

Reading the Eighth Schedule – As a Text on Multilingualism

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Abstract

This paper attempts to read the VIII Schedule (ES) of the Constitution of India. This is an attempt to find out the criterion for entry into the VIII Schedule and the incentives offered to the languages that are listed. The paper attempts to capture the implications of this Schedule on the multiple languages of India. The paper endeavors to find the underlying vision behind enlisting languages under this Schedule.

This hermeneutic study of an appendage of our Constitution begins with the hypothesis that the VIII Schedule reflects the multilingual mind set of the people of India in general and the framers of the Constitution in particular. The text is the VIII Schedule. Primary and secondary sources are referred to read the text. The method is based on both inductive and deductive logic.

The key words are 'Eighth schedule' and 'language/s'.

Introduction

There are Twelve Schedules of the Constitution of India. Of them, the Eighth Schedule (hereafter ES) goes under the heading 'Languages': **Articles 344 (1)** and Art. 351 are mentioned in parenthesis. Under this heading there is a list of languages. The foot notes are the Amendments that added languages to the ES. There is nothing else. The Oxford Advance Learner's Dictionary gives the meaning for the word 'schedule' as 'written list of things'. The Oxford Thesaurus lists the synonyms of the word- calendar, list, programme, register... Hindi and Kannada use the word 'Pariched/a', a Sanskrit word for Schedule and the Subhash Kannada

x English Dictionary gives the words- 'chapter' and 'section' as the English equivalents of the word. "Schedules appended to statutes form part of the statutes. They are added towards the end as their use is made to avoid encumbering the sections in the matters of excessive details"¹. So, the ES is an elaboration of the Articles mentioned above. Of the two Articles that the Schedule refers to, **Art. 344 (1)** is about 'Commission and Committee of Parliament on official language' and **Art. 351** deals with the 'Directive for development of Hindi language'. It is **Art. 343 (1)** that states the Official Language of the Union- 'shall be Hindi in Devanagari script.'² Art. 343 (2) provided for the continuation of English for official purposes of the Union. The two articles mentioned in the ES have a direct reference to all the clauses of Art. 343.

In legal parlance 'schedule' is defined to "mean a schedule to the Act or Regulation in which the word occurs". There by, the ES is connected with every Act where the word 'language' occurs.³ But, "In case of a conflict between the body of the Act and the Schedule the former prevails."⁴

The caption of the ES - '**Languages**' refers to the languages chosen to be included in the ES of the Constitution of India. In its singular form, the term 'language' encompasses the structure, pragmatics, semantics and the resultant Discourse. "Discourses in this sense, are more than just language, they are ways of being in the world, or forms of life that integrate words, acts, values, beliefs, attitudes, and social identities."⁵ If each of these forms of life is explained in multiple volumes, it would still be inadequate to capture the full meaning of language. However, to draw a premise to begin a reading of ES as text, one cannot but agree that language as a shared code is necessary for communication between individuals, groups, communities and nations. The human speech organs, ears, the brain, together with language processing capacity, capacity to produce infinite sentences with finite grammatical structures, memory, collective consciousness coupled with emotions have made language the most potent form of human expression. Language "is perhaps the most important

thing which society has evolved, out of which other things have taken growth".⁶ Language is inseparably connected with thought and meaning. The modern education has connected language with employment opportunities. The modern nation states, at least some of them have assimilated the antiquity of languages to claim a historical sense of continuity for the idea of nation state. The ES is a list of 'Languages'.

The genesis of the ES is traced to the Constituent Assembly Debate⁷ and the Munshi- Ayyangar formula. This formula was a compromise- "two aspects of the compromise, however, included for the benefit of regional language speakers, deserve special comment. They are: the listing of regional languages in the Constitution and the reference to the interest of non- Hindi speakers in regard to the public services."⁸

