English Medium Instruction in South Asia: Addressing Equity and Inclusion in Education

Bishnu Kumar Khadka [1]

[1] Assistant Professor of English Education, Central Department of English Education, Mid-West University, Surkhet [1]
Corresponding Author: Email: luckybishnu@gmail.com

Abstract

English Medium Instruction (EMI) has become an increasingly prominent phenomenon across South Asia, driven by its perceived association with global competitiveness and socioeconomic mobility. This review-based paper offers a comprehensive overview of EMI in the region, analyzing its historical origins, evolving role in education systems, and the challenges and implications it poses for equity and social justice focusing particularly on its impact on educational access, social mobility, and linguistic diversity. The study explores how colonial legacies have shaped the status of English as the dominant language of instruction in countries like India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. It further investigates how these nations have adopted EMI to align with global educational trends, despite disparities in access and outcomes. Based on the review of existing literature, the findings highlight the challenges posed by inadequate teacher preparedness, resource constraints, and the potential marginalization of students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. Drawing on empirical studies and policy analysis, the paper also discusses the effectiveness of EMI in enhancing academic performance, language proficiency, and employability, while acknowledging the risks of reinforcing educational inequalities. It also suggests potential strategies for addressing these challenges, advocating for a more balanced, context-sensitive approach to EMI implementation. By examining the multifaceted impact of EMI in South Asia, this review contributes to the ongoing debate on its role in shaping the future of education in linguistically diverse and economically stratified societies. It concludes by offering recommendations for creating equitable and linguistically sensitive EMI frameworks that accommodate the region's diverse sociocultural contexts, ensuring that all students, regardless of background, benefit from English-medium education.

Keywords: English Medium Instruction, Linguistic Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Introduction

South Asia is characterized by a historically multilingual landscape, boasting over 700 languages spoken throughout the region. India alone is home to 454 active languages, while Nepal, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh contribute more than 250 additional languages (Lewis et al., 2013, as cited in Sultana, 2024). Within this context, English has emerged as a significant lingua franca, influencing various facets of life in India, including education, law, administration, media, commerce, and religion (Low, 2022). Following independence, English

assumed the role of a neutral language in India, free from associations with any particular regional, religious, ethnic, or linguistic group, which has made it an effective medium for national communication (Bhatia, 2022, p. 65).

The increasing use of English Medium Instruction (EMI) across South Asia has raised critical debates around its implications for equity and inclusion within the region's diverse educational systems. In this regard, it has been argued that in numerous Global South countries, the implementation of EMI has resulted in confusion, frustration, and increased dropout rates (Kirkpatrick, 2014; 2017; Mahboob & Sultana, 2021 as cited in Giri et. al, 2024). While EMI is often perceived as a tool for enhancing global competitiveness and economic opportunities, its introduction in public and private schools has widened the gap between socioeconomically privileged and marginalized communities, including linguistic minorities and students with limited access to quality English education.

English Medium Instruction (EMI) is the practice of teaching academic subjects in English, rather than using native or local languages, across various grade levels and educational streams (Dearden, 2014). In recent years, the use of English Medium Instruction (EMI) rises across eight South Asian countries: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. This growing trend is driven by the heightened demand for English, which is widely seen as a critical skill for economic advancement and global competitiveness. Consequently, an increasing number of schools and educational institutions in these countries have integrated EMI into their curricula, with many academic subjects now being taught predominantly, if not exclusively, in English.

The growing reliance on EMI, while aligning with global trends, underscores the need for a more context-sensitive approach that balances the demand for English proficiency with the need to preserve linguistic and cultural diversity. Without careful planning and inclusive policies, EMI risks exacerbating existing educational disparities and alienating large segments of the student population. Therefore, it is crucial for policymakers and educators in South Asia to critically assess the implications of EMI and develop strategies that promote equitable access to quality education for all learners. However, there is no standardized EMI policy across South Asia. Following the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, South Asian countries have adopted Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE), which theoretically supports the linguistic rights of ethnic and indigenous children and acknowledges that learning in one's native language enhances retention (Skutnabb-Kangas & Mohanty, 2009; UNICEF, 2019). Despite this, many schools, driven by the growing demand for English, are rapidly transitioning to dominant national languages or fully adopting EMI from the start of children's education (Sah, 2022).

