

# MBBS IN HINDI LOST IN TRANSLITERATION?

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“The aim is to ensure that students who have finished their schooling in regional languages are able to make a smooth transition into the tough medical graduation programme,” Mr. Sarang added.

Madhya Pradesh plans to make textbooks in Devanagari script available to all the 13 government and 11 private medical colleges. The State is working to add transliterated textbooks for second year MBBS students as well.

So far, two other State Governments — Tamil Nadu and Uttarakhand — have also promised to offer MBBS programmes in regional languages.

## State’s responsibility

Chamu Krishna Shastry, chairman of the Bharatiya Bhasha Samiti, said that education is a State subject, and it is the mandate of the State governments to get textbooks translated.

Each State has Granth Academies, which are mandated with the translation of textbooks in higher education. There are a total of 22 Granth Academies across the country. Apart from this, State Sahitya Academies are also involved in translation of textbooks of higher education. Until 1985, the University Grants Commission was involved in aiding translations. However, the scheme was stopped after that.

At the Central level, the Commission for Scientific and Technical Terminology (CSTT) brings out glossaries and dictionaries of scientific terms. Working under the aegis of the Education Ministry, the Commission is supposed to collaborate with State governments, universities, regional textbook boards and State Granth Academies to produce university-level textbooks and reference materials in Hindi and other Indian languages with the use of standard terminology as evolved by the CSTT.

“Till date, CSTT has standardised the terminology of about eight lakh technical terms in different subjects and in different languages,” said the Commission’s chairperson Girinath Jha. However, as far as medical terminology is concerned, the CSTT has only translated about 60,000 words so far.

## Latin medical terms, a key issue

One of the key issues flagged by doctors is that a lot of medical terms are not really in English, but in Latin. “In basic science, most of the terms are in Latin. Additionally, learning in medicine is a continuous process, and is done through conference research papers, lectures, seminars etc. Currently 99.99% of this is in English and especially when it comes to overseas or Indian faculty, they all teach in English. So, students training in native languages will be at a distinct disadvantage. In the long run, this will have an adverse effect on patient care,” said Rajeev Jayadevan, senior consultant gastroenterologist, professor, and former president of the Indian Medical Association in Cochin.

Doctors who have studied MBBS in English-medium programmes after having completed their schooling in regional languages emphasised that uniformity of language is vital.

“It takes a year to make the transition to English language. But after that, since all the education, tests, research papers and seminars are in this language, the progress is steady. The regional language option is a stop-gap arrangement,” said Dr. Rahul Chakravarty, president of the Association of Resident Doctors at PGI Chandigarh. “Besides, in case we want to work outside India or even interstate, studying in a regional language doesn’t help in any way. We may also have to clear a language proficiency test in English to work abroad.”

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