The Purpose of ES: The functional purpose of ES was twofold. It was recognition granted to 14 languages for being developed enough to be used in multiple domains. Jawaharlal Nehru explained the purpose of the ES- "Our country has a number of highly developed languages and several scripts. We have decided to encourage these great provincial languages".⁹ By its reference to the Articles 344 (1) and 351, the ES was a source to draw members to the Official Language Commission and a source of assimilation for the enrichment of Hindi. "It is important to note that no language has sought its inclusion in the Eighth Schedule to enrich Hindi by lending its linguistic resources, but intends its own development through inclusion because of direct accessibility of resources due to enhanced status."¹⁰ Such being the reality, it is necessary to ponder as to what the framers of the Constitution meant by 'enrichment'. 'Enrichment' as used in the article 351 refers to the unique vocabulary resource that a people develop to express their lived experience through language – '...the forms, style and expressions used in Hindustani and the other languages specified in the Eighth Schedule...'.¹¹ It would be naïve to conclude that vocabulary is the be all and end all of language enrichment. Vocabulary reflects a people's ideas, beliefs

and worldview. It is this worldview that represents methods of resolving conflict, concern for environment, means of preserving natural resources, the myths and stories that should move from generation to generation and people to people through language/s.

The Profile of ES: The languages in the ES are referred to as Provincial languages, Modern Indian languages, National languages and Recognized languages- nomenclatures that do not have constitutional validity. Chapter II of Part XVII of the Constitution of India uses the term- 'Regional Languages.' The Kothari Commission Report of 1964 referred to the languages of ES as 'Modern Indian Languages' which was repeated in the Three Language Formula of National Education Policy of 1968.

The ES has grown to a list of **22 Languages**. The number has almost doubled since the Constitution came into being. The 22 languages in the VIII Schedule are-

1. Assamese
2. Bengali
3. Gujarati
4. Hindi
5. Kannada
6. Kashmiri
7. Konkani
8. Malayalam
9. Manipuri
10. Marathi
11. Nepali
12. Oriya
13. Punjabi
14. Sanskrit
15. Sindhi
16. Tamil
17. Telugu
18. Urdu
19. Bodo
20. Santali
21. Maithili
22. Dogri.¹²

These 22 languages can be grouped under the language families they belong to, which goes to prove the uneven representation of languages belonging to various families. Belonging to any one of the language families seems to be one of the criteria for languages to be included into the ES.

	Language Family	No of Languages
1	Indo Aryan	15
2	Dravidian	4
3	Tibeto-Burman	2
4	Munda	1

This categorization reflects only the tip of the linguistic diversity of India. "The 1961 Census reported as many as 1652

Mother tongues classified into two hundred and odd languages belonging to four distinct families". This linguistic diversity is unique to India. These languages in turn have their dialects. There are language isolates- languages that stand alone without belonging to any of the families.¹³ There are 'ten major writing systems and a host of minor ones.'¹⁴ Among the 22 languages listed in ES, three languages- Nepali, Bengali and Urdu also happen to be the national languages of our neighboring countries- Nepal, Bangla Desh and Pakistan. Sanskrit, Sindhi and Urdu are not region specific languages of the Union. Kashmiri is not the official language of Kashmir. English is not listed but is the Associate Official Language of the Union as well the official language of States of Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram. English is also the official language of the Union territories. Hindi finds a place in the Constitution as well as in the ES! Konkani that was added to the ES with the Seventy-first Amendment of the Constitutional Act and Santali with the Ninety-second Amendment are written in multiple scripts. The representation of States in the ES is uneven – some states have two or more of their major languages in the Schedule. In terms of collective demography, majority of Indians speak the languages listed in the ES. "In 1981, the percentage of the speakers of the 15 Scheduled languages had risen to 95.58% of the total household population".¹⁵

What is left out of the Schedule is 1300 Mother tongues. The 22 languages listed under the ES + English that finds a mention in the Constitution are a minuscule minority. However, the list is a move towards acknowledging the linguistic diversity of India. The ES by listing 22 languages out of this linguistic diversity shifts the focus on two issues- the unscheduled languages are given a benchmark and a direction for growth. There is an unstated but underlying objective in bunching the languages together under the ES. The idea of an open ended Schedule to begin with should be viewed as a move in the direction of recognizing multilingualism on the one hand and facilitating a symbiotic growth oriented relationship between languages on the other.

More and more languages can join the bandwagon to help each other grow.

Criteria for Selection: To a poser as to how languages are selected to be included in the ES or what is the criterion on which the list was expanded to 22 languages, there isn't any authentic, authorized document as answer. The Constitution does not mention any qualifying criteria for a language to be included in the ES. P. Chidambaram told the Lok Sabha that there is "no criteria for inclusion in the VIII Schedule".¹⁶ There is room for flexibility and the criteria seem to have emerged out of precedence. This was a sure way to encourage the languages that had not found a place in the ES to develop. Apart from other variables, the languages had to be ready to claim an entry into the Schedule. They had to be used in the domains that modernity had chartered.

