

The Inclusion, Mobility and Multilingual Education Conference

Exploring the role of languages for education and development

237A

English Language Learning Outcomes at the Secondary School Stage in India

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In India, English is viewed as the language of socio-economic empowerment through education. Education could be either in English or in regional languages, but children should learn English, because it is seen as the key to the world of opportunities in higher education and employment.

The demand for English emerges from many factors, as recognised by the position paper on the teaching of English produced by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT 2006). The Central Advisory Board on Education (CABE) also deliberated in detail on the study of English as a compulsory subject as recommended at the Education Ministers' Conference held in 1957, concluding that English should be taught as a compulsory language both at secondary and university levels, and students should acquire adequate knowledge of English so as to be able to receive education through this language at university level.

This paper attempts to assess the status of achieved levels of English language in schools in India using the National Achievement Survey of class x data collected from over more than 300,000 students. The difference in achievement levels with regards to area (rural/urban), gender, social group, and management (government/private) of schools revealed that there is not only an issue of quality but the issue of equity is a concern for students learning English language in secondary education. In addition, applying data mining techniques, patterns were identified wherein students need intervention in reading comprehension vis-à-vis cognitive processes e.g. locating information, grasping ideas and interpretation, inference and evaluation. These patterns can form the basis of a framework for specific pedagogy training.