

SOCIAL ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN BIHAR

RESEARCH REPORT

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FOREWORD

The British Council is the UK's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. We create friendly knowledge and understanding between the people of the UK and other countries. We do this by making a positive contribution to the UK and the countries we work with – changing lives by creating opportunities, building connections and engendering trust.

Improving the teaching and learning of the English language is one of the three core strands of work that we undertake to achieve these aims, alongside our work in the arts and education and society programmes. Globally, we deliver English activity in over 110 countries around the world with more than 100 million people worldwide accessing our online learning sites and other resources. In India, our involvement with English includes the English Partnerships programme, now in its tenth year of operation. In collaboration with Departments of Education in twelve Indian states, we support the continuing professional development of English language teachers and teacher educators and raise awareness of all stakeholders of how learners can be enabled to learn English more effectively.

A cornerstone of this work has been our engagement since 2011 in the state of Bihar. Despite many challenges, the state has made considerable progress in the last decade, including in the quality of educational provision. The BLISS (Bihar Language Initiative for Secondary Schools) project, funded by the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID) supports the teaching and learning of English through the development of 200 teacher educators and 2000 teachers through a continuing professional development programme which includes face-to-face training, and other components. As our externally validated monitoring and evaluation systems have shown, the project is having a significant impact on English language education within the state and is held in high esteem by stakeholders.

However, the teaching and learning of English does not function in isolation from

the community as a whole. As Professor Hayes stresses in the current report *'second language learners and users are socially situated beings with diverse needs, wants and identities.'* India has robust networks for the dissemination of opinions of academics and decision makers on the place and role of English and a range of perspectives are presented in the opening pages of this report. The BLISS project has collected considerable data on views related to the English of classroom practitioners and educational administrators which are presented in the *'English and Education: Bihar State Profile'* (available online and intended as a companion volume to this report). However, during the preparation of this former report, it became clear that there was a significant lack of data on social attitudes towards English in Bihar.

Any visitor to Patna, the capital of Bihar, will be aware of the visible use of English in street signage, extensive advertising and promotion for private tuition as amply illustrated in the report by the examples drawn from the photographic record established by Dr Chris Tribble. But to date, the views of those who come into contact with the language have remained undocumented. The perspectives on English in India of the parent of a child in rural Bihar, an IT operative in booming Patna, a shopkeeper in a Bhojpur bazaar or the rickshaw driver who provides transport for all these individuals have so far been unclear. How important is English to them, what connections do they see between English and prestige? How do they feel about their own English skills and the way English is taught to their children? This research study has found out.

Professor David Hayes brings a wealth of understanding of the use of English, the teaching and learning of English in India and attitudes to the language in the country. The research programme he has led investigates the attitudes of parents of school-age children, people employed in private or government enterprises, higher education students and private language school students to connections between the English language and status, English



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language teaching and learning provision in the state and the interaction between English and employment. Together with EvalDesign, the local partner selected for the project, the research programme has been implemented in three districts of Bihar. It has accessed the views of over 2000 respondents and also identified the uses of English in the workplace.

The results are fascinating. The report shows that English is widely seen as one of the most important keys to a better life, a passport to higher education and to secure employment and emphasises the value respondents place upon the importance and status of English. It shows that not everyone agrees that the impact of English is always positive and the report examines in-depth differences between urban and rural areas and respondents' views on the impact of English on society and their own lives. The fact that an overwhelming majority of respondents feel it is essential for the people of India to learn English confirms the need for continued British Council support for the teaching and learning of English and further engagement in education to continue the progress that has recently been made in raising educational standards.

These research findings will inform British Council work in the future and will help develop programmes to improve English language teaching and learning in India. We hope too that the report which follows will be of interest to a wider audience, including decision-makers, academics and indeed anyone interested in the place of English in India.

1. INTRODUCTION

In India, as in many other countries around the world, English is widely regarded as the language of globalisation, important for national economic development, and a language of economic opportunity for individuals.

English has become ‘the working tongue of the global village’ (Svartvik and Leech, 2006, p. 1) and a source of aspiration for many of its learners, representing the promise of a better future. As Annamalai (2005, p. 31) puts it with reference to India: ‘the purpose of learning English ... is for the economic progress of the individual from the point of view of the learner and also of the country from the point of view of the policy.’ In many countries English is the first foreign language in the educational curriculum and is increasingly being taught in schools at ever younger ages. In a global survey Rixon (2013) found that one third of the 64 participating countries had lowered the starting age for teaching English since the first iteration of the survey twelve years previously, with 30 countries teaching English from Grade 1. English is also progressively being used as a medium-of-instruction (EMI) with Dearden (2014, p. 2) labelling EMI a ‘rapidly growing global phenomenon.’

While it continues to expand its reach, the claims that English is essential for national economic progress and that it brings economic opportunity for individuals remain contested (Bruthiaux, 2000; Draper, 2012). Growth rates in many emerging economies have consistently been above OECD averages even though these countries’ rankings on an international English proficiency index are relatively low. For example, China was ranked 47th out of 70 countries, with ‘low proficiency’, in the 2015 English First (EF) Proficiency Index

(EF, 2015, p. 8) whilst their forecast average annual growth rate for 2016-20 was 6 per cent (OECD, 2016). Meanwhile growth rates for another country in the OECD survey, Malaysia, but one which was ranked much higher on the EF Index at 14th (‘high proficiency’), were forecast to be 5 per cent for the same period. For India which ranked 20th, also in the ‘high proficiency’ group on the EF index (EF, *ibid*, p. 7), the OECD forecast an average growth rate of 7.3 per cent for 2016-20. Taken at face value, this data suggests a simplistic link between proficiency in English and economic growth at the national level is questionable and that other factors are likely to be significant, including levels of private consumption, private investment and public infrastructure development (OECD, 2016). Moreover, recent econometric analyses also indicate clearly that ‘widespread competence in a dominant language such as English is in no manner associated with a higher level of economic development, when the latter is measured by its most common incarnation of GDP per capita’ (Arcand & Grin, 2013, p. 262).

Other research suggests a clearer link between national economic development and the provision of quality education across the population in general rather than proficiency in English alone. Hanushek and Wößmann (2009, p. 251) conclude ‘the accumulated evidence from analyses of economic outcomes is that the quality of education – measured on an outcome basis of

cognitive skills – has powerful economic effects.’ Their lesson is that governments need to be as concerned with the quality of teaching and learning in schools as they are with simply increasing enrolments (though clearly that is also important). If quality of education in general is important, governments will have to counter the two ‘urban legends’ related to English teaching identified by Kaplan, Baldauf and Kamwangamalu (2011, p. 106) and which dominate much public discourse, viz:

People in many polities have come to believe that their children would be guaranteed better economic opportunities if they had English as part of their linguistic repertoire. This belief has supported the addition of English to the school curriculum – initially at the secondary school level and then at the intermediate school level. A decade or more of experimentation demonstrated that English at intermediate school was not sufficient to develop proficiency, so another legend – that early introduction to English would be the panacea – spurred an international belief that English language education should begin at the first grade, or even better in kindergarten.

Nevertheless, at the individual level, some studies identify strong gains in salary for English speakers in comparison with non-English speakers.



Surveys conducted by Euromonitor International across a broad range of countries have concluded that the pay gap in certain sectors between individuals who are proficient in English and those who are not is as much as 30 per cent (see e.g. Euromonitor International, 2012). Yet these surveys do not reflect employment conditions in economies as a whole. We should note first that the total numbers of employees requiring English skills in the economies surveyed are not given; second, the employers for whom English is important tend to be multinational corporations; and third, the positions for which English is required are in middle and senior management. The Euromonitor (2012, p. 10) report states that ‘multinationals are the primary drivers for demand in English speakers, irrespective of the sector in which they specialise’ and a reasonable inference would be that it is only a small number of jobs for which English is essential with a logical corollary that there are many other employment opportunities for which it is not a requirement. This inference is supported

by the limited database for the Euromonitor surveys with, for example, 10 companies in Morocco, 6 in Algeria, 16 in Tunisia, 15 in Egypt, 23 in Jordan, 10 in Lebanon, 19 in Iraq and 11 in Yemen being contacted to provide data (Euromonitor, *ibid.*). Such a small sample is not statistically representative of employment requirements across these entire countries.

It is against this backdrop of contested claims surrounding the benefits of English to individuals and national economies that this research report investigates social attitudes towards English in the state of Bihar. It derives from a larger British government-funded English language educational project, the Bihar Language Initiative in Secondary Schools (BLISS) running from 2011–2017. BLISS¹ aimed to develop the capacity of over 200 classroom practitioners as teacher educators who would then provide training to 3,200 English teachers across the state, and also to develop a capacity to plan and implement a long-term continuing

professional development (CPD) system for teachers in Bihar (British Council, 2016b). Whilst preparing a state English in education profile it was found that there was a paucity of data on social attitudes towards English in Bihar beyond the needs analysis conducted for BLISS in 2011 with parents and learners (British Council, 2016b), a gap which the research described in this report is designed to fill.

In the report we begin by examining the position of English in India from a national perspective, connecting it with experience elsewhere and the discussion outlined in this introduction on its putative benefits for the national economy and for individuals, before turning to the more local perspective of English in Bihar. We then turn to the research project itself. After reporting on the development of the research instruments, the data collection process and methods of analysis, we report our findings and draw a number of conclusions.

¹ For more information on BLISS see : <https://www.britishcouncil.in/programmes/english-partnerships/english-state-partnership-projects/bihar-language-initiative>



2. ENGLISH IN INDIA: STATUS, ACCESS AND OPPORTUNITY

English is an important element in the linguistic complexity of India where there are 447 living languages² with Hindi as the statutory national language and English as the statutory working language of parliamentary law-making and the judiciary according to Part XVII, Articles 343 and 348 of the 1950 Constitution. Although the Constitution allowed for the creation of a Commission on languages which, inter alia, would make recommendations on '(a) the progressive use of the Hindi language for the official purposes of the Union; (b) restrictions on the use of the English language for all or any of the official purposes of the Union' (Article 344 (2))³, in practice the status of English has not altered since independence. To counteract fears of post-colonial dominance of English in the education system, a 'Three Language Formula' was developed in 1956 by the Central Advisory Board on Education to promote the maintenance of children's mother tongues or a regional language alongside Hindi as the official language of the Union and English as the associate official language (Meganathan, 2011). This has been revised over the years and

in its current formulation the three language formula is:

1. *The mother tongue or the regional language*
2. *The official language of the Union or the associate official language of the Union as long as it exists; and*
3. *A modern Indian or foreign language not covered under (1) and (2) and other than that used as the medium of instruction.*

(MOE, 1966, p. 192; as cited in Meganathan, 2011, p. 62)

The policy was designed to promote greater equality amongst the many languages of India; however, Meganathan's survey of language-in-education policies across 32 of the 36⁴ states and union territories reveals that 'in total, 75 different languages are taught in Indian schools [...], but Hindi and English between them account for 20 per cent of all the language choices available' (ibid, p. 67) indicating a clear hierarchy of preference.

The relationship between the English language and India is not only a story of

domination. Language contact is bi-directional in impact and words from Indian languages have enriched the English language over many years: Svartvik and Leech (2006) report that during the colonial period more than 900 words were incorporated into English from Indian languages.⁵ With this evidence of the impact of Indian languages on English, its long-standing presence in India and a large pool of speakers, currently estimated at 125 million users, it is not surprising that English has become an Indian language in its own right. There is, accordingly, growing acceptance of the legitimacy of a standard Indian English variety though, as with all languages, there are variations in the standard across the country (Sailaja, 2009). Sailaja also notes the particular domains of use for English even amongst proficient speakers, commenting that 'overall it is quite clear that English is not used in domains that are more emotional and non-intellectual. English is the language of the intellect and formality' (ibid, p. 6). Mohanty (2006, p. 263) recorded his own language use as follows:

² www.ethnologue.com/country/IN

³ <https://india.gov.in/my-government/constitution-india/constitution-india-full-text>

⁴ At the time of publication there were 35 states, of which three did not provide data. A 36th state, Telangana, was created in 2014 by dividing Andhra Pradesh.

⁵ See also: 'How India changed the English language', available at: www.bbc.com/culture/story/20150619-how-india-changed-english (accessed 15 May, 2016)



I use Oriya in my home, English in my work place, Hindi for television viewing, Bengali to communicate with my domestic helper, a variety of Hindi-Punjabi-Urdu in market places in Delhi, Sanskrit for my prayer and religious activities, and some conversational Kui with the Konds for my research in their community.

English has its place then in what Mohanty (ibid) called ‘a mutually complementary and non-competing relationship in my life.’ Similar demarcations in the domains of use of languages exist in other multilingual societies. For example, a study by Young (2006) of language attitudes in Macao found that ‘Chinese is the language of the family, media and communication with mainland China, English is the language of world trade, gaming and tourism, and Portuguese is the language of legislation and business communication with Portuguese-speaking countries’ (p. 490).

But high as the number of users of English in India is, it still only constitutes some 10 per cent of the total population and degrees of expertise vary across this group. Fluency in English (rather than having more limited proficiency) remains a key factor in the composition of social élites. To neutralise the strong associations between English and the élites in India (initially colonial and then indigenous), there have been attempts made through the education system in recent years to democratise its possession beyond the top 10 per cent of the population. English is now taught from Standard⁶ I in 26 of the 35⁷ states

and union territories (Yadav, 2011, p. 40). Most states allocate a considerable tranche of instructional time to English with, for example, six periods per week (with a low of three in one state and a high of eight in six states) allotted in the primary school by Standard V, with the length of a period usually being 40 minutes (Yadav, ibid). The Madhya Pradesh State Curriculum Framework (RSK, 2007, p. 2) provides an example of the intention to make English more inclusive rather than exclusive:

It is our primary objective to reach English to every child of the State and to ensure that the child gains a sufficiently high level of proficiency in it and does not suffer discrimination for lack of it.

This decision to extend the reach of English through education, particularly by introducing it in Standard 1 is as much a political as an educational one. The National Curriculum Framework (NCERT, 2005, p. 38) recognises this explicitly, stating that ‘the level of introduction of English is now a matter of political response to people’s aspirations rather than an academic or feasibility issue.’ As NCERT implies, the practical consequences of offering English to all children in all schools from the earliest grades are unlikely to be taken into account in decision-making. Issues which have a bearing on the feasibility of offering English in the early years of government primary schools include the availability of teachers with both appropriate training and adequate language skills, together with an enabling environment to promote the

acquisition of English outside the school for the majority of children. Available data indicate that in most areas of the country there are significant shortages of well-qualified teachers with the appropriate language skills and that the necessary enabling environment is generally lacking (Battacharya, 2013; British Council, 2016b; Hayes and Rahman, 2015; Meganathan, 2011). Thus, the necessary preconditions for success in teaching English in government schools across the country and in democratising its possession are not being met.

A complicating factor which needs to be considered is the expansion of English-medium schooling in response to the links between English and upward socio-economic mobility. In 1993 only 5 per cent of primary schools, 16 per cent of upper primary and 18 per cent of secondary schools purported to be English-medium, figures which had risen to 13 per cent, 18 per cent and 26 per cent respectively by 2002 and are likely to be even higher now, though more recent figures are not yet available (Meganathan, 2011, p. 75). There has also been an expansion in provision of private English-medium schools, some of which charge low fees and have been established to ‘cater specifically to the poor’ (Bhattacharya, 2013, p.166), trading on the dream of a better life through English. The schools are of varying quality, however, and there are many which are English-medium in name rather than in reality. There is a need for a critical analysis of research which appears to indicate that low-cost private schools offer better outcomes for their

⁶ ‘Standard’ and ‘Class’ are both used to refer to the grade level in India.

⁷ See also note 3.

students than government schools. Central to this research is the work which Tooley and his associates conducted in Hyderabad from 2003–5 which found that students in these schools achieve higher scores in mathematics and English than comparable students in government schools (Tooley, Dixon, Shamsen and Schagen, 2010). Further this was achieved at a lower cost as schools had minimum infrastructure and resources and teachers, who were on contract, were paid much less than their counterparts in government schools (Tooley et al., *ibid*). However, critics maintain that there are shortcomings in the methodology of this research which, they argue, does not control for levels of education offered by the respective schools with many more government schools offering only five years of primary education rather than primary and secondary education which is preferred by parents for continuity (IDFC Foundation, 2013). Further, there is a conceptual difficulty with Tooley et al.'s (*ibid*) research as no attempt is made to define what is meant by the 'poor' with critics asserting that the schools studied did not cater to the chronically poor who enrolled their children in government schools which charged no tuition fees, offered free

textbooks and mid-day meals (IDFC Foundation, *ibid*). A similar conclusion was reached by Woodhead, Frost and James (2013) from research in Andhra Pradesh: 'even private schools presented as 'low fee' are not within reach for those from some of the most marginalised backgrounds' (p. 72).

It is widely acknowledged that the most effective English-medium schools remain the preserve of the socio-economically privileged (Annamalai, 2005), reinforcing their position at the top of the social hierarchy. India is, of course, not alone in experiencing a hierarchical education system. Élités tend to be self-perpetuating and use a privileged education as the first step in preserving their hold on social and economic power across generations. Fuller and Hannum (2002, p. 1) note that 'a student's social-class background and neighbourhood attributes remain the strongest predictors of achievement.' Hence, since it is the children of the less privileged who, with rare exceptions, perform least well in schools, learning English in formal education may not just enhance access to opportunity for a few but may also play a part in restricting access to opportunity for many more. When governments are committed to

providing greater equality of opportunity for all students, including 'to reach English to every child of the State and to ensure that the child gains a sufficiently high level of proficiency in it and does not suffer discrimination for lack of it' (RSK, 2007, p.2), the contribution of English-medium schooling to intensifying rather than reducing inequality in Indian schools needs to be examined critically (Mohanty, 2006).

The poor quality of education in government schools nationwide is illustrated by the results of the Annual Status of Education (ASER) surveys which focus on rural areas. ASER results for 2014 indicate low achievement in government schools not just in English but also in reading (in the child's local language) and mathematics. For English, only 25.2 per cent of children in Standard V could read simple English words, only 24 per cent could read easy English sentences and, of these children, just 60.9 per cent and 62.2 per cent respectively could then convey the meaning of the words and sentences in their first language (ASER, 2015, p. 88). The full national results are given in Tables 1 and 2 below (*ibid*, p. 88).

% children by class and reading level in English All schools 2014						
Std.	Not even capital letters	Capital letters	Small letters	Simple words	Easy sentences	Total
I	56.5	15.5	14.8	10.2	3.0	100
II	38.3	19.4	20.8	13.8	7.7	100
III	26.9	19.1	24.6	17.9	11.5	100
IV	18.1	16.4	25.5	22.4	17.6	100
V	13.3	13.7	23.9	25.2	24.0	100
VI	8.7	10.4	23.3	26.3	31.4	100
VII	6.5	8.4	20.2	26.2	38.8	100
VIII	4.7	6.5	17.7	24.4	46.8	100
Total	23.0	13.9	21.3	20.4	21.4	100

Table 1: English achievement by class and reading level



% children by class who can comprehend English All schools 2014		
Std.	Of those who can read words, % who can tell meanings of the words	Of those who can read sentences, % who can tell meanings of the sentences
I	62.1	43.1
II	59.4	46.9
III	60.1	57.3
IV	60.9	59.5
V	60.9	62.2
VI	60.5	64.8
VII	60.7	66.3
VIII	59.4	68.2
Total	60.5	63.2

Table 2: English comprehension by class and reading level

These results are hardly surprising if we consider the lack of trained, English-proficient teachers alluded to earlier. Indeed, Annamalai (2013) estimates that to implement effectively a policy of teaching English starting in Standard 1 and continuing throughout primary schooling, there are 3.5 million teachers in some 900,000 schools requiring improvement in their language proficiency and specialist training in language teaching pedagogy. Meganathan (2011, p. 82) sums up the situation as follows:

While the demand increases on the one hand, the quality of English language education in our state-run schools, more particularly in rural schools, presents an abysmal picture. The divide between urban and rural is further exacerbated by the increasing tendency to use English as a medium of instruction.

Yet, as Meganathan says, the increasing demand for English continues unabated. Parents see it as an opportunity for their children to participate and prosper in

the new globalised economy, and these perceptions are passed down to their children. Indian parents are not alone in this. Similar findings regarding instrumental, economic orientations to learning English can be found worldwide – see e.g. Warden and Lin (2000) for Taiwan; Malallah (2000) for Kuwait; Atay and Ece (2009) for Turkey.

Paradoxically, some evidence for India suggests that the actual need for English in employment does not seem to be as significant as demand for English education suggests, as Graddol (2010, p. 38) comments:

In terms of employment, the organised sector – which might be expected to provide the kinds of jobs which most need English, is tiny and the total number of jobs available has not grown in the last two decades. [...] Although government reports identify English as a key skill in vocational training, it is not yet clear where the jobs requiring English are, or what kind of English they might require.

Graddol goes on to note that ‘there are probably too few jobs in India requiring English (or indeed higher levels of education) to justify the investment being made in it by individuals, families and government’ (ibid, p. 114). Indeed, there is little solid evidence that English is, at present, widely used outside of sectors such as tourism, international business and international Business Process Outsourcing (BPO). Graddol’s conclusion is supported by analyses in Madhya Pradesh where 72 per cent of the population are engaged in agriculture and a report by the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC, 2013) saw a need for English only in the comparatively small organised retail and IT and IT enabled sectors (ITES).

Perceptions regarding the need for English in employment across India as a whole may be distorted by the global value accorded to the country’s expertise in the English-using IT and BPO sectors, what has been called India’s ‘valuable brand equity’ in IT and ITES (Singh, 2006, p. 6). However, of the 497 million strong workforce (World

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Bank, 2016) only an estimated 2.8 million or 0.56 per cent were engaged in IT-ITES in 2011, the latest date for which government figures are available.⁸ Global perceptions of the national brand equity in IT and ITES are also affected by the prominence of expatriate Indians working in these sectors in other countries, attracted there by the prospect of higher salaries. The U.S. Migration Policy Institute reports that from 1980 to 2013 the Indian immigration population increased from some 206,000 to 2.04 million and that the majority were young and highly-educated. Indeed, in 2014 Indian citizens received 70 per cent of the 316,000 high-skilled worker immigrant visas to the United States.⁹ The level of highly-skilled migration can also be seen in data from the National Centre on Education and the Economy (NCEE) which reports that 'about 20,000 IIT (Indian Institute of Technology) graduates currently live in the United States, almost 20 per cent of the total IIT grad population since the system's inception' (NCEE, 2005, p.25). Data on such migrants highlights a critical factor in the English language-employability nexus, which is their high levels of education in their chosen fields: they are not employed just because they are fluent in English. The importance of general education more broadly is also backed up by other studies on the domestic labour market. Azam, Chin and Prakash (2010, p. 21) note that 'for recent entrants [to the Indian labour market], English skills help increase wages only when coupled with high education; those who have not completed their secondary schooling would not see wage increases

due to acquisition of English-language skills' (cited in Rassool (2013, p. 61). Therefore, completion of secondary education is seen as the basic requirement for employability and English proficiency is additional to that.