In the absence of clear cut criteria for languages to find an entry into the ES, the possibility of the emergence of pressure groups cannot be brushed aside as a collateral. The 71st Amendment to the Constitution included Manipuri, Konkani and Nepali to the ES. This was challenged in the petition- Kanhaiya Lal Sethia and another v. Union government.¹⁷ The Supreme Court dismissed the petition stating- "whether to include or not a particular language in the VIII Schedule is a matter of policy of the Union and in such matters the court would not exercise the power of judicial review".¹⁸ In the absence of clear cut criterion, political arm twisting cannot be written off. But, The demands for inclusion of languages to the ES has been on the basis of readying the languages to be used in multiple domains.

The road map that the speech communities have followed to develop their languages should reflect the unwritten criteria for selection. The statement of objects and reasons for the inclusion of Sindhi into the Schedule says- "Although at present Sindhi is not a regional language in a well-defined area, it used to be the language of a province of the undivided India and, but for partition, would have continued to be so. The Commissioner for Linguistic Minorities has also recommended the inclusion

of Sindhi in the ES to the Constitution. On 4th November, 1966, it was announced that Government had decided to include the Sindhi language in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution. The Bill seeks to give effect to this decision".¹⁹ It can be concluded that languages could also find an entry in the ES due to historical reasons. It is also clear that the Commission of Linguistic Minority has to recommend the inclusion of a language into the ES and the Government includes a language through an Amendment.

A Memorandum dated 17th December, 1999, submitted by the members of the Santali Bhasha Morcha to Mr. Vajpayee, the then Prime Minister of India, more or less explains the requirements of a language aspiring to enter the ES. As the Santali language did find an entry into the ES, through the 92nd Amendment in 2003, w.e.f. 7-1-2004, the claim can be treated as near authentic but unwritten guidelines to be followed. The points mentioned in the memorandum are-

- The representatives having the support of cultural associations and various other organizations.
- The language having large number speakers in a number of States.
- Language having a large Corpus of literature.
- Recognition of Literature by the Kendra Sahithya Academy.
- Language belonging to a particular language group.
- Publication of News Papers, Magazines and Journals in the language
- Language having its own scientific script- developed or designed
- Language being used in Mass Communication
- Language being taught in schools and colleges.²⁰

Not having a criteria makes language communities shout

the loudest to be heard. Responding to the demand by the people, Home Minister Shivaraj Patil said - "... the Sita Kant Mohapatra Commission was set up to evolve a set of objective criteria for inclusion of more languages in the ES. Since the Commission was constituted to submit a report on the feasibility of including Bhojpuri in the Schedule. The Government had asked the UPSC too to submit a report on the same issue."²¹

Inclusion of multiple languages under the ES is exactly what the framers of the Constitution desired. Languages that were oral grew to be written languages. Those languages that did not have a script, took professional help to design a script (OIchiki of Santali for example). The ES is more relaxed about script when compared with the Constitution that specified a single script for the official language of the Union. ES reflects the desire of the framers of the Constitution to see languages to develop from oral to textual so that they can be used in multiple domains of modern life. Jawaharlal Nehru, in a write up spells out how languages should develop- "Language must base itself on its ancient roots and, at the same time, vary and expand with growing needs and be essentially the language of mass of people and not of a select coterie."²² The languages listed under the ES receive incentives of many types- some only emotional and some other more concrete.

The incentives given to languages under ES: There is a clamor to be listed under the ES. There is a drive to develop languages and bring it to the notice of all as there is prestige attached to languages of the ES. There is a belief that the desire to get languages included in the ES is due to the fact that there are incentives extended to the listed languages. The incentives extended to the listed languages are-

- a. Cultural Incentives
- b. Employment opportunities
- c. Monetary benefits
- d. Pedagogic Implications

- e. Membership of the Official Language Commission.
- f. Benefits in the Parliament
- g. Translation Benefits

a. Cultural Incentives: The listed languages get recognized by the Sahitya Academy. Before the advent of National Translation Mission, recognition from the Academy was a sure reason for translation of the recognized literary work into multiple languages of India. The films produced in these languages get included for the national film awards. These incentives instill a sense of pride among the people of speech communities. National Translation Mission situated at Mysore plays an important role in getting translation of knowledge text from English to 22 Indian languages included in ES, from one Indian language to another Indian language and it is expected to translate from various foreign languages to Indian languages of ES as per its mandate. If such a feat is achieved knowledge gets democratized and common people of India would have an exposition of knowledge in their mother tongue.