In conclusion, the evolving role of English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) in South Asia reflects a complex interplay of linguistic diversity, socio-economic dynamics, and educational aspirations. While EMI is increasingly viewed as a pathway to global competitiveness and economic advancement, its implementation raises significant concerns regarding equity and inclusion within the region's multifaceted educational landscape. The rapid transition to English instruction in schools, often at the expense of indigenous languages and local dialects, highlights the urgent need for context-sensitive educational policies that prioritize linguistic rights and cultural preservation.

Materials and Methods

This study employs a qualitative, interpretive research design based on a systematic literature review. The methodology follows a systematic review process that involves the collection, analysis, and synthesis of scholarly works, government documents, and reports related to the use of English in South Asia. The focus is on secondary data sources, including historical accounts, linguistic research, educational reports, and policy analyses. The review method is used to synthesize the development and current role of SAE across the South Asian nations, including India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Nepal. The primary aim is to explore the evolution of South Asian English (SAE) and its role in education. The data were collected through extensive searches of academic databases, including JSTOR, Google Scholar, and institutional repositories, focusing on publications between the late 19th century and the present. The search was restricted to peer-reviewed journal articles, books, and policy documents from 1950 onwards to capture both the colonial and postcolonial periods. The publications based on the development and role of English in education in South Asian countries, studies on language policies, and articles discussing the socio-political context of English language use in the region. The data analysis followed a thematic approach, wherein the selected studies were analyzed based on recurring themes related to the development and role of English in education across different South Asian countries. The findings were synthesized to provide a coherent narrative of the historical development of South Asian English and its evolving role in the education systems of countries such as India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. This study was limited by its reliance on secondary sources, which may present a gap in the latest empirical data. Furthermore, language policies and their implementation vary significantly across South Asia, meaning that generalizations may not fully capture the nuances of each country's educational context. As a review-based study, this research ensures that all sources are properly cited, and credit is given to original authors. No new data collection from human subjects was involved, and the study complies with ethical standards for academic research.

Results and Discussion

The role of English in South Asia has undergone significant transformation, evolving from a colonial language of administration and power to a key medium of education and social mobility. The present review aims to trace this trajectory by examining existing literature on the historical development of English in the region and its current impact on educational systems. This section provides a critical analysis of the reviewed studies, exploring how English was introduced during British colonialism, how post-colonial language policies shaped its role in education, and how it functions today as both a tool for opportunity and a source of inequity. The discussion explores into the varying contexts of South Asian nations, highlighting both the benefits and challenges of English as a medium of instruction, and reflecting on its implications for linguistic diversity, identity, and access to education.

English in South Asia

The history and development of English Medium Instruction (EMI) in South Asia is both complex and deeply rooted. Its origins can be traced back to the establishment of educational institutions by the East India Company (Giri, 2024), with English being introduced to the region as early as December 1600. During this period, missionary activities played a key role in

spreading English, although they remained limited between 1600 and 1765, gaining momentum later in key Indian cities like Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras (Kachru, 1983). The introduction of English to India nearly two centuries ago was a product of colonial authorities, who utilized the language for governance, education, and cultural dominance, often overlooking the region's complex linguistic and social dynamics. As Ferguson (2009) argues, the presence of English in South Asia is a direct legacy of imperialism, acting as a tool for colonial power and control (p. 30). The establishment of English in the region can be traced back to British trade, exploration, missionary activities, and imperial endeavors from as early as the seventeenth century. However, it is crucial to acknowledge that South Asia's linguistic diversity predated the arrival of English, with a rich array of regional languages intricately woven into the cultural and social fabric of its people (Bhattacharya, 2010).

In Pakistan, both Urdu and English function as official languages, with English playing a pivotal role in professional and administrative sectors. The 1973 Constitution designated Urdu as the national language, while English continues to be the official language used in governance and competitive examinations (Shamim, 2023; Sultana, 2024). Likewise, in Bangladesh, although English is considered a foreign language, it is instrumental in obtaining social status, better job prospects, and an improved quality of life (Sultana et al., 2021). This underscores the complex relationship between English and the regional languages, illustrating how English has adapted to and influenced the sociolinguistic landscape of South Asia.

