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Challenges and Transformations in the Teaching Practices of Hindi Teachers in Mizoram

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Abstract

This research paper examines the experiences of teachers instructing Hindi as a third language in classrooms across Mizoram, as well as the difficulties they encounter. This study identifies the key linguistic, cultural, institutional, and financial challenges faced by Hindi teachers in Mizoram. Based on these challenges and shared needs, a training program was organized, and its relevance and effectiveness in addressing pedagogical, linguistic, and cultural issues were evaluated. A 'mixed-methods' approach was employed for data collection. The data was collected into two phases. In the first phase, Focus Group Discussions were conducted to identify the challenges faced by Hindi teachers. In the second phase, a questionnaire was distributed to gain a deeper understanding of these challenges and to assess the impact of the training program. This study involved 168 Hindi teachers from various schools across Mizoram. The findings reveal that Hindi education in Mizoram faces numerous obstacles, including systemic delays, curriculum inconsistencies, inadequate training, and socio-cultural and political apathy. Teachers also reported additional issues, such as being assigned the task of teaching other subjects and having a limited command of the Hindi language themselves. Furthermore, they reported significant personal progress achieved through their participation in the training program.

Introduction

India's linguistic diversity is unparalleled, with 22 scheduled languages recognized by the Constitution and hundreds of other languages spoken across the country (Census of India, 2011). In Mizoram, Mizo (also known as Lushai/Lusei) is the dominant language spoken by the majority of the population (Bentham et al., n.d.; Chhangte, 1993; Devi et al., 2022). The linguistic dynamics of Mizoram reflect a complex interplay between local languages and Hindi, which is prevalent in most regions of the country and is often viewed as a symbol of a broader Indian identity (Agrawal & Dey, 2023; Government of Mizoram, 2010; Saxena, 1997). Furthermore, while Mizo, along with various tribal languages, poses a challenge to Hindi within the state, it also establishes a unique framework for the integration and teaching of Hindi in communication outside the state.

Teaching Hindi in Mizoram, a state in Northeast India where the majority of people do not speak Hindi, presents both challenges and significant opportunities (Dwivedi, 2023; Dwivedi & Chuaungo, 2023). As one of India's official languages, Hindi serves as a means of national integration and promotes communication among communities speaking different languages (Kumar, 2019; NCERT, 2005; Rajput, 2024; Swamy, 2021). The purpose of introducing Hindi in non-Hindi-speaking states is to promote national integration and increase access to more socio-economic opportunities (Kumar, 2019; Tiwari, 2023; Verma, 2024).

However, Hindi faces resistance as a second, third or official language in non-Hindi states due to historical, cultural and political reasons (Debbarma, 2025; Dua, 1993; Dua, 1994; Dwivedi, 2024; Khan and Jayaraj, 2024; Ranjan, 2021). As is the case in Mizoram, where Mizo is the dominant language, the introduction of Hindi education needs to consider the cultural, linguistic and infrastructural factors of the state (Bari & Goswami, 2024; Bhattacharjee, 2021). Moreover, English is widely used as a second language in Mizoram (Lalremtluanga, 2020; Venkateswaran, 1995), which complicates the adoption and acceptance of Hindi (Deshpande, 2000; Dua, 1993; Dwivedi, 2024). In Mizoram, English often takes precedence over the local language, Mizo, as the medium of instruction, just as in many other Indian states and around the world, due to its global importance (Lalchhanhima, 2024; Lalremtluanga, 2020; Lalrinmawia & Zomingliani, 2024; Nagarajan, 2021; Singh, 2022). This environment presents significant challenges for Hindi teachers, who must navigate both linguistic and cultural differences while attempting to teach the language effectively in a region where Hindi is not commonly spoken (Dwivedi, 2023; Tiwari, 2025).

The linguistically complex educational landscape of Mizoram is deeply influenced by the state's cultural heritage and diverse linguistic environment (Banerjee & Mete, 2024; Government of Mizoram, 2022). The strong historical presence of the Mizo language and the general public's aversion to Hindi have made the acceptance and integration of Hindi as a third language even more challenging (Agarwal & Dey, 2023; Aribam, 2024; Gurudev, 1996; Lalmuansangkimi, 2015). However, recognizing the potential of Hindi to promote wider communication and strengthen national unity, the Government of India has launched several initiatives to promote Hindi education in non-Hindi-speaking areas (Garg, 2024; Hadke, 2021; Ministry of Culture, 2025). Similar efforts are underway in Mizoram.