b. Employment opportunities: The languages of the ES get included in UPSC exam. The Parliamentary resolution of 1967 allows UPSC aspirants to answer in the listed languages. This benefit would enhance a candidate's chances of clearing the exam- provided s/he belongs to these speech communities. The languages in the ES also become the medium for a few papers of the UPSC examinations. Citing the immediate effect of including a language in the VIII Schedule P. Chidambaram said -"the inclusion of a language in the VIII Schedule has at present a direct link to the examinations conducted by the UPSC".²³ This provision is disadvantageous to the aspirants of non-scheduled languages. The UPSC "allowed candidates in 1969 to write the Essay and the General Knowledge papers in English or any other language included in the Eighth Schedule."²⁴ Apart from the Civil Services, a large number of examinations are conducted only in English or Hindi and English. The high level panel set up by the UPSC

made commendation for the delinking of the language of UPSC examinations and the inclusion of languages in the ES.

c. Monetary Benefits: The states of listed languages receive Central grants. This includes rupees One crore grant for the development of listed languages. The languages with a Classical language status get huge amounts for their further development.

d. The pedagogic Implications: The pedagogic implications of any language can only be judged by the cognitive theories of learning which prescribe education in the mother tongue. The Mother Tongue as a Medium of Instruction at any level is a pleasurable and participatory experience for the pupils. If the language under the ES is a Minority Language, then it can be the Medium of Instruction even if the official language of the state is different. There is provision in Art. 350-A which directs the state to provide 'instruction in the mother –tongue at the primary stage of education to children belonging to linguistic minority groups'.²⁵ The members of the minority language communities are free to start private educational institutions.

e. Membership of the Official Language Commission: This is a coveted position. The enormous power vested with the Commission, is an added attraction for the desire to get the language enlisted in the Eighth Schedule. According to the Art. 344 –(1) "The President shall...by order constitute a commission which shall consist of a Chairman and such other members representing the different languages specified in the Eighth Schedule as the President may appoint, and the order shall define the procedure to be followed by the Commission".²⁶ It is the duty of the Commission to make recommendations to the President as to-

- a) the progressive use of the Hindi language for the official purposes of the Union;
- b) restriction of the use of the English language for all or any of the official purposes of the Union;

- c) The language to be used for all or any of the purposes mentioned in Article 348;
- d) Any other matter referred to the Commission by the President as regards the official language of the Union and the language for Communication between the Union and a State or between one state and another and their use;²⁷

The same Article stipulates that the Official Language commission would 'have due regard to the industrial, cultural and scientific advancement of India and the just claims and the interest of persons belonging to the non-Hindi speaking areas in regard to the Public Services.'²⁸ The Article is aimed at three things-

- i. Develop Hindi to be used in all domains.
- ii. Thwart the use of English in the domain of administration.
- iii. Show linguistic sensitivity to the non- Hindi speech communities by providing a level playing field in employment opportunities.

f. Benefits in the Parliament: The languages of the ES have the facility for simultaneous translation in Parliament leading to better participation by the parliamentarians in the discussions. People of the listed languages have the "opportunity for submission of petitions in the listed languages for redressing the grievances under Art. 350"²⁹

g. Translation Benefits: The Committee on Parliament of Official Language as laid down in Art. 344, has to ensure progressive use of Hindi for Official purposes by making necessary recommendations to the President of India. The Official language of the Union-Hindi is to be enriched by drawing from the languages of the ES. But the idea of listing of multiple languages under one heading is to allow these languages to enrich themselves by drawing vocabulary, ideas and knowledge from each other. Translation from Hindi to these languages and from these languages to Hindi would ensure enrichment of all the languages on one