Proficiency in English undoubtedly enhances employability in certain sectors of the economy and brings with it significant economic benefits for those who secure professional jobs in these sectors but, at present, it seems that for many of India's citizens, especially those living in rural areas who constitute 70 per cent of the population according to the 2011 Census (*The Hindu*, 2011), the promise of English to provide a better life remains unfulfilled and is likely to continue as such unless the quality of basic education is addressed. As Kamat (2007, p. 129) concludes:

it is only a slim minority that has benefited from the knowledge-based economy and a vast majority who find it impossible to be part of the new growth economy because of poor educational infrastructure at all levels. [...] In order to achieve this [more balanced growth], quality basic education for all must become a reality while also building on the accomplishments of the tertiary system.

The need to focus on improving the quality of basic education for all leads critics such as Bruthiaux (2000, p. 287) to question 'whether it is appropriate and economically justifiable to devote so many resources to generalised English

language education in the first place' given 'how relatively few individuals in most developing societies (including former British colonies such as India) ever come into contact with English or have any immediate need for it in their day-to-day life.' The implication is that, all things being equal, resources would be better spent on more basic educational needs such as initial literacy and numeracy than on English.

It would be easy to conclude that these limitations argue against according special value to English. However, it is not so easy for governments to ignore the insatiable public demand for English to be offered in all schools to all sectors of society. How can they deny the children of the poor access to a language which is seen as having the power to improve their lives? There is little doubt that English will remain one of the most important languages of India and that social and economic aspirations play a significant part in its continuing prominence. Though the utility of English to enhance employment prospects and increase salaries may, at the moment, be limited to a restricted number of users, there are many millions more who seek to join them in economic advancement; and not only economic advancement as the NCEE (2005, p. 6) note that 'English is considered a distinction of social class.'

We now turn our attention to the state of Bihar.

⁸ See <https://data.gov.in/catalog/production-and-export-targets-electronics-hardware-and-it-ites-industry-12th-five-year-plan>

⁹ See www.migrationpolicy.org/article/indian-immigrants-united-states

3. ENGLISH IN BIHAR: ECONOMY, EDUCATION AND ATTITUDES¹⁰

Located in the north-east, bordering Nepal to the north, Bihar is the 13th largest state in India¹¹, covering 94,163km², and the 3rd largest by population with 104 million people according to the 2011 census. It is the most densely populated state in India with 1106 people per km², compared to a national average of 382 per km². Forty-six per cent of the population is below the age of 19 and it has the 2nd highest rate of internal out-migration (that is people leaving the state) in India with 2.225 million or 13.43 per cent of the national total according to the 2001 census, as against much less in-migration from other states (460,000 or 2.78 per cent of the total). High poverty rates (33.74 per cent of the population live below the poverty line) and a per capita income of just 39.2 per cent of the all-India average contribute significantly to this pattern of migration, as does Bihar's predominantly agrarian status: 75 per cent of the population are involved in agriculture and 98 per cent of the state area is classified as rural. Das and Saha (n.d., p. 4) note that 'the lack of employment opportunities in the rural areas and better employment prospects and infrastructure facilities in the urban areas motivate people to migrate.' This occurs within the state and also between states. Thus 'migration occurs as a response to regional disparities in levels of socio-economic development over the national space. [...] The major urban, administrative and business centres of developed states attract the migrants from the rural agricultural areas of backward states' (ibid, p. 6). Hence localities such as the administrative capital, Delhi, and Maharashtra with its major port, commercial and industrial hub of Mumbai (also home to the Indian film industry) are most attractive to internal migrants across state lines, received 13

per cent and 19 per cent of in-migrants respectively according to the 2001 data. Bihar is, then, currently an economically under-developed state, a situation which seems to have been exacerbated by the formation of Jharkhand from parts of Bihar in 2000 which deprived it of the southern districts rich in minerals, mining and heavy industry. Around a quarter of India's one hundred poorest districts are located in the state. Nevertheless, as is to be expected within a rapidly growing national economy, economic growth has occurred in Bihar. Indeed, growth rates between 2005/6 and 2009/10 averaged 13 per cent, higher than the national rate of 8.2 per cent (World Bank, 2015), though from a low base. Growth has been most rapid in service sectors where English skills may be considered an advantage such as banking and insurance (19.2 per cent growth over the last five years), trade, hotels and restaurants (17.3 per cent growth) and communications (16.3 per cent growth). There is also a limited but developing tourist industry centred on a rich heritage of Buddhist sites including Bodhgaya and Nalanda which attracts tourists from Nepal and Japan as well as smaller numbers from the west. It remains to be seen to what extent these sectors will stimulate greater use of English in the future but, at present, sectors traditionally using English are restricted in scope. The tourist industry, as noted, is still limited and the greatest employer in the service sector remains government departments where 'there is a common perception that to perform duties in this sector (at lower levels, at least) no English is required' (British Council, 2016b, p. 24).

Literacy rates are another generally accepted indicator of economic development. According to the 2011 census the national literacy rate¹² has

improved to 74.04 per cent from the 2001 figure of 65.38 per cent. The national figures mask a wide, albeit narrowing, gender disparity of 82.14 per cent for males and 65.46 per cent for females. There are also significant state disparities. Kerala has the highest state literacy rate of 93.91 per cent whilst Bihar has the lowest at 63.82 per cent. Within Bihar, the male literacy rate is 73.39 per cent (lowest by state) and the female rate 53.33 per cent (second lowest by state). However, these figures are significant improvements over the 2001 census where literacy rates were 47 per cent (statewide) and 59.68 per cent for males and 33.12 per cent for females.

Improving literacy rates are indicative of the efforts state governments have made to improve education in Bihar, which follows a 10+2 system, divided into elementary (primary: Standards 1–4 and upper primary: Standards 6–8), secondary (Standards 9–10) and senior secondary/intermediate, often referred to as 'Inter' (Standards 11–12). A decade ago, the state had the highest number of out- of- school children in India, with enrolment in 2006 at 86 per cent; and also poor gender parity with the lowest rates in the country for girls' share of enrolment at 45.89 per cent for lower primary and 41.66 per cent for upper primary levels. By 2011 the percentage of school-age children enrolled was 96.7 per cent; and by 2014 the number of girls out of school had fallen to 5.7 per cent from 17.6 per cent in 2006. Literacy and enrolment figures may have been positively impacted by the doubling of elementary teachers between 2006 and 2013, another significant achievement. But, positive though these developments are, the figures tend to mask continuing shortcomings in the system. Drop-out

¹⁰ Much of this section is based on British Council (2016). English in education: Bihar state profile. New Delhi: British Council. Available at: https://www.britishcouncil.in/sites/default/files/bliss_english_profile_report_final_170216.pdf

¹¹ Prior to the division of Andhra Pradesh it was the 12th largest state.

¹² See http://censusindia.gov.in/2011-prov-results/data_files/india/Final_PPT_2011_chapter6.pdf



rates are very high, cumulatively 79.8 per cent from Standard 1 to Standard 10 and 30.14 per cent at secondary level. Further, rates of both student and teacher absenteeism are high. The 2014 ASER study (ASER, 2015) found 60 per cent of children at primary level and 53.7 per cent at upper primary level actually present during attendance checks, some of the highest rate of absenteeism in the country. Teacher absenteeism has also been historically high. A study by Kremer, Chaudhury, Halsey Rogers, Muralidharan and Hammer (2005) found rates of absenteeism of 37.8 per cent, the second highest amongst the 19 states surveyed. A more recent World Bank project appraisal report noted a 10 per cent reduction in teacher absenteeism between 2003–10 due to improved inspection and monitoring but rates were still as high as 20 per cent (World Bank, 2015). Teacher time on task is another significant variable in student achievement, and the World Bank (ibid) reported that this too was low. When combined with high, albeit declining, current pupil-teacher ratios (PTR) of 54:1 for government schools it is not surprising that student levels of achievement are considered to be very poor. In this regard, the 2015 National Achievement Survey placed Bihar second from bottom for student learning achievement in Standard 3 for both languages and mathematics (NCERT, 2015); and an earlier Asia Development Research Institute study indicated 20 per cent of students in Standards 1 and 2 were clearly failing while 50 per cent achieved a 'moderate' level of learning (Ghosh and Rana, 2011). This is especially troubling when set against the context of research by Atherton and

Kingdon (2009) which found that 'while in Bihar children are likely to learn in the early grades, their pace of learning slows as they progress [through the grades]' (p. 18). The general educational situation in Bihar, then, is far from satisfactory though both the recent strides forward and the scale of the challenge in a system with 24.7 million students (2013 figures for Standard 1-12) should be acknowledged. Within this general educational context, challenges abound for the teaching of English as a subject in schools in Bihar. Research conducted under the auspices of the BLISS project indicates a prerequisite for successful teaching of a language, that is teachers who are themselves proficient in the language, is sadly lacking. Baseline surveys of secondary school English teachers' language levels conducted in 2014 and 2015 with samples of 330 and 388 teachers respectively revealed that more than half had levels below B1 on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), i.e. they were at 'basic user' level. Baseline studies were also conducted of teaching skills through standardised observations of 156 teachers in 13 districts which indicated

that the vast majority of untrained [by the project] teachers adopt a highly traditional approach in which teacher talking time is very high, as is use of regional languages as opposed to English. Activities, games and the use of pair and group work are rare, with rows of passive students who are – occasionally – asked a question to which they reply with short utterances."

(British Council, 2016b, p. 58)

English language tests were also conducted on teachers selected for training as teacher educators. These teachers, as one would expect, had higher baseline levels at the start of the project but what is more significant is the improvement that they made after receiving project training, with 57 per cent of a random sample moving up one CEFR band and one per cent more than one band.¹³ Teacher educators' classroom skills were also assessed at mid-point in the project, revealing considerable impact on areas such as providing increased opportunities for interaction, prioritising teaching skills and the ability to reflect productively on their own practice. This indicates that both language proficiency gains and skills development are possible if teachers receive high-quality, targeted training and are given adequate support as they develop their new language and teaching skills. An issue for BLISS and the state government will be whether these gains can be extended to larger teacher populations across the state.¹⁴

Official pronouncements continue to proclaim the importance of English within the school system and the need to ensure equality of opportunity. For example, the Bihar Curriculum Framework (BCF) comments on the need for English in various domains as well as the benefits that it might bring to users.

We have to acknowledge, whether we like it or not, that English plays an important role in the domains of education, administration, business and political relations, judiciary, industry etc and is therefore a passport to social mobility, higher education and better job

¹³ These results were corroborated by assessment of teachers receiving project training in cohort 2 in 2016, of whom 59 per cent moved up one CEFR band.

¹⁴ Monitoring and evaluation of the classroom practice of teachers who had participated in training led by BLISS-trained teacher educators was being conducted in July 2016 and results will shed light on this.



opportunities.

(BCF, 2008; cited in British Council, 2016a, p. 2)

And the Bihar School Examinations Board (BSEB) remarks on the need for equality of opportunity to be provided in the system.

The very principle of equality entails that English should not remain associated only with the rich, elite or the upper-middle class. Even a rural child of the underprivileged has an equal right to gain a sufficiently good level of proficiency in it so that he [sic] should not suffer discrimination for lack of it.

(BSEB, n.d.; cited in British Council, 2016b, p. 25)

It is difficult to see how statewide equality in English teaching-learning can be realised in practice with the current language and skill levels amongst English teachers, highlighting the need for projects such as BLISS to provide sustained language and skills improvement with larger numbers of teachers over an extended period of time. A further difficulty is caused by the contrast between official acknowledgement of the importance and prospective value of English to students and its academic status in the Bihar education system. Though English has been a compulsory subject of study from Standard 1 since 2006, it has not been a compulsory examination subject at Standard 10 since the late 1960s. Known as the 'Karpoori doctrine' after the education minister who implemented the policy, it has been a source of continuing controversy with calls for it to be reversed increasing in recent years (see e.g. the *Times of India* article 'Time to revisit Karpoori doctrine on English' of

April 12, 2016).¹⁵ An inevitable consequence of its non-compulsory examination status is to downgrade the importance of English in the eyes of students who focus their attention on those subjects which they are required to pass. Recent pass rates for English for the Standard 10 examination conducted by the BSEB are low with 328,913 or 26.06 per cent of candidates passing from a total of 1,262,004 taking the exam in 2012 and 189,648 or 20.36 per cent of candidates passing from a total of 931,267 in 2011 (more recent figures are not available).

It is thus somewhat of a paradox that the number of private English-medium schools in Bihar has been increasing at a phenomenal rate. Figures from the District Information System for Education (DISE), as reported in the *Times of India*, show a 4,700 per cent increase in enrolment in English-medium in the past five years, though Bihar and Uttar Pradesh combined still have 53 per cent of the national total of students enrolled in Hindi-medium schools (Nagarajan, 2015). In the absence of any prior research on attitudes to English in Bihar, one can only infer that there are an increasing number of parents who see enough value in English to enrol their children in English-medium schools, though the majority still do not. This inference should be set against a backdrop of apparent difficulty in pursuing education more generally in Bihar, evidenced by the high rates of absenteeism from classes and the high drop-out rate from Standard 1 to 10 reported earlier. As Prakash (2012) comments:

There is a problem with parents and children demanding enough education. Our survey of existing

research suggests that many parents and children perceive the returns to schooling as much less than the returns from starting work earlier in life. That is to say, they believe school does not provide sufficient increase in economic benefits to warrant staying in school longer. In this they are mistaken as research indicates 'actual returns to schooling are greater than the perceived returns' (Ranjan and Prakash, 2012, p. 13).

Ranjan and Prakash (ibid) emphasise the importance of providing parents with information on the returns to schooling as a way of increasing participation and include the provision of information about the particular economic returns of being able to speak English in this. From focus group discussions undertaken as part of initial BLISS research, it seems that parents would like to support their children's learning but do not know how to go about it, are generally ill-informed about the education their children are receiving and were divided on the value of learning English. In this context it would seem that there would be great benefit to be derived from an information campaign as suggested by Ranjan and Prakash (ibid) given that perceptions about the usefulness of learning English cannot be divorced from perceptions about the usefulness of school in general.

In the following section we provide a description of our research, hoping to shed further light on social attitudes towards English in Bihar.

¹⁵ Available at: <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/patna/Time-to-revisit-Karpoori-doctrine-on-English-Sushil-Modi/articleshow/51792316.cms>

4. THE RESEARCH PROJECT

The research was commissioned to investigate perceptions of target groups in Bihar regarding the value of English to future employment, the English language and prestige, English language learning provision in government schools and that delivered by non-state agencies, and the extent of English use in the local environments, particularly beyond the school or university and in employment. The initial target groups indicated for the research were parents of school-age children ('Parents' henceforth), students in university or college ('Higher Education') and people in employment in the private sector or with the government ('Professionals'), as these three groups were regarded as being likely to have involvement with the teaching, learning and use of English in the state. It was later decided also to include students in private language schools ('Language students') as a separate group in response to the significant growth in this sector in Bihar, paralleling that nationwide.

4.1 Research design

The primary research instrument was a direct attitude survey of 25 items, derived from a 22 item survey used in Young (2006), itself based on earlier work by Pierson, Fu and Lee (1980) and Pennington and Yue (1994). The survey was designed to assess respondents' attitudes towards the English language, its teaching and learning, status and use in Bihar. Statements were scored on a Likert scale, using four points to guard against central tendency bias, with 1 representing strong agreement, 2 agreement, 3 disagreement and 4 strong disagreement. Separate surveys were prepared for each target group of respondents, with minor variations appropriate to the target group. The surveys were supplemented by interview schedules, intended to elicit more extended perceptions from survey respondents who agreed to participate in follow-up interviews, and tracer studies,

through which researchers recorded actual language use of a small number of respondents who indicated they used English in the course of their daily work. All research instruments are included in Appendix 1.

4.2 Research procedures

The research instruments were prepared in English by the lead author of this report and then translated into Hindi. The original instruments and translations were scrutinised for consistency and accuracy in both languages by bilingual (in Hindi and English) members of the research team and necessary amendments made at a research project meeting in Patna, the state capital, prior to the start of data collection. Amended instruments were then distributed to and discussed with data collectors at a further meeting prior to a pilot survey being conducted in Patna to test comprehension of the survey instruments with respondents. Feedback from the pilot survey did not indicate any problems with implementation of the surveys or of understanding their contents and no further changes were made. A separate meeting was held with a smaller number of data collectors to discuss the interview schedule, approaches to interviewing and how to complete the tracer study data sheet. Data collectors worked in teams in three districts across the state – Patna, Bhojpur and West (Paschim) Champaran – and were required to complete daily self-tracking forms which provided records of the number of respondents. Each team had a designated leader who was responsible for keeping track of target numbers as well as conducting daily spot checks by phone with 10 respondents for each of their team members to ensure the veracity of surveys. Daily reports of surveys completed were then made by team leaders and sent to the data collection coordinator. One member of each team in Bhojpur and West Champaran was responsible for

conducting follow-up interviews whilst two members in Patna were responsible for follow-up interviews and tracer studies (which were only conducted in Patna). All interviews were digitally recorded.

4.3 Sampling and data collection

The three districts of Patna, Bhojpur and West (Paschim) Champaran were chosen to represent a range of urban, semi-urban and rural areas respectively. The locations of the districts can be seen in the state map in Figure 1 while the breakdown of population in each district is given in Table 3 below. As can be seen even the capital district, Patna, is predominantly rural and while Bhojpur is more urbanised than West Champaran the difference in urban populations between the two is only just over 3 per cent.



Respondents in each district were identified through purposive or convenience sampling, i.e. data collectors approached respondents at various locations (e.g. outside schools as parents were waiting to collect their children, in small businesses, hospitals, outside language schools and randomly on the streets), identified themselves, explained the purpose of the survey and then sought verbal agreement to participation. Purposive/convenience



Figure 1: Districts of Bihar

● Districts sampled in this study

sampling has the advantage of easier identification of potential respondents but a potential disadvantage is that there may be limited representation of the wider population due to researcher subjectivity in approaching the potential respondents. However, in this project, all data collectors were trained and experienced in social science surveys and thus skilled in identifying potential respondents from the target populations, helping to reduce subjectivity.



	Patna	Bhojpur	West Champaran
Urban	1,376,701 (38.05%)	235,484 (13.14%)	235,368 (10.09%)
Rural	2,241,510 (61.95%)	1,557,287 (86.86%)	2,098,298 (89.91%)
Total	3,618,211 (100%)	1,792,771 (100%)	2,333,666 (100%)

Table 3: Breakdown of population in research districts¹⁶

4.4 Data analysis

Once collected, data from each district was forwarded to the data collection coordinator and taken for processing. Raw data from the surveys was entered into computers for statistical analysis: double-blind entry was conducted to eliminate errors in data transfer. The open-source program 'R' was used for statistical analysis.

Interview data was translated and transferred into Excel files for response trends to be identified across respondent groups for each question. Trends were then analysed and grouped thematically. Given that interview data was quite sparse, no software was used in the analysis but descriptive coding conducted manually, prior to making inferences from the categories derived from the data.

Data from the tracer studies was transferred from the completed handwritten forms into an Excel file. Again, as only four tracer studies were conducted, analysis was conducted manually to identify similarities and differences across the categories of language used, interlocutor, purpose of the interaction and language functions/tasks.

¹⁶ Source: <http://gov.bih.nic.in/Profile/Districts.htm>



5. FINDINGS

5.1 Survey results

5.1.1 Characteristics of the sample

5.1.1.1 Sample size

A total of 1,949 surveys were completed across the three selected districts of Bihar, Bhojpur, Patna and West Champaran. Availability of stakeholders from the different groups varied across districts. The highest number of surveys – 742 – was conducted in Patna, 716 surveys were conducted in Bhojpur and 491 in West Champaran. Stakeholder group sizes across the three districts varied between 399 and 582. Table 4 provides a detailed breakdown of the number of surveys by stakeholder and district.

The higher numbers of Language students in Patna reflects the strong presence¹⁷ of private language schools in the capital, the urban concentration providing a ready market of students who wish to improve their English language skills for employment. The smaller number of parents and professionals surveyed in Patna in comparison to those in Bhojpur is somewhat surprising given the larger number of schools and commercial enterprises in the capital and we can only speculate that this may have been due to the target numbers given to the teams of data collectors; i.e. in Patna, having surveyed a relatively high number of Language students, the data collectors had no need to survey as many parents or professionals in order to meet their targets.

5.1.1.2 Gender of respondents

A total of 1,216 males and 683 females were surveyed across the three districts. In each district there was a higher number of males than of females, resulting in nearly double the number of male respondents as compared to female respondents (see Table 5).

In all except the Parent stakeholder group, far more males were available than females. From the Parent group 238 females were surveyed, just 43 less than the males that were surveyed. In contrast, in the other groups there were almost double (Higher Education, Professionals) or more than double (Language students) the numbers of males than females.

District	Higher Education	Language students	Parents	Professionals	Total
Bhojpur	147	142	215	212	716
Patna	149	303	149	141	742
West Champaran	103	137	170	81	491
Total	399	582	534	434	1,949

Table 4: Number of surveys in each district by stakeholder group

District	Female	Male	Total
Bhojpur	291	389	680
Patna	244	493	737
West Champaran	148	334	482
Total	683	1,216	1,899*

*50 surveys did not record the gender of respondents

Table 5: Number of surveys conducted in each district by gender

¹⁷ Reliable figures for the number of such unregulated schools (often known in India as coaching centres) are not available. A recent report (British Council, 2016b) drew on an earlier *New York Times* article to estimate at least 150, although, given the recent rapid expansion in private provision, the number is likely to be significantly higher. Online guides to coaching centres in the city often list over one hundred and in urban areas street advertising for institutes (often one teacher enterprises) are ubiquitous. There are a number of coaching centres in both Bhojpur and West Champaran but fewer than in Patna, the state capital.



The preponderance of male respondents across three of the four target groups may have been affected by the gender of the data collectors themselves, who were overwhelmingly male. Female respondents may also not have been willing to respond to unknown males, in spite of their official identification, except in public spaces such as outside schools where many other women would have been present, a reaction which is in part influenced by the broader socio-cultural context. The gender of data collectors themselves was also affected by the

context, with females generally finding it more difficult to undertake travel and extended work away from their home districts. Though regrettable, these factors are likely representative of social attitudes in India where 'education and development do not necessarily translate into equity and enlightenment' and 'stubborn sexism is painfully slow to give way' as a study of cross-generational attitudes towards the role and status of women in Uttar Pradesh put it (Shukla, 2015, p. 127).¹⁸

5.1.1.3 Age of respondents

The average age of respondents was 28.64 (SD 10.97) with male respondents having an average age of 28.38 years (SD 11.41) and females 28.91 years (SD 9.96). Respondents from the Language students group were youngest in age averaging 18.61 years while respondents from the Parents group were oldest, averaging 37.48 years.

Survey group	Female	Male	Total
Higher Education	133	259	392
Language students	171	396	567
Parents	238	281	519
Professionals	141	280	421
Total	683	1,216	1,899*

*50 surveys did not record the gender of respondents

Table 6: Number of surveys conducted by stakeholder group

Survey group	Mean	N	SD
Higher Education	21.20	364	3.19
Language students	18.61	533	2.84
Parents	37.48	516	8.49
Professionals	36.79	427	8.88
Total	28.64	1,840¹⁹	10.97

Table 7: Mean age of respondents by stakeholder group

¹⁸ See also 'Attitudes on Indian women must change' (V.N. Desai, *The Hindu*, 22 June, 2015) for a brief discussion of 'the complex cultural attitudes towards women.'

¹⁹ The age of some respondents was recorded as <12, indicating perhaps confusion about whether respondents were giving their own or their children's ages, or these were simply errors by the data collectors. These have been excluded from the total.



