

PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES OF HINDI  
TEACHING IN CHINA

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**Abstract**

*Hindi, the official language of India and the third most spoken language in the world is one of the ten powerful languages of the world. Apart from India, Hindi is widely spoken in many countries, such as Fiji, Mauritius, Guyana, Suriname, Nepal and United Arab Emirates etc. The development of Hindi in the countries of the world has been very rapid in the last two decades of the twentieth century. According to the population forecast released by the United Nations, India will overtake China in population by 2023 and become the most populous country in the world. There is no doubt that it will increase the influence of Hindi in the world. India and China are neighbors. Hindi teaching has also gradually developed in China with exchanges between the two countries. The present article focusses on the opportunities and challenges of Hindi teaching in China.*

**Keywords:** *teaching, hind, education, challenges of teaching, hind teaching*

Hindi is one of the official languages in India and it's one of the major languages of the world. It's the third most spoken language in the world also. According to the calculation of the World Economic Forum, Hindi is one of the ten powerful languages of the world. Apart from India, Hindi is widely spoken in many countries, such as Fiji, Mauritius, Guyana, Suriname, Nepal and United Arab Emirates etc. The development of Hindi in the countries of the world has been very rapid in the last two decades of the twentieth century. According to the population forecast released by the United Nations, India will overtake China in population by 2023 and become the most populous country in the world. There is no doubt that it will increase the influence of Hindi in the world. India and China are neighbors. Hindi teaching has also gradually developed in China with exchanges between the two countries. The present article focusses on the opportunities and challenges of Hindi teaching in China.

The National College of Oriental Studies was established in Kunming, Yunnan Province of China in July 1942. In the beginning, there were 4 subjects — Hindi, Vietnamese, Thai, Burmese. Actually, Yunnan province is also my hometown, from here Hindi teaching started officially in China. In 1949, the college moved to Beijing and became part of the Department of Eastern Languages of Peking University and it's known as the Center for South Asian Studies today. After many years of development, till now there are total 18 universities are teaching Hindi in China, more and more people in China are starting to learn Hindi.

**Prospects of Teaching Hindi in China**

Why there are more students start to learn Hindi in China? What are the prospects of teaching Hindi in China? We can see from below points:

The long history of ancient civilizational exchanges between India and China provided the basis for the development of Hindi teaching in China. China and India are countries of ancient civilizations with a history of more than 5,000 years in the world. There is a long history of friendly cultural exchanges between the two countries. So, India and China have many similarities. large population; only these two countries have more than 1 billion population in the world; its long history; vast area and so on. For example, the theme of G20-2023 in India is “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam”. The concept of “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam” in India and the concept of "Tian Xia Da Tong" in China is same, which means “The world is one family”. Language is the bridge of cultural and historical development and communication.

Buddhism was propagated from India to China, it helps paved the way for the education of Indian languages in China. About 15.87% of the people in China belief in Buddhism. Exchanges between Buddhist scholars and monks from the two countries have promoted the development of Indian languages in China. Buddhist texts are translated into Chinese from Indian language Pali or Sanskrit. People have to learn Indian culture and language first, if they want to understand Buddhist texts.

The development of business exchange between China and India requires language specialists. Today language teaching is purpose-oriented language learning, the learners to learn the new language for some purposes. Hindi teaching also has its own purpose in China. From the country point of view, India and China are emerging economies in the twenty-first century world. India and China account for 35% of the world's population, and their contribution to the world's economic growth reaches 45%.India overtakes UK to become fifth largest economy in the world in 2022. China is an important trading partner of India, and India is also China's largest trading partner in South Asia. Hindi is required on official communication between the two countries, studies of bilateral relations, political studies, etc. From a personal point of view, Indian Yoga, Bollywood movies of modern society have spread in China and Chinese people like them very much, this is one of the reasons there are lots of people are interested in Hindi and Indian culture and started learning it. I am an such example of it.

