How is the development and revitalization of the languages of linguistic minorities officially addressed in India? What policies deal with multilingual education and what impact have they had on linguistic minorities? Looking from a language policy perspective and citing the work of current Indian socio-linguists, we will examine the development over time of India’s language policies pertaining to linguistic minorities as revealed in the Census, Constitution and national education policies.

The number of languages in India remains a political question and census categorization of minority languages impacts that number. Within the Indian Constitution we see many safeguards for linguistic minorities. How have their rights, both linguistic and educational, been addressed? Over the years national education policies have recommended such strategies as the Three Language Formula and made recommendations regarding education for linguistic minorities. Above these questions is our most important question: What actually happens in education for linguistic minorities in India? Issues include national versus state jurisdiction, positive rights versus negative rights, linguistic versus relative minorities, the transitions from one language to another in the school, standardization’s impact, and natural bilingualism versus planned bilingualism.

In the problem of providing access to education through the mother tongue and access to higher education and economic advancement though the more powerful languages, could the observed de facto multilingual education be part of the solution? Let’s consider the possibilities together, keeping in mind the words of Khubchandani (2001: 43): “When dealing with plural societies, we shall do well to realize the risks involved in uniform solutions.”

**Key terms:** language planning, linguistic minorities, multilingual education