskrit.

That means that some Telugu-speaking students can never learn their mother tongue.

If you do not learn your mother tongue. What can be worse? Ask yourself.

Additionally, many of these students struggle with English language proficiency, which is only intensified by the increasing number of English-medium students.

As I understand, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh are not alone. So is the predicament in West Bengal and other states.

The State of Languages in the World Today As Voiced by British Linguists It is the Day of Reckoning -

"The world is a mosaic of visions, and each vision is encapsulated by a language.

Yet every two weeks, one of the world's approximately 6,500 languages dies out."

"There are only 6,000 visions out there, and 3,000 of these visions are likely to disappear in the current 100 years"

Voices of the World: The Extinction of Language and Linguistic Diversity. Crystal, D., Austin, P., & Rischel, J. (2005). Films Media Group.

The Benefits of English Are Clear. But How to Mitigate Its Lethal Side Effects?

The benefits of Anglification are accompanied by cultural impoverishment, as a side-effect of continuing globalization.

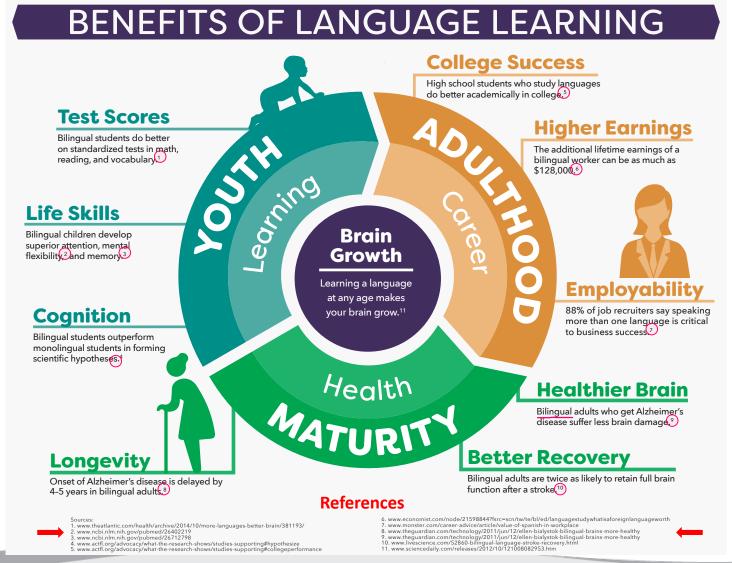
I voiced this concern and presented a method to tackle with it in this paper.

Multi-Alphabetics: A Novel Model for the Simultaneous Learning of Alphabets for Five Languages by 2–5-Year-Old Children, Adding a New Dimension to the Multi-Languaging Concept and Method.

Seshi, B. Open Journal of Modern Linguistics Vol.13 No.1, February 2023

I propose Multi-Languaging as a Solution.

Benefits of At Least the "Bilingual" Learning Are Well Documented



https://www.mla.org/content/download/60860/file/Language-Learning-Infographic.pdf



India's Ethical Paradox – What to do? "Bite the Bullet", As They Say



India's Ethical Paradox **Dharmic Culture But Rampant Corruption**

Why This Paradox?

"Because it is Kali Yuga" is a cop-out.

The emphasis on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) education without a parallel emphasis on language, especially Sanskrit, is a serious contributing fault.

We should recognize that languages are the root of all education and, thus, should be given singular importance.

Learning languages contributes to forming one's character by connecting with our ancestry.

In Today's World, No Doubt, STEM Is of Importance, But It Hangs in the Air Without Its Root.

The STEM disciplines are barren
without an understanding of
ethical decision making,
critical thinking,
and better oral and written communication skills.

It is universally accepted that science should be integrated into the liberal arts.

In fact, it is well documented that scientific geniuses cultivate arts and crafts avocations from which they draw their creativity for science.

Dharmic Culture and Sanskrit, Inseparable

India's dharmic culture, i.e., *Sanatana Dharma* is embodied and encoded in Sanskrit, a language that is innately endowed with unique sound, music, and rhythm of its own. So, it has an equally uniquely tempering and empowering result on the development of learner's mind and overall character.

(Is it not interesting, the Sanskrit word "ritam" (meaning cosmic order) and "rhythm" are related!)

"Culture has been called 'the way of life for an entire society'."

If so, How can the dharmic culture be imparted as a way of life to the entire Indian society with a population of 1.4 billion people if there are only 24,821 speakers of Sanskrit?

https://theprint.in/india/only-24821-indians-identified-as-sanskrit-speakers-in-2011-census-reveals-rti-query/1148572/

Demystifying Sanatana Dharma

Sri Aurobindo on Sanatana Dharma

Sanatana Dharma is being invoked so much. However, two mistakes are made:

- Mistake 1: Most people seem to be "adulterating" it with their own dharma. The Sanatana Dharma is the purest of the pure, as I can understand it.
- Mistake 2: Sanatana (eternal) = Puratana (ancient).
 Not all Puratana is Sanatana.