5.1.1.4 Employment details of respondents

Respondents from the Language students, Parents and Professionals groups were asked about their employment status, though only Parents and Professionals were asked to indicate type of employment. A total of 647 respondents indicated that they were working. As expected, the largest group of 402 working respondents were from the Professionals group whereas 475 of the 523 Language students spoken to said they were not employed, reinforcing the earlier comment that they were attending language schools so as to enhance their prospects of gaining employment whilst a minority (9 per cent) were already in work, either full or part-time, and seeking to upgrade their skills base.

Parents and Professionals were requested to indicate their occupation if employed.²⁰ The most frequently recorded occupation was nursing, given by 87 respondents, while 62 were in the retail sector. Of the 87 who gave nursing as an occupation, only two were Parents and 85 were from the Professionals group. For retail, 37 respondents came from the Professionals group and 25 from the Parents. For the Parents, the most frequently recorded occupations were Agriculture and Business with 30 and 26 respondents respectively.

Employed	Language Students	Parents	Professionals	Total
Yes	48	197	402	647
No	475	310	25	810
Total	523	507	427	1,457

Table 8: Employment status across stakeholder groups

Occupation	Parents	Professionals	Total
Agriculture	30	0	30
Army	4	2	6
Bank	5	13	18
Business	26	4	30
Clerk	3	8	11
Doctor	1	16	17
Entrepreneur	2	3	5
Government	5	9	14
Health	2	10	12
Housework	12	0	12
Insurance	3	8	11
Law	3	12	15
Management	7	13	20
NGO	2	6	8
Nursing	2	85	87
Police	5	5	10
Post Office	1	9	10
Private Job	18	0	18
Retail	25	37	62
Sales	3	16	19
Security	1	4	5
Small Business	7	31	38
Teacher	19	2	21
Technician	0	7	7
Others	18	37	55
Total²¹	204	337	541

Table 9: Respondents' occupations by stakeholder group

²⁰ The data point asking respondents to indicate whether they were employed or not was taken as is. It was not corrected against respondents' occupation.

²¹ *Occupations with < 5 respondents are included in the table as 'Others'.



Gender distribution of the commonly occurring occupations for Parents and Professionals is given in Figures 2 and 3 below. As we can see, there is still a gender disparity in a number of professions. Agriculture is predominantly a male undertaking. Nurses are exclusively female whilst doctors are predominantly male. Those respondents working in various businesses are overwhelmingly male and the situation is

similar for 'retail', taken to be those working in or owning small stores. Those in management are all male as are the small numbers in law while respondents recording 'housework' as their occupation are almost all female. This picture seems to reflect Shukla's (2015) observations regarding the lack of 'equity and enlightenment' in many aspects of life in the Indian socio-cultural context.

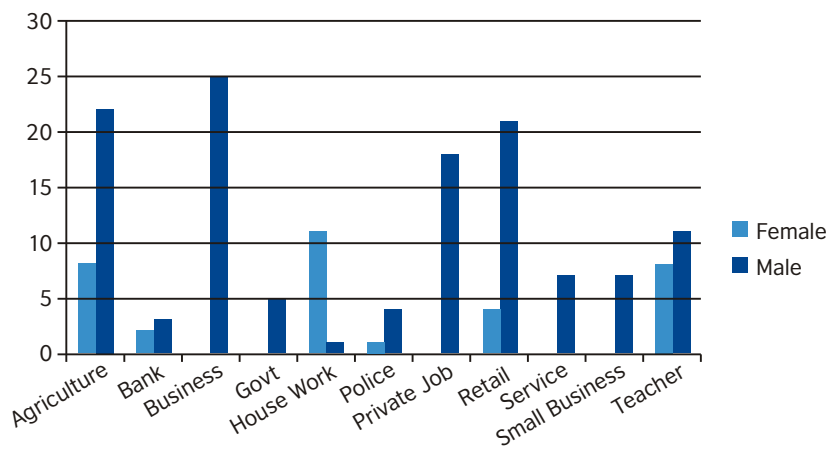


Figure 2: Common occupations amongst Parents by gender

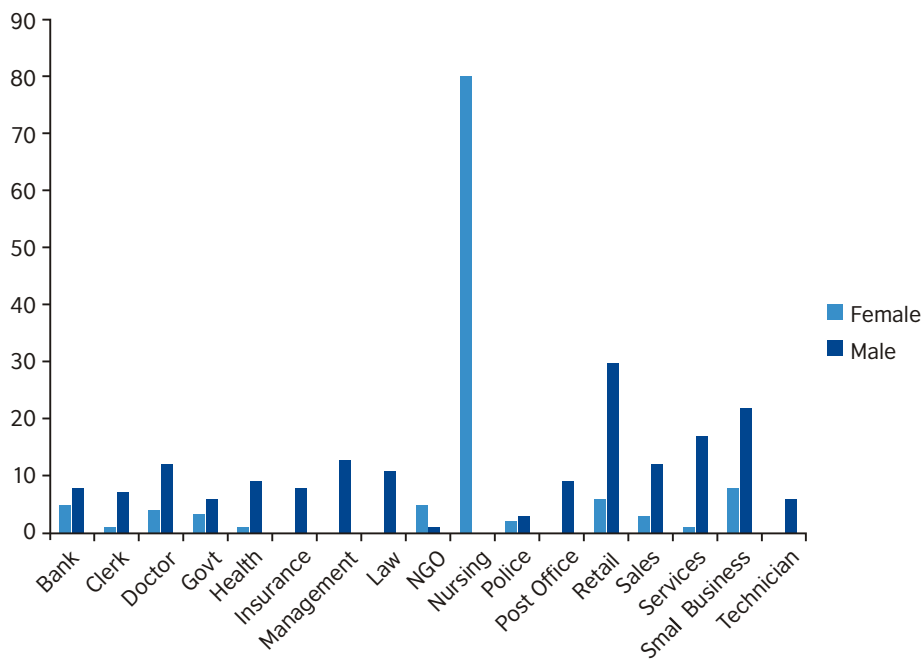


Figure 3: Common occupations amongst Professionals by gender

5.1.2 Self-perceptions of daily use of English and proficiency in the language

Respondents were also asked if they used English in their daily lives and, if so, for what purposes. Amongst the Higher Education students 282 (86 per cent) said they used English and 45 (14 per cent) did not; whilst amongst the Language students the figures were 422 (84 per cent) saying they used English and 82 (16 per cent) did not (invalid or no responses were recorded for the remainder of the groups). Purposes for using English in the two groups are given in Table 10 below.

As is to be expected, many of the respondents in both groups said that they used English as the main language of study, though there was a higher proportion (37.25 per cent) in the Language students group than the Higher Education students group (27.78 per cent). Again, this is hardly surprising given that the latter group were primarily studying English and is also reflected in

the higher percentage (19.61 per cent) saying that they used the language to communicate regularly with fellow students over the HE group (14.07 per cent). In contrast, more HE students (22.22 per cent) reported only using English for brief social exchanges than in the Language students group (12.61 per cent). Very few students in either group reported using the language to socialise with friends, 5.19 per cent of HE students and 2.24 per cent of Language students; and even fewer as the language of the home (1.11 per cent and 1.96 per cent respectively). Nor did many students report using English when they wanted to impress someone, 1.48 per cent and 1.96 per cent of the HE and Language students respectively. These results paint a picture of English being used primarily for study purposes, with very little use for socialising and minimal use as the language of the home.

Parents' and Professionals' daily use of English (if spoken at all) is recorded in Table 11 below. In both groups, the majority of respondents used English in

brief exchanges for social purposes. For the Parent group, this was 59.9 per cent and for the Professionals it was 63.5 per cent. Of the Parents 20.3 per cent indicated that they did not speak English at all while only 10.8 per cent of Professionals did not speak English at all. In contrast, 20.5 per cent of Professionals declared that they spoke English regularly at work. These figures indicate that for the majority of respondents English is something which they use in a very limited way, though there is a sizable minority of Professionals who report that they use the language regularly at work. The Tracer Studies were designed to explore further actual English language use at work and will be reported on in section 5.3.

When broken down by gender, 57.1 per cent of female Parents and 62.9 per cent of male Parents use English only for brief exchanges in their daily lives. Less than one per cent of Parents use English in their homes and another 19.7 per cent stated that they don't use English at all.

Daily use	Higher Education students		Language students		Total	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
A few phrases/brief exchanges for social purposes	60	22.22%	45	12.61%	105	16.75%
Regularly with my fellow students	38	14.07%	70	19.61%	108	17.22%
Occasionally with my fellow students	41	15.18%	28	7.84%	69	11.00%
Regularly for communication with lecturers	16	5.93%	51	14.29%	67	10.69%
Occasionally for communication with lecturers	19	7.04%	8	2.24%	27	4.31%
I only use English when I want to impress someone	4	1.48%	7	1.96%	11	1.75%
English is my main language for study	75	27.78%	133	37.25%	208	33.17%
English is the language I use when I socialise with friends	14	5.19%	8	2.24%	22	3.51%
English is the language I use at home	3	1.11%	7	1.96%	10	1.60%
Total	270	100%	357	100%	627	100%

Table 10: Reported daily use of English for Higher Education and Language student groups



Daily use	Parents		Professionals		Total	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
A few phrases/brief exchanges for social purposes	272	59.9%	251	63.5%	523	61.6%
English is the language I use when I socialise with friends	12	2.6%	27	6.8%	39	4.6%
Regularly for study purposes	23	5.1%	21	5.3%	44	5.2%
I use English regularly at work	29	6.4%	81	20.5%	110	13.0%
English is the language I use at home	4	0.9%	1	0.3%	5	0.6%
Although I can speak English I never use it in my daily life	22	4.8%	14	3.6%	36	4.2%
No, not at all	92	20.3%	0	0.0%	92	10.8%
Total²²	454	100%	395	100%	849	100%

Table 11: Reported daily use of English for Parent and Professional groups

Daily use	Female		Male		Total	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
A few phrases/brief exchanges for social purposes	117	57.1%	151	62.9%	268	60.2%
English is the language I use when I socialise with friends	4	2.0%	8	3.3%	12	2.7%
Regularly for study purposes	10	4.9%	13	5.4%	23	5.2%
I use English regularly at work	9	4.4%	20	8.3%	29	6.5%
English is the language I use at home	2	1.0%	2	0.8%	4	0.9%
Although I can speak English I never use it in my daily life	7	3.4%	15	6.3%	22	4.9%
No, not at all	56	27.3%	31	12.9%	87	19.6%
Total	205	100.1%	240	99.9%	445	100%

Table 12: Use of English amongst Parents by gender

²² Discrepancies where total numbers are broken down by gender arise either because the gender has not been indicated on the survey or if indicated it has not been written clearly and/or entered electronically. The research team has found this to be a consistent issue in all of its work across Bihar.

Of those who spoke English, more than half of the Parents (53.9 per cent) and over a third (34 per cent) of Professionals perceived their English as limited. Amongst Parents just over a quarter (26.9 per cent) thought their English was adequate, as did 35.4 per cent of Professionals. Only one and five per cent of Parents and Professionals respectively felt their English was excellent, with a further 18.2 per cent of Parents and 25.6

per cent of Professionals believing it was good. The general picture is thus one in which sizeable proportions of these groups had little confidence in their proficiency in English and very small numbers felt their English to be excellent. When broken down by gender, of those who responded, only two female and three male Parents (one per cent) believed that their English was excellent.

Of females, 63 per cent perceived their English to be of limited proficiency, as against 46 per cent of males.

Professionals were also asked about how much English was used in their work places (which is not necessarily to be equated with their own use of English). Responses are given in Table 15.

Quality	Parents		Professionals		Total	
Excellent	5	1.0%	21	5.0%	26	2.8%
Good	91	18.2%	109	25.6%	200	21.7%
Adequate	134	26.9%	150	35.4%	284	30.8%
Limited	269	53.9%	144	34.0%	413	44.7%
Total	499	100%	424	100%	923	100%

Table 13: Perceived proficiency in English

Quality	Female		Male		Total	
Excellent	2	0.9%	3	1.1%	5	1.0%
Good	28	13.0%	62	22.6%	90	18.4%
Adequate	50	23.1%	83	30.3%	133	27.1%
Limited	136	63.0%	126	46.0%	262	53.5%
Total	216	100%	274	100%	490	100%

Table 14: Perceived quality of English amongst Parents by gender

Frequency of English use at work	n	%
All the time	55	15.58
Often	89	25.21
Sometimes	115	32.58
Rarely	85	24.08
Never	9	2.55
Total	353	100%

Table 15: Amount of English used in Professionals' work places



Those who used English in the workplace were also asked to specify the main purpose. Chief amongst the reasons selected was communication with Indian clients or customers in Bihar itself (33.6 per cent) with another common being to communicate with Indian clients or customers in other states (16.1 per cent); while 16.8 per cent recorded that it was the main working language in their place of employment. Use of the language in India was far greater than reported use of English with clients or customers overseas (19.5 per cent).

These results indicate a pattern of predominantly 'limited' or 'adequate' proficiency in English and limited use with only 40.79 per cent of Professionals indicating that they use it 'always' or 'often' at work. It is interesting to note, however, that there was much greater use of the language internally in Bihar and across state boundaries together than there was internationally. This would seem to indicate that English is as much an Indian language of business as it is a language of wider communication. The Tracer Studies report on daily language

use at work amongst a small number of Professionals and, though not generalisable, seem to indicate that very little English is actually used even by professionals who claim to use it (see Section 5.3). However, across all four groups in this survey there is very limited use of English either for socialising with friends or as a home language, which corresponds with Sailaja's (2009) findings regarding English not being used in emotional or non-intellectual domains.

Purpose of use	n	%
For communication with clients or customers overseas	58	19.5
For communication with foreign clients or customers in India	21	7.0
For communication with Indian clients or customers in other states	48	16.1
For communication with Indian clients or customers in Bihar	100	33.6
For communication with head office overseas	21	7.0
English is the main working language in my workplace	50	16.8
Total	298	100

Table 16: Purposes for English use in the workplace amongst Professionals

5.1.3 School choices amongst Parents and Professionals

School choice, whether government or private, Hindi or English-medium, may be an indicator of attitudes towards and the value attached to particular languages. (The literature indicates that other factors influencing the quality of schooling such as class size, teaching quality and/or facilities available may also be important). Parents and Professionals were, accordingly, asked which types of school their children were attending. The largest

number of children of the Parents group (36.44 per cent) attended Government Hindi-medium schools whilst 30.54 per cent attended private English-medium schools. A substantial minority (13.38 per cent) also attended private non-recognised²³ English-medium schools. In total 59.04 per cent of children in this group were attending private schools, predominantly English-medium (43.92 per cent) rather than Hindi-medium (15.12 per cent). These results are presented in Table 17 and graphically in Figure 4.

School type	n	%
Government Hindi-medium	395	36.44
Private Hindi-medium	99	9.13
Private English-medium	331	30.54
Private non-recognised Hindi-medium	65	5.99
Private non-recognised English-medium	145	13.38
Madrasaa	2	0.18
Don't know	3	0.28
Not in school	44	4.06
Total	1,084	100

Table 17: Distribution of children of Parents group across school types

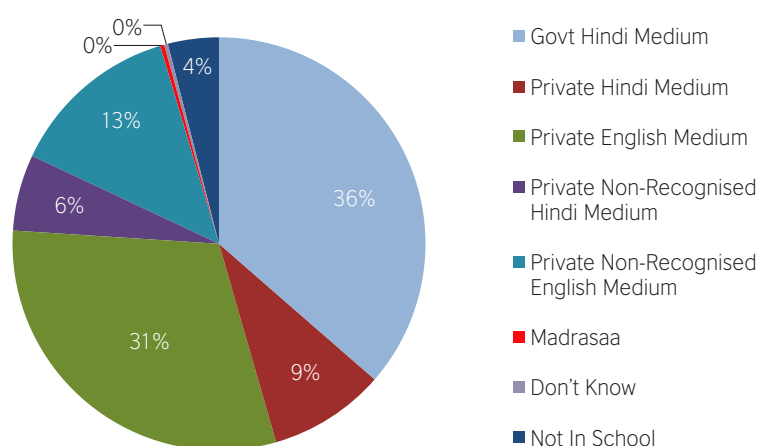


Figure 4: Distribution of children of Parents group across school types (% rounded)

²³ Status as a 'non-recognised' school should not necessarily be equated with lower quality schooling. In interviews conducted in Patna by Pratham, private school directors reported continuing difficulty in obtaining recognition from the government even though they had been in operation for 10 years or more (British Council, 2016b).

In contrast to children from the Parents group, the most popular school type given for children of the Professionals group was private English-medium schools, which 40.58 per cent of children were reported to be attending. The next highest category was government Hindi-medium schools, attended by 23.57 per cent of children whilst 14.78 per cent of children attended private non-recognised English-medium schools. Thus, 55.36 per cent of the children of Professionals were attending English-medium schools which is likely to be both a reflection of the

economic position of their parents, as well as an indicator of the value attached to education conducted through the language.

When we combine school choices across these two groups a little less than a third of children are attending government Hindi-medium and a little over a third private English-medium schools with a further 10 per cent attending private Hindi-medium, four per cent unrecognised Hindi-medium and 14 per cent unrecognised English-medium

schools. The exact totals for all types of Hindi-medium are 45.26 per cent and for all types of English-medium 48.48 per cent. There is roughly parity between the two mediums of instruction amongst our respondents which is somewhat surprising if one reflects on the statistic that Bihar and Uttar Pradesh combined still have, as noted earlier, 53 per cent of the national total of students enrolled in Hindi-medium schools (Nagarajan, 2015).

School type	n	%
Government Hindi-medium	169	23.57
Private Hindi-medium	80	11.18
Private English-medium	291	40.58
Private non-recognised Hindi-medium	7	0.97
Private non-recognised English-medium	106	14.78
Madrasaa	3	0.41
Don't know	2	0.28
Not in school	59	8.23
Total	717	100

Table 18: Distribution of children of Professionals group across school types

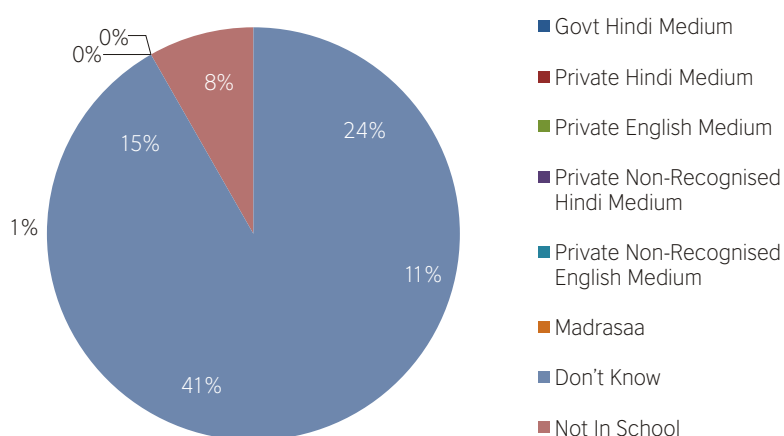


Figure 5: Distribution of children of Professionals group across school types (% rounded)

It seems that the preference for English-medium is greatest amongst those most able to pay for the privilege, those amongst the Professionals group in employment of various kinds (see Table 9), which is hardly surprising. In spite of the increase in low-cost private schooling, the most effective English-medium schools are generally thought to cater primarily to the children of the better off (Annamalai, 2005) and hence those parents in employment or running their own businesses who are financially

more able to send their children to such schools. It is also likely that children of the Professionals group come from households where there are higher levels of education and an appreciation of the value of particular forms of education as a means of preserving family social and economic status across generations (Fuller and Hannam, 2002) which in this case correlates with English-medium education.



School type	n	%
Government Hindi-medium	564	31.32
Private Hindi-medium	179	9.94
Private English-medium	622	34.54
Private non-recognised Hindi-medium	72	4
Private non-recognised English-medium	251	13.94
Madrasaa	5	0.27
Don't know	5	0.27
Not in school	103	5.72
Total	1,801	100

Table 19: Distribution of children across school types (Parents and Professionals groups combined)

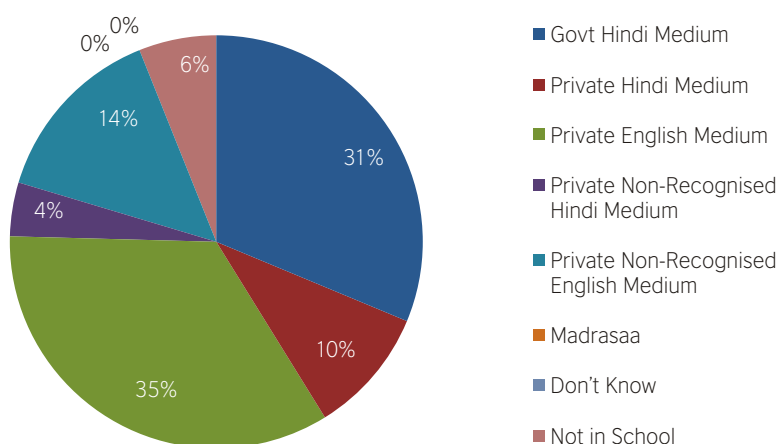


Figure 6: Distribution of children across school types (Parents and Professionals groups combined, % rounded)

5.1.4 Attitudes to English language varieties

Respondents from all stakeholder groups were asked for their preference on the variety of English they thought should be taught to Indian students. Amongst all stakeholder groups collectively, the most preferred variety was Indian English, which 57.25 per cent of respondents opted for. The second preferred option was British English, which 25.8 per cent of the respondents selected though it is interesting to note that Language students selected British English and Indian English almost equally (41.2 per cent and 44.8 per cent respectively). The relatively large numbers of this

group expressing a preference for British English may perhaps indicate the impact of their current status as English language students which, in turn, may be affected by the power of international publishers in the English teaching market (Gray, 2002). For example, international publishers such as Cambridge University Press and Pearson Education both have representatives in Patna while others such as Oxford University Press and Palgrave Macmillan have regional representatives and sales teams in Kolkata. However, further research is needed to ascertain the extent to which private English language schools in Bihar use textbooks available from these publishers.

This pattern of preferences held true irrespective of gender. Table 21 indicates that the most preferred type of English amongst males in each stakeholder group was Indian English, which cumulatively 55.1 per cent of respondents opted for. Across all stakeholder groups, for males American English was the least preferred option and only accounted for 6.7 per cent of the cumulative vote.

Type of English	Higher Education students		Language students		Parents		Professionals		Total	
American English	33	9.4%	35	6.9%	14	2.9%	22	5.5%	104	6.0%
British English	87	24.7%	208	41.2%	73	15.0%	83	20.6%	451	25.85%
Indian English	194	55.1%	226	44.8%	321	66.05%	258	64.2%	999	57.25%
It doesn't matter	38	10.8%	36	7.1%	78	16.05%	39	9.7%	191	10.9%
Total	352	100%	505	100%	486	100%	402	100%	1,745	100%

Table 20: Variety of English preferred by stakeholder group

Type of English	Higher Education		Language students		Parents		Professionals		Total	
American English	20	8.7%	26	7.8%	7	2.7%	19	7.4%	72	6.7%
British English	57	24.8%	133	39.8%	40	15.5%	62	24.0%	292	27.0%
Indian English	125	54.3%	152	45.5%	165	64.0%	153	59.3%	595	55.1%
It doesn't matter	28	12.2%	23	6.9%	46	17.8%	24	9.3%	121	11.2%
Total	230	100%	334	100%	258	100%	258	100%	1,080	100%

Table 21: Variety of English preferred by stakeholder group and gender (male)

Similarly, in Table 22 we see that females in each stakeholder group preferred Indian English over any other variety of English. Reflecting the cumulative totals, there was an almost even divide in the percentage of females from the Language students group who preferred Indian English and British English. The biggest difference came from the females in the Professionals group, where 72.5 per cent opted for Indian English and only 14.5 per cent for British English.

