

# The Importance and Utility of Working Knowledge of Official Language Hindi to Central University Employees of India

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## **Abstract**

Official Language has been an important issue for centuries. Hindi was used as an associate Official Language during Mughal Empire and British Rule and as the main Official Language in several Maratha kingdoms. After the independence of India, Hindi was recognized as the Official Language of the Union of India. Government of India has been trying to implement Official Language policy in all its organizations since India became republic. Government of India Official Language Hindi policy applies to central universities too. This research focuses on why it is essential for Central University employees to have working knowledge of Official Language Hindi and what is its utility for them and how can it be implemented effectively. This is a factual and descriptive research paper.

**Keywords:** Official Language, Central University employees, Official Language Policy, working knowledge

## **History of Hindi as an Official Language**

The Constitution of India recognized Hindi as the official language of the Union of India. The Government of India has been trying to implement official language policy in all its organizations including central universities. Government of India Official Language Hindi Policy applies to central universities too. Also the government has been trying to have Hindi as the language of correspondence among all the offices falling under it.

Official language has always been a sensitive issue. Dr. Bholanath Tiwari writes that Persian became official language after the arrival of Turks and Afghans in India after 12th century; contemporary language Hindi in use was also accepted as an associate language as majority of officials were Indian and they were unable to work in Persian medium (66). After the independence of India, Hindi was adopted as official language of the Union of India by the majority of representatives. The effect of Persian and English on the official language Hindi is still evident. It is noteworthy that even during the Mughal period and British period, the importance of lingua franca Hindi was considered and used for the ease of rule. Gupt writes that Mughal emperors in their allies' Kingdom and accordingly allies monarchs in the capital of Mughal emperors established their lawyers' office. In these offices works were done in Hindi language and Devanagri script(3).

Dr. Hardev Bahari writes that great learned from South India, understanding the importance of Hindi, opted their medium for spreading their messages through Hindi since its 'Aadikaal' itself. In the south, Hindi spread in the kingdom of Rashtrakuta and Yadvas. Hindi was official language in Ahmednagar,

Bijapur, Golconda and Vidarbha. Dakshini Hindi developed there itself (213). In the 18th century, Marathi Gharana of Peshwa, Sindhiya, Holkar etc. carried out their official works In Hindi. Hindi was the official language during Muslim rule too. All the information on coins was available in Hindi. Hindi was used in ‘Shahi Farman’ too. Persian was the official language during the Mughal Empire, and for ruling purpose Hindi was used as an alternative language and it was lingua franca of the public. Blackman on the basis of his research wrote in Calcutta Review (1871) that during the Mughal rule period and also earlier to that, all government documents were preserved in Hindi. Bahari writes that the coin of East India Company was inscribed in Hindi and orders were published in Hindi (214).

### **Relevance**

Hindi in Devanagari script being the official language of India, its implementation in the official works of the central government, may be viewed as our constitutional duty and responsibility. In a central university, staff come from different corners of India. They work together. Hindi has a similar syntactical structure to other Indian languages and many words in use are alike among them. As a result, it becomes convenient to understand Hindi by different language speaking people. Considering this, Hindi is a preferred link language among them for communication purpose. Hence, arrangements are done for its working knowledge and staff are encouraged to undergo Hindi Training courses. In many central universities, students get their admissions through Central University Entrance Test (CUET). Most of them may not be fluent and comfortable enough to express themselves and study through English medium. They may not be fluent in Hindi either. Hindi, being close to Indian languages with syntactical, cultural and semantic view, may preferably be implemented. Directorate for Hindi Medium Implementation has been established in a few Central Universities. It is involved in publishing books by eminent academics and authors. It has over the years published several books, translations and other study materials for the use of Hindi as a language of instruction in several subjects. It has a consultative committee of eminent persons which guide the activities of the Directorate.

### **Why should we opt Hindi for official work purpose?**

Even though English is the medium of instruction in many of the central universities, however we find that the students are required only to pass a basic level of the language; this does not make them efficient to express and execute their works through English medium. As per 1951 census, Hindi was spoken by above 40% population of India whereas speakers of all the other Indian language were less than 10%. As per 2011 census of India, the population of India stood at 1210.9 million as on 31st March 2011. Also, as per census of 2011, number of Hindi speaking people stood at 52,83,47,193. It is the Indian language spoken by maximum number of people. Bengali stands at number 2 with 9,72,37,669 people speaking the language. Thus, Hindi has been spoken by a very large population of India and no other Indian language has a close figure to it. Also, as per latest update of official language department of ministry of home affairs, Government of India; Hindi is the main official language in 11 and 2nd Main official language in 6 states and union territories. Hence, considering our constitutional responsibility we need to opt for implementation of Hindi as the official language in central universities.