In Sri Lanka, English education, driven by missionary efforts, began in Colombo in 1799, and by 1831, 235 mission schools were established, a number that continued to grow substantially by 1886. Sri Lanka incorporated English into its colonial framework early on, with the Colebrooke Commission designating it as an official language in 1833 (Sivaji & Iyer, 2023). Presently, Sri Lankan English has evolved into a localized variant, integrating elements from the island's diverse linguistic landscape, thus highlighting its multilingual character (Sultana, 2024). In Bhutan, English functions as a second language, finding extensive use in business, administration, education, and media (Dendup, 2020; Tshering, 2020). Meanwhile, in Afghanistan, although English is not commonly spoken in daily life, it is gaining significance as a tool for international communication, increasingly competing with Pashto (Alamyar, 2017). By the 1980s, Kachru (1983) noted the emergence of a comparable standard of educated English across countries like Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka, underscoring the extensive influence of English throughout the region. Initially an administrative language, English gradually became a powerful medium for creative expression, with South Asian writers, particularly from India, gaining international recognition.

Critically, the spread of English in South Asia was not merely an educational endeavor but was also closely linked to the colonial agenda. The promotion of English, framed as a "civilizing mission," often involved the imposition of Western values and ideologies on South Asian societies, aligning with the broader colonial power dynamics. This historical context laid the foundation for the prominence of EMI in the region, influencing its educational and sociopolitical landscape even in the post-colonial era. While its origins lie in colonial control, English has evolved into a medium through which South Asian societies engage with, and challenge, their colonial histories. Its prominence in education, governance, and literature signifies a language that, despite its colonial roots, has been reshaped and reinterpreted to align with local identities and postcolonial goals. This complex history underscores English's

continued significance in South Asia, serving both as a symbol of the past and a means of future advancement. However, it is essential to critically examine the historical context of English's introduction to South Asia, which was far from neutral. Rather, it formed part of a broader colonial strategy aimed at transforming the region's social and educational frameworks, often to the detriment of indigenous languages.

The establishment of English as a dominant language served to cultivate a class of intermediaries who were loyal to colonial powers, effectively sidelining local languages and undermining traditional linguistic practices. Bhattacharya (2010) emphasizes that while a multitude of languages coexisted in South Asia prior to colonization, the imposition of English has had profound and lasting consequences for cultural identity and continuity. This imposition not only reshaped communication but also altered the societal dynamics, creating a linguistic hierarchy that privileges English over native languages. As such, the legacy of English in South Asia can be seen as a double-edged sword; while it facilitates global connectivity, it simultaneously perpetuates a colonial legacy that threatens the region's rich linguistic diversity.

The spread of English in South Asia not only reshaped the region's linguistic landscape but also led to the emergence of South Asian English (SAE). This variety of English, enriched by loanwords and local idioms, reflects the linguistic diversity of the region and marks SAE as a distinct and globally recognized form of English. However, despite the extensive research on the historical spread of English and its adoption by local elites (Kachru, 1983; Fishman, 1992), there remains a gap in understanding how SAE functions in contemporary educational settings, especially in multilingual classrooms. This critical gap calls for further exploration of the role of SAE in modern South Asian education systems, particularly regarding its impact on local languages and identities.

While past studies often center on the imposition of English during colonial rule, they overlook the ways in which SAE has adapted to modern educational challenges. This is especially important as today's education systems grapple with balancing SAE's dominance with the preservation of indigenous languages. Multilingual classrooms, in particular, require pedagogical strategies that acknowledge SAE's evolving role while protecting linguistic diversity. The ongoing dominance of English can be seen as both a tool for global opportunity and a potential threat to local linguistic and cultural identities.