While these results should be treated with caution as reports from the field indicated that some respondents had

difficulty understanding the concept of a 'variety' of English, they may nonetheless indicate that former-colonial status is not linked with a particular preference for British English. Further, just as the fact that the use of English for business internally in Bihar and across state boundaries rather than internationally indicates that it is very much a language of India (see section 5.1.2), so too do these preferences indicate that respondents see Indian English as a legitimate variety of the language for teaching in schools.

Type of English	Higher Education		Language students		Parents		Professionals		Total	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
American English	11	9.6%	8	5.1%	7	3.2%	3	2.3%	29	4.7%
British English	30	26.1%	67	42.7%	33	15.1%	19	14.5%	149	24.0%
Indian English	64	55.6%	69	43.9%	148	67.6%	95	72.5%	376	60.4%
It doesn't matter	10	8.7%	13	8.3%	31	14.1%	14	10.7%	68	10.9%
Total	115	100%	157	100%	219	100%	131	100%	622	100%

Table 22: Variety of English preferred by stakeholder group and gender (female)



5.1.5 Attitudes to languages and language use: descriptive analysis

5.1.5.1 Responses to section 2 of the survey

In this section we provide a descriptive analysis of section 2 of the survey, highlighting responses to statements which reflect current issues of concern in the teaching-learning and use of English in Bihar and in India more widely. The analysis here focuses on summarising responses to the statements, reporting what the data shows, rather than on developing findings which may be generalisable to the wider population (which can be found in section 5.1.6 below).

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with a series of statements on a scale of 1-4, with 1 representing 'strongly agree', 2 'agree', 3 'disagree' and 4 'strongly disagree'.

Table 23 provides a comparison of mean scores for all statements included in the analysis. Statement 2 was excluded from the analysis as it demonstrated lower internal consistency than other statements (see 5.1.6.1. below). The scores are first presented for all four research groups as a whole, followed by a breakdown of responses from the female and male respondents in the whole group (where gender was specified). Whole group scores are followed by scores for each research group, also broken down by gender. For ease of reference Figure 7 provides the statements from section 2 of the survey (with multiple forms for different groups entered for statements 3, 6, 8 and 24) while Figure 8 provides a key to Table 23.

- Statement 1*
Indian people should learn English.
- Statement 3*
If I can use English, I will be praised by my friends and/or family.
- Statement 4*
The use of English is important for India's economic development.
- Statement 5*
The English language is superior to Hindi.
- Statement 6*
If I can use English I will be praised by other people/my colleagues/my classmates.
- Statement 7*
I feel uneasy when I speak English.
- Statement 8*
English should be a condition of employment in Indian businesses/a medium of instruction in universities.
- Statement 9*
When I use English, I do not feel that I am Indian any more.
- Statement 10*
I feel comfortable when I speak English.
- Statement 11*
English can help to modernise the Indian way of life.
- Statement 12*
English brings undesirable cultural values to India.
- Statement 13*
English helps people to find better jobs.
- Statement 14*
A pass in English should be necessary for students to graduate from Class 10.
- Statement 15*
I feel uncomfortable when I hear one Indian speaking to another in English.
- Statement 16*
If I use English, my status is raised.
- Statement 17*
Business in India should be conducted in English.
- Statement 18*
Knowledge of English is important for access to new scientific developments.
- Statement 19*
English is the language of advanced societies.
- Statement 20*
I would like to speak fluent and accurate English.
- Statement 21*
English is a symbol of an educated person.
- Statement 22*
At times I fear that by using English I will become like a foreigner.
- Statement 23*
Knowledge of English is very helpful in understanding foreigners and their cultures.
- Statement 24*
The English language is essential for my future career/my children's future career.
- Statement 25*
If I use English, it increases my self-respect

Figure 7: Statements from section 2 of survey included in the analysis

The mean scores provide an indication of the general strength of agreement or disagreement with the various statements. For example, we see that the highest level of agreement for the whole group was with Statement 1, *'Indian people should learn English'*; with a mean score of 1.35, and that females had a slightly higher level of agreement (1.29) than males (1.38). This pattern is repeated for all four of the component research groups. The highest level of disagreement was with Statement 22, *'At times I fear that by using English I will become like a foreigner,'* with a mean score of 3.11, and with females having a slightly higher level of disagreement (3.20) than males (3.05). Again, this pattern is repeated for all four of the research groups. Statement 9, *'When I use English, I do not feel that I am Indian any more,'* provided an alternate form of statement 22 and the score of 2.98 approximated closely to the score of 3.11 for statement 22, indicating the reliability of the forms. Taken at face value these responses indicate that amongst these respondents in Bihar there was a strong feeling that Indians should learn English and that, if they did so, there was little anxiety about it having a detrimental effect on their sense of identity as Indians. When we look at the mean scores by group, though, it is interesting to note that the Language Students group have the highest level of agreement (1.29) with Statement 1 and the lowest level of disagreement (2.94) with Statement 22 amongst the four groups. That is, those respondents who are currently studying English in private language schools are the most strongly in agreement about the need to learn English amongst the groups but also, though the differences are not large, seem slightly more ambivalent than other groups about its detrimental effect on their sense of identity as Indians. In contrast, the three other groups all have scores over 3 for this statement, indicating they more clearly 'disagree' with it. This finding may not be unexpected, however, when we consider that they are in the process of extending their linguistic repertoires and that coming to terms with a new language and incorporating it in a stable sense of self inevitably entails

a period of adjustment or even identity flux: 'language learners' identities are always multiple and in process' as Norton and Toohey (2011, p. 437) put it.

The reasons underlying the need to learn English are reflected, *inter alia*, in the mean scores for statement 24 *'The English language is essential for my future business or professional career'* with a whole group score of 1.44, statement 13 *'English helps people to find better jobs,'* with a score of 1.50, and statement 18 *'Knowledge of English is important for access to new scientific developments,'* with a score of 1.52. Here we see the intersection of English for personal economic advancement and scientific progress. However, the degree of agreement was less for statement 17, *'Business in India should be conducted in English'* with a score of 1.91. As we shall see in the analysis of the tracer studies (see section 5.4), the use of English in business in Bihar is low and the response to this survey item may be a reflection of that reality.

Responses to statement 14, *'a pass in English should be necessary for students to graduate from Class 10,'* are also worthy of special attention given that Bihar is unusual amongst states in India in not having English as a required examination subject at this level. The whole group mean of 1.46 indicates a high level of agreement with making a pass in English compulsory at Grade 10 for students wishing to progress. In common with trends for other responses, females have a slightly higher level of agreement (1.38) than males (1.50) and this pattern is repeated across all four research groups. This finding echoes research conducted by the BLISS project (reported in British Council, 2016b), in which teachers and headteachers expressed concern that English was not a compulsory examination subject with teachers, in particular, feeling that this was demotivating for their learners and themselves as it downgraded the importance of English as a subject.

WG = Whole group	
WGF = Whole group – females	
WGM = Whole group – males	
HE = Higher Education group	PA = Parents group
HEF = Higher Education – females	PAF = Parents – females
HEM = Higher Education – males	PAM = Parents – males
LA = Language students group	PR = Professionals group
LAF = Language students – females	PRF = Professionals – females
LAM = Language students – males	PRM = Professionals – males

Figure 8: Key to Table 23

Group	S1	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	S9	S10	S11	S12	S13	S14	S15	S16	S17	S18	S19	S20	S21	S22	S23	S24	S25
WG n=1949	1.35	1.80	1.75	2.57	1.89	2.74	1.75	2.98	2.14	1.83	2.04	1.50	1.46	2.77	1.89	1.91	1.52	2.14	1.61	1.84	3.11	1.72	1.44	1.96
WGF n=683	1.29	1.82	1.74	2.64	1.92	2.70	1.71	3.03	2.20	1.83	2.08	1.48	1.38	2.74	1.94	1.89	1.50	2.15	1.60	1.78	3.20	1.71	1.43	2.01
WGM n=1216	1.38	1.78	1.76	2.52	1.85	2.75	1.77	2.95	2.09	1.84	2.02	1.52	1.50	2.78	1.86	1.92	1.53	2.13	1.62	1.87	3.05	1.73	1.44	1.93
HE n=399	1.37	1.85	1.71	2.55	1.89	2.79	1.82	2.94	2.05	1.87	2.03	1.60	1.57	2.76	1.94	1.99	1.60	2.22	1.56	1.94	3.13	1.83	1.50	2.03
HEF n=133	1.35	1.92	1.73	2.60	1.92	2.89	1.82	3.04	2.05	1.89	2.19	1.64	1.57	2.82	1.95	1.98	1.63	2.22	1.48	1.85	3.23	1.78	1.46	2.04
HEM n=259	1.38	1.80	1.70	2.51	1.85	2.73	1.83	2.92	2.05	1.87	1.95	1.59	1.59	2.72	1.94	2.00	1.59	2.19	1.61	1.99	3.10	1.85	1.52	1.98
LA n=582	1.29	1.59	1.56	2.18	1.62	2.83	1.65	2.84	1.93	1.62	1.92	1.42	1.50	2.77	1.56	1.79	1.50	1.87	1.30	1.65	2.94	1.65	1.38	1.59
LAF n=171	1.25	1.63	1.57	2.31	1.59	2.78	1.66	2.84	1.96	1.60	2.03	1.39	1.40	2.83	1.59	1.86	1.56	1.91	1.28	1.61	3.05	1.73	1.41	1.57
LAM n=396	1.31	1.58	1.55	2.14	1.63	2.83	1.66	2.83	1.90	1.63	1.88	1.45	1.54	2.73	1.56	1.77	1.47	1.85	1.32	1.67	2.89	1.61	1.37	1.60
PA n=534	1.39	2.08	1.86	2.87	2.07	2.66	1.48	3.06	2.29	1.94	2.12	1.49	1.39	2.74	2.11	1.92	1.54	2.29	1.85	1.93	3.19	1.74	1.27	2.17
PAF n=238	1.35	2.06	1.79	2.86	2.09	2.66	1.48	3.10	2.31	1.93	2.14	1.46	1.32	2.68	2.16	1.84	1.49	2.24	1.84	1.85	3.27	1.71	1.24	2.15
PAM n=281	1.40	2.09	1.92	2.90	2.05	2.67	1.45	3.03	2.25	1.95	2.09	1.52	1.45	2.80	2.06	1.96	1.57	2.31	1.85	2.00	3.13	1.78	1.30	2.18
PR n=434	1.35	2.02	1.90	2.72	2.00	2.65	1.82	3.10	2.30	1.94	2.10	1.53	1.37	2.81	2.00	1.99	1.45	2.26	1.77	1.87	3.20	1.67	1.37	2.14
PRF n=141	1.20	1.96	1.86	2.70	1.94	2.50	1.68	3.14	2.43	1.87	1.94	1.46	1.28	2.69	1.98	1.91	1.30	2.22	1.69	1.81	3.24	1.60	1.19	2.26
PRM n=280	1.44	2.04	1.95	2.71	2.03	2.72	1.88	3.07	2.23	1.99	2.19	1.55	1.43	2.88	2.02	2.02	1.53	2.28	1.81	1.90	3.16	1.71	1.46	2.06

Table 23: Comparison of means for all statements in the analysis

Attitudes to English as an indicator of social status were examined in statements 16 and 21, amongst others. For statement 16, *'If I use English, my status is raised'*, the whole group score was 1.89 while for statement 21, *'English is a symbol of an educated person'*, it was similar at 1.84. In a reversal of previous trends for males and females, for statement 16 – though not for statement 21 – males (1.86) were in slightly stronger agreement than females (1.94) across the whole group and for all sub-groups except professionals where the scores were 2.02 for males and 1.98 for females. The differences are, however, minimal. The results suggest that in the minds of respondents there is a strong association between proficiency in English and higher social status in the community, including perceptions of being highly educated if one speaks English (irrespective of other qualifications). This finding is supported elsewhere in our research (see section 5.2) and resonates with findings from other contexts (see e.g. Hayes, 2005).

As well as comparing means we can also examine the distribution of responses for selected statements (collated responses for all statements in the analysis can be found in Tables 24-27 below)²⁴ and represent these diagrammatically to portray the relative strength of agreement and disagreement with the statements. Looking again at statement 1, for example, we find an overwhelming number of respondents 'strongly agree' or 'agree' with this and a minimal number who 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree.' This is represented in Figure 9 where raw scores as well as percentages are given.

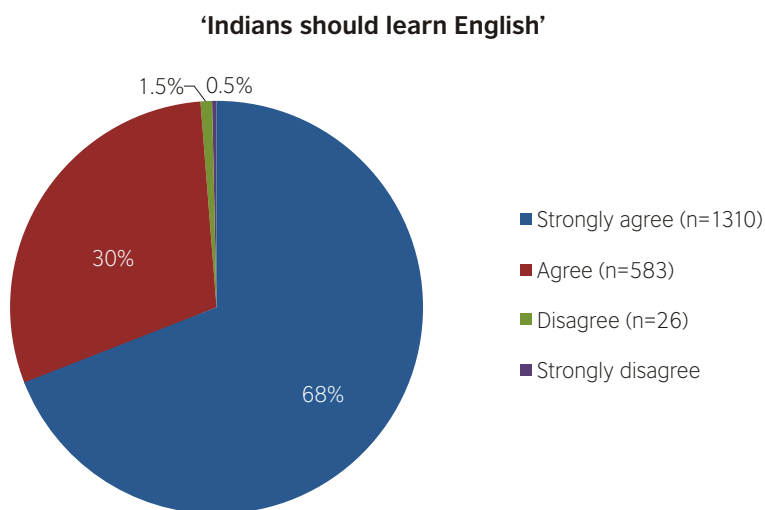


Figure 9: Whole group responses to statement 1



²⁴ Note that total responses for each statement do not always match the total number of respondents as some responses may have been unclear and/or incorrectly entered on survey sheets or the digital copy.

Group	S1				S3				S4				S5				S6				S7			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
WG n=1949	1310	583	26	11	562	1070	242	39	717	989	182	26	381	375	852	308	556	1073	238	48	173	475	953	314
WGF n=683	487	178	7	2	182	378	96	11	251	346	57	4	123	108	329	111	195	358	102	13	61	183	298	115
WGM n=1216	790	395	17	9	368	666	142	25	443	625	112	21	248	262	504	187	351	689	129	32	112	269	531	189
HE n=399	263	129	4	3	126	217	46	10	163	196	30	8	80	74	188	55	114	223	45	12	39	73	213	69
HEF n=133	91	39	2	1	33	79	18	2	50	68	13	1	25	23	65	20	34	74	18	3	11	22	66	30
HEM n=259	166	89	2	2	91	135	27	6	108	126	17	7	54	50	121	32	78	147	26	7	28	50	144	36
LA n=582	427	134	9	5	285	236	34	10	289	246	25	7	200	115	200	52	260	270	31	7	60	100	284	122
LAF n=171	131	34	4	0	80	71	12	3	80	80	6	1	55	21	75	16	82	75	9	2	17	40	72	37
LAM n=396	286	98	4	5	197	161	22	7	204	160	18	5	139	92	122	35	173	187	21	5	43	58	205	79
PA n=534	333	182	7	2	79	336	93	13	145	306	65	3	50	90	258	124	94	313	99	17	48	150	255	70
PAF n=238	152	77	1	1	42	138	44	6	78	122	29	0	24	38	116	53	46	125	53	7	21	72	103	35
PAM n=281	175	100	5	1	36	188	49	6	62	178	35	3	23	51	137	68	47	181	43	9	27	72	47	34
PR n=434	287	138	6	1	72	281	69	6	120	241	62	8	51	96	206	77	88	267	63	12	26	152	201	53
PRF n=141	113	28	0	0	27	90	22	0	43	76	19	2	19	26	73	22	33	84	22	1	12	59	57	13
PRM n=280	163	108	6	1	44	182	44	6	69	161	42	6	32	69	124	52	53	174	39	11	14	89	135	40

Table 24: Collated responses to statements 1,3-7

Note:

WG no gender: n = 50 HE no gender: n = 7 PA no gender: n = 15 PR no gender: n = 13 LA no gender: n = 15

Group	S8				S9				S10				S11				S12				S13			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
WG n=1949	878	834	166	42	136	238	1072	468	379	972	468	85	671	959	233	58	510	928	366	111	1117	667	94	34
WGF n=683	329	251	61	11	40	79	370	179	125	313	195	32	236	330	86	18	167	128	128	46	392	234	36	4
WGM n=1216	525	548	100	30	91	154	680	277	248	639	256	49	416	606	139	40	297	579	233	60	693	419	58	29
HE n=399	150	183	50	14	34	53	211	96	91	210	71	20	143	177	58	17	111	182	74	25	194	164	26	6
HEF n=133	46	66	16	3	8	17	67	38	33	63	28	6	44	63	18	6	25	63	27	11	58	59	12	0
HEM n=259	101	113	34	11	21	36	142	58	56	145	42	13	94	113	39	11	82	119	46	12	130	104	14	6
LA n=582	264	258	35	14	68	69	319	112	176	282	82	27	273	251	32	13	173	284	92	21	381	159	17	16
LAF n=171	77	74	12	4	21	20	90	35	48	83	26	8	81	74	9	3	41	86	34	6	114	46	5	3
LAM n=396	176	181	22	10	47	48	216	76	125	193	49	19	188	166	23	10	130	188	57	13	254	111	12	13
PA n=534	316	174	27	5	19	70	294	140	75	245	170	27	148	275	82	17	121	259	100	41	305	183	27	6
PAF n=238	146	46	18	4	10	28	123	70	37	97	81	14	70	113	42	6	55	109	45	21	133	88	9	0
PAM n=281	162	107	8	1	9	40	165	66	37	144	84	11	75	155	38	11	65	142	53	19	164	91	18	6
PR n=434	148	219	54	9	15	46	251	120	37	235	145	11	107	256	58	11	105	203	100	24	237	161	24	6
PRF n=141	60	65	15	0	1	14	90	36	7	70	60	4	41	80	17	3	46	64	22	8	87	41	10	1
PRM n=280	86	147	36	8	14	30	157	77	30	157	81	6	59	172	39	8	20	130	77	16	145	113	14	4

Table 25: Collated responses to statements 8-13

Group	S14				S15				S16				S17				S18				S19			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
WG n=1949	1214	568	111	28	157	472	951	337	572	1011	262	50	562	1005	289	47	1041	759	100	13	372	1005	418	115
WGF n=683	459	175	31	6	56	185	302	126	183	359	99	22	215	327	111	15	382	255	26	9	124	353	158	33
WGM n=1216	721	382	80	21	98	274	627	202	376	624	161	25	334	655	171	34	634	490	68	4	246	625	249	75
HE n=399	218	139	29	10	35	91	205	65	112	197	77	6	112	191	74	17	190	178	22	5	75	191	100	31
HEF n=133	69	51	9	2	11	28	66	26	34	71	24	2	35	66	25	4	60	62	6	3	24	60	39	7
HEM n=259	143	88	20	8	23	62	137	36	74	125	52	3	72	125	48	12	125	115	16	2	51	130	57	21
LA n=582	341	182	38	8	63	109	294	102	294	224	35	7	207	287	58	16	331	192	43	3	176	304	66	19
LAF n=171	111	49	6	2	16	36	74	40	82	65	15	0	59	80	23	6	93	61	12	3	47	92	24	4
LAM n=396	222	126	32	6	47	71	209	60	204	152	20	7	142	201	33	10	230	129	26	0	127	201	42	14
PA n=534	353	141	25	4	36	160	232	94	90	305	95	26	148	273	87	4	266	230	23	2	75	256	151	37
PAF n=238	166	56	9	0	19	77	95	40	39	132	41	17	82	105	38	4	125	99	6	1	36	115	67	12
PAM n=281	177	83	16	4	16	77	134	52	51	164	53	7	64	162	47	3	137	124	16	1	39	137	78	23
PR n=434	302	106	19	6	23	112	220	76	76	285	55	11	95	254	70	10	254	159	12	3	46	254	101	28
PRF n=141	113	19	7	2	10	44	67	20	28	91	19	3	39	76	25	1	104	33	2	2	17	86	28	10
PRM n=280	179	85	12	3	12	64	147	54	47	183	36	8	56	167	43	9	142	122	10	1	29	157	72	17

Table 26: Collated responses to statements 14-19

Group	S20				S21				S22				S23				S24				S25			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
WG n=1949	935	821	132	28	745	788	304	65	101	149	1108	554	803	879	182	40	1270	583	44	13	586	897	333	92
WGF n=683	338	271	53	8	286	250	119	11	25	43	375	227	288	304	61	15	474	184	14	0	183	331	127	30
WGM n=1216	572	533	77	17	435	528	180	50	72	105	704	314	492	558	117	24	765	386	31	12	392	548	183	51
HE n=399	200	176	14	6	132	176	63	23	17	23	244	110	153	174	47	19	230	138	19	7	115	179	75	25
HEF n=133	73	54	3	1	46	60	24	1	2	9	76	43	51	58	15	4	76	51	5	0	35	62	30	5
HEM n=259	122	120	11	5	82	115	39	20	13	14	165	65	98	114	32	14	148	87	14	6	80	115	45	15
LA n=582	415	142	11	3	291	199	60	17	52	63	321	134	286	199	69	9	369	181	13	1	303	199	49	12
LAF n=171	126	38	5	0	90	56	20	2	13	15	92	49	82	57	24	6	106	57	6	0	93	57	15	3
LAM n=396	277	101	6	3	194	136	40	14	39	47	216	84	196	140	42	3	252	122	8	1	202	138	34	8
PA n=534	177	258	71	14	178	210	110	16	17	40	290	173	184	290	39	6	389	123	10	0	77	302	115	26
PAF n=238	76	120	29	5	91	83	48	5	7	13	121	89	86	128	13	3	177	52	2	0	31	142	48	9
PAM n=281	97	134	40	7	80	128	61	10	9	27	161	81	94	154	26	3	204	67	8	0	44	155	46	15
PR n=434	143	245	36	5	144	203	71	9	15	23	253	137	180	216	27	6	282	141	2	5	91	217	94	29
PRF n=141	63	59	16	2	59	51	27	3	3	6	86	46	69	61	9	2	115	24	1	0	24	70	34	13
PRM n=280	76	178	20	2	79	149	40	6	11	17	162	84	104	150	17	4	161	110	1	5	66	140	58	13

Table 27: Collated responses to statements 20-25

Turning to attitudes towards English as having a potentially harmful impact on respondents' sense of identity (see Figure 10), we see in responses to statement 22 that there is very strong disagreement with this notion across the research sample, though the number with concerns about the impact of learning English is higher at 13 per cent ('strongly agree' and 'agree') than those who do not feel Indians should learn English. This reflects anxiety about the impact of learning English amongst this minority even though, as we have seen, a vast majority of respondents feel that Indians should learn the language. This may also be reflected in the fact that the levels of 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree' are a reversal of the support for the need to learn English.