It is refreshing to learn from what Sri Aurobindo may have to say: Sri Aurobindo on India's Destiny and India's Religion

"When it is said that India shall rise, it is the Sanatana Dharma that shall rise. When it is said that India shall be great, it is the Sanatana Dharma that shall be great. That which we call the Hindu religion is really the eternal religion because it is the universal religion which embraces all others. If a religion is not universal, it cannot be eternal. A narrow religion, a sectarian religion, an exclusive religion can live only for a limited time and limited purpose."

Therefore, the cardinal principle or the Dharma of Sanatana Dharma is its Universality, essentially like that of the Scientific Truth.

As such, Sanatana Dharma is the Saving Grace of Humanity, in my view!



To Further Get to The Root of The Word

A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami writes on Dharma Meaning, as follows:

"Dharma is sometimes translated as 'religion' but that is not exactly the meaning.

Dharma actually means 'that which one cannot give up' and 'that which is inseparable from oneself'.

The warmth of fire is inseparable from fire; therefore, warmth is called the dharma, or nature, of fire."

Dharma then essentially means the innate property or the character of a thing or being.

A Cell Biologist's View of Sanatana Dharma

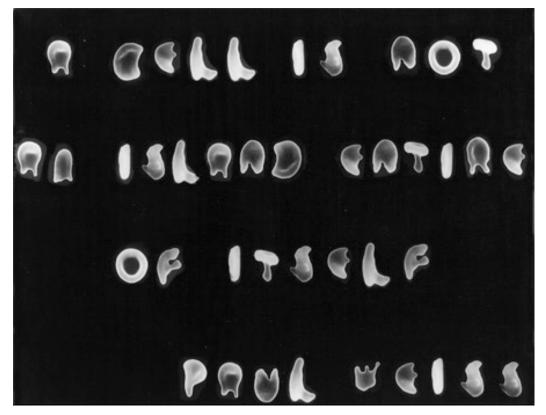
Red Cell Alphabet

Dharma as it Works in the World of Cells!



"Be an Island unto Yourself"

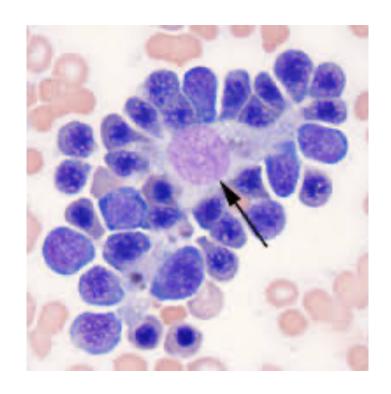
Dharma as in Gautama Buddha's Conception!



(Photo: Courtesy of Marshall A. Lichtman, MD)

The Sanatana Dharma at Work at the Micro and Macro Levels

A Macrophage (A Foster Mother)
Nursing Red Blood Cell Precursors
A Dharmic Tale That Cells Can Tell



A Mother Pig Nursing Piglets



The conceptual parallelism is evident.

Dharma Repeats Itself!



The essence of Sanatana Dharma

Like the word *yoga*, it is a non-translatable, and an endonym, literally translated, it means the "eternal properties" in the sense of the properties of, for example, water, matter, and mind, or the universal laws of Nature, or the eternal truth, that is beyond any belief system.

On the Above Basis:

In a larger sense, I would like to think of Sanatana Dharma as — the "Common Sense" i.e., the "Sense Common To" the Eight Billion people out there in this World!

Such an innate or the distilled property or nature or core character of the collective humanity must be beyond any belief system and should qualify as the Sanatana Dharma.

Why Am I Investigating Into Sanatana Dharma?

- > Besides the Rashtra Bhasha problem, India has the Ethical Paradox, as I mentioned.
- > India claims to be a dharmic civilization, but corruption is rampant at all levels.
- ➤ In my conception, India will never be able to "Reclaim, Rebuild the Indic Civilization", as Sangam Talks aspires, without being able to root out the corruption from India. Cos. nothing makes sense in the face of corruption.
- If so, can we then seek out a <u>single integrated solution</u> to the twin problems, i.e., the Rashtra Bhasha conundrum and the Ethical Paradox?
- ➤ To be realistic, one cannot make the existing adults any less corrupt (they are entrenched, "grandfathered into" corruption, so to speak!).
- ➤ But we can certainly teach the children with the Sanatana Dharma.

 Unless children are inculcated with the Sanatana Dharma in formative years, its beneficial effects cannot be realized. The age makes it indelible.
- > Teaching of the Sanatana Dharma may therefore be best interwoven with the teaching of multi-alphabetics to preschoolers.
- One can teach this world view in many other ways. Ask, how often is it done?
 Not often! Piggybacking with multi-alphabetics provides a programmatic avenue.

Multi-Languaging Concept/Method – How It Works

As Applicable to School-Going Children I–X Class/Grade

Multi-Languaging Being Proposed as a Solution

Over 2000-Page eBook



Documentary Film

MULTI ∞ LANGUAGING

An Accelerated Path To **Understanding Among Cultures**





March 2019-Present



Why This Project?

Diversity Is All-Pervasive

- The diversity of nature, the diversity of life in general and the diversity of people and their ways as embodied in their languages and cultures is so beautiful and mesmerizing.
- It raises the question: why are we not celebrating diversity as much as is warranted?
- To truly celebrate diversity, understanding of others is paramount.
- Understanding of others' languages provides one concrete window of opportunity toward that goal—hence this project.
- This project arose out of the specific and complex context of the language situation in India—as it comprises 28 states, 8 union territories, and 22 official languages.