English as the Medium of Instruction in South Asian Contexts

The use of English as a medium of instruction (EMI) in South Asian contexts has become a significant and complex educational phenomenon, shaped by colonial legacies, globalization, and national language policies. In countries like India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka, English holds a privileged status within education systems, often associated with socioeconomic mobility, access to global opportunities, and academic prestige. However, the dominance of English in educational settings also raises critical issues of equity and social justice, as it can marginalize indigenous languages and create barriers for students from non-English-speaking backgrounds. The integration of EMI in South Asia requires careful balancing of linguistic diversity, pedagogical effectiveness, and inclusivity to ensure that the educational landscape is equitable and accessible to all learners.

EMI in most of South Asia is characterised by a shared colonial history (Sah, 2021). The British colonial rule was the primary driver behind the introduction and widespread use of English in these countries, although English had already reached various parts of the subcontinent earlier through missionary activities (Giri et al., 2024). During the British Raj, English was introduced as the medium of instruction and the first English daily newspaper was published in Calcutta, aiming to bridge Eastern and Western cultures. English is not only utilized by native speakers to communicate but is also appreciated by a large segment of the educated population in Asia for expressing their emotions and ideas (Bhattacharya, 2010). Many Indians use English as a second language, considering it crucial for international communication. While English has never been indigenous to India, it functions both as an international and intra-national language. It facilitates not only external interactions but also communication within India, among people who do not share the same native language. Consequently, English is widely used by a significant portion of the population for intra-community communication in South Asian contexts.

The introduction of English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) in South Asia can be traced back to the establishment of educational institutions by the East India Company. While initially designed to serve British interests, local elites gradually embraced English, recognizing it as a symbol of prestige and social mobility (Giri et al., 2024). However, the effectiveness of EMI varies across the region. In countries like Bangladesh and Afghanistan, where English has limited use outside the classroom, EMI is less effective (Giri et al., 2024). Bhutan, on the other hand, actively promotes EMI as a way to prepare students for higher education abroad, compensating for its limited domestic educational infrastructure. Meanwhile, Pakistan, Nepal, and Bangladesh take a more nuanced stance on EMI, supporting its use while simultaneously promoting local languages to avoid privileging English over native tongues (Manan et al., 2015; Phyak & Sharma, 2020; Rahman et al., 2020, as cited in Giri et al., 2024). This balancing act reflects broader concerns about linguistic equity. In Afghanistan, however, most university faculty support EMI, viewing it as essential for preparing students for global opportunities, improving university rankings, and enhancing academic prestige (Orfan, 2023). Similarly, Bhutan's adoption of EMI was gradual, moving from mother-tongue instruction to a hybrid model before fully implementing EMI in schools and universities (Dendup, 2024).

In Pakistan, English is generally perceived positively, with educationists, parents, and students all agreeing that it enhances future opportunities, especially in terms of economic prospects and social mobility (Mahboob, 2022; Shamim, 2023). However, while EMI is seen as a pathway to better employment, it also deepens existing social inequalities. As Shamim (2023) argues, Pakistan's Language-in-Education policies, including EMI, exacerbate the divide between socio-economic classes, creating a widening gap between privileged and marginalized communities. In contrast, the Maldives, once heavily reliant on EMI across all levels of education, has recently shifted its approach, reflecting a broader regional trend of reevaluating the role of English in education (Lutfi, 2011, as cited in Giri et al., 2024). This reevaluation highlights ongoing debates about balancing global competitiveness with linguistic and cultural preservation.

During colonial rule in Bangladesh, English dominated the educational landscape. However, following independence in 1971, Bangla became the primary language of instruction at all educational levels, except in Madrasah schools, which used both Arabic and Bangla, and in

elite English medium schools located in urban areas (Hamid, 2010; Hamid & Honan, 2012, as cited in Shrestha et al., 2024). Today, Bangladesh's education system is divided into three streams: Bangla medium, English medium, and Madrasah education. English medium schools, which cater primarily to the affluent, follow international curricula such as Edexcel and Cambridge, using English as the language of instruction (Roshid & Sultana, 2022; Sultana & Roshid, 2021, as cited in Roshid et al., 2024). This division in education perpetuates inequality, as students from Bangla medium schools, particularly those from lower socio-economic backgrounds, face significant challenges in gaining university admission and succeeding in STEM fields where English proficiency is crucial. In contrast, students from expensive English medium schools, often from elite backgrounds, continue to benefit from the EMI policy, much like during the colonial era (Jahan & Hamid, 2019, as cited in Shrestha et al., 2024).