'At times I fear by using English I will become like a foreigner'

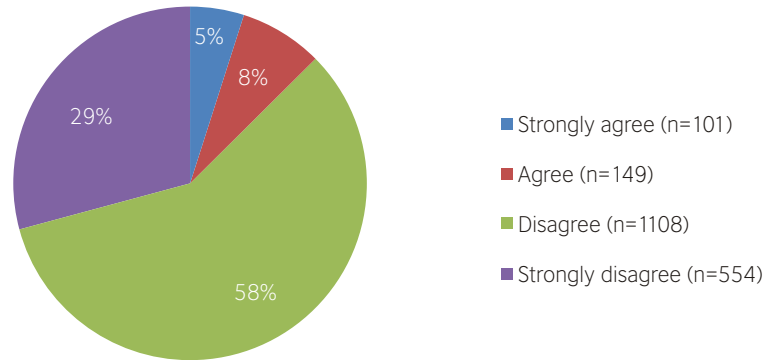


Figure 10: Whole group responses to statement 22

Statement 24 was worded differently for the various research groups, though the underlying focus on English for career purposes was the same. For example, the form for Higher Education students and Language students was '*The English language is essential for my future career*' whilst for Parents and Professionals it was '*The English language is essential for my child's/children's future career*'. We can then contrast responses for the two forms of the statement, for students focused on their own future careers and for parents and professionals focused on their children's future careers (in Figures 11 and 12 respectively). As we can see there is minimal disagreement with the perception that English is an essential for a future career, one's own if a student (four per cent combined) or that of one's children if a parent or in the workforce (two per cent combined). Parents and Professionals even more 'strongly agree' that English is necessary for their children's future (70 per cent) than both Higher Education and Language students (63 per cent).

'The English language is essential for my future career'

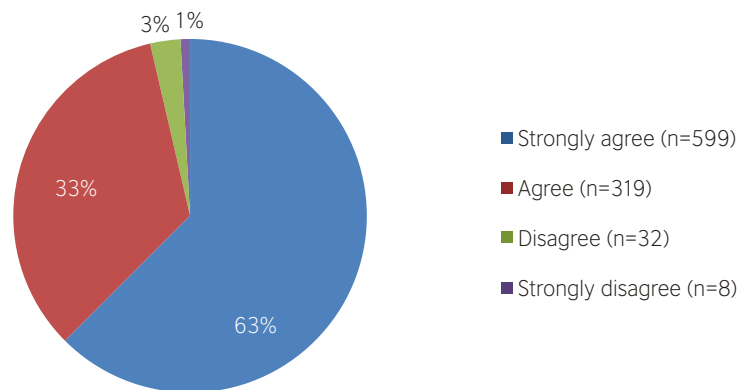


Figure 11: Responses to statement 24 for Higher Education and Language Students

The association between English and social status is evident in responses to statements 16 and 21. There is considerable agreement across the groups that speaking English contributes to perceptions of higher social status and of being considered an educated person (Figure 13).

'The English language is essential for my child's children's future career'

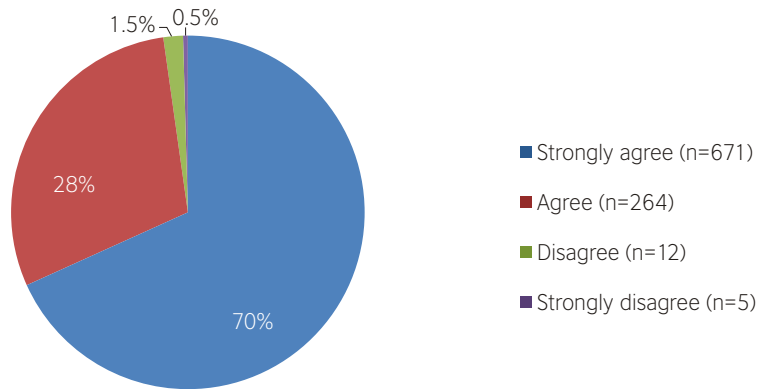


Figure 12: Responses to statement 24 for Parents and Professionals groups

'If I use English my status is raised'

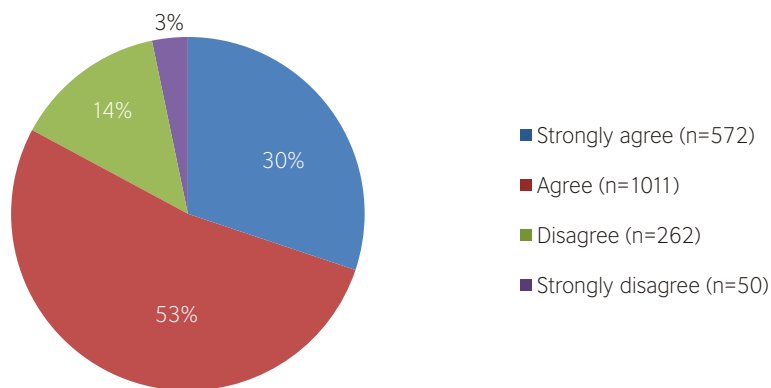


Figure 13: Whole group responses to statement 16

Looking at the responses of the four groups, however, it is interesting to note a contrast between the Language students (Figure 14) who are more strongly in agreement that use of English raises their status than the three other groups who tend to 'agree' rather than 'strongly agree' (Figure 15 provides an example of the Professionals group). This may reflect the investment that the Language students group are bringing to the task of learning the language and their hopes that it will indeed raise their status whilst the Professionals, having more experience of the workforce and the place of English in Bihar society are less strongly convinced of its impact.

A similar situation obtains for statement 21 and the association of English with perceptions of being educated. Figures 16-18 report the responses to statement 21 for all four research groups combined, the Language students and Professionals groups respectively.

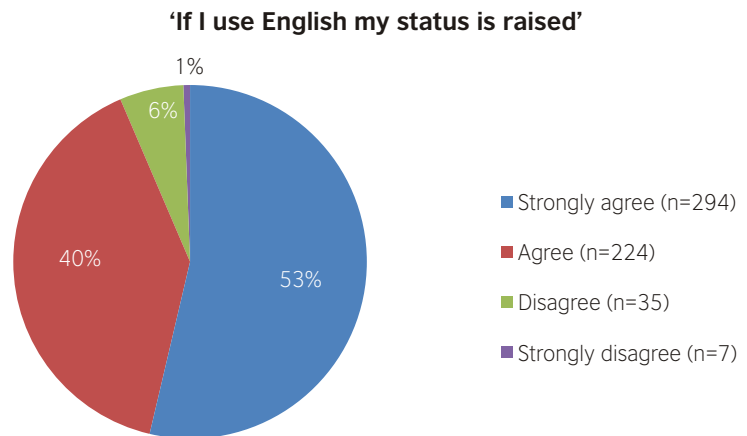


Figure 14: Responses to statement 16 for Language students

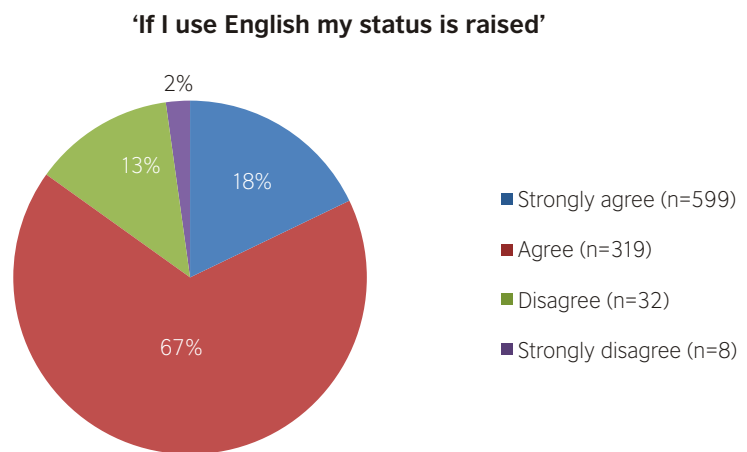
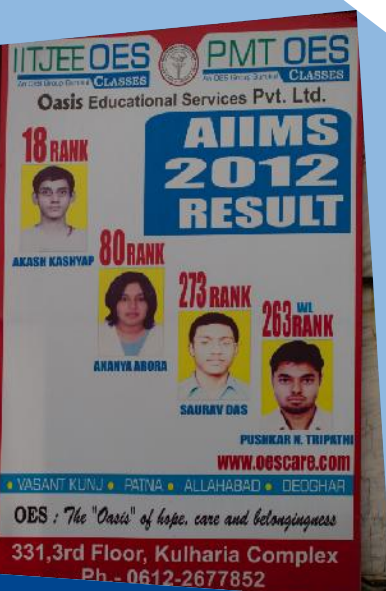


Figure 15: Responses to statement 16 for Professionals



'English is a symbol of an educated person'

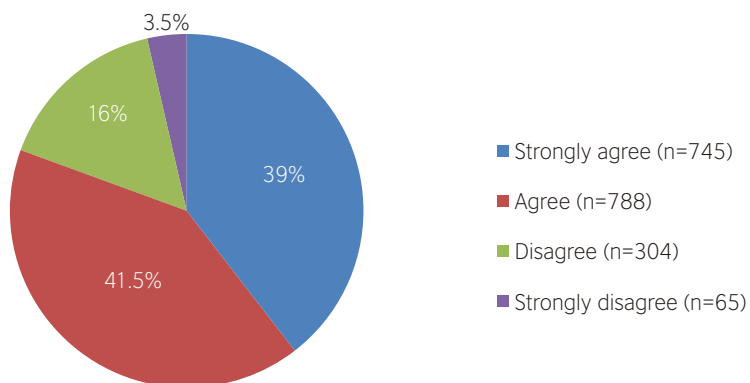


Figure 16: Whole group responses to statement 21

'English is a symbol of an educated person'

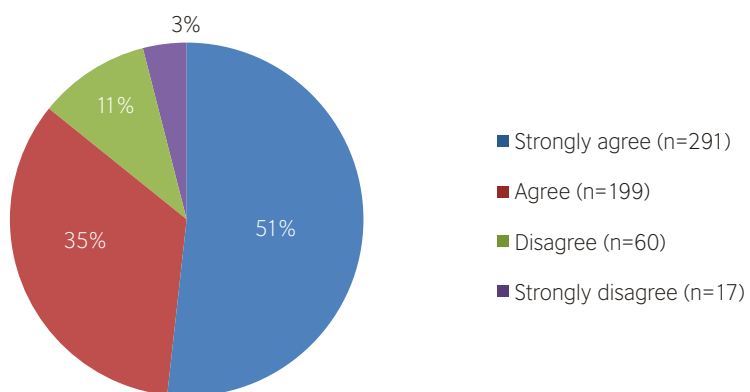


Figure 17: Responses to statement 21 for Language students

'English is a symbol of an educated person'

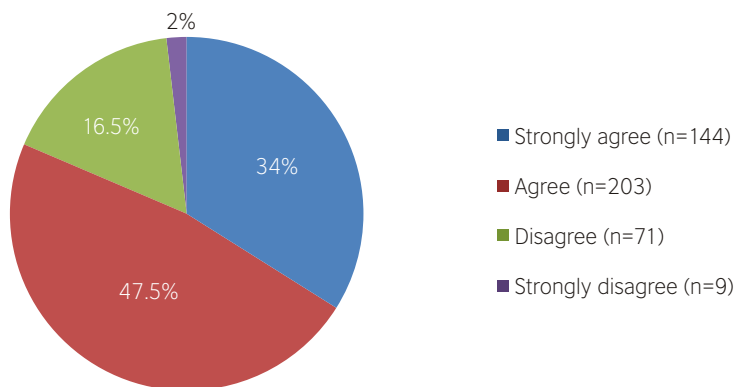


Figure 18: Responses to statement 21 for Professionals

Once again Language students seem more convinced of the association between English and perceptions of being an educated person than other groups, reflecting their current investment in education. It is worth noting that a substantial minority (19.5 per cent) of the four research groups combined either 'disagree' or 'strongly' disagree with the statement, as do the sub-group of Professionals (18.5 per cent), indicating that the association between English and being educated is a powerful one, but by no means universal. In contrast to these differing views on English and status, there remains very strong support across all research groups for a pass in English being made compulsory to graduate from Class 10 (statement 14). Collated responses are given in Figure 19.

There was less difference between the four research groups than for statement 21. As an example, the responses for Parents and Higher Education students are given in Figures 20 and 21.

As we can see, Parents are very strongly in favour of a pass in English being compulsory at Class 10 with 67 per cent who 'strongly agree' and 27 per cent who 'agree' while the results for Higher Education students are 55 per cent and 35 per cent respectively. While both groups have 90 per cent or more agreeing with the statement, it seems that Parents subscribe even more strongly to making English compulsory at Class 10 than those – the Higher Education students – who have had more recent direct experience of the existing system. More research would be needed to ascertain whether the views of the Higher Education students were discipline- specific, with some having more immediate use for English than others according to their subject of study, as well as whether the views of Parents were related to their children's current stage of schooling; e.g. would Parents views alter the closer their children got to Class 10?

'A pass in English should be necessary for students to graduate from Class 10'

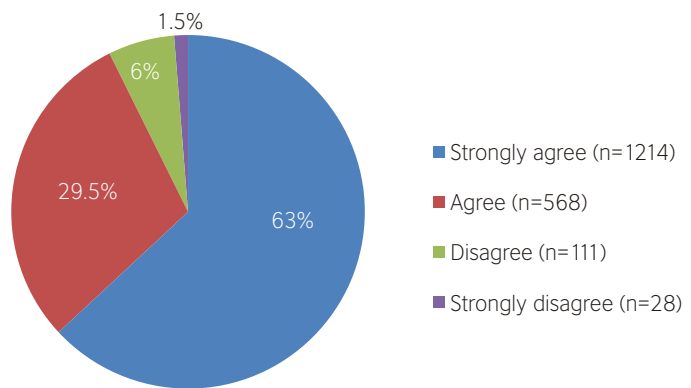


Figure 19: Whole group responses to statement 14

'A pass in English should be necessary for students to graduate from Class 10'

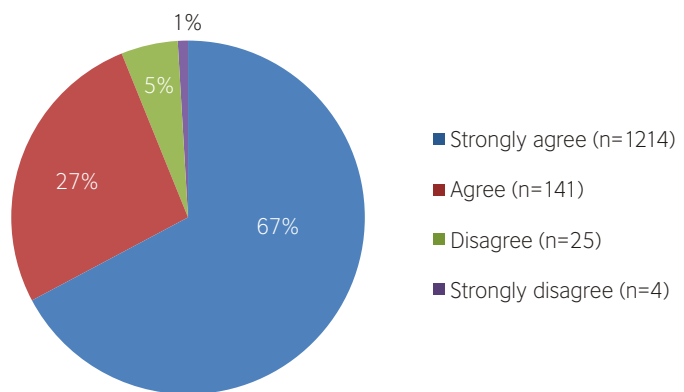


Figure 20: Responses to statement 14 for Parents

'A pass in English should be necessary for students to graduate from Class 10'

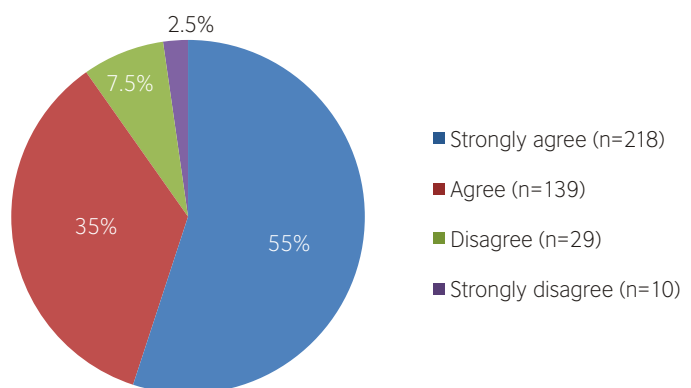


Figure 21: Responses to statement 14 for Higher Education students

5.1.5.2 Open-ended responses

At the end of the survey respondents were all asked whether they had any further comments about English in India or the English language itself. Only around 50 per cent or less of each group offered comments, all of which were brief. A broad content analysis of all the comments was conducted and eight categories developed, as follows:

1. English as a necessity in school, college and/or university
2. English and its connection with personal or national economic development

3. The general importance of English in the modern world
4. A general liking for English itself
5. The necessity to value Hindi as well as English
6. English as a status symbol
7. Negative comments about English and its impact
8. Unclear or irrelevant comments.

The number of responses for the whole group and the four research sub-groups are given for each of the categories in Table 28 below.

Group/Comment category	Higher Education n = 399	Language students n = 582	Parents n = 534	Professionals n = 434	Whole group n = 1949
1 English as educational necessity	61	78	81	53	273
2 Importance of English	52	79	78	51	260
3 English and development	37	62	36	27	162
4 Personal liking for English	18	14	11	14	57
5 Valuing Hindi and English	11	2	4	4	21
6 English as status symbol	0	1	5	2	8
7 Negative comments	4	6	1	4	15
8 Unclear/ not relevant	24	5	14	23	66
Total comments	207	247	230	178	862

Table 28: Number of open-ended responses by category and research group

As all of the comments were brief and there was little difference in the nature of the comments between the groups we will report on the open-ended responses for the whole group rather than for each of the four sub-groups separately.

1. English as an educational necessity

The largest number of comments (273) concerned the need to teach English at all levels of education, from primary schools to university. One of the Parents thought that English should be taught in primary schools and that it should not be a language only for the prosperous:

'English should be taught in primary schools; and it should also be taught to the underprivileged.'

Many respondents also mentioned the need to make English compulsory at Class 10, as with this comment from one of the Language students:

'Every Indian should know English, be able to read and write in English. In Bihar English should be made compulsory at Class 10.'

2. The general importance of English in the modern world

The belief that English was a necessity in the modern, globalised world was frequently expressed. Amongst the 260 comments of this nature, the following from a Higher Education student was typical:

'English is a requirement of our time.'

One of the parents spoke of the impact of English on individuals and on development:

'The English language helps to give our children a bright future. It is also necessary for development.'

3. English and its connection with individual or national economic development

The third highest number of comments (162) focused on the role that English had to play in individual or national economic development. English was widely seen as a passport to a better future for individuals. One of the Parents said:

'English should be compulsory for everyone, as without it our children's future will be dark.'

Similarly, two of the Professionals group commented:

'The English language takes one to a bright future.'

'People who know English are never jobless.'

An association between English and national economic development was also commonly made, as a Parent, Professional and Higher Education student, respectively, said:

'English is necessary for modernisation in Indian society.'

'English is an important language for development.'

'Knowing English is very important for India's development.'

Having this belief did not mean that respondents devalued Hindi. For example, one of the Language students commented:

'English is necessary for India's development, but not to the extent that we forget our national language, Hindi.'

4. Personal liking for English itself

A number of comments (57) expressed a personal fondness for English as a language. One of the Parents remarked:

'I like English very much.'

This type of comment was seen across the groups with one of the Professionals using exactly the same words whilst another said:

'English is my favourite language.'

5. The necessity to value Hindi as well as English

While recognising the value of English, a number of respondents (21) took care to mention that it should function alongside Hindi. As one of the Parents said:

'We should know both Hindi and English.'

One of the Higher Education students focused on the restricted domains in which English could be useful:

'English should be used in learning technical subjects; however, the status of Hindi should be maintained.'

The equality of languages was stressed by one of the Professionals.

'We should know English as well as Hindi. There is no question of superiority or inferiority regarding kinds of language.'

6. English as a status symbol

Only a small number of comments (8) made reference to the place that English had as a status symbol. These were typified by comment from respondents in the Professionals and Parents groups:

'Knowing English symbolises that a person is educated.'

'Knowing English helps in gaining respect in society.'

7. Negative comments about English and its impact

Overtly negative comments about English and its impact were rare (15). Of these, one or two were strongly worded. One of the Professionals commented that:

'For India the English language is the symbol of slavery.'

However, the remainder of the negative comments were more nuanced, with the status of Hindi emphasised, as one of the Language students said:

'Hindi is our national language so we should prefer Hindi over English. Hindi is important to maintain Indian traditions.'

In a similar vein, one of the Higher Education students said:

'English is just a language, not everything.'

8. Unclear or irrelevant comments

A number of the comments (66) in each of the four research groups were either unclear or not relevant to the topic of social attitudes to English. Some of the comments were unclear to the Hindi translators while others such as *'Thank you'* were classified as not relevant. A few respondents made comments about the project itself, such as *'This project is very good'*, which for the purposes of the analysis were classified as not relevant.



5.1.6 Attitudes to languages and language use: composite analysis

5.1.6.1 Development and analysis of composites

To determine the reliability, or internal consistency, of the statements assessing stakeholders' attitudes towards English and its use alongside attitudes towards Hindi, Cronbach's alpha was calculated for all the statements in section 2. Statement 2 demonstrated relatively low internal consistency and was removed from the final analysis. With statement 2 removed from the calculation of the reliability coefficient, there was an increase in the value of Cronbach's alpha from 0.81 to 0.82, demonstrating high reliability of the statements, i.e. that they were consistent measures of the concepts. Also excluded from the composite analysis were statements 3, 6, 8 and 24 as there were multiple versions of these statements in the surveys

tailored to the specific research groups and they are, thus, not entirely comparable. To enable meaningful overall analysis of the data, three composites were then developed that measure stakeholder attitude towards English. These are:

1. Where stakeholders look towards English as a language as a status symbol ('Status').
Statements²⁵ 4, 5, 11, 12, 16, 19, 21, 25
2. A practical approach where stakeholders view English as the language of tomorrow and a necessity for the future ('Future Use').
Statements 1, 10, 13, 14, 17, 18, 20, 23
3. Where stakeholders look at English as a language that may bring about unwanted changes in society and in

their lives – a sceptic's perspective ('Sceptic').
Statements 7, 9, 15, 22

An automated clustering around latent variables (CLV) was conducted, a process which enables 'the classification of similar objects into groups, where the number of groups, as well as their forms are unknown' (Vermunt and Madigson, 2002, p.89). The CLV supports the classification of the stakeholder characteristics into three broad groups (see Figure 22). For each of the groupings, the reliability of the unstandardised composite indicators is high (> 0.6) as measured using Cronbach's alpha, indicating that these composites are reliable estimates of the defined characteristics.

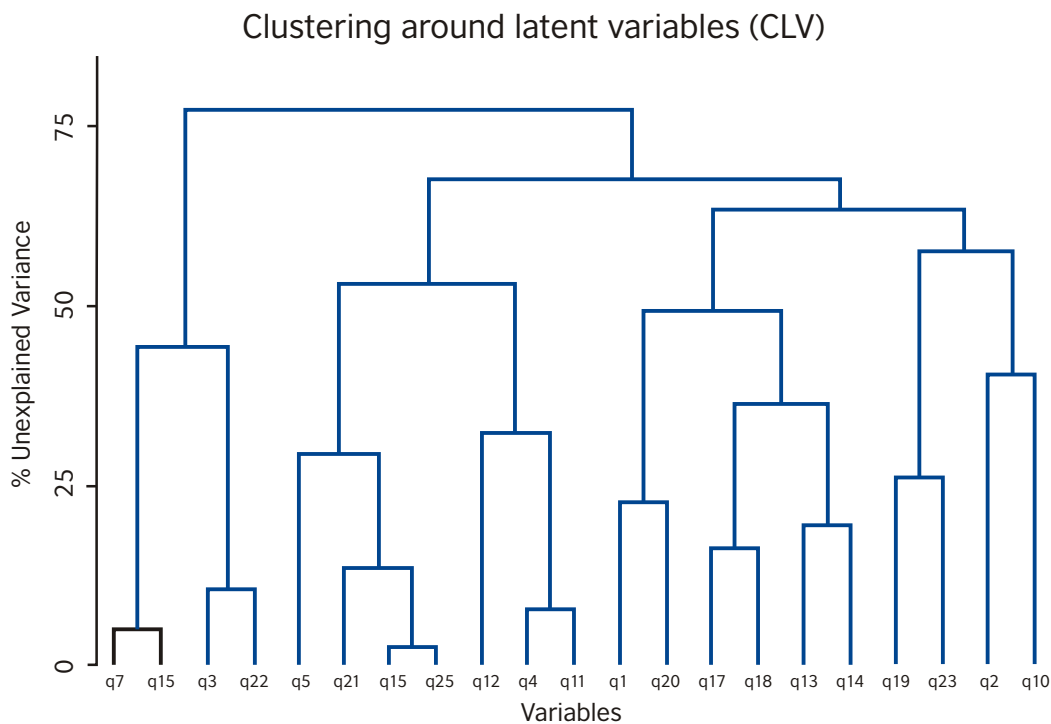


Figure 22: Dendrogram representing the clustering around latent variables

²⁵ Note that in the dendrogram (Figure 22) the statements are referred to as q1, q2, etc.