Objective & Method

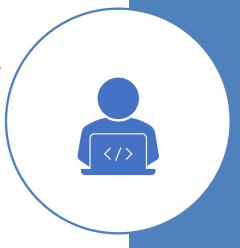
This proposal has two parts to it, both new:

Objective – To teach/learn five languages, Method – To achieve that objective.

- The number of languages is not
 2, 3, or 4—it is 5.
- That number has its genesis in the desire to achieve India's <u>national</u> integration and linguistic equality across India.

What is the Cornerstone/Foundation of the Multi-Languaging Proposal?

The cornerstone of the proposal is that the content or subject material of each lesson in each class is *identical* in all five languages and will include material that is representative or encompassing of all five languages.



One question to ask is, "Which is more effective — teaching five languages with the same content or different content?"

What is Multi-Languaging Method?

- The most common terms in the field are multilingual or plurilingual.
- I have adopted the term
 "multi-languaging" to convey
 a broad meaning of the concurrent,
 comparative teaching/learning of
 multiple languages.



What is Novel About the Method?

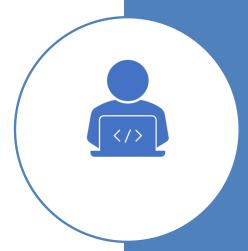
- There exist any number of methods to teach individual languages or their alphabets.
- However, to the best of my knowledge none exists that teaches, for example, five or seven languages all together in a correlative and integrated way.
- It is my thesis that relational learning imparts a thinking skillset/power and enjoyment to the learner—children and adults alike.
- This new proposal to simultaneously teach/learn multiple languages is transformative in its potential impact, I believe.
- It is expected to produce a new educational paradigm or practice for the teaching of languages.



Need for Testing the Multi-Languaging Method

• It remains to be determined whether learning five languages by the proposed "concurrent/simultaneous" method or the existing "sequential" method is more effective.

• That determination needs to be made using a clinical trial-like setting in which the investigators would evaluate the safety and efficacy of a new treatment as it is tested.



Multi∞Languaging
Method as Applied
to Learning of
Five Languages

- Three pan-Indian languages (Hindi, Urdu, and Sanskrit),
- One international language (English), and
- One vernacular language (Telugu).
- Any other vernacular language can replace Telugu.
- All languages start from First Class (Grade or Standard).

SIMULTANEOUSLY LEARNING A GIVEN SENTENCE IN FIVE LANGUAGES

	▶ 0:00 / 0:49 -
	Voice: All five languages by the same speaker, Beerelli Seshi, M.D.
	To listen, visit: multilanguaging.org
English	The Lotus flower is born in muddy water and rises to the surface to bloom.
Telugu	తామర పువ్వు మురికి నీటిలో పుట్టి ఉపరితలము పైకి వచ్చి విరబూస్తుంది. ▶
Transliteration	Tāmara puvvu muriki nīţilō puţţi uparitalamu paiki vacci virabūstundi.
Hindi	कमल का फूल कीचड़ वाले पानी में पैदा होता है और सतह पर उठ कर खिलता है। 🕨
Transliteration	Kamal kā phūl kīcar vāle pānī men paidā hotā hai aur satah par uṭh kar khilatā hai.
Urdu	▲ ممل کا کچول کیچز والے پانی میں پیدا ہوتا ہے اور سطح پر کھلنے کے لئے آتا ہے۔
Transliteration	Kamal kā phūl kīcar vāle pānī meṇ paidā hotā hai aur sataḥ par khilne ke li'e ātā hai.
Sanskrit	कमलपुष्पं पङ्कमये जले जिं लब्ध्वा विकासाय तस्य उपरि तलम् उद्गच्छति । 🕨
Transliteration	kamalapuṣpaṃ paṅkamaye jale janiṃ labdhvā vikāsāya tasya upari talam udgacchati.

You can listen to a full sentence in any of five languages by a native speaker of that language by clicking on the play button at the end of that sentence . () To listen, visit: multilanguaging.org