A similar pattern of inequality can be seen in Sri Lanka, where English, though officially recognized, is not commonly used in everyday communication. Despite this, English is viewed as a prestigious language linked to economic advantages and better opportunities (Liyanage, 2022). However, Sri Lanka's increased adoption of EMI in schools, despite high failure rates and generally low English proficiency among students, is contributing to greater social divides. The inconsistent implementation of language education policies exacerbates these inequalities, reinforcing class distinctions within the population (Giri et al., 2024). In the Maldives, the introduction of EMI in the early 1960s under British colonial influence was similarly restricted to the elite, rendering education largely inaccessible to the broader population (Mohamed, 2024). These cases highlight the continued role of EMI in reinforcing socio-economic disparities across South Asia, echoing colonial-era divisions.

The dual system of private and public schools in India has entrenched social inequalities, despite repeated calls from national policies to eliminate this divide, except for the recent National Education Policy (NEP) (Government of India, 2020). However, efforts to establish a unified school system and diminish the emphasis on English in education are now viewed as both unrealistic and unnecessary. English continues to represent a powerful symbol of social aspiration in India, closely associated with the ruling elite and considerable economic benefits (Guha, 2021). For marginalized communities, English holds emancipatory potential, offering a pathway to greater socio-economic mobility (Padwad, 2023). Similarly, in Nepal, the commodification of English through English Language Teaching (ELT) and English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) in schools has perpetuated social injustice, particularly affecting students from marginalized economic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds (Devkota, 2024). The pursuit of EMI in these contexts, rather than improving overall language proficiency, appears to exacerbate existing inequalities.

The adoption of English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) in South Asian contexts is a multifaceted phenomenon that reflects the region's complex historical, cultural, and social dynamics. While English is often associated with opportunities for socioeconomic advancement and global engagement, its dominance within educational systems raises significant concerns regarding equity and social justice. The historical context of EMI reveals a legacy rooted in colonialism, which has resulted in the marginalization of indigenous languages and a reinforcement of social stratification. Across countries like India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka, the implications of EMI are particularly pronounced, as it perpetuates existing disparities between privileged and marginalized communities.

The trend towards English-medium education often privileges those who can afford it while leaving behind students from non-English-speaking backgrounds, further entrenching social divides. Moreover, the varying degrees of effectiveness of EMI in different contexts, such as in Bangladesh and Afghanistan, highlight the need for context-sensitive policies that not only promote English proficiency but also protect and value local languages. As South Asian nations navigate the complexities of globalization and national identity, the challenge remains to balance the benefits of English in facilitating access to global opportunities with the imperative to promote linguistic diversity and social equity. Policymakers must strive to create educational frameworks that are inclusive and equitable, recognizing the rich tapestry of languages and cultures in the region. Ultimately, a more equitable approach to EMI should ensure that it serves as a tool for empowerment rather than exclusion, allowing all learners to thrive in an increasingly interconnected world.

EMI: Addressing Issues of Equity and Inclusion in Education

As educational institutions strive to prepare students for a globalized world, they must also prioritize inclusivity and equity in their language policies. In this context, addressing the issues of equity and inclusion in education necessitates a comprehensive understanding of how EMI functions across diverse sociolinguistic environments. Educational frameworks must not only promote English proficiency but also recognize and support the linguistic rights of all learners. By fostering an inclusive approach to EMI, educators and policymakers can create a more equitable educational landscape that values linguistic diversity and empowers all students, regardless of their linguistic background. This paper aims to explore the challenges and opportunities associated with EMI in South Asia, emphasizing the importance of equity and inclusion in shaping a more just educational future.

In many South Asian countries, access to quality education often hinges on access to English. Private English-medium schools, which cater to the wealthy urban elite, contrast starkly with public schools, particularly in rural areas, where education is delivered in regional languages with limited resources. This linguistic divide reinforces class-based educational disparities, as proficiency in English is frequently linked to better employment prospects and social mobility (Sah, 2022). Consequently, English and EMI are viewed as critical linguistic assets for advancing socio-economic status in South Asia. However, this shift towards English-medium education poses a significant threat to the survival of indigenous languages and cultures. Many parents in South Asia prioritize English-medium education for their children, seeing it as a pathway to success, even if it comes at the expense of their children's proficiency in their mother tongue. This trend has contributed to the decline, and in some cases extinction, of indigenous languages, raising concerns about the erosion of linguistic and cultural diversity across the region.