hand and engineer national integration on the other. Translation from English to the listed languages would create accessibility of global knowledge to the various speech communities. Translation of knowledge texts would result in creating a level playing field to every seeker of knowledge. This has huge implications in the area of Medium of Instruction at Primary, Secondary and Higher education. Availability of quality texts and reading material for the post-primary level would encourage mother tongue medium at all levels. This would be a great leveler between the urban and the rural, the privileged and the underprivileged. The National Translation Mission is a huge project to make reference/knowledge texts available in all the listed languages. To a question in the Lok Sabha, the Union Human Resource Development Minister, in a written reply said- “The mandate of National Translation Mission is to translate Knowledge Text Books from English to 22 Indian languages of the VIII schedule of the Indian Constitution.”³⁰ The languages of the ES are a part of the knowledge revolution in India leading to a pedagogic shift from rote learning to comprehension. “The NTM will concentrate on facilitating research and teaching of different disciplines at colleges and universities, which like to use both printed and online texts and reference materials in all languages in the 8th schedule.”³¹ The benefits accrued through the availability of translation include methods and materials of teaching.

With these details, the ES opens itself to multiple layers of reading. “Fredrick Jameson’s (1987) assertion that ‘third world’ texts are necessarily national allegories ...³², is an apt description for the ES. The text of the ES, with 22 languages listed under it, is nothing less than a Discourse. **The ES is an effort to accommodate multilingualism. It is also an effort to take knowledge systems beyond linguistic diversity.** Read under this light, it opens possibilities of many more languages finding an entry into this open ended list and the creation of many more inclusive categories. So, it can be deduced that -

- The ES, as an exercise in Language Planning, was an attempt

to resolve a confusing state of linguistic diversity purely from the point of view of administration.

- It was an exercise in creating a list of languages that were developed enough to be used in all domains.
- It was also an invitation to other languages to grow from orality to writing.
- It is a way creating corpora of languages to be used at the regional and national levels.
- It was a sure way to make languages draw from one another to the enrichment of all languages.

If the choice of an Official language for the Union Government was a need of the modern nation state, this pragmatic exercise of drawing the ES is a master stroke that only a multilingual people could pull off. Here is a chance for every language to grow. If the choice of Official Language was within the paradigm of monolingualism associated with the Western framework of a nation state, the ES is a reflection of the multilingual Indian mindset. It is a demonstration of accepting the inevitability of Language Planning for the new nation state and at the same time, making room for multiple official languages through this innocuous looking list of fourteen languages. It is a structural change of the Western, monolingual paradigm to suit the linguistic areas that are 'pieced together like a patchwork quilt or a pastiche.'³³ It is through the ES that the framers of the constitution created as level playing a field as possible for all the languages of the nation.

ES in Future: At present, there are demands for inclusion of 38 more languages in the ES to the Constitution. They are-

(1) Angika (2) Banjara (3) Bazika (4) Bhojpuri (5) Bhoti (6) Bhotia(7) Bundelkhandi (8) Chhattisgarhi (9) Dhatki (10) English (11) Garhwali (Pahari) (12) Gondi (13) Gujjar/Gujjari (14) Ho (15) Kachachhi (16) Kamtapuri (17) Karbi (18) Khasi (19) Kodava (Coorg) (20) Kok Barak

(21) Kumaoni (Pahari) (22) Kurak (23) Kurmali (24) Lepcha (25) Limbu (26) Mizo (Lushai) (27) Magahi (28) Mundari (29) Nagpuri (30) Nicobarese (31) Pahari (Himachali) (32) Pali (33) Rajasthani (34) Sambalpuri/Kosali (35) Shaurseni (Prakrit) (36) Siraiki (37) Tenyidi and (38) Tulu.³⁴

It is a dream come true for a linguist with a multilingual mind set to see hundreds of Languages developed enough to find an entry into the ES. It is a dream come true for hundreds of languages to graduate from orality to technology driven writing.

The Union Governments have to have a two pronged approach for further development of languages-

- i. To be prepared to accommodate many more Mother Tongues under the ES.
- ii. To coin new strategies to coax people to further develop their languages that is already there in the ES.
- iii. To connect the growth of language with each other by making their knowledge systems accessible to all.

The 38 languages waiting to be included in the ES need an entry. On the issue of coaxing speech communities of ES to further develop their languages, the newly coined category of Classical Languages can also be viewed as an up gradation. A look at the Classical Language Tag given to Sanskrit, Tamil, Kannada, Malayalam, Odiya and Telugu shows that these are the languages that are already in the ES. If the ES is a benchmark and a prerequisite criterion for the classical language status, it can be concluded that the classical language tag is the next step for the languages that are listed under ES. With so many categories being created for the development of languages in India, there could be one more category- Orally Rich Languages. The technological development would make preserving the spoken/oral languages an easy task. If at all the languages in the ES want to assimilate and grow, then these orally rich languages are treasure trove to draw from.

