



Register Number:

Date:

**ST. JOSEPH'S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), BANGALORE- 27**  
**BA/B.Sc/BSW/B.Com - III SEMESTER**  
**END SEMESTER EXAMINATION- OCTOBER 2019**  
**GE - 314- REGULAR**

**TIME: 2 1/2 Hours**

**Max marks- 70**

**INSTRUCTIONS**

1. This paper contains **THREE** printed pages and **TWO** sections.
2. You will lose marks for exceeding word limits.
3. You are allowed to use a dictionary during the examination.
4. This paper is for students who have opted for **REGULAR- BA/B.Sc/BSW/B.Com**

**SECTION A**

**I A. Read the excerpt, "What Hindi keeps hidden" by Sagar from the Caravan**

I was born into Hindi, and brought up in it. It was the language of my parents and siblings, my cousins and friends, all our neighbours in the Dalit ghetto in the small town in Bihar where I spent my childhood. It is still the only language I use with them. I studied for ten years in a Hindi-medium school that followed the curriculum of the Bihar state board. After a two-year intermediate course in Patna, I moved to a journalism college in coastal Karnataka. There the classes were in English, and the students spoke it on campus; the locals outside spoke Kannada or Tulu. I was not good with either. Stranded, I worked hard on my English. With every sporadic controversy over the imposition of Hindi, I remember what I have learnt in which language. This time the storm was over a draft national education policy, which called for compulsory instruction in Hindi, English and a regional language for all. Many in the non-Hindi-speaking states protested the attempt to force Hindi upon them, and the government withdrew its proposition. Now the winners of this latest skirmish rest, happy to have forced back a threatened incursion, but I cannot rest with them. I still worry about what is left to the many who already live and think in Hindi.

Once, I wondered why my awakening did not come in Hindi. But the more I learn about the language, the less I am surprised that it never did. I realise now that my upbringing in Hindi did not just delay my discovery of Ambedkar, it kept me from understanding the very concepts of justice and equality. It is not that discovering these things in Hindi was absolutely impossible—Ambedkar is translated into the language, for instance, and it has some thinkers and writers of its own concerned with social justice—but, growing up in a

Hindi home with a Hindi education in the Hindi belt, the chances of me finding them were impossibly small. This was not an accident. It had everything to do with who created the language, who developed and propagated it, and whose stamp remains deepest upon it today.

Hindi carried Brahminical and communal impulses from its inception. Later, its installation as a dominant language came to be a demand in the nationalist movement, though even then this was highly contentious. In school, we were taught in detail about Mohandas Gandhi, and made to read his autobiography. From this, we understood that the Brahminical values of vegetarianism and celibacy were probably keys to success. Ambedkar existed only in a few lines in our General Knowledge classes, and as nothing beyond the man who wrote the constitution.

In Journalism college, for the first time, the constitution Ambedkar wrote was considered worth serious study, though Ambedkar himself still was not. This unlocked a window in my mind—I saw that knowledge could be associated with reason instead of religion. Still, reading the constitution in the limited light of what I knew only reinforced a trust in the government’s goodness and authority. In debates on Kashmir, I supported the government and the armed forces religiously, and parroted the news reports I was watching and reading. When the government launched Operation Green Hunt, I truly believed it was only killing Maoists. I could not imagine its costs on Adivasi lives.

Hindi carries a blighted legacy. Of course, many other languages do too. English, for one, has the troubling history of colonialism behind it, and has been an instrument of elitism and caste privilege itself. But it could show me things that Hindi keeps hidden because those who have power over Hindi, who have shaped its history, vocabulary, literature and curricula, do not have equal power over English as well. I do not want English to replace Hindi, just as I do not want Hindi to replace other languages. But any language is at its best when it opens minds rather than closes them. Hindi can do more of that one day for all the hundreds of millions of people who speak and think and live in it. If that is to happen, we have to look honestly at its present and past, and ask what we want for Hindi’s future.

**I B. Answer the following questions in 150 words. (4x10=40)**

1. Do you consider the government’s move to propagate Hindi an imposition over the rights of the people to speak the language that they are born into? Explain your views.
2. The draft National Educational Policy, proposes mandates compulsory education in Hindi and English, and a third language “of the student’s choice”. In what ways would it have changed your school life if it was imposed?
3. The author in this article states that, “even English too had a troubling history of colonialism but it clearly showed what Hindi had kept as hidden”. What are your thoughts on this statement? Explain how it has affected your mother tongue?

4. "Hindi can do more of that one day for all the hundreds of millions of people who speak and think and live in it". What do you think the writer means by this?

## SECTION B

**II A. Examine the following excerpts and answer the questions in 100 words. (2x5=10)**

1. "*Hindi rashtrabhasha hai. Hindi ke bina Bharat mein aage badhna sambhav nahi hai.*" – Venkaiah Naidu, Vice President of India. (Hindi is our national language. It is not possible to survive in India (Bharat) without Hindi.) How true is that statement with reference to the scenario in our country? Do you consider it is necessary to know Hindi to progress in India?

2. RTO Application to PM was rejected as it was in Tamil.

According to the RTI activist, A. Brama, whose application to the PMO seeking information on the demonetization process was deemed not valid as, in the very words of a communication from the Central assistant public information officer, "the application has not been made either in English or in Hindi, so it cannot be treated as valid as this office is located in Delhi. Can any government office deny the right to information on the basis of the language that the individual identifies with?"

**II B. 1. "Language is an emotive issue for many people". Should India declare all languages as national language? What will happen if all the regional languages are incorporated in the running of the government directives? Respond in 200 words. (1x20=20)**