The dominance of English in South Asian education systems presents significant pedagogical challenges, particularly in multilingual classrooms. Studies indicate that students learning in a language other than their mother tongue often struggle academically, as they must grasp complex content in a language they have not fully mastered. This is especially problematic in rural and marginalized communities, where English is promoted as the medium of instruction despite many students facing substantial linguistic barriers. The issue is exacerbated by a shortage of qualified teachers proficient in both English and local languages, resulting in

substandard teaching and learning outcomes (Bhattacharya, 2010). The complexities of incorporating English into South Asian education systems are thus multifaceted. While English is seen by elites as an essential tool for international communication, for the majority of students, particularly those unable to access high-quality English education, it becomes a significant social and academic hurdle.

Moreover, the assumption that English-medium education is inherently superior overlooks the proven advantages of mother-tongue instruction in early childhood education. Research shows that learning in one's native language enhances cognitive development and improves overall academic performance. As South Asian countries continue to expand English-medium instruction, there is an urgent need for policies that balance the promotion of English with multilingual education. This would ensure that students are not deprived of the cognitive, social, and cultural benefits associated with learning in their native languages. The teaching and learning of English and EMI in South Asia are not just educational issues but also socio-political phenomena, fraught with internal contradictions (Giri et al., 2024). Balancing these linguistic and socio-political complexities remains a critical challenge for policymakers.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the role of English in South Asian contexts reflects a complex historical trajectory, evolving from its imposition during colonial rule to its contemporary status as a symbol of global opportunity and socio-economic mobility. While initially serving colonial elites, English has gradually become embedded in the region's education systems, with its influence extending across countries like India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, and the Maldives. However, this evolution has been accompanied by significant challenges. The dominance of English in education has perpetuated socio-economic divides, with access to English-medium instruction often being limited to the elite, leaving marginalized communities at a disadvantage. Pedagogically, the reliance on English as a medium of instruction has created linguistic barriers for many students, particularly in multilingual and rural settings, further exacerbating educational inequalities.

Despite these challenges, English remains a powerful tool for international communication, higher education, and professional advancement in South Asia. The growing demand for English-medium instruction underscores its perceived value, yet it also raises concerns about the marginalization of local languages and cultures. As South Asian countries continue to expand English in their educational policies, a balanced approach that promotes multilingualism while recognizing the significance of English is essential. Policymakers must address the inherent socio-political contradictions and work towards creating inclusive educational frameworks that accommodate both the global aspirations tied to English and the cultural and linguistic diversity that defines the region. The future of English in South Asian education will depend on navigating these tensions in a way that fosters equity, social justice, and sustainable development.

As South Asian countries continue to navigate the complexities of globalization and the demand for English proficiency, the region stands at a crossroads. The decisions made today regarding EMI will have long-lasting impacts on the educational opportunities available to future generations. Therefore, it is essential for all stakeholders—governments, educators, and communities—to collaborate in developing comprehensive and inclusive policies that not only embrace English as a tool for global engagement but also celebrate and protect the rich linguistic

heritage of the region. By doing so, South Asian countries can create an educational landscape that is equitable, accessible, and reflective of the diverse identities that characterize the region.

References

Alamyar, M. N. (2017). Emerging roles of English in Afghanistan. *Intesol Journal*, 14(1), 1–24.

Bernaisch, T., & Lange, C. (2012). The typology of focus marking in South Asian Englishes. *Indian Linguistics,* 73 ,1–18.

Bhatia, K. T. (2022). English language policy in multilingual India. In E. L. Low & A. Pakir (Eds.). *English in East and South Asia: Policy, features and language in use* (pp. 1–16). Routledge.