"The Eighth Schedule (ES) ... has given rise to a new hierarchical ordering of languages. There is English that transcends and is above the ES and may be termed supra ES language ranking higher than any Indian language."³⁵ The Constitutional provision made to Hindi as the Official language of the Union and English as the associate official language of the union, is an answer to the problematizing the functional need for a link language in multilingual federal democratic set up. A set of human translators in the past and machine driven translation in future would solve this administrative difficulty. Trade, education, employment opportunities and travel are thinning the lines between languages not only in India but all over the world. The need of the hour is to find a cure for a monolingual mind set. Accepting multiple languages as the official languages of the states is within the framework of multilingualism that the multiple speech communities in India practice in their day today life. "In India, the multiplicity of languages is largely a product of long and composite development of 5000 years. History demonstrates that, from times immemorial, India has been a multilingual country, each language having a certain region in which it was supreme, but none of these regions truly constitute unilingual kingdom or principality."³⁶ The practice of establishing any one language on the polity is again a product of Western way of looking at language within an administrative set up. This mind set can be called hegemonic, colonial and imperial. The manifestation of this mind set is an uncontrollable desire to impose one single language in all domains of life. Nehru displayed linguistic sensitivity when he argued that "it was no service to a language to introduce the element of compulsion, which would be resented and which would thus lead to continuous conflict..."³⁷. It is not so much the language of the colonizer that has to be dreaded but the monolingual, colonial mind set. In concrete terms, if the Union Government imposes Hindi or English on the states and if the states impose one single language in all domains within the state, both represent a mindset that is not multilingual and hence not based on the Indian ethos.

The Underlying Vision: The languages listed under the ES have received recognition and status. ES is an exercise in creating a level playing field for the regional languages. ES is a rainbow of new vocabulary, ideas, ways of going about this world without conflict and the only ray of hope for national integration. The framers of the Constitution accommodated multiple languages under ES. It is imperative that the same nature of accommodation be shown to the multiple languages in the state by the state. The linguistic accommodation and the linguistic sensitivity the states receive from the Union Government, needs to be translated into sensitivity towards the other languages of the state – not as an extension of charity but as a recognition of the legitimate linguistic right of the people of various speech communities. ES is not an exercise of preserving those languages but a means to preserve all our languages – as the binary of our language v/s their language itself is a remnant of the Colonial/Imperial/Western mindset. “The fundamental principle which holds a multilingual society together is recognition. Recognition of the existence of the other gives a sense of protection of the other’s rights, a sense of being part of a mosaic. Recognizing one dominant language in a multilingual milieu is denying equality of opportunity of growth to the many unrecognized ones. It is denying their very existence. Ethnicity and culture related language maintenance movements are the result of such non- recognition.”³⁸ In a country with 1657 mother tongues, the ES is the first step towards bunching multiple languages together. ES is an invitation to harmony between languages and people. This is the message the framers of Constitution impart through the open ended ES.

Conclusion: The Eighth Schedule is a benchmark for the languages to prove that they are developed enough to be used in multiple domains. The framers of the constitution left the Schedule open ended to encourage all the languages to develop according to the requirements of modern times. There is no way languages can develop as watertight compartments. They can grow only by drawing from each other. Languages need to translate their ‘thisness’ to each other. Hindi, English, Twenty two languages

under the ES, Thirty eight languages waiting in the wings for an entry into the ES and Six languages with the Classical language status – what does this reflect? It is a step towards celebrating the linguistic diversity of this country. The framers of the Constitution altered the framework of a nation state to accommodate multiple languages. They exhibited linguistic sensitivity even on the face of stiff resistance. It was their vision that got expressed through the ES of the Constitution that all languages should be encouraged. All languages need that little help to survive. When languages die, Speech communities adopt a new language for communication to survive. But it is the world view that they had carried with them through the language that dies leaving a void behind. It is this worldview that had nurtured diversity not by professing but by a symbiotic existence with everything in the world around. It is that worldview which had been handed down through generations. Who knows if this is the often quoted but elusive ‘unity’ that has held the diversity together. Imposition of one language to be used in all domains of life would go contrary to the multilingual ethos of India and the ES. Hence, the ES is less of a list of languages than a prophylactic prescription of a worldview.

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