To give an example of multi-languaging method

SIMULTANEOUSLY LEARNING WORDS OF A GIVEN MEANING IN FIVE LANGUAGES

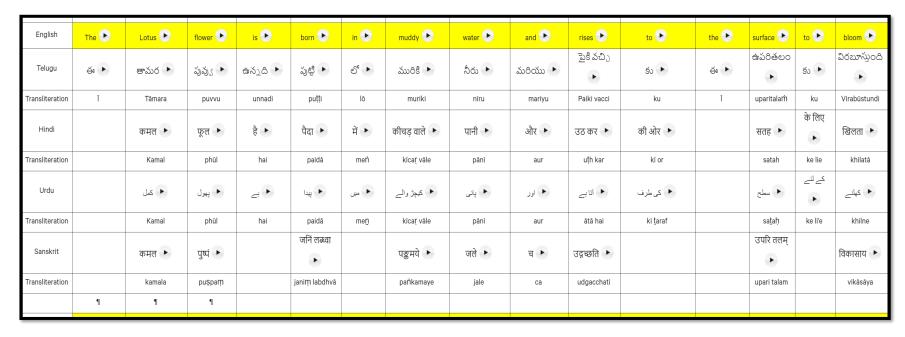
Multi-Languaging Wordbook

#				born	in	muddy	water	and	rises	to	the	surface	to	bloom
50	తామర	పువ్వ	ఉన్నది	పుట్టి	లో	మురికి	నీరు	మరియు	పైకి వచ్చి	కు		ఉపరితలం	కు	విరబూస్తుంది
Ī	Tāmara	puvvu	unnadi	puţţi	lō	muriki	nīru	mariyu	Paiki vacci	ku	Ī	uparitalaṁ	ku	Virabūstundi
	कमल	फूल	है	पैदा	में	कीचड़ वाले	पानी	और	उठ कर	की ओर		सतह	के लिए	खिलता
	Kamal	phūl	hai	paidā	meṅ	kīca <u>r</u> vāle	pānī	aur	uţh kar	kī or		satah	ke lie	khilatā
	كمل	پھول	ہے	پیدا	میں	کیچڑ والے	پانی	اور	آتاہے	كى طرف		سطح	کے لئے	کھانے
	Kamal	phūl	hai	paidā	me <u>n</u>	kīca <u>r</u> vāle	pānī	aur	ātā hai	kī taraf		saţaḥ	ke li'e	khilne
	कमल	पुष्पं		जनिं लब्ध्वा		पङ्कमये	जले	च	उद्गच्छति			उपरि तलम्		विकासाय
	kamala	puśpaṃ		janiṃ labdhvā		paṅkamaye	jale	ca	udgacchati			upari talam		vikāsāya
1	1	1												
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SIMULTANEOUSLY
LEARNING TO SPEAK
WORDS OF A GIVEN
MEANING
IN FIVE LANGUAGES

You can listen to a word of a given meaning in any of five languages by a native speaker of that language by clicking on the play button at the end of that word. • To listen, visit: multilanguaging.org

Same Meaning/Idea/Concept But Conveyed by Different Words/Sounds



Model Lesson on India's National Symbols – Video Form

Model Lesson Standalone Sanskrit Medium

https://youtu.be/akOICT0x3hs



Model Lesson on India's National Symbols – Video Form

Model Lesson Sentence by Sentence in Sanskrit and English

https://youtu.be/KlZc14LuYK0



Model Lesson on India's National Symbols – Video Form

Model Lesson Banyan Tree Sentence and Words in Five Languages

https://youtu.be/nIANPOrAJol



Model Lesson on India's National Symbols

Interactive Form

https://indian.multilanguaging.org/sanskrit/प्रारूपात्मकः-पाठः-i/

https://indian.multilanguaging.org/sanskrit/ प्रारूपात्मकः-पाठः-i-पञ्च-वाक्यशः-पञ्च-वाक्याना/

https://indian.multilanguaging.org/sanskrit/प्रारूपात्म कः-पाठः-i-शब्दशः-प्रारूपम-excel-tts/

"Same sound but different script symbol"—
Another visible form of India's national motto

a७अ।अ

"Unity in Diversity"
—"विविधतायामेकता"—

"vividhatāyāmekatā"

Outward forms may differ, but the essence is the same.

Mapping of India's 22 Official Languages by State and Union Territory— Capturing a Glimpse of India's Rich Language Diversity





What Next—Need to Produce the Class Textbooks



Dr. Seshi's International Centre & Academy for Multi-Languaging

To Be Used By Schools and Professionals and Made Available Online When Produced



Multi-Alphabetics Concept/Method – How It Works

As Applicable to Preschool Years Children Ages 2 To 5

MULTI-ALPHABETICS: INFOGRAPHIC SUMMARY





Title of the Paper: Multi-Alphabetics: A Novel Model for the Simultaneous Learning of Alphabets for Five Languages by 2–5-Year-Old Children, Adding a New Dimension to the Multi-Languaging Concept and Method

Author: Beerelli Seshi, M.D.

Ref. to the Original Journal Article: Open Journal of Modern Linguistics Vol.13 No.1, February 2023

Link to the Original Journal Article: https://www.scirp.org/pdf/ojml_2023022814092466.pdf

DOI: https://doi.org/10.4236/ojml.2023.131015

Corresponding Author E-Mail: bseshi@multilanguaging.org

MULTI-ALPHABETICS

A Novel Model for the Simultaneous Learning of Alphabets
The Process Whereby 2–5–Year–Old Children Learn Five
Different Alphabets, Where in Each Step the Previously
Learned Information Serves as an Anchor

SESHI ACADEMY FOR MULTI ∞ LANGUAGING

Foundational Basis

>> A foundational "study set" of 444 images/meanings/concepts corresponding to two keywords (instead of one, to allow for an expanded scope of learning) for each letter in the English, Telugu, Hindi, Urdu, and Sanskrit alphabets (26, 51, 57, 39, and 49 letters, respectively) formed the basis of the model. For example,

aಅअ/अ

A/a	Apple; Astronaut (English)
ഇ − a	అమ్మ – am'ma; అద్దము – addamu (Telugu)
अ – a	अक्षमाला – akshamālā; अगरबत्ती – agarabattī (Hindi)
/ — а	– āstīn; آتش – ātish (Urdu)
अ – a	अस्थिपञ्जरः – asthipañjaraḥ; अजः – ajaḥ (Sanskrit)

>> Observe that the first letter is the same across five seemingly disparate languages, accentuating the advantage of parallel learning.