### **Current status and provisions**

There is a list of 22 official languages in the eighth schedule of the Constitution of India. Hindi is one of them. Initially there were 14 languages in this list. Later ‘Sindhi’ was added in the list by the

Constitution 21<sup>st</sup> Amendment Act, 1967. Three other languages- Konkani, Nepali and Manipuri were added to it by the 71<sup>st</sup> Amendment Act, 1992. By the Constitution (Ninety-second Amendment) Act, 2003; four languages namely Bodo, Dogri, Maithili and Santhali were added. And thus, total number of languages listed in the eighth schedule of the Constitution of India has increased to 22. Also, constitutional provisions regarding official language have been mentioned in part 5(Article 120), Part 6(Article 210) and part 17 of the Constitution of India.

The fore mentioned parts of the Constitution of India provide detailed information with regards to the use of languages. It also states the responsibilities for implementation of official language as well as the way for propagation of official language Hindi. Rule Number 12 of the official Language Rules, 1976 states that it is the responsibility of implementation of the official language of the head of an organization whereas article 351 States that the union will promote the spread of Hindi language to develop it so that it may serve as medium of expression for all the elements of the composite culture of India and secure its enrichment by assimilating without interfering with its genius, the forms, style and expressions used in Hindustani and in other languages of India specified in the 8th schedule, and by drawing, wherever necessary or desirable, primarily on Sanskrit and secondarily on other languages. Also S. K. Saklani mentions that international term may be retained in English or foreign language as far as possible and numerals, symbols, signs and formula used in sciences such as mathematics should be in Roman or Greek alphabet. However, abbreviation may be written in Devanagari script and standardized form while letters of Indian script may be used in geometrical figures. Conceptual forms can be translated. Selection of Hindi or any other language equivalent, as far as possible, may be accepted and Sanskrit root may be preferred. Popular words even if they relate to a foreign language be retained. International terms adopted in Hindi and Indian language should be used in masculine gender unless there are compelling reasons otherwise. In any case, complicated and derogatory description must be avoided in any event (ii).

### **Why do central university employees need training in official language?**

In many central universities, students get admission through CUET from all over India. They have different mother tongues and also different medium educational background. They need a common link language. Premakrishna Goravara says that a link language is the language which may be used to connect different regions of the country and Hindi is the only language of India which is spoken in a vast geographical area and spoken and understood by most of the people of the nation. Hindi plays the role of the official language as well as link language which connects people of the entire nation (327-28). Hindi is the main official language in 11 states and union territories which covers a very large geographical area and population of the country. Hence, for execution of their task smoothly, it is very useful and helpful for central university employees to have working knowledge in official language Hindi.

Though English is taught in entire India, still a meagre percentage of people are able to express themselves in English. As per Census of India 2011, number of persons who returned the language as their mother tongue English is 2,59,678 among vast population of India. Even though English is the medium of instruction in many of the central universities, however we find that the students are required only to pass a basic level of the language, this does not prepare for professionals to work efficiently in English. Hindi being a lingua franca in a large geographical area of India is comfortably spoken and understood in almost all the parts of our country. As per 2011 census, Hindi is spoken by the highest number, i.e., 52,83,47,193 of people in India whereas all other Indian language are spoken by less than

10 crore people. This figure includes all the dialects. Usually, the most spoken language of a country is chosen for official work purpose. In such a consideration the only language which fulfills this criterion is Hindi.

As mentioned in the Article 343 of the Constitution of India, Government of India seeks to implement one official language of the union for which it has chosen Hindi. Hence, every financial year the implementation of official language Hindi is adorned with many policies framed in accordance with the provisions mentioned in the constitution of India. The training for working in Hindi given to the Employees falls under such policies through which the government of India seeks to bring the employees working in the central government institutions to align by working in a common language.