Boruah, P. B., & Mohanty, A. K. (2023). Social construction of EMI in India: Situating EMI within the multilingual education paradigm. In *English as a Medium of Instruction in South Asia* (pp. 76-93). Routledge.

British Council. (2016). *Social attitudes towards the English language in Bihar*. British Council.

Chaudhury, T. A., & Rafique, R. (2023). Effectiveness of English Medium Instruction (EMI) Courses at the Undergraduate Level in the English Department of a Public University. In *English as a Medium of Instruction in South Asia* (pp. 190-205). Routledge.

Dahal, B. K., & Gyawali, Y. P. (2022). Using English as a Medium of Instruction in EFL context in higher education. *Marsyangdi Journal*, 3(1), 72–81.

De Silva, K. M. (1981). *A History of Sri Lanka*. Berkeley.

Dendup, P.(2024). English Medium Instruction in the Bhutanese Education System: A Historical Journey. In *English as a Medium of Instruction in South Asia* (pp. 145-155). Routledge.

Dendup, T., & Onthanee, A. (2020). Effectiveness of cooperative learning on English communicative ability of 4th grade students in Bhutan. *International Journal of Instruction*, 13(1), 255–266.

Devkota, K. R. (2023). Multi-Layered Framework for Promoting Social Justice in English Education: EMI Policies and Practices in Nepal. In *English as a Medium of Instruction in South Asia* (pp. 287-303). Routledge.

Giri, R. A. (2015). The many faces of English in Nepal. *Asian Englishes*, 17(2), 94–115.

Giri, R. A. (2020). Nepali English. In K. Bolton, W. Botha, & A. Kirkpatrick (Eds.), *The handbook of Asian Englishes* (pp. 317–336). Wiley Blackwell.

Giri, R. A. (2011). Bhutan's language policy: Where does English stand? In L. Farrell, U. N. Sing, & R. Giri (Eds.), *English Language education in South asia: From policy to pedagogy*. Foundation Books.

Giri, R. A. (2023). The Changing Status and Role of English in Afghanistan. In *English as a Medium of Instruction in South Asia* (pp. 239-253). Routledge.

Giri, R. A., Padwad, A., & Kabir, M. M. N. (Eds.). (2024). *English as a medium of instruction in South Asia: Issues in equity and social justice*. Taylor & Francis.

Giri, R. A., Padwad, A., & Kabir, M. M. N. (2024). EMI in South Asia: The Ideological Underpinnings and Practical Considerations. In *English as a Medium of Instruction in South Asia* (pp. 21-30). Routledge.

Government of India. (2020). *National education policy.* https://static.pib.gov.in/WriteReadData/userfiles/NEP_Final_English_0 .pdf

Government of Pakistan (1973). *Constitution of Pakistan*. Govt. of Pakistan.

Götz, S. (2022). Epicentral influences of Indian English on Nepali English. *World Englishes*, *41*(3), 347-360.

Guha, R. (2021). *English language education in India: How aspirations for social mobility shape pedagogy.* Economic and Political Weekly-EPW Engage.

Gunesekera, M. (2005). *The Postcolonial Identity of Sri Lankan English*.

Haider, S., & Manan, S. A. (2022). English in Pakistan: Language policy, features, and present-day use. In E. L. Low & A. Pakir (Eds.*), English in East and South Asia: Policy, features and language in use* (pp. 242 256). Routledge.

Khadka, B. K. (2022). Development of ELT in Nepal: An Overview. *Journal of NELTA*, *27*(1-2), 124-140. https://doi.org/10.3126/nelta.v27i1-2.53199

Kraaz, M., & Bernaisch, T. (2022). Backchannels and the pragmatics of South Asian Englishes. *World Englishes*, *41*(2), 224-243.

Kaushik, R., & Khanna, A. L. (2023). English Language and (In) Equity: Seminal Issues Concerning Language-in-Education Policies and Practices in India. In *English as a Medium of Instruction in South Asia* (pp. 206-220). Routledge.

Lasagabaster, D. (2022). *English-medium instruction in higher education*. Cambridge University Press.

Liyanage, I. (2022). English language policy in Sri Lanka: Historical developments, current realities and future challenges. In Ee Ling Low & Anne Pakir (Eds.), *English in East and South Asia: Policy, features and language in use* (pp. 90–104). Routledge.