AN OVERVIEW OF THE ANCHOR CONCEPT

For example, a child of Hindi background

First learns to speak 444 Hindi words corresponding to 444 images

Focus: Learning to speak Hindi words



Next learns to write the 444 Hindi words in the Hindi script

Focus: Learning to read and write the Hindi alphabet



Then learns to speak the 444 words in all five languages as written in the Hindi script

Focus: Learning to speak all five language-words as if they were all Hindi



Finally learns to write the other four language scripts in succession

Focus: Learning to read and write the other four language alphabets/scripts using the

words learned as an anchor

STEP 1: LEARNING TO SPEAK 444 WORDS IN MOTHER LANGUAGE, I.E., HINDI

- >> A short story or rhyme in English about each of the explored 444 images is created and translated into the other four languages.
- >> The story is told by the image itself in a playful manner using 2D/3D animation.
- >> The child watches and learns the stories/rhymes in his or her mother language (monolingual rhymes).
- >> From 2 to 3 years old, a child of Hindi background learns to speak 444 Hindi words corresponding to 444 images/concepts with no reference to or knowledge of any script, not even the Hindi script, thus laying the conceptual foundation for further exploration. For example,

```
सेब – seb; अंतरिक्ष यात्री – antariksh yātrī (Meanings that arose from English alphabet words)
माता – mātā; दर्पण – darpaṇ (Similarly meanings from Telugu)
अक्षमाला – akshamālā; अगरबत्ती – agarabattī (Meanings from Hindi)
आस्तीन (कपड़े की) – āstīn (kapaṛe kī), बाह (कपड़े की) – bāh (kapaṛe kī); अग्नि – agni (Meanings from Urdu)
कंकाल – kankāl; भेड़ा / ब्रह्म – bheṛā / brāhma (Meanings from Sanskrit)
```

>> Children from different language backgrounds learn to speak the same content, but in their own language.

FOCUS	METHOD	TIME	SPEECH	READING	WRITING	OUTCOME
Speak mother tongue words	Listen to monolingual rhymes	1 Year	Mother tongue	NA	NA	444 words spoken in mother tongue

STEP 2: LEARNING TO READ AND WRITE 444 WORDS IN MOTHER LANGUAGE, I.E., HINDI

- >> During the six months from age 3 to 3½, the child learns to read and write in the Hindi script, with the 444 Hindi words learned to speak in Step 1 serving as an anchor.
- >> The child learned the names/words of the related images and now learns the alphabet letters by correlating them with the names/words with which he or she is already familiar (114 alphabet words from Hindi) and uses the remainder of the 444 native language words (52 derived from English, 102 from Telugu, and likewise from Urdu and Sanskrit) for practicing writing the Hindi script. This process is much like the conventional path of learning.



FOCUS	METHOD	TIME	SPEECH	READING	WRITING	OUTCOME
Write mother tongue script	Write words learned in Step 1 in native script	1/2 year	Mother tongue	Mother tongue	Mother tongue	444 words spoken and written in mother tongue

STEP 3: LEARNING TO SPEAK AND READ 444 WORDS FROM THE OTHER FOUR LANGUAGES (TOGETHER 1,776 WORDS) WRITTEN IN MOTHER LANGUAGE SCRIPT, I.E., HINDI, AS IF THEY WERE ALL HINDI

>> Between 3 ½ and 4 ½ years old, the child learns to speak the 444 words from the five languages (together 2,220 words, the complete set) by writing in the Hindi script learned in Step 2 and by listening to *multilingual* rhymes/vignettes/conversations in the five languages, covering the full gamut of the image set. For example,

आपिल (apple; English) बोय (boy; English) बोय (boy; English) आपिल पण्डु (apple pandu; Telugu) बालुडु (baaludu; Telugu) लंड्का (ladkaa; Hindi) सेब (seb; Urdu) लंड्का (ladkaa; Urdu)

>> The child is still operating under the shelter of his or her mother language.

आताफलम् (aathaaphalam; Sanskrit)

FOCUS	METHOD	TIME	SPEECH	READING	WRITING	OUTCOME
Speak 5 language words	Listening to multilingual rhymes	1 Year	5 languages	Mother tongue	Mother tongue	2,220 words spoken in 5 languages and written in mother tongue

बालकः (baalakaha; Sanskrit)

STEP 4: LEARNING TO READ AND WRITE THE SCRIPTS OF THE OTHER FOUR LANGUAGES

>> From 4½ to 5 years old, the child learns to write the scripts of the other four languages one after another.

>> The child learns to firmly associate the specific words/sounds with the specific language.