Promotion of foreign language education by China and support of Hindi education by India. With China's reform and opening-up policy, China has strengthened foreign language education to increase exchanges with various countries. At the same time Indian government also gives great importance in Hindi. For example, the Government of India has introduced several policies to encourage the use of Hindi and provides ICCR scholarship to support foreign students for Hindi learning, Mahatma Gandhi Antarrashtriya Hindi Vishwavidyalaya, Central Institute of Hindi, Agra ect. have been supporting foreign students in learning Hindi for a long time. The Indian Embassy in China organizes activities to celebrate Hindi

Festival (September 14), Diwali every year, and organizes various activities to promote cultural exchanges between the two countries and encourage Chinese people to learn Hindi.

**Challenges of Hindi Teaching in China:**

From the point of view of linguistics, Chinese and Hindi come from different language families. Chinese is from Sino-Tibetan language family; Hindi is from Indo-European language family. Language structure, grammar, pronunciation etc. are all different. So, there are many challenges and difficulties for learners, we can see from the following aspects.

The languages of the Indo-European language family are typical fusional language, in which semantic elements and related elements are mixed. Hindi words are formed by the addition of prefix, root and suffix, there is a plurality of suffixes, words are formed by adding suffix to the root, it is very complicated. While Chinese is a non- fusional language, Chinese words are monosyllabic and unchangeable, there are no elements like participle, suffix etc.

The grammar learning is also one of the challenges for Chinese students. Hindi has subject-action-verb syntax and has two genders – masculine and feminine. The form of the verb depends on the gender of the subject. There are singular and plural also. But it is not available in Chinese language, Chinese language has subject-verb-action syntax, it does not have gender, there is no different form of verbs. For example, "I work" in Hindi boys say "main kaam karta hoon", girls say "main kaam karti hoon" in Chinese, boys and girls say same- "wo gongzuo". Here "wo" means "I", "gongzuo" means "work". In Chinese, there is importance of the place of words, due to the special place in the sentence, a word becomes a noun, verb, adjective, etc., the meaning changes when the place is changed. "ta, te, ti, tein" of verbs in Hindi makes it difficult for Chinese to learn Hindi, the gender of nouns is irregular, but it affects the form of verbs, adjectives, etc. in sentences. Apart from this, prepositions are often used in Hindi. like "ne, ka, se, sa" etc., with the preposition the gender and word of the noun is different, it also changes in many forms. Words change a lot, sometimes we know the word but we cannot recognize it after its change.

From the point of view of pronunciation, Hindi is written in Devanagari script. Devanagari has 11 vowels and 33 consonants. The consonant 'r' is not pronounced in Chinese language, which is pronounced by touching the front part of the tongue with the palate. Its pronunciation is a challenge for most Chinese students. I still can't pronounce it correctly until now. Hindi language also has more compound consonants, foreign sounds, it takes more time to practice for learning Hindi as compared to languages like English. There is a feature in the pronunciation of Chinese language which is not there in Hindi. There are 4 tones are used in Chinese, one word gives different meaning in different tones. Like the "ma" in Hindi, there are "mā , má, mǎ, mà" 4 tones in Chinese. mā=mother, má=numb, mǎ=horse,

mà=abuse. Same spelling different tone has totally different meaning. I think it's a big challenge for the Indian students who are learning Chinese language.

From the point of view of words, Hindi language has a lot of vocabularies. Many words come from Sanskrit, Arabic, Urdu, Persian, Turkish, English etc. it's a difficult task to recite Hindi words. My Hindi-Chinese dictionary is very thick, about 3kg.

Above I talked about the challenges of Hindi teaching from linguistics, now let me tell you some more challenges. Language teaching needs good teaching materials. There is a shortage of Hindi books and teaching materials for study in China, a complete set of Hindi textbooks for students was published in 2020 only. The rest of the materials are very old, original Hindi books are not available. If students want Hindi books they have to buy books from India and send courier to China. A lot of inconvenience is being faced in this regard. There are very few high-level Hindi teachers in universities, currently most of the teachers start teaching after completing their master's degree. To solve this problem, I think universities in both countries need to invest more. Comprehensive and clear Hindi teaching courses should be made keeping in mind the teaching level and objectives of Hindi training. Chinese and Indian universities should organize and conduct teaching-training and renewal courses for teachers with cooperation.

India and China are the countries in the world whose population is more than one billion and these two countries can play an important role in speeding up the process of collective upliftment of developing countries along with the historical mission of national rejuvenation. I hope that more and more people learn Hindi and Chinese, so that we can enhance our understanding, ideological exchange, and common development.

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