Linear regression²⁶ models were used to estimate the variances of the different attitude composites for the various stakeholder groups. A summary of the models is given in Table 29.

For the Parents group, we find that age has a negative impact on the perception of English as a status symbol or, to put it another way, as respondents get older they view English as less of a status symbol. This may perhaps be explained by their increased exposure to the language over time, either through their own or their children's experience, and the realities of its use in the Bihar environment. Similarly, the fact that employment is a negative predictor of scepticism about the language, i.e. employment correlates with less scepticism about the unwanted change that English might bring to society in the future, may result from greater exposure to use of English in the work environment (whether as active user or observer of its use) in Bihar where, as we have observed, English is a necessary tool for internal communication in the state and across state boundaries rather than an external imposition or unwelcome post-colonial legacy (see section 5.1.2).

Gender has a significant impact on perceptions of English as a necessity for the future – as the 'language of tomorrow' – with male respondents having a more positive outlook towards English in this respect as compared to women amongst the Parents and Professionals groups. Whether this view is connected to the 'stubborn sexism' (Shukla, 2015, p. 127) in India restricting opportunities for women and, thus, their ability to take advantage of openings arising from knowing English would need further investigation. In contrast, men may find it easier to take advantage of opportunities that arise associated with possession of English language skills and thus be more disposed towards viewing it as beneficial for the future.

Turning to the two student groups, we find that for Higher Education students, the daily use of English is correlated with negative opinions about it as a necessity for the future. The reasons for this are unclear and further investigation would be needed to determine, for example, whether negative opinions about the necessity for English in the future amongst Bihari students result from struggles with the language as they confront its increased use in higher education, struggles which, in turn, arise from poor standards in secondary school and the fact that English is not a compulsory examination subject at that level. However, such a view aligns with research elsewhere which reveals that universities across India face a number of socio-demographic changes with more students being first-generation learners and more coming from rural communities with specific learning needs in English rather than from urban élites which traditionally have had strong associations with English (British Council, 2014).



²⁶ Linear regression is used to explain the relationship between a dependent variable and one or more independent (or explanatory) variables.

Independent/ Control Variable	Parents			Higher Education students			Professionals			Language students		
	Status	Future Use	Sceptic	Status	Future Use	Sceptic	Status	Future Use	Sceptic	Status	Future Use	Sceptic
Age	-0.032**	-0.01	-0.008	0.03	0.017	0.072**	0	0.014	0.007	0.242	0.041	0.081
	-0.01	-0.01	-0.01	-0.03	-0.03	-0.02	-0.01	-0.01	-0.01	-0.13	-0.1	-0.13
Gender	0.085	0.427**	-0.136	0.06	0.132	-0.288	0.194	0.584***	0.122	-0.751	-0.877	0.283
	-0.19	-0.16	-0.13	-0.24	-0.21	-0.17	-0.17	-0.16	-0.14	-0.72	-0.51	-0.67
School English Medium	-0.017	-0.041	0.152				0.075	-0.081	-0.092			
	-0.16	-0.14	-0.11				-0.17	-0.17	-0.15			
Employed	0.237	-0.21	0.365**									
	-0.19	-0.16	-0.13									
Full Time Student				-0.028	-0.35	0.017						
				-0.47	-0.41	-0.33						
English Used in College				-0.528	-0.399	-0.618**						
				-0.32	-0.27	-0.22						
English Used Daily				0.023	-0.748*	0.428						
				-0.39	-0.33	-0.27						
English Used at Work										-2.348	-0.15	-1.606
										-1.54	-1.15	-1.56
English Used Outside Centre										-0.111	-0.645	-0.199
										-0.76	-0.62	-0.76
Constant	1.609***	0.404	0.259	-0.214	1.016	-1.154	0.001	-0.629	0.126	-2.499	-0.278	-1.192
	-0.39	-0.33	-0.26	-1.04	-0.88	-0.73	-0.33	-0.32	-0.28	-2.82	-2.04	-2.88
R-sqr	0.027	0.017	0.026	0.012	0.034	0.073	0.01	0.044	0.016	0.169	0.151	0.052
Dfres	453	459	471	306	305	311	400	397	406	38	37	41

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Table 29: Summary of linear regression models explaining attitudes towards the English language

Findings here also indicate that age has a positive correlation with scepticism (the older respondents get, the more sceptical they become) about the impact of English though, paradoxically, use of the language in college correlates with decreasing scepticism (with actual use of the language bringing about less worry about its impact. In the case of the Language students, age and employment²⁷ are positively correlated with scepticism about English, i.e. the older they are and if they are employed, the more sceptical they become about the impact of English on society and their own lives. These results probably indicate attitudes from these two groups are in a state of flux, developing over time as they experience both increased use of the language and the need to study it more. It would be interesting to conduct follow-up studies with the same respondents to determine how their

attitudes change after graduation from university or upon completion of their language courses and as they enter the workforce for the first time or with enhanced English language skills.

5.1.6.2 Demographic factors affecting perceptions of English

The relationship between Professionals seeing English as a status symbol and whether their child was enrolled in an English-medium school was not found to be statistically significant. This was also true for the relationship between the Future Use and Sceptical composites and whether their child was enrolled in an English-medium school (see Table 30). These results indicate that, for respondents in the Professional group, any differences are random and not generalisable to the wider population.

Status	n	Mean	SD	Yes	Mean	SD	p value
English-medium school	209	0.34	1.52	210	0.52	1.57	0.22
Future Use	n	Mean	SD	Yes	Mean	SD	p value
English-medium school	206	0.11	1.54	210	0.09	1.48	0.91
Sceptical	n	Mean	SD	Yes	Mean	SD	p value
English-medium school	211	0.18	1.14	215	0.03	1.46	0.24

Table 30: Composite scores against type of school for Professionals group

²⁷ The data for employment should be considered with care as n < 50 for employed respondents in this group.

Similarly, as we see in Table 31, for Parents there was no significant relationship between English as a status symbol and whether their child was enrolled in an English-medium school. English as a necessity for the future also shared no statistically significant relationship with Parents' employment status or the school type of their child. However, the relationship between English as a language for the future and Parents' use of English at work was statistically significant, suggesting that parents' own use of the language influenced their views on its importance as a tool for success in one's future. Realisation of the importance of English, however, did not equate with wholehearted acceptance of the language as, there was a significant

relationship between the sceptical composite and school type and employment status as well as the use of English at work. This suggests that respondents in the Parents group had concerns about unwanted changes in society and in their lives if they were employed and as a result of the use of English at work as well as in school if their children attended English-medium, a case of increased exposure leading to increased apprehension about the impact of English.

Age, gender and the district in which respondents were located were considered as variables across the whole group (Table 32). Of these, age had a significant relationship to how a respondent felt about English as a status

symbol and the future use of English. However, age had no statistically significant relationship to a respondent's scepticism regarding English. In the case of a respondent's gender, it only seemed to play a significant role in how a respondent felt about the future use of English but not their scepticism about the language or in viewing English as a status symbol. With regards to districts in which respondents were located, perceptions of English as a status symbol and scepticism about English were significantly related to district. However, district had no relationship with how a respondent felt about the potential future use of English, suggesting that there was no meaningful difference, for example, whether they lived in a rural or an urban location.

Status	n	Mean	SD	Yes	Mean	SD	p value
English-medium school	247	0.51	1.85	249	0.57	1.68	0.72
Employed	290	0.48	1.72	188	0.69	1.82	0.22
Use at work	79	1.00	2.09	114	0.52	1.55	0.07
Future use	n	Mean	SD	Yes	Mean	SD	p value
English-medium school	254	0.20	1.51	251	0.15	1.57	0.69
Employed	295	0.17	1.55	189	0.15	1.50	0.88
Use at work	80	0.51	1.43	115	0.04	1.54	0.03
Sceptical	n	Mean	SD	Yes	Mean	SD	p value
English-medium school	259	-0.08	1.22	258	0.15	1.24	0.03
Employed	301	-0.04	1.18	195	0.25	1.26	0.01
Use at work	82	-0.06	1.11	119	0.38	1.34	0.01

Table 31: Composite scores against Parents' type of school, employment status and use of English at work

Table 33 below provides a closer look at the relationship between districts and the composites. Attitudes towards the value of English for future use did not vary much across districts; opinions were fairly neutral with the averages ranging from -0.02 to 0.01. English as a status symbol was positively viewed in West Champaran while respondents in Bhojpur were largely neutral towards the notion of English as a status symbol. However, the same cannot be said for Patna where the mean was -0.23 indicating that respondents were in slight disagreement with the statements in this composite. This finding is interesting given that the capital could be said to experience the largest English language impact in economic terms through its commercial and financial activities, in education

through prestigious English-medium schools, large numbers of private language schools and institutions of higher education, and administratively as the centre for government services in the state. The finding is also supported by those relating to the sceptical composite where Bhojpur and West Champaran were in slight disagreement with the statements regarding scepticism whereas those in Patna were in slight agreement, indicating that respondents in Patna were more sceptical regarding the impact of the use of English on society and their own lives. It thus seems that where English has a stronger hold respondents become more sceptical about its impact on society and the individual as well as on its value as a status symbol. Conversely, in less

developed areas of the state English remains more aspirational and continues to be associated with higher status. This may perhaps be explained by Graddol's (2010) conclusion that the more people possess English the less it will facilitate social mobility in itself. In Patna, then, respondents may perhaps be beginning to experience a feeling that English is not quite delivering on the promises made for it and new barriers are being raised to their social progress. Yet again, further research is needed to shed light on this possibility.

Status	n	p value
Age	1736	0.00
Gender	1783	0.17
District	1823	0.00
Future use	n	p Value
Age	1759	0.00
Gender	1806	0.01
District	1848	0.97
Sceptical	n	p Value
Age	1793	0.22
Gender	1841	0.16
District	1888	0.00

Table 32: Composites scores against age, gender and district

Bhojpur	n	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Status	641	0.05	1.67	-3.49	5.88
Future use	655	0.01	1.66	-2.46	6.17
Sceptical	680	-0.09	1.25	-4.70	2.72
Patna	n	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Status	709	-0.23	1.68	-3.49	5.57
Future use	718	0.01	1.57	-2.46	5.55
Sceptical	729	0.17	1.39	-4.70	2.72
West Champaran	n	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Status	473	0.27	2.18	-3.49	5.77
Future use	475	-0.02	1.53	-2.46	5.20
Sceptical	479	-0.13	1.59	-4.70	2.72

Table 33: Mean composite scores by district

5.2 Interview results

5.2.1 Interview sample and procedures

In all 27 interviews were conducted. Table 34 provides the breakdown of interviews by target research group.

All interviews were conducted in Hindi and then translated into English. An interview guide was used which researchers had been trained to use at the research project meeting prior to the start of data collection. The research designer's intention had been for interviews to be conducted in a conversation-like manner with the questions in the guide acting as starting points for an extended discussion, using techniques commonly associated with in-depth qualitative interviewing (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). However, experience from the field indicated that respondents were reluctant to engage in lengthy exchanges with researchers for two reasons:

1. the point of contact was short and not part of a longer intervention, meaning that researcher and respondent had little time to build up the relationship of trust which is essential for qualitative interviewing; and

2. both respondents and researchers lacked the intensive engagement with the subject matter that would enable them to develop extended responses on the research topics.

As a consequence, and given that the number of interviewees was quite small, data was relatively sparse. Content analysis was thus conducted manually with four broad themes emerging, namely:

1. Personal use of English
2. Educational background and quality of teaching-learning experienced (for the Parent group this was focused on their children)
3. Reasons for learning English
4. Perceptions of English and the future of the language

We now explore the findings by respondent research group. As with all qualitative interviewing, we should caution against generalising from such a small sample to the wider population and note that the perceptions of these respondents are best used to illustrate or 'bring life to' more generalisable findings from the surveys.

Target group	No. of interviews
Higher Education students	7
Language school students	4
Parents	5
Professionals	11

Table 34: No. of interviews by target research group



²⁸ In future research of this type more focused and extensive interviewer training might help to yield data characterised by extended responses.

5.2.2 Interview findings: Higher Education students

Personal use of English

All except one respondent reported that they knew how to speak English; however, none claimed to speak it well. One mentioned a lack of confidence in his knowledge of English and there was a general feeling amongst the respondents who spoke English that they did so only when it was required. As one commented:

'It depends on the situation. Whenever it is required, I speak it.'

English use thus occurs largely due to necessity – helping others, responding to those who initiated a conversation in English to or maintain an image. Only one respondent mentioned using the language casually with friends. When they hear English being spoken respondents claimed to feel motivated to learn and/or speak the language more themselves. One respondent even expressed a degree of remorse that he hadn't learnt English earlier in life; another complained that 'Bihar's position in English is very bad.' The function of English as a status symbol, the signifier of an educated person, was also mentioned in the following comment:

'I speak it when I feel there is a requirement to speak in English and when I want to make an impact on the other person, so that he thinks I am well-educated.'

Educational background and quality of teaching-learning experienced

Most respondents were educated in government schools: only one respondent studied in a private school. While all respondents were taught English, two of the respondents stated classes were not taken seriously by either the teachers (sporadic classes) or the students (English was not considered important):

'It was not taught seriously, taught just like that, and its importance was not explained to us. So the students also did not study.'

The other three stated that they enjoyed their classes although specific reasons were not given, even after some probing. Most respondents also studied English in college but opinions regarding quality were split. Some felt their classes in school had been better while others felt the subject was taught more rigorously in college.

There was a majority perception that the teaching of English in government schools in Bihar was very poor: *'You must know how teaching is done in government schools. It is very bad.'*

In order to improve the experience of learning English respondents made suggestions such as prioritising English in schools, hiring good teachers, starting classes from the younger grades and focusing on spoken English and/or grammar. All respondents felt that English should be made a compulsory examination subject in schools and through this that the status of English could be improved. One comment on the current status of English in Bihar was:

'In my opinion it [English] is nowhere in Bihar. No students in Bihar are keen on learning English. In the Bihar board [examinations] English is not compulsory so students ignore English.'

Most respondents were also in favour of English being a subject in colleges but only one wanted it to be made a medium of instruction and another suggested that bilingual textbooks would be useful.

Reasons for learning English

According to the respondents, reasons for making English a compulsory subject in schools focused on the fact that it is required when pursuing higher education: 'For higher studies it is very necessary.' All respondents felt that knowing English improved an individual's social status as well as their economic status and would lead to improved chances of better jobs or positions:

'To get a good job and to reach a good position, English is a must.'

English was thus universally perceived to be helpful in acquiring better jobs after graduation, and particularly for any work involving computers. Most respondents also felt that English was important for India's economic and scientific development (and two of them specified that new inventions and technology could only be accessed through English). However, this view was tempered by a recognition that India was by no means unique in this position:

'Yes, but it doesn't only affect India but also all other countries as this is an international language.'

Interestingly, in spite of the perceptions about the necessity of English for higher education and employment and comments about poor standards in government schools only one of the respondents was taking English courses outside of college though this could be attributed, as one respondent, remarked to lack of time and resources: *'I don't have the time or the money.'*

Perceptions of English and the future of the language

When asked about the position of English in ten years' time in their localities, all but one respondent (who felt it should take

priority) suggested that it should be in second position in Bihar while with respect to India as a whole respondents seemed to think that there were fewer issues. It was Bihar specifically which was perceived as having problems.

'In India overall it's OK. The problem is in Bihar and so in Bihar it is necessary to promote it.'

Though there was a strong feeling that English in Bihar should be strengthened, it was not perceived as affecting the status of Hindi or any other Indian language nor was it generally perceived as affecting India's traditions and culture.

'No, no it can't affect Indian traditions. English has its own place.'

In fact, only one of the respondents expressed concerns that traditions were being abandoned for pursuit of the English language – *'Everybody is leaving their traditions and running after English'* – though, paradoxically, this same respondent felt English should become a medium of instruction in higher education. These contradictory responses seem to indicate a recognition of the instrumental value of English in economic terms alongside an underlying anxiety about its impact on Indian society.

5.2.3 Interview findings: Language School students

Personal use of English

Of the four respondents, only one claimed to speak English well with the remaining three reporting that they spoke just a little. This presumably reflected their current levels in their language schools, as one of the latter three commented:

'I am just in the learning period. I am trying to speak well and hope that slowly I will improve.'

Respondents reported feeling very differently on hearing English. Two stated that they felt 'confused' or 'bad' when they could not understand English, while one thought about how speaking English well would help his career to prosper and the remaining respondent lamented not having been taught properly when he was younger. One of the students reported that use of English occurs largely due to necessity – at hospitals, school admission offices or for their own studies – while two stated that they did not speak English outside class at all. The fourth said that he only spoke English a little and also admitted frankly that English was used to show off and give the impression that he was educated and not illiterate.

'I speak English with others so that they think I am educated and not illiterate, to show off.'

Educational background and quality of teaching-learning experienced

Three of the four respondents were educated in Hindi medium schools and one in an English-medium school (this respondent reported speaking English well). While all respondents were taught English, two of the respondents remarked that their experiences were negative. English was not considered to be equal to other subjects and was not taught well.

'I tried hard to learn English, even complained but they never taught properly. Actually, English was not considered a subject at all like other subjects – chemistry, physics, maths – English was never taught. [...] Sir [the teacher] used to speak two or three lines only like 'good morning, sit down please, heads down please'. So what will be the experience?'

This same respondent noted that *'if English was taught in our school then I wouldn't have had to come here [to the language centre].'* In contrast, the other two respondents reported enjoying their classes because they could understand lessons, although the respondent who had studied in Hindi-medium noted that they were only taught literature and grammar.

In order to improve the experience of learning English respondents made suggestions such as hiring good teachers, emphasising the teaching of vocabulary and grammar, and even auditing school and college English classes for teaching quality. Respondents were equally divided on whether English should be a medium of instruction or just a subject with those in favour of the former stressing its necessity in all areas of life nowadays. One of those in favour of retaining it as a subject noted, however, that anyone who knew English could get a job in a call centre even if they were poor in other curriculum areas.

'They may not know physics or chemistry but at least will be able to speak in English and work in a call centre; and can earn 12-15,000 and can support their families.'

Reasons for learning English

When asked why they were taking a language course, one respondent noted that interacting with any form of technology required English. The others reported that they were unable to study English at college or university, or weren't taught English at school and needed it to pursue specific courses, and so sought to fill those gaps in private English classes. For instance:

'I want to do mass communication so I am learning English. My seniors said that I have to be good in English to pursue this course.'

English was perceived by three of the four language school students to be helpful in acquiring better jobs and positions, one stating simply this was *'because everyone speaks English'* while another said that *'nowadays in big companies everyone prefers English.'* Interestingly, one respondent felt that knowledge of English had little to do with getting a good job and talent was more important.

'To get a job the most important thing is talent in the field or area in which you are seeking a job. Like, if you are going into the education side, suppose you want to be a teacher, the most important thing is how you work as a good teacher. Are you able to guide students? And for that the medium which students understand is necessary. English is just a language; it has nothing to do with getting a job.'

Three of the respondents believed that speaking English did not improve an individual's social status, however, with one (who prioritised talent for employability in the comment above) saying that more important were *'honesty, truthfulness and morality.'* The other, who also reported using English himself to 'show off', felt that when speaking English *'people give us respect and think that we are very educated.'* As for economic status, opinions were split with half claiming English had no effect on economic status while the other half associated competence in English with improved chances at better jobs or positions. One student felt that English was important for India's economic and scientific status in general and another said it had no effect. A third student noted that books and equipment for science were only available in English.

Perceptions of English and the future of the language

Opinions on the position of English in the state and India as a whole in ten years' time were very mixed. One respondent suggested that nothing would change if things carried on as they are at present.

'If it goes on like this, even if you try your best, nothing will improve. [...] After 10 years you could come and ask me the same question and my reply will be the same, that you can't improve the position of English.'

Another believed that everything depended on whether English teaching in schools were to be improved while another felt English would remain a second option in Bihar and India. The fourth respondent felt optimistic about the future of English in Bihar and stated English would remain a top priority in India.

'In India it will be in first position: now it is in first position so in 10 years it will be even better.'

English was not perceived as affecting the status of Hindi by half of the respondents. One of the others felt, however, that Hindi was being spoken less because of English and therefore its effect was slightly negative whilst the remaining respondent's negative opinion lacked detail. English was also not generally perceived as affecting India's traditions and culture with the exception of one respondent, who expressed concerns that Indian culture was being forgotten. A fourth student explained that English had no impact because it was not well taught currently; however, he also noted that:

'If we can improve the condition of government schools and teachers teach properly, and if in every school, college and institute English is spoken, then it may have an effect. Now it does not have an effect.'

5.2.4 Interview findings: Parents

Personal use of English

All respondents reported being able to speak English, though four of the five said that this was only *'a little bit'* or *'somewhat.'* The other respondent felt that in situations where s/he knew the vocabulary proficiency could qualify as good. Parents reported that their English use occurred largely out of necessity, primarily for their children's education but also at offices or interviews, or when other people speak to them in English. The following comments illustrate this.

'If the other person speaks English, then I speak in English. To teach my children I speak English.'

'I speak English in offices and in school, everywhere it is used and is in demand. It is good that English is used.'

As we can see from the preceding comment, the respondent also felt that use of English was a positive thing. The importance of English was echoed in other responses to how interviewees felt on hearing English spoken: *'I feel good. English is very important.'* Another thought of their child's future when hearing English spoken, while a third said he wished *'I could speak like that.'* However, none of the respondents reported using English at home as a family language or as a language for socialising with their friends.

Children's educational background and quality of teaching-learning experienced

Parents reported having between one and three children, of whom at least one child was currently of school going age. Two respondents were educating their children in government schools, another two were sending their children to private schools and the fifth offered no information in this respect. Parents generally felt that learning English was a high priority

for their children, largely for instrumental reasons. One parent commented:

'The learning of English should be a top priority so that they have a good future, they get good jobs and have a good position.'

One parent whose daughter was in an English-medium school explained that an early focus on the language was important:

'From the beginning [in her school] the studies are done in English-medium only and if their base of English is strong, then in the future it will be good.'