FOCUS	METHOD	TIME	SPEECH	READING	WRITING	OUTCOME
Write other 4 language scripts	Write words learned in Step 3 in other scripts sequentially	1/2 year	5 languages	5 languages	5 languages	2,220 words spoken and written in 5 languages

- ➤ One Sample Monolingual *Rhyme*Teaching the **Mother Language** Keywords
- ➤ Three Sample Penta-Lingual *Vignettes* Teaching the "Other" Language Keywords
- ➤ A Short "Silent" Movie Presentation of a Dharmic Tale Teaching the Essence of Sanatana Dharma to Young Children in Their Formative Years

The Band of Five Multi-Lingual Child Characters



Multi-Languaging Nursery Rhyme Apple for the English Alphabet Letter A

https://youtu.be/gdiO6vriALA





LEARNING THE WORD "BOY" FOR ENGLISH ALPHABET LETTER B

Monolingual rhyme on the word "Boy" (for 2–3-year-old):

Little boy, little boy, full of cheer, Laughing loud, with nothing to fear. With endless energy, you shine so bright, Little boy, little boy, you are a joyful sight.

- The rhyme will be translated into other four languages.
- And will be sung to music and animated.
- Note that the keyword "boy" is repeated four times.
- The rhyme itself will be repeated three times.

The same content will be learned by children of five different language backgrounds in their respective mother tongue.

Penta-Lingual Vignettes/Scenarios Learning the Other ("Foreign") Language Words for a Given Meaning

- ➤ By watching and listening to the monolingual rhymes, the child would have learned 444 mother language words for 444 meanings.
- Next, the child will learn the four other language words for each of the 444 meanings by watching and listening to the conversational scenarios, voiced over and animated, still using the medium of their mother language.
- A variety of interesting scenarios can be devised, but I will just show three such possible scenarios, to make the point.

Penta-Lingual Vignette - Scenario I

Each individual child answering the word for boy in her/his language.

Teacher: "Hello everyone! Today we're going to learn a new word: 'boy.'

Can anyone tell me what 'boy' means in English?"

Saroja: "Boy means a male child."

Teacher: "That's right, Saroja! Now, Vema, can you tell us what 'boy' means in Telugu?"

Vema: "Baludu means boy in Telugu."

Teacher: "Great job, Vema! And how about in Hindi, Prem?"

Prem: "Ladka means boy in Hindi."

Teacher: "Excellent, Prem! Now, Mirza, can you tell us what 'boy' means in Urdu?"

Mirza: "Ladka means boy in Urdu."

Teacher: "Well done, Mirza! And finally, Kalidas, what is the Sanskrit word for 'boy'?"

Kalidas: "Balakah means boy in Sanskrit."

Teacher: Did anybody see anything interesting in today's lesson?

Prem: Yes, teacher. It's the same word "Ladka" both in Hindi and Urdu.

Teacher: Anything else interesting?

Kalidas: Telugu word "Baludu" and Sanskrit word "Balakah" are very close, teacher.

Teacher: Amazing, Kalidas! You all did a great job learning the word 'boy' in five

different languages. Keep up the good work!"

The vignette will be translated into other four languages, voiced over, and animated.



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Penta-Lingual Vignette – Scenario II

All children together in chorus answering the word in each language.

Teacher: Good morning, everyone!

Today we are going to learn how to say "boy" in different languages. Are you ready?

Children: Yes!

Teacher: Okay, let's start with English. What's the word for "boy" in English?

Children: Boy!

Teacher: Great job! Now, can you tell me how to say "boy" in Telugu?

Children: Baludu!

Teacher: Excellent! What about in Hindi?

Children: Ladka!

Teacher: And in Urdu?

Children: Ladka!

Teacher: Good work! Finally, what's the word for "boy" in Sanskrit?

Children: Balakah!

Teacher: Did anybody find anything interesting in today's lesson?

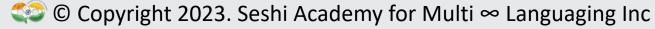
Kalidas: Yes teacher. I see two interesting things. It is the same word "Ladka" in Hindi

and Urdu, and "Baludu" and "Balakah" in Telugu/Sanskrit sound alike and related.

Teacher: Yes, they are related. You all did amazing! It's so cool to learn different words

in different languages. Keep up the good work!

• The vignette will be translated into other four languages, voiced over, and animated.



Penta-Lingual Vignette - Scenario III

All children together in chorus matching the word to the correct language

Teacher: Good morning, boys, and girls! I have a fun quiz for you today.

Are you ready to show off your language skills?

Children: Yes!

Teacher: Great! Here's the question: What is the word for "boy" in English, Telugu,

Hindi, Urdu, and Sanskrit?

Children: Boy, baludu, ladka, ladka, balakah!

Teacher: Excellent job, everyone! Now let's see if you can match the correct word to the

language. I'll say a word, and you tell me which language it belongs to.

Teacher: Baludu ——— Children: Telugu!

Teacher: Ladka — Children: Hindi and Urdu!

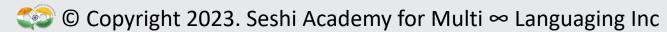
Teacher: Does anybody see anything interesting today's lesson?

Kalidas: Yes teacher, in fact I see something very interesting: Baludu in Telugu and

Balakah in Sanskrit sound alike to me.

Teacher: Yes Kalidas, you are spot on. You all did fantastic! It's great to learn from each other's languages. Let's keep practicing and exploring together.

The vignette will be translated into other four languages, voiced over, and animated.