Low, E. L. (2022). English in East and South Asia in the post-Kachruvian era. In E. L. Low & A. Pakir (Eds.), *English in East and South Asia: Policy, features and language in use* (pp. 271–291). Routledge.

Lutfi, M. (2011). *Dhivehi raajjeyge school manhajaai thauleem* [School curriculum and education in the Maldives]. (n.p.).

Mahboob, A. (2022). English in Pakistan: Past, present, and future. In Ee Ling Low & Anne Pakir (Eds.), *English in East and South Asia: Policy, features and language in use* (pp. 75–89). Routledge.

Ministry of Education (MoE). (2010). National education policy 2010.

Mohamed, N. (2024). The Long Fingers of English: The Impact of EMI Policies on Non-EMI Courses in the Maldives. In *English as a Medium of Instruction in South Asia* (pp. 254-268). Routledge.

Mukherjee, J. (2007). Steady states in the evolution of New Englishes: Present-day Indian English as an equilibrium. *Journal of English Linguistics*, *35*(2), 157-187.

Ojha, L. P. (2018). Shifting the medium of instruction to English in community schools: Policies, practices and challenges in Nepal. In D. Hayes (Ed.*), English language teaching in Nepal: Research, reflection and practice* (pp. 189–198). Kathmandu, Nepal: British Council.

Orfan, S. N. (2020). Afghan undergraduate students' attitudes towards learning English. *Cogent Arts & Humanities*, 7: 1–23. https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2020.1723831 .

Orfan, S. N. (2023). Lecturers' perceptions of English medium instruction in Afghanistan's public higher education. *Issues in Educational Research*, 33(1), 247–265. https://www.iier.org.au/iier33/orfan.pdf

Padwad, A. (2023). English, EMI, and Social Justice: The Indian (Hi) Story. In *English as a Medium of Instruction in South Asia* (pp. 115-127). Routledge.

Pandey, S.B. (2020). English in Nepal. *World Englishes*, 39,500–513.

Roshid, M. M., Zilany, G. K., & Afroz, N. (2024). Medium of Education and Inequality in University Admission Tests: Exploring the Case of a Flagship University in Bangladesh. In *English as a Medium of Instruction in South Asia* (pp. 57-75). Routledge.

Sah, P. K. (2021). Reproduction of nationalist and neoliberal ideologies in Nepal's language and literacy policies. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, 41(2), 238–252.

Sah, P. K. (2022). English medium instruction in South Asia's multilingual schools: Unpacking the dynamics of ideological orientations, policy/practices, and democratic questions. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 25(2), 742–755.

Schilk, M., Bernaisch, T., & Mukherjee, J. (2012). Mapping unity and diversity in South Asian English lexicogrammar. *Mapping unity and diversity world-wide: Corpus-based studies of New Englishes*, 137-166.

Shamim, F. (2023). EMI, ELT, and Social Justice: Case of Pakistan. In *English as a Medium of Instruction in South Asia* (pp. 94-112). Routledge.

Sharma, A. (2022). English as a facilitator of social mobility in India: The instrumentality vs. identity debate in language policy research. *English Today*, 38(2), 88–91.

Shrestha, P. N., Rahman, S., & Shrestha, B. B. (2024). English as a Medium of Instruction and Social Justice in Higher Education in Bangladesh and Nepal: A Capability Perspective. In *English as a Medium of Instruction in South Asia* (pp. 171-189). Routledge.

Sivaji, K., & Iyer, M. S. (2023). Trajectory of English Medium Instruction in a Post-War Community: A Historical Perspective from Jaffna, Sri Lanka. In *English as a Medium of Instruction in South Asia* (pp. 156-168). Routledge.

Sultana, S. (2024). EMI in the Multilingual Ecology of South Asia: Historical Development, Shifting Paradigms, and Transformative Practices. In *English as a Medium of Instruction in South Asia* (pp. 31-56). Routledge.

Tshering, K. (2020). The status and role of English as a language of administration in Bhutan. *Journal of World Englishes and Educational Practices*, 2(4), 31–43.