### **Pros of official language training**

On analyzing 54<sup>th</sup> Annual Assessment Report 2022-23 of the Department of Official Language, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India we see that the documents falling under section 3(3) of Official Language Act, 1963 have been issued 100% bilingually, no. of letters received in Hindi has increased, no. of letters replied in Hindi has increased and also Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education has issued 1431 letters bilingually. This shows employees of central universities are enthusiastic to learn Hindi and to work in it.

### **Some steps towards implementation of Official Language Hindi:**

There is a common plan for implementation of official language Hindi in all the central government organizations. Official language policy framed by the Department of Official Language, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India is implemented in central university. Some important steps taken by the central university to implement official language Hindi are as follows:

1. Central university nominates their employees to learn Hindi through Hindi training courses run by Hindi Teaching Scheme, a wing of the Government of India. Online facilities for these courses are also available. Detailed information is available on Rajbhasha website too.
2. Central universities also nominate their employees to undergo courses such as Hindi typing, Hindi Stenography and Hindi translation run by Central Hindi Teaching Institute and Central Translation Bureau at different locations in India. Employees are also sent for advanced course, revision course to keep themselves updated.
3. Central university employees are trained on latest translation and typing software developed by government of India agencies like C-DAC, AICTE, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology etc.
4. They are trained in official language Hindi workshop too.
5. They are encouraged to learn Hindi by providing increment, cash prize and other incentive too as per Government of India norms.
6. Competitions are organized for them which are encouraging.
7. After Hindi Teaching Scheme training or getting declaration from the central university employees for having working knowledge of Hindi, they are issued an order to work in Hindi under official language rule 8(4).
8. As per Rule number 5 of the Official Language Rules, 1976; all the Hindi letters are to be replied in Hindi compulsorily. Hence, working knowledge of Hindi is required to execute such tasks maintaining confidentiality of work.

9. Official language Cell is established in a Central University. Hindi typist, Hindi translator and Hindi Officer are appointed in this Cell. They are devoted towards implementation of official language Hindi.
10. In some of the central universities like Delhi University, Directorate of Hindi Medium Implementation has been established. They arrange for textbook on various subjects in Hindi which are helpful for study and instructions through Hindi medium.
11. There is a target to train all the central government employees in Hindi by 2025.
12. Computers are facilitated with software to help type and work in Hindi.
13. Website of a central university is made available in Hindi besides other language.
14. Hindi learning software, Hindi translation software, Hindi typing software etc. are available for free on websites like <https://cdac.in>, [www.rajbhasha.gov.in](http://www.rajbhasha.gov.in), <https://indiatyping.com>, [www.microsoft.com](http://www.microsoft.com) etc.
15. As per Section 3(3) of Official Language Act, 1963; 14 classified documents are to be issued compulsorily in Hindi along with English. Hence, sufficient facilities for learning Hindi language are provided to central university employees.
16. Inspection regarding official language implementation in central university is done by the competent authority of the same university, regional official language implementation office, UGC, Ministry of Education and Parliamentary committee.
17. Hindi Day/ week/ fortnight/ month etc. are celebrated to make employees aware of its activities in respect of official language.

### **Government structure**

In compliance of Official Language Act, 1963 of the Government of India, central university also sets up Official Language Cell in its premises. Official Language Cell is functioning in all the central universities. Vice chancellor being the head of the institution is responsible for implementation of official language Hindi as per Government of India norms. The implementation of official language in the university is monitored through official language cell. Hindi translator translates the 14 classified documents into Hindi or English as per instruction. Hindi typist types the documents. Hindi officer holds a number of responsibilities like translation, vetting of translation, organization of official language workshop, meetings, inspection of Departments/ sections, monitoring and helping of official language implementation in other departments/ sections, organization of Hindi fortnight/ Divas etc. All the expenses of Official Language Cell are met from the funds provided by the concerned central university. Also, at times, public sector undertakings and volunteers sponsor some official language related activities, encourage Hindi studying students by providing financial aids and encouraging by giving them certificates, electronic gadgets etc.

### **Conclusion**

Central government issues guidelines time and again for proper implementation of official language Hindi. A lot has been done and still miles to go ahead is needed. We can conclude that learning Hindi and implementation of official language Hindi policy by central university employees will contribute in unity, integrity, functioning of administrative and teaching work. Hence, it is essential for central university employees to have at least working knowledge of Hindi.

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