The Pedagogical Importance of Preschool Years Ages 2-5 The Magical Age

My program aims to lay the foundation in preschool, from age 2–5 years.

This is the most receptive and absorbent age, as it has been well documented. Everything they see is a wonder of their life. Their minds are like a "sponge". They are completely unencumbered and starting life with a clean slate.

Also, to be cognizant of the labor class in India, which is a major class, at this age, their children

- do not have the pressure to get a job,
- do not have to perform labor in a farm or factory, and
- do not have to worry about STEM subjects, thus, regardless of elite or labor class, reaching out to all sections of the society, and serving social justice is critically important.

No excuse not to learn the languages if the resources are delivered to the doorstep in the form of an App, no more difficult than using a cell phone.

Concepts learned and ethical standards imbibed during the formative years are remarkably indelible and will have the lasting impact.

Inculcating The Preschoolers With The Essence of The Sanatana Dharma

Each penta-lingual conversational vignette involving five children will have a "watch and learn" video graphic story to go with.

These stories entail the Age-Old Truths (E.g., Panchatantra story, Aesop's fable.)

Presenting as an Animated Musical without the Language Words.

Let the Child Just Watch, Learn and Imagine in Their Own Language.

The child should then be encouraged to narrate the story after watching the video graphic in their own words in their mother tongue to their parents or teachers or other children and as well to write the story.

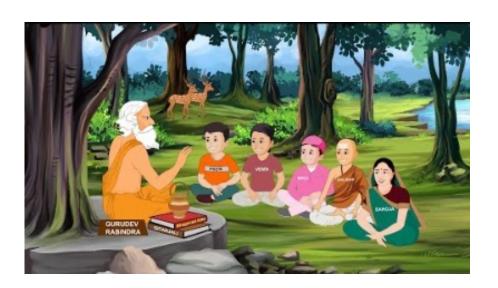
About 100 such video graphic stories will be developed to be watched and learned by the child along with 444 vignettes on five-language words.

For example: A Story Involving the Universality of Maternal Love

Preschool

Teachings in Sanatana Dharma-Maternal Love

https://youtu.be/x4cncsFZL4Y



"Moral Education" Combined with "Language Education" Foundational Elements of a Moral/Value Education (Slide 1 of 2)

These elements may vary from one authority to another authority. For the sake of clarity and comprehensiveness, I sought to organize them under 10 groups, as follows:

- 1. Love/Sense of Beauty/Affection
- 2. Friendship/Caring/Compassion/Sacrifice
- 3. Honesty/Truthfulness
- 4. Tolerance/Respect for Difference
- 5. Resilience/Perseverance
- 6. Spirit of Inquiry/Feeling of Wonder
- 7. Fairness/Reciprocity
- 8. Ingroup/Loyalty
- 9. Authority/Respect
- 10. Purity/Sanctity

"Moral Education" Combined with "Language Education" Foundational Elements of a Moral/Value Education (Slide 2 of 2)

- My goal is to produce 100 video graphic stories like the one on "Maternal Love", covering the 10 dharmic groups as above (with 10 video graphic stories in each group).
- The stories will be featured as a piggyback to the voiced over/animated penta-lingual conversational vignettes enacted by the child characters from five languages.
- The child students are then asked to narrate/write the story in their own words/language.
- This exercise is expected to effectively inculcate morality/values in preschool children.
- ➤ One needs to await decades before experimental testing is performed to verify whether this initiative in fact reduces the corruption level in India.

One Important End Result Is Sanskrit Is The Leading Beneficiary Of the Multi-Languaging Program

That's Because The Level Of Sanskrit Literacy In India Only 24,821 Indians Are Identified **As Sanskrit Speakers**

https://theprint.in/india/only-24821-indiansidentified-as-sanskrit-speakers-in-2011-census-reveals-rtiquery/1148572/

https://www.indiatoday.in/amp/india/story/peoplespeak-sanskrit-india-home-ministry-languagedepartment-2005594-2022-09-28

https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/Whereare-the-Sanskrit-speakers/article60089403.ece

Still So-What? Why Learn Sanskrit?

- Ancient Indic knowledge and wisdom, in the form of Vedas, Upanishads and other scriptures, and various Shashtras (sciences), and Sanatana Dharma are all embodied and encoded in Sanskrit.
- ➤ It appears that so much is lost in translation, literally and figuratively, as some Indian scholars are critical of some foreign translators as being Eurocentric, Religiocentric, and Ethnocentric.
- ➤ On the other hand, so much glory is being made of India's ancient past by some Indians and disputed by others, raising the question, What is the truth?
- Learning Sanskrit enables and empowers even the common man to directly see the real-truth of it, or lack there of, and benefit from it.

Piggyback Effect

Multi-Languaging provides a practical way of learning Sanskrit in tandem ("piggyback") and on par with modern languages, starting with age 2 years.

In this way, my hope is that in 20-30 years, Sanskrit will quietly achieve a status equal to that of the other languages of India.

Despite my enchantment for and emphasis on Sanskrit, it is to be learned in combination with four other languages (English, State language, Hindi, and Urdu). (producing true mobility between languages)

It is a win-win for all the five languages and will greatly serve to connect people of India to one another.