Though parents expressed the view that their experience of their children's schools had been largely positive, they had several suggestions when asked if they felt that learning of English could be improved. These included focusing on English from an early age, emphasising the teaching of grammar and vocabulary and hiring good teachers. One respondent also mentioned the importance of an English-speaking environment, as follows, but there was no evidence this was the case for his/her own children:

'[They should be] in a good school with good teachers, have a good environment at home. People in the locality should also speak English and they would learn more.'

Another respondent felt parents would have to make a greater financial investment – *'We have to invest more money, we can send them to English tuition'* – by sending their children for additional tuition but, interestingly, only one reported that their child actually attended additional classes. This was not the child of the parent who made the comment about financial investment but the child from the private English-medium school.

In terms of helping their children with learning, parents reported that they act more as a resource, ensuring that they enrol their children in good schools, help them find the right person to answer questions, encourage them to use language they may have learnt, and even looking up definitions in a dictionary. The following comments illustrate these views:

'Yes, we help a lot by giving them what they need. We think they should be enrolled in a good school and given all the facilities to learn.'

'When I see my child studying and I find something wrong, I search for the meaning of the word in a dictionary. Whatever help I can give, if it's possible I do it. If I can't help, then I get help from their English teacher or somebody else. Like this I help her.'

Respondents were divided on making English a medium of instruction or retaining it as just a subject, though their comments indicated that not all parents may have understood

the implications of the question, e.g. one said simply *'Yes, it [English] should be used.'* Nevertheless, while two respondents clearly suggested that it should be made a medium of instruction, it seemed that all respondents were strongly in favour of English being a compulsory subject in schools.

'Yes, it is very necessary. Without English nothing can be done.'

The parent whose child was enrolled in an English-medium school did not suggest, however, that all schools should be English-medium and opted instead for English as a subject, taking its place alongside regional languages. S/he explained:

'I think it should be made a subject because different languages are spoken in different places, regional languages like Hindi, Urdu and Bangla. English should also be a subject, so there will be a focus on English too.'

Reasons for learning English

According to the respondents, English is especially necessary for higher education, though there was not much further explanation beyond that it was required for admission to more prestigious institutions and even for extra tuition (presumably on the basis that the best tutors would not want to accept students who they thought would fail due to lack of sufficient English). As one parent commented:

'You will not get admission in coaching or tuition or in any big institution without English.'

One parent focused on the fact that English was required in institutes of higher education, and knowledge of the language would ensure that a child continues to do well.

'For higher education English is very necessary. If English is there at the school level, then it would help them in the future.'

All respondents felt that speaking English improved an individual's economic and social status. As with most respondents in other groups, proficiency in English was associated with improved chances at better jobs or positions, as one parent said:

'Nowadays when we go for interviews for any job knowing English is very necessary. Unless we learn English our economic state will not improve.'

Proficiency in English was also strongly associated with higher social status:

'Also if you speak in English your social status increases, you get admired and you are respected.'

Another parent noted the impact on perceptions of educational levels.

'Like if we don't know English, but when someone speaks in English we say "See how educated the person is." These thoughts come in your mind. The person may not have any degree but when he speaks in English, people think the person is highly educated.'

English was also perceived to offer the ability to mingle with professionals of higher status:

'If we mingle with people of high social status like doctors, engineers or social workers, or if I go to some good institution, then English is very necessary there.'

Only one Parent felt that English was not important for India's economic and scientific status while others thought that 'without English scientific development is not possible.' Further, one respondent noted that English was necessary for transnational interaction as a country's scientific and economic status was tied to the international community.

Perceptions of English and the future of the language

Responses for the position of English in Bihar and India in ten years' time generally lacked detail. Respondents thought it would be 'second' (presumably to Hindi or another language of wider communication such as Urdu) or just 'it should be good in 10 years' (which we take to mean an improvement on its current position). One parent thought that one could not really say what would happen in ten years, though he offered some interesting stipulations for improved standards, as follows:

'This I can't say. If in government schools, speaking in English is made mandatory, nobody speaks in Hindi, and all teachers teach English well, then it will definitely be good.'

For most of these parents, English currently takes second place in Bihar and India in general. Only one stated that English had prominence in their locality but this was specifically because more and more people were recognising its impact on children's economic future rather than it having immediate use in that locality. The association of English with the rich was also noted: *'People who are rich and educated, they speak English.'*

Respondents did not feel that the status of Hindi was affected by English, and it was thought the two languages should co-exist: *'One should know English as well as Hindi.'* Only two parents answered the question whether English was having any effect on Indian culture or traditions, with one saying *'No, no effect'* and the other simply *'Yes'* without offering any reasons. Without further probing these views are minimally informative and so of little value here.

5.2.5 Interview findings: Professionals

Personal use of English

Five respondents reported not being able to speak English while the remaining six reported being able to speak at least a little. However, none of these six respondents perceived their English to be good, all saying they had limited proficiency. For example:

'Yes, I speak it a little. Due to lack of vocabulary and lack of knowledge I can't speak it fluently.'

Another said that he only used English in response to others, through a sense of obligation: *'If someone speaks with me in English then I feel that I have to answer in English.'* One respondent who could not speak English expressed frustration at the question and openly linked his occupation to his lack of ability in English.

'How can I speak English? I don't know English. I would not be driving an auto[rickshaw] if I knew English.'

English use that does occur is largely due to necessity, at or for work; however, it was usually in combination with Hindi as one businessman commented:

'English is very necessary for our work. All my work is done in English and in Hindi. Hindi and English are both equal.'

There was, in contrast, little use of English casually amongst his friends or for everyday communication and conversation except when he is first spoken to in English. One respondent reported trying to speak English with friends as a way to improve his English, which he saw as increasingly necessary for work.

'Mostly I speak [English] with my friends, when I meet them or they come to my house. I try to speak with them a little, when they speak [English], I also speak it. They laugh and say 'try, try' so we all try to improve.'

There were varying reactions to hearing English spoken. One respondent linked his perceptions to the status of the state, allied to a feeling of being uneducated, as in this comment:

'What would we feel? We are from Bihar and live in Bihar so we don't understand English that much. We are a less educated lot.'

There were also perceptions focused not on the respondents themselves, but on the future of their children:

'What comes to mind is that children should be taught this language. Alongside Hindi, the teaching of English is also necessary.'

Whilst recognising the importance of English in the current day – *‘English is a very important subject nowadays’* – there was occasionally a sense amongst some professionals of regret at lost opportunities. One respondent, an electrician by profession, expressed this directly:

‘When I hear English the first thing that comes to mind is that I made a great mistake by not learning English. When somebody asks something in English, my mind goes totally blank. I start thinking about how I can reply to him. I don’t know English, and I regret then.’

Educational background and quality of teaching-learning experienced

All respondents reported having studied at government Hindi medium schools and all were taught English as a subject in school. However, experiences varied greatly. Negative experiences were often linked to English not being a compulsory examination subject in Bihar. For example:

‘I studied for the Bihar board and English is not compulsory there; nor is it well taught there. If it was compulsory, then I would have concentrated on it.’

Most respondents who reported positive experiences simply claimed their experiences were good with little to no explanation as to why, which may indicate that they were unable to recall the experience with clarity after the passage of time. Nevertheless, one noted that his positive experience was because he *‘was also taking private tuition for English.’* Another respondent regretted that English was not taught with the same rigour as Hindi and felt that if English had been given the same attention *‘then we would have improved more and would have been more successful.’*

In order to improve the experience of learning English respondents made suggestions similar to respondents in other groups, such as focusing on the teaching of grammar and vocabulary, hiring good teachers and by increasing the priority of English in the classroom. One respondent suggested that it should become a compulsory subject in order to pass the Grade 10 examination:

‘It can be improved in the Bihar board and it should be made compulsory. If it is compulsory, then the students will read and try to pass it.’

Only three respondents wanted to make English a medium of instruction in schools with the remainder opting to retain it as a subject though, as we have seen, there was a general perception that standards and the quality of teaching in Bihar needed to be improved. One respondent felt that *‘making it a medium will create problems’* and that students *‘will not gain anything.’* However, more of the respondents – five in all – felt English should be a medium of instruction in college.

Reasons for learning English

All respondents perceived English as necessary for higher education – *‘for higher studies English is very necessary’* – as well as to get better jobs or positions. In this latter respect, most respondents believed that speaking English improved an individual's economic status: *‘to prosper you should know English’*. Following from this, all the respondents except one felt that English should be made a compulsory subject in schools because it was perceived to be a necessity for further studies. The same dissenting respondent also believed English had little or no connection with economic status, as:

‘All work is done in Hindi in Bihar; it is not a foreign land so that we have to learn English. [...] In India one can work in Hindi; if someone has to go to a foreign country then English is necessary.’

He went on to say that *‘[even] legal, court work is done in Hindi; every day the use of Hindi is increasing.’*

Most respondents believed that English enhanced an individual's social status and, as with respondents in other groups, there was an association between English and 'being educated' irrespective of one's actual educational attainment. This perception is illustrated by the following comment:

‘In society when someone speaks English we feel that he is educated. If a person does not have a degree and speaks English, then people think he is educated.’

A minority view, though, was that perceptions of social status depended very much on an individual's reactions to the languages spoken and one should not react negatively to the use of a particular language.

‘It [depends on] one’s own understanding. If someone speaks in Hindi and another person speaks in English and the person who speaks in Hindi feels bad about it and gives importance to English, and the other person feels proud to speak in English, these kinds of thoughts are bad.’

All respondents felt that without English scientific development was not possible and English was necessary to engage with the scientific world. Even the respondent who did not perceive there was a relationship between English and economic status agreed, saying:

‘Scientific things are different, in that English is used. Without English no scientific advancement can be made.’

Perceptions of English and the future of the language

Responses regarding the position of English in ten years' time were mixed. Most respondents suggested that the position of English in general would improve in Bihar as well as India:

'After ten years it will certainly improve. Now everybody is trying to learn English and join English institutes. People come to Patna now to study English and I have friends who are studying English.'

However, it was still thought that English would take at most second place to local languages in Bihar as well as in India as a whole and one respondent was pessimistic about its prospects unless it was made compulsory in school and teaching extended down to Standard 1. As s/he said: *'if it goes on like this, then in ten years it will be finished.'*

English was not generally perceived to affect the status of Hindi by most respondents, with only one stating that Hindi was being used less now because of English. This view was related to the popularity of English-medium schooling: *'Now students want to learn in English-medium only.'* There were also strong opposing views that there was no effect from English on Hindi; for example: *'No, no it does not. Hindi is our mother tongue.'* Another respondent had a view of language learning as additive rather than subtractive, saying *'It is not as if when you know one language you forget the other language.'*

While three respondents from this group felt that English was having an effect on Indian traditions and culture, there were no precise explanations as to why they felt this way or specific examples given of its effect. Comments were restricted to general statements such as:

'Our traditions are in Hindi, everything is in Hindi. Nowadays people are paying more attention to English, learning English. So it is definitely having an effect.'

Of the remaining eight respondents who felt that English had no effect, one explained that if Indians know English they are in a better position to explain Indian culture to foreign visitors, which could enhance their understanding.

Q: *'Do you feel that English is having an effect on Indian traditions or culture?'*

R: *'No, I don't think so, because you are just using the language not the culture. Now many, many people from western cultures – tourists – come to India. If we know English they can understand us, and we can explain our culture to them in a more positive way.'*

5.3 Tracer study results

5.3.1 Tracer study sample and procedures

The tracer studies were designed to record actual English language use amongst a small number of respondents employed in businesses or the professions who self-identified as making use of English in their work when completing the survey and also declared their willingness to be accompanied by a project researcher throughout a complete working day. Respondents were thus self-selected and the sample was not representative of the wider population. Nevertheless, as the Tracer Study was designed to illustrate and clarify the nature of daily language use rather than provide a statistically valid and reliable sample, the inherent bias is not problematic. Two researchers (one male, one female) followed four respondents for one day each. All of the respondents were based in Patna and all were male. Fields of employment covered a wide range: clerk in a government office, university laboratory

technician and managing director of a construction company. A fifth tracer study was conducted by a third researcher but as the form was completed in a non-standard way and it was difficult to classify languages used and/or their functions, the data was discounted for analysis. Details of the other researchers and the respondents they accompanied are given in Table 35 below.

Researchers completed the 'Tracer Study' form (see Appendix), first entering basic demographic information for the participant. They then made a general record of the participant's interactions throughout the working day, which languages were used, the purpose of the interactions and the language functions or tasks accomplished.

Researcher gender	Respondent gender	Field of employment	Position in organisation
Female	Male	State government	Clerk
Female	Male	University	Laboratory technician
Male 1	Male	Information technology firm	Software engineer
Male 1	Male	Construction	Managing director

Table 35: Tracer study researchers and respondents

5.3.2 Tracer study findings

Information from the Tracer Study sheets was aggregated as far as possible for each respondent. Information on the number of interactions (in 15 minute slots), the type of interlocutor, the purpose of the interaction and the language functions or tasks is given by respondent in Tables 36-39 below. It should be noted that many exchanges within the 15 minute time slots were quite short and that not all of the time periods would be taken up with speech as the respondents would be working on job-

related tasks not requiring interaction with other people.

The majority (eight out of nine) of the interactions in English only were with office seniors and consisted of brief exchanges acknowledging instructions about work to be accomplished. Three interactions with the department head used codeswitching in Hindi and English but it is notable that none were in Hindi only. Social interaction of an extended nature was primarily in Hindi with some routine socialisation in a Hindi-English mix. Thus, for this respondent, Hindi

seemed to be the primary language of socialisation with friends with codeswitching in Hindi and English secondary, while English only was reserved for exchanges entirely about work-related matters with senior personnel and brief greetings – ‘Good morning’ for the office guard and ‘Good morning, sir’ for the senior clerk.

Position: clerk			Field of employment: state government	
Language used (time slots used)	No. of time slots	Interlocutors	Purpose of interaction	Language functions/tasks
English (9)	1	Office guard	Social interaction	Greetings
	1	Senior clerk	Social interaction	Greetings
	3	Department head	Work-related	Acknowledgement of tasks/instructions
	4	Senior clerk	Work-related	Acknowledgement of tasks/instructions
Hindi (10)	9	Office colleagues	Social interaction	Exchange about personal matters; colleagues; routine socialisation (e.g. lunch arrangements); leave-taking
	1	Senior clerk	Work-related	Providing information about task given by department head
Hindi-English codeswitching (7)	4	Office colleagues	Social interaction	Routine socialisation; lunch arrangements
	3	Department head	Work-related	Acknowledgement of tasks/instructions

Table 36: Details of daily language use for first respondent

Interactions in English only for the second respondent were predominantly exchanges acknowledging instructions or information about work to be accomplished both with the department head and a colleague of the same level as well as a discussion of equipment with an outside supplier. There were also initial brief social exchanges with the university guard and department head in the morning: as with respondent one these consisted of 'Good morning' for the university guard and 'Good morning, sir' for the department head. Five interactions with the department head used codeswitching in Hindi and English

but just one was in Hindi only, in response to a request to perform a task. Social interaction of an extended nature with a colleague, particularly when it concerned family matters, was predominantly in Hindi with some routine socialisation in a Hindi-English mix with the same colleague and students. It may be that the university environment promoted more interaction in English about work-related matters with a colleague of the same level than occurred with the first respondent in a government office who used English only with more senior staff.

Position: laboratory technician			Field of employment: university	
Language used (time slots used)	No. of time slots	Interlocutors	Purpose of interaction	Language functions/tasks
English (7)	1	University guard	Social interaction	Greetings
	1	Department head	Social interaction	Greetings
	1	Department head	Work-related	Providing information about task given by department head
	1	Company agent	Work-related	Discussion about supplies
	3	Other technician	Work-related	Responding to/requesting assistance
Hindi (17)	1	Department head	Work-related	Responding to request
	1	Students	Work-related	Giving instructions
	3	Students	Social interaction	Routine socialisation; leave-taking
	5	Other technician	Social interaction	Exchange about family matters; colleagues; routine socialisation (e.g. lunch arrangements); leave-taking
	7	Other technician	Work-related	Discussion about equipment
Hindi-English codeswitching (9)	1	Other technician	Social interaction	Routine socialisation
	1	Students	Work-related	Giving instructions
	2	Students	Social interaction	Routine socialisation
	5	Department head	Work-related	Receiving/responding to instructions; discussion about equipment

Table 37: Details of daily language use for second respondent

Clearly the nature of the business influenced the quantity of talk as a whole, with employees spending much of the day working alone at the computer. Where talk did occur, most of it was in a mixture of Hindi and English, including social interaction. English is often said to be a necessity in the IT sector but there was surprisingly little interaction in English only. It may be that English is important as the most common programming language rather than a language of face-to-face interaction in the workplace. Whether use of English for programming may have had a knock-on effect, spilling over into codeswitching for social interaction is an area that would require further investigation.



Position: software engineer			Field of employment: IT company	
Language used (time slots used)	No. of time slots	Interlocutors	Purpose of interaction	Language functions/tasks
None (17)	17	n/a	n/a	Working alone at the computer
English (2)	1	All colleagues (senior, junior, same level)	Social interaction	Greetings
	1	Senior colleague	Work-related	Exchange about current task
Hindi (1)	1	Colleague	Work-related	Exchange about current task
Hindi-English codeswitching (12)	7	Colleagues	Social interaction	Exchange about family matters; 'gossip' during breaks; routine socialisation (e.g. lunch arrangements); leave-taking
	1	Senior colleague	Work-related	End-of-day progress report on tasks
	4	Colleagues	Work-related	Discussion of tasks; new working arrangements

Table 38: Details of daily language use for third respondent

Here also talk in English only was minimal, restricted to greetings and a simple exchange about e-mail and a job site. It is not clear what motivated the choice of English for this work-related exchange as other work was primarily carried out in a Hindi-English mix (in eighteen time slots) as well as in Hindi alone (in nine time slots). Again, it is not clear from data available what motivated

the choice of Hindi alone or codeswitching between Hindi and English for work-related talk. Social interaction with employees was limited, most likely due to the power differentials as the respondent was the managing director and would not be expected to engage in extended social exchanges at work with his employees, but when it did occur it was carried out entirely in Hindi.

Position: managing director			Field of employment: construction	
Language used (time slots used)	No. of time slots	Interlocutors	Purpose of interaction	Language functions/tasks
English (2)	1	Company staff	Social interaction	Greetings
	1	Employee	Work-related	Asking about e-mail and job site
Hindi (11)	9	Employees	Work-related	Giving instructions; asking for information, documents etc; discussion about work on job site
	2	Employees	Social interaction	Routine socialisation: tea and lunch arrangements
Hindi-English codeswitching (18)	6	Client	Work-related	Discussion about work on job site; site maintenance
	11	Employees	Work-related	Giving instructions; gathering information about current projects; making invoicing and payment arrangements; receiving site/field report
	1	Researcher	Work-related	Requesting information about English courses

Table 39: Details of daily language use for fourth respondent

6 DISCUSSION

Even with a research sample of nearly 2,000 respondents we must urge caution in over-generalising from our findings when we consider that our research sampling has been purposive rather than strictly random and that Bihar has a total population of some 104 million people.²⁹ Nevertheless, we feel that this research study has been valuable, particularly as it is the first of its kind in Bihar, and allows us to draw some tentative conclusions which may have wider relevance. Of course, we recommend replication studies to test the generalisability of these tentative conclusions. It is also important to foreground the fact that any language is a socially situated artefact and English in Bihar is no exception. To understand attitudes to English fully, then, we must always be mindful of the complex social context of Bihar and India as a whole in any analysis and interpretation. With these caveats in mind we discuss general findings from our research, grouping these in six key topic areas, i.e.:

- negative attitudes to and impact of English in Bihar
- English, personal progress and national economic development
- English in the workplace
- English and social life
- English, identity and social status
- English in education

6.1 Negative attitudes to English in Bihar

There was little evidence of negative attitudes to English in Bihar. Some respondents in interviews and in open-ended responses at the end of the survey indicated that Hindi was equally or more important in Bihar but overtly negative reactions were very much outliers, i.e. not following the general trends. This does not mean, however, that respondents were uncritical in their attitudes to English and its putative benefits. There was, indeed, a sense that

though English remains aspirational, associated in the minds of many with a better life in the future, some older respondents were more sceptical of its value. This may, however, also be related to the socio-political context at the time they were in school when English was devalued under the Karpoori doctrine. Nevertheless, when questioned about their preference for varieties of English, respondents had no attachment to, or indeed any significant aversion to, British English and believed Indian English was an acceptable variety to be taught in schools, indicating an acceptance of English as a language of India.

6.2 English, personal progress and national economic development

Amongst the vast majority of our respondents in Bihar there is a significant association between English and individual economic progress: English is widely seen as one of the most important keys to a better life. In this sense the view of English as an aspirational language in Bihar accords with research elsewhere (see e.g. Hu, 2005) and is prevalent even though, as we have seen from our review of key literature, high levels of education and relevant skills in the chosen field are as important as proficiency in English in gaining employment. As indicated above, older respondents are more likely to be sceptical of the value of English and it seems too that the more experience respondents have of contexts where English is likely to be found, whether this is employment (the Professionals group) or location (living in the state capital, Patna), the more sceptical they seem to become about its putative benefits. This suggests that experience with the language leads to the development of a more realistic view of the benefits that it can bring with respect to personal economic improvement.

There was also a strong association amongst respondents between English and national economic development, which seems to be part of the national discourse, again in common with other contexts. For example, Hu (2005, p. 5) notes in his discussion of policy in China that 'on the national level, English language education has been viewed by the Chinese leadership as having a vital role to play in national modernisation and development.' Similarly, in Bihar, the recent decision to make English compulsory for all students at Magadh University in Patna was seen as a positive move by a local political leader who was reported as saying that 'much change has taken place since Karpoori Thakur visualised education sans English and one has to take into account the ground realities, including job market requirements and the after effects of economic reforms.'³⁰ This view reflects a general perception nationwide – and, indeed across the whole region (Erling, 2014) that English is an essential factor in economic development, particularly since economic liberalisation and deregulation in India in the 1990s.

While respondents may subscribe to notions of English as key drivers in economic progress at the individual and the national levels, it remains to be seen whether attitudes will hold constant if this progress is not actually realised.

6.3 English in the workplace

Where English is used in the workplace, it is more likely to be used with clients and customers in Bihar and in other states across India than with international contacts. Of course, we do not know whether this may indicate a lack of international business connections amongst our respondents in Bihar, but it is nonetheless revealing as it tends to indicate that currently English is more a state and national language of business than it is of international communication.

²⁹ Most recent census figures are from 2011.

³⁰ Available at: <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/patna/Time-to-revisit-Karpoori-doctrine-on-English-Sushil-Modi/articleshow/51792316.cms>



However, we should also note (though our dataset was very small) that the English that is actually used in the workplace is quite limited. Further, few of our respondents reported having 'excellent' English, with a high percentage having little confidence in their proficiency. It seems that English is commonly perceived as a language that respondents are likely to require in the future to gain employment, particularly for employment in scientific and technological fields, irrespective of whether it may actually be used. Thus, proficiency in English may function as a gatekeeper to employment in many fields and lack of proficiency a means to exclude some applicants from consideration at the first stage of selection.

6.4 English in social life

Hindi is overwhelmingly the primary language for socialisation, even amongst those respondents who claimed to use English at work. There was minimal reported use of English as the language of the home or for any social purposes. This accords with previous research which found that the domains of use for the two languages were very different: English is the language of the intellect not the language of emotions (Sailaja, 2009). Even amongst those who are in favour of promoting English in education and/or a means to national economic development, then, English seems unlikely to displace Hindi (or other first languages) as the primary language of the home (see also 6.5 below).