Making India the Linguistic Envy of the World

In a nutshell, Multi-Languaging provides a key to harnessing the India's rich language diversity, and

Transforms what seems on the surface like a nightmare or minefield of languages into a goldmine.

Summary of Past Achievements and Future Goals of the Multi-Languaging Project

Accomplishments Over the Past 4 ¼ Years – Single-Handed and Self-Funded (Phase I)

Developed a Multi-Languaging Website:

https://multilanguaging.org

Published a 2,000-Plus Page eBook:

https://www.multilanguaging.org/ebookfrm.php

Created Explainer Videos in 11 Languages:

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLMhe73nZdAvx-rJUgZbhHNAj8pbac8JEV

Produced 20 Model Lesson Instructional Videos:

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLMhe73nZdAvxECw3CChiSc0gmJEnSmJJh

Published a Peer-Reviewed Research Paper:

https://www.scirp.org/pdf/ojml 2023022814092466.pdf

Made a Documentary Film (met the qualifications for Oscar entry):

https://youtu.be/SINDjAMp0pA

Interviewed by the President of JNCL-NCLIS on Language & Science—Language at the

Intersection: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cs3BqFfPxJ8

Zoom Talk Presented to the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Alumni:

https://youtu.be/lx1 6Xqftck

Still, I have "Miles to Go Before I Sleep", As You See in The Next Slide!



The Specific Goals for the Next 7 Years – A Blueprint Involves Resource Development (Phase II)

The *Overall Objective* is to *develop* the educational resources and *deploy* the resources.

They include producing 444 monolingual nursery rhymes and 444 penta-lingual vignettes in five languages for preschoolers, and penta-lingual textbooks from Classes I–X for school-going children.

The **Specific Goals** are **sequentially** to have:

Phase II A (immediate): 1.5 years

- 1. The 888 nursey rhymes/vignettes written by professional content writers in English (6 months).
- 2. The **rhymes translated** by professional translators into four companion languages (8 months).
- 3. The written rhymes published as an eBook, thus producing a usable product as such (4 months). Phase II B (next): 2.5 years
- 4. Music composed by professional musicians and rhymes sung by expert singers (12 months).
- 5. **Animations added** by animation experts, thus finalizing the full-fledged rhymes (6 months).
- 6. Dharmic video tales (100) prepared, animations and music added by experts (6 months).
- 7. **Rhymes made available** to day-care centers, Montessori schools, Balavihar, YTb, etc. (6 months). **Phase II C (final): 3.0 years**
- 8. The integrated five-language **textbooks**, Class/Grade I–X, **prepared and published (24 months)**.
- 9. The **textbooks made available** to school-going children via Seshi Academy website (**6 months**).
- 10. Created math and science vocabularies in five languages and made available (6 months).

It may need a total financial support of 2–3 million USD to achieve the stated goals. Considering its immense benefit to a country of 1.4 billion people, the cost is small.

An Executive Summary of the Talk - Slide 1 of 2

- (i) India has been facing problems because of language-based conflicts and nobody in my judgment has found a workable solution.
- (ii) India has been facing problems because of corruption and nobody in my judgment has found a workable solution.
- (iii) I believe that I have found a plausibly workable solution.
- (iv) Presented many slides for describing my solution, and extensive efforts towards preparing material for implementing the solution and demonstrating illustrative examples of such materials.
- (v) This is a work-in-progress. I started it and self-funded it to bring it this far.
- (vi) To move to the next phase, 2-3 million US dollars are needed for achieving the 10 stated goals toward implementing this solution. Considering its anticipated benefit to 1.4 billion people, it may translate to 0.142 to 0.214 US cents (0.12 to 0.18 INR) per head. This may pale in comparison to other governmental budgets.

Importantly, it is expected to provide a useful model that can benefit all, as it can be adapted to any 5 or all 22 languages.

An Executive Summary of the Talk - Slide 2 of 2

- (vii) It will take 20-30 years to realize the full benefit of the proposed solutions. That may be because of the nature of the subject/field:
 - (a) It is prospective research unlike observational research.
 - (b) It is a sociolinguistic experiment unlike a biological experiment.
 - (c) As I am unaware of any published studies measuring the success (or the lack thereof) or outcomes of the existing methods, my initiative may augur a new chapter for educational research in India.
- (viii) While the effectiveness remains to be determined, there is no safety concern in experimenting with it, and considering its low cost/benefit ratio, it is worth producing the resource materials needed and experimenting with it, and hence I am persevering.
- (ix) In 20-30 years, interestingly we will have two population sets to compare in a large scale at national level: one, educated in 5 languages, and received 100 dharmic lessons in formative years *vs.* the other, old generation.
- (x) In the interim, a variety of studies can be designed locally and regionally to monitor the benefit of the new teaching methods *vs.* the old as in a clinical trial setting. Suffice to say that it will be a collective effort and involve other experts.

सत्यमेव जयते नानृतं

– मुण्डक-उपनिषद्

satyameva jayate nānṛtaṃ

Truth alone triumphs; not falsehood.

– Mundaka Upanishad (Late BC–Early AD)

That is the Dharma (Nature or Truth) of Truth.

And That is Sanatana (Eternal).



Q&A Session