6.5 English, identity and social status

Proficiency in English has been an indicator of social status in India for many years and this is still the case in much of Bihar today with high levels of agreement in our survey with statements indicating an association between English, social status and perceptions of being educated. However, it is interesting to note that our findings indicate that the

older some of our respondents in the Parents group were, the less they viewed English as a status symbol (this may, again, be associated with their own educational experience when the 'Karpoori doctrine' held sway). Also, the greater the level of prominence of English in a geographic area, such as in the state capital, the less inclined respondents are to view it as a status symbol and, indeed, the more inclined they are to be sceptical about its impact on society and their own lives. Conversely, in less developed areas of the state such as West Champaran perceptions of English as an aspirational language are stronger and it continues to be positively viewed as a status symbol. As we have noted, this may perhaps be explained by Graddol's (2010) conclusion that the more people possess English the less it will facilitate social mobility in itself and, in our own data, respondents in Patna may perhaps be beginning to experience a feeling that English is not quite delivering on the promises made for it and new barriers are being raised to their social progress.

It is also interesting that employment was found to be a negative predictor of scepticism about English, indicating that greater exposure to the work environment where English may be used – in however limited a fashion – results in less anxiety about it bringing unwanted change to society. This may be connected to what Block (2010, p.294) has called the 'commodification of the English language' which has resulted in 'a shift from a valuing of language for its basic communicative function and more emotive associations – national identity, culture, the authentic spirit of a people and so on – to valuing it for what it means in the globalized, deregulated, hyper-competitive, post-industrial 'new work order' in which we now live'. It may also help to explain why, amongst these respondents, there is very little sense that the attention being given to English is having an adverse effect either on their sense of identity as Indians. It is possible that the respondents had an

image of themselves as being or becoming bilingual with English and Hindi operating in different domains and for different purposes: English as one of the languages of the workplace and Hindi as the language of the home and socialisation. Dörnyei (2005) has spoken of language learners having conceptions of 'possible selves' and in this case the respondents' L2 self would not be in conflict with the L1 self but would exist alongside it.

We should end this section on a note of caution by speculating that English may not currently be having any impact on respondents' sense of identity in Bihar simply because it is widely perceived to be badly taught in schools and general levels of proficiency statewide are low. Whether this changes if the teaching of English as a subject improves or English-medium education spreads more widely is an interesting question for the future (see also 6.6 below).

6.6 English and education

There was a strong sense among Higher Education and Language students as well as parents of school-age children that proficiency in English was essential for the future; however, for those already in the workforce (our Professionals group) the association was much less strong. There was nevertheless strong agreement across all groups that a pass in English should be compulsory to graduate from Class 10. However, low self-reported language proficiency levels and evidence from interviews indicates that English has not been well taught in Bihar, in government schools at least, for some time. Perceptions that the quality of English teaching in government schools is poor are also borne out by the growth in private language schools. Amongst our Language student respondents, attendance at these schools was in part a response to feelings that English was badly taught at their schools, resulting in a gap in their skill-sets that needed to be filled which is, in turn, related to the common belief that English is necessary for securing better jobs in general and



any employment in technological fields in particular (see 6.2 above).

While the commitment of the state government to raising the standard of education generally has begun to show results and while projects such as BLISS are making progress in raising standards of English teaching in government schools, the scale of the task is immense and the resources required considerable. It can be argued that the continued expansion of fee-paying English-medium education, even though education through a language which is not children's mother tongue may not be in their best interests educationally, is as much a response to concerns over quality in government schools as it is to the supposed benefits of being educated in English. This is supported by our research which indicates that for Parents and Professionals there was no significant relationship between the 'status' composite and whether their children were enrolled in an English-medium school, implying that other factors are equally important in determining school choice, amongst which the smaller class sizes, more regular teacher attendance and improved discipline offered by private schools are often considered to be attractions for parents. This finding corroborates research in Patna by Rangaraju, Tooley and Dixon (2012, p. 29) whose survey found that 'more than 93 per cent of parents said that they chose a private school because they found better quality education there. This shows that private schools compete with government schools on quality first. Merely being an English medium school

does not guarantee patronage.'

Socio-economic forces also play a part in school choice and, not surprisingly, it seems that the preference for English-medium is greatest amongst those most able to pay for the privilege, those in the Professionals group in employment of various kinds. If we take this in combination with the high student rates of absenteeism and the high drop-out rates from Class 1-10, it highlights the need for the state government to focus on the quality of teaching and learning if government schools are to compete with the private sector and ensure that the children of the poor, who do not have the luxury of choice, are not to be further disadvantaged.

To conclude this section, we note that, at present, there is no evidence that learning English in schools, colleges, universities or private language schools is having any impact on Hindi as one of the primary languages of Bihar. However, if there is a continuing expansion of English-medium education at the school level and if English does become a compulsory examination subject at Grade 10 then the situation will need to be re-assessed.

7 CONCLUSION

This research study has provided considerable insights into social attitudes to English in Bihar in 2016. Conclusions to languages are inevitably multifaceted and, as Firth and Wagner (1997, 2007) commented some time ago, second language learners and users are socially situated beings with diverse needs, wants and identities. Attitudes to English must, then, be set within the social context of the communities of Bihar and wider India in all their diversity. Mohanty (2006) illustrates from his own experience that India is a multilingual society and English has a place in the linguistic mosaic of the country as a whole and individual states within it. It is not simply a question of the presence of English being thought of as a positive or a negative. In Bihar an intricate web of attitudes exists to the place of English in various domains. English, it seems, is largely perceived as a language for study and, by those not yet in the workforce, as one which would be required to gain employment. There was very limited concern about the impact of English on Indian society and traditions and, even where it did occur, it was counter-balanced by a perception of the instrumental value of English in economic terms for the individual and society as a whole. However, though there is evidence from other research studies that proficiency in English is associated with higher incomes, where this does occur the individuals also possess high skill levels and qualifications in their chosen fields. English is one factor in economic advancement, not the only one, and we would like to close by endorsing Erling's (2014, p. 22) conclusion that:

'English is promoted as if it is a panacea for poverty and skills development, and the fact that English accrues with other socioeconomic variables and is only likely to be acquired if there is a strong base of general education is not kept in sight. [...] English language education, if part of skills development, should build on first language literacy and numeracy, and support also the development of generic employability skills.'

Though attitudes to English in Bihar amongst our respondents indicate that they generally subscribe to the instrumental value of English this does not mean they do so uncritically, nor do they value Hindi any the less. It remains to be seen whether their aspirations are met and whether the state government will be able to build on existing promises to enhance the quality of general education and English language teaching to support their goals of a better future.



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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Sample survey, Professionals group

Note: The surveys for each research group followed a broadly common structure, with some minor variation to suit each group. For this reason, and for reasons of space, we have elected to include only one of the surveys as an example.

Questionnaire: business and the professions

Introduction

All information provided in this questionnaire is confidential. You do not need to give your name. None of the personal information requested will be able to identify you as an individual. Please note that your participation in this research project is entirely voluntary and you are free to terminate your involvement at any point.

Section 1

Please provide the following information.

1. Your age:
2. Your gender:
3. Do you have any children in school at the moment? YES / NO (please delete)
4. If YES to question 3, what ages are your children?
5. If YES to question 4, what type of school do they go to (please tick)
 - Government Hindi-medium school
 - Government English-medium school
 - Private Hindi-medium school
 - Private English-medium school
 - Madrasaa
 - Don't know
6. Do you speak English yourself? YES / NO (please delete)
7. If YES to question 6, do you think your knowledge of English is (please tick one box)
 - excellent
 - good
 - adequate
 - limited

8. If YES to question 6, how often do you use English in your daily life? (please tick the box/es that apply to you)

- a. A few phrases/brief exchanges for social purposes
- b. English is the language I use when I socialise with friends
- c. Regularly, for study purposes
- d. I use English regularly at work
- e. English is the language I use at home
- f. Although I can speak English I never use it in my daily life

9. What is your occupation?

10. How much is English used in your workplace? (please tick one box)

- All the time
- Often
- Sometimes
- Occasionally
- Rarely
- Never

11. If English IS USED in your workplace, for what purposes is it used?

- For communication with clients or customers overseas
- For communication with foreign clients or customers in India
- For communication with Indian clients or customers in other states
- For communication with Indian clients or customers in Bihar
- For communication with head office overseas
- English is the main working language in my workplace

12. If English IS NOT USED in your workplace at present, do you think you will use English in your working life in the future? (please tick)

- YES
- NO

13. If YES to question 12, for what purposes?

14. If NO to question 12, why do you think you will not use English in the future?

Section 2

Please circle your responses to the statements below, according to the following scale:

- 1 = strongly agree
- 2 = agree
- 3 = disagree
- 4 = strongly disagree

Statement 1

Indian people should learn English.

1 2 3 4

Statement 2

Hindi is superior to English.

1 2 3 4

Statement 3

If I can use English, I will be praised by my friends and family.

1 2 3 4

Statement 4

The use of English is important for India's economic development.

1 2 3 4

Statement 5

The English language is superior to Hindi.

1 2 3 4

Statement 6

If I can use English I will be praised by my colleagues.

1 2 3 4

Statement 7

I feel uneasy when I speak English.

1 2 3 4

Statement 8

English should be a condition of employment in Indian businesses.

1 2 3 4

Statement 9

When I use English, I do not feel that I am Indian any more.

1 2 3 4

Statement 10

I feel comfortable when I speak English.

1 2 3 4

Statement 11

English can help to modernise the Indian way of life.

1 2 3 4

Statement 12

English brings undesirable cultural values to India.

1 2 3 4

Statement 13

English helps people to find better jobs.

1 2 3 4

Statement 14

A pass in English should be necessary for students to graduate from Class 10.

1 2 3 4

Statement 15

I feel uncomfortable when I hear one Indian speaking to another in English.

1 2 3 4

Statement 16

If I use English, my status is raised.

1 2 3 4

Statement 17

Business in India should be conducted in English.

1 2 3 4

Statement 18

Knowledge of English is important for access to new scientific developments.

1 2 3 4

Statement 19

English is the language of advanced societies.

1 2 3 4

Statement 20

I would like to speak fluent and accurate English.

1 2 3 4

Statement 21

English is a symbol of an educated person.

1 2 3 4

Statement 22

At times I fear that by using English I will become like a foreigner.

1 2 3 4

Statement 23

Knowledge of English is very helpful in understanding foreigners and their cultures.

1 2 3 4

Statement 24

The English language is essential for my child's/children's future career.

1 2 3 4

Statement 25

If I use English, it increases my self-respect

1 2 3 4

Section 3

Which variety of English do you think your children should learn? Please tick one:

- American English
- British English
- Indian English
- It doesn't matter

Section 4

If you have any other comments about English in India or the English language itself, please write them here.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Your responses are greatly appreciated.

Appendix 2: Interview schedules and guidelines

Individual interviews

The purpose of the interviews is to explore in more detail with individual participants their views on English and its place in Bihar and India more widely. Questions derive from and/or extend topics in the questionnaires for each group. Interviews with individuals in the geographic areas identified for research will be able to provide qualitative data to supplement the questionnaire data. The interviews also complement focus group meetings in areas where these can take place and replace them in areas where they cannot be conducted for any reason. On occasion we will find that some participants would prefer speaking individually to a researcher rather than in a group.

1. General points for interviews

1.1 Numbers of participants

The number of interviews will be decided in consultation with the British Council and the local partner but should be conducted in all of the survey locations. The exact location for the interviews will depend on local circumstances.

1.2 Duration of interviews

It is suggested that each interview should last for between 45-60 minutes.

1.4 Interview procedures

Interviews should be conducted in participants' first language. The researcher should encourage as much open discussion around the questions as possible, and seek to clarify opinions in as much detail as possible. We are interested in why people hold the views that they do, as much as the actual views themselves. There are no "right answers" and participants should be encouraged to be as honest as they can. The guide questions do not have to be asked in the order presented, apart from the opening question: researchers will need to be sensitive to the dynamics of the interaction and probe reasons for views, or seek to clarify opinions with follow-up questions as necessary. Participants' responses may affect the order in which questions are asked. Interviews should be tape-recorded and key points transcribed as soon as possible after the meeting. It is not necessary to translate or to make a verbatim transcription of the entire interview, but participants' direct comments (translated into English) should be included in the interview reports.

1.5 Reporting

Reports will be required for interviews with participants in each target group, together with a summary report.

1.5.1 Target group reports

- At the conclusion of all interviews for each target group a summary report is required for that target group. This report should:
- Say when and where each interview took place, how long it lasted, and who participated in it – provide a table with the demographic information collected for each interview.
- Summarise main themes/issues arising from each interview.
- Include a sample of participants' direct comments to illustrate the points being made, clearly identifying in which interview the comments were made and including the gender of the person who made the comment.
- Provide a summary of common themes across interviews in each target group.
- Highlight any contrasting views on the issues across the interviews in each target group, according to location.

1.5.2 Global summary report

Once all the interviews for all target groups in all locations have been completed a global summary report is required. This report should:

- Provide a summary table with all the demographic information for interviewees by target group and location.
- Summarise main themes/issues arising from the interviews as a whole.
- Include a sample of participants' direct comments to illustrate the points being made, clearly identifying in which interview the comments were made and including the gender of the person who made the comment.
- Provide a summary of common themes across all interviews in the target groups.
- Highlight any contrasting views on the issues between interviewees in the target groups, making reference to location where this may be significant.

2. Interview guide questions: parents of school-age children

Introduce yourself and introduce the purpose of the interview, i.e. to have a free and open discussion about English and its place in participants' lives, the state and India as a whole, including in formal education. Ask a few social questions to help put the participant at ease. Collect some basic demographic information, i.e. participant's age, gender, occupation, level of education. Then use the following questions to guide the discussion.

1. What's the first thing that comes into your mind when you hear the word 'English'?
2. Do you speak English yourself?
3. If you speak English, do you think you speak it well?
4. If you speak English, when do you use it and for what purposes?
5. Please tell us your thoughts about the place of English in:
 - a. your locality.
 - b. Bihar.
 - c. India as a whole.
6. How many children do you have?
 - a. Are they boys or girls?
 - b. What are their ages?
 - c. What schools do they go to?
7. What are your children's attitudes towards learning English at school?
8. What are your children's experiences of learning English at school?
 - a. What are the positive points?
 - b. What are the negative points?
9. Do you think your children's school learning experience with English could be improved? If so, how?
10. Do you help your children with their English?
 - a. If so, how?
 - b. If not, why not?
11. Do any of your children attend extra English classes outside school?
 - a. If so, why do they attend?
 - b. If so, how do these classes help your children?
12. What do you think about making English a compulsory examination subject at secondary school? What are the reasons for your views?
13. Do you think English should be:
 - a. the medium of instruction in school?
 - b. just a subject in school?
 - c. not taught in school at all?What are the reasons for your views?
14. Do you think knowing English can help your children when they leave school? In what ways?
15. Do you think knowing English has any effect on a person's social status? In what ways?
16. Do you think knowing English has any effect on a person's economic status? If so, in what ways?
17. Do you think English helps in India's economic and scientific development? If so, in what ways?
18. Do you think English has any effect on Hindi or other Indian languages?
 - a. Are there any positive effects?
 - b. Are there any negative effects?
19. Do you think English has any effect on Indian culture and ways of life?
 - a. Are there any positive effects?
 - b. Are there any negative effects?
20. Looking to the future, what do you think will be the place of English in 10 years' time in:
 - a. your locality?
 - b. Bihar?
 - c. India as a whole?

3. Interview guide questions: university students

Introduce yourself and introduce the purpose of the interview, i.e. to have a free and open discussion about English and its place in participants' lives, the state and India as a whole, including in formal education. Ask a few social questions to help put the participant at ease. Collect some basic demographic information, i.e. participant's age, gender, occupation, level of education. Then use the following questions to guide the discussion.

1. What's the first thing that comes into your mind when you hear the word "English"?
2. Do you speak English?
3. If you speak English, do you think you speak it well?
4. If you speak English, when do you use it and for what purposes?
5. Please tell us your thoughts about the place of English in:
 - a. your locality.
 - b. Bihar.
 - c. India as a whole.
6. What kind of school did you attend?
7. Did you study English at school? How did you feel about this?
8. What were your experiences of learning English at school?
 - a. What were the positive points?
 - b. What were the negative points?
9. Do you think your school learning experience with English could have been improved? If so, how?
10. What do you think about making English a compulsory examination subject at secondary school? What are the reasons for your views?
11. Do you think English should be:
 - a. the medium of instruction in schools?
 - b. just a subject in school?
 - c. not taught in schools at all?What are the reasons for your views?
12. Are you studying English now at university? If so, how does this contrast with your school learning experience?
13. Do you attend any extra English classes outside university?
 - a. If so, why do you attend?
 - b. If so, how do these classes help you with your English?
14. Do you think English should be:
 - a. the medium of instruction in university?
 - b. just a subject in university?
 - c. not taught in university at all?What are the reasons for your views?
15. Do you think knowing English can help you when you graduate? If so, in what ways?
16. Do you think knowing English has any effect on a person's social status? If so, in what ways?
17. Do you think knowing English has any effect on a person's economic status? If so, in what ways?
18. Do you think English helps in India's economic and scientific development? If so, in what ways?
19. Do you think English has any effect on Hindi or other Indian languages?
 - a. Are there any positive effects?
 - b. Are there any negative effects?
20. Do you think English has any effect on Indian culture and ways of life?
 - a. Are there any positive effects?
 - b. Are there any negative effects?
21. Looking to the future, what do you think will be the place of English in 10 years' time in:
 - a. your locality?
 - b. Bihar?
 - c. India as a whole?

4. Interview guide questions: private language school students

Introduce yourself and introduce the purpose of the interview, i.e. to have a free and open discussion about English and its place in participants' lives, the state and India as a whole, including in formal education. Ask a few social questions to help put the participant at ease. Collect some basic demographic information, i.e. participant's age, gender, occupation, level of education. Then use the following questions to guide the discussion.

1. What's the first thing that comes into your mind when you hear the word "English"?
2. Do you speak English outside your classes?
3. If you speak English, do you think you speak it well?
4. If you speak English, when do you use it and for what purposes?
5. Please tell us your thoughts about the place of English in:
 - a. your locality.
 - b. Bihar.
 - c. India as a whole.
6. What kind of school did you attend?
7. Did you study English at school? How did you feel about this?
8. What were your experiences of learning English at school?
 - a. What were the positive points?
 - b. What were the negative points?
9. Do you think your school learning experience with English could have been improved? If so, how?
10. What do you think about making English a compulsory examination subject at secondary school? What are the reasons for your views?
11. Do you think English should be:
 - a. the medium of instruction in schools?
 - b. just a subject in school?
 - c. not taught in schools at all?What are the reasons for your views?
12. Thinking about the English classes you are attending now:
 - a. why do you attend?
 - b. how do these classes help you with your English?
13. Do you think knowing English can help you to get a job (or a better job)? If so, in what ways?
14. Do you think knowing English has any effect on a person's social status? If so, in what ways?
15. Do you think knowing English has any effect on a person's economic status? If so, in what ways?
16. Do you think English helps in India's economic and scientific development? If so, in what ways?
17. Do you think English has any effect on Hindi or other Indian languages?
 - a. Are there any positive effects?
 - b. Are there any negative effects?
18. Do you think English has any effect on Indian culture and ways of life?
 - a. Are there any positive effects?
 - b. Are there any negative effects?
19. Looking to the future, what do you think will be the place of English in 10 years' time in:
 - a. your locality?
 - b. Bihar?
 - c. India as a whole?

5. Interview guide questions: business and the professions

Introduce yourself and introduce the purpose of the interview, i.e. to have a free and open discussion about English and its place in participants' lives, the state and India as a whole, including in formal education. Ask a few social questions to help put the participant at ease. Collect some basic demographic information, i.e. participant's age, gender, occupation, level of education. Then use the following questions to guide the discussion.

1. What's the first thing that comes into your mind when you hear the word 'English'?
2. Do you speak English?
3. If you speak English, do you think you speak it well?
4. If you speak English, when do you use it and for what purposes?
 - a. How helpful is a knowledge of English in your work? Please explain how and for what purposes you use English.
 - b. Do you use English for social purposes? If so, with whom?
 - c. If you do not use English for work or social purposes, are there any particular reasons why you do not use it?
5. Please tell us your thoughts about the place of English in:
 - a. your locality.
 - b. Bihar.
 - c. India as a whole.
6. What kind of school did you attend?
7. Did you study English at school? How did you feel about this?
8. What were your experiences of learning English at school?
 - a. What were the positive points?
 - b. What were the negative points?
9. Do you think your school learning experience with English could have been improved? If so, how?
10. What do you think about making English a compulsory examination subject at secondary school? What are the reasons for your views?
11. Do you think English should be:
 - a. the medium of instruction in schools?
 - b. just a subject in school?
 - c. not taught in schools at all?What are the reasons for your views?
12. Do you think English should be:
 - a. the medium of instruction in universities/colleges?
 - b. just a subject in universities/colleges?
 - c. not taught in universities/colleges at all?What are the reasons for your views?
13. Do you think knowing English can help someone to get a job (or a better job)? If so, in what ways?
14. Do you think knowing English has any effect on a person's social status? If so, in what ways?
15. Do you think knowing English has any effect on a person's economic status? If so, in what ways?
16. Do you think English helps in India's economic and scientific development? If so, in what ways?
17. Do you think English has any effect on Hindi or other Indian languages?
 - a. Are there any positive effects?
 - b. Are there any negative effects?
18. Do you think English has any effect on Indian culture and ways of life?
 - a. Are there any positive effects?
 - b. Are there any negative effects?
19. Looking to the future, what do you think will be the place of English in 10 years' time in:
 - a. your locality?
 - b. Bihar?
 - c. India as a whole?

Appendix 3: Tracer study form and guidelines

Tracer studies

Introduction

The purpose of the tracer studies is to record actual English language use amongst research participants who are employed in businesses or the professions and who have said that they make use of English in their work. It is expected that approximately five participants will each be followed through one day of their usual work routines. The tracer studies will thus enable us to contrast actual language use against claimed language use for a small number of participants.

Instructions

On the attached form, first enter the demographic information for the participant. Then use the form to make a general record of the participant's interactions throughout the working day, which languages are used for which purposes and with whom, and the nature of the language. We do not need a word-for-word account: it is sufficient to record general functions and/or tasks accomplished.

Tracer study record form

Participant's gender	
Nature of business	
Position in company	
Location of business	

Time <i>Use 15 minute time slots; adjust to participant's working hours</i>	What language is being used? <i>English, Hindi, etc</i>	Who is the participant talking to? <i>Role/position of interlocutor</i>	What are they talking about? <i>Purpose of the interaction</i>	What type of language is being used? <i>Language functions/tasks accomplished</i>
0900-0915				
0916-0930				
0931-0945				
0946-1000				
1001-1015				
1016-1030				
1031-1045				
1046-1100				
1101-1115				
1116-1130				
1131-1145				
1146-1200				
1201-1215				
1216-1230				
1231-1245				
1246-1300				
1301-1315				
1316-1330				
1331-1345				

1346-1400				
1401-1415				
1416-1430				
1431-1445				
1446-1500				
1501-1515				
1516-1530				
1531-1545				
1546-1600				
1601-1615				
1616-1630				
1631-1645				
1646-1700				
1701-1715				
1716-1730				
1731-1745				
1746-1800				