In 2011, 1,305 Hindi teachers were recruited in Mizoram under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) to further develop Hindi language teaching (Government of Mizoram, 2017; Rajya Sabha, 2018). The government has appointed Hindi teachers to promote Hindi in the state, but these teachers face several challenges such as irregularities in salary disbursement, employment instability and limited access to professional development opportunities (Dwivedi, 2023; Government of Mizoram, 2022; The Times of India, 2016, August 12).

Hindi teachers in Mizoram face several challenges arising from linguistic, cultural, systemic and financial factors (Bebei, 2023; Dwivedi, 2023; Mathur, 2001). One of the problems faced by Hindi teachers is related to the structural differences between Hindi and Mizo that create difficulties in learning Hindi (Bentham et al., n.d.; Chhangte, 1993; Dwivedi & Chuango, 2023b; Fanai, 2015; Zedeng, 2015). In

particular, this structural difference between Hindi and Mizo makes it particularly difficult for students to learn Hindi effectively (Dwivedi, 2024; Dua, 1994; Ranjan, 2021). Additionally, insufficient teaching resources, a lack of a positive environment for Hindi in schools, shortage of time, non-qualified and untrained teachers, substitute teachers, a lack of motivation, teachers' attitude, an unsupportive classroom environment, and limited institutional support exacerbate these challenges (Amin & Sharma, 2023; Beibei, 2023; Dwivedi & Chuaungo, 2023a; Nandi, 2021). Financial instability remains a significant concern, as Hindi teachers recruited under the CSS have faced job insecurity and inconsistent salary payments, which affect their morale and teaching effectiveness (Dwivedi, 2023; Government of Mizoram, 2022; The Times of India, 2016, 12 August). Another issue is the late introduction of Hindi in the school curriculum. Hindi as a subject, typically introduced in Class V, a time which many teachers argue is too late for effective language acquisition (Garg, 2024; Lalhmachhuani, 2019).

Linguistic and cultural backgrounds shape the professional identity of language teachers (Liu, 2022; Kumaravadivelu, 2012; Phan, 2007; Varghese et al., 2005; Zhang & Kim, 2024). In Mizoram, Hindi teachers often experience professional isolation due to the limited prioritisation of Hindi in schools (Mason & Matas, 2016; Nazari et al., 2021; Saxena, 1997; Smala et al., 2021). Research emphasises the need for ongoing professional growth in facilitating teachers' ability to adjust to changing pedagogical practices and improving their teaching approaches (Abakah, 2023; Camral & Sumayo, 2025; Germuth, 2018; Mgaiwa & Milinga, 2023; Okumu & Opio, 2023). Short-term training programs have been recognised as effective measures for enhancing pedagogical skills and the self-esteem of teachers (Freeman, 2001; Flores Rivera et al., 2021; Mena-Guacas et al., 2023). A structured training program can resolve second-language acquisition challenges by integrating bilingual teaching practices (Boese et al., 2023; Kumaravadivelu, 2003; Polanco & Baker, 2018). Training programs that focus on culturally responsive teaching practices can significantly influence the learning of a second or third language, particularly in environments where a single language is dominant (Johnson, 2009; Markey et al., 2023; Samuels, 2018). By developing an appreciation for multiculture, these initiatives not only make of diverse cultures, these initiatives not only make language learning more inclusive but also enrich the educational experience for everyone involved in this process. Besides, interactive and technology-based instruction workshops can maximize student participation and improve learning outcomes (Carstens et al., 2021; Godsk & Moller, 2025; Khalid et al., 2023; Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Vera, 2023). Empirical evidence further indicates that teachers' self-reflection and peer collaboration are essential for professional development, as they provide opportunities for sharing experiences and best practices (Beatty, 2000; Cole et al., 2022; Gudeta, 2022; Juma, 2024; Masharipova, 2025; Tobin et al., 2024).

Extensive research on second and third language acquisition has highlighted the importance of context-based pedagogical approaches (Ellis, 2005; Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011; Sanz & Lado, 2008). The findings from the studies emphasize that teachers must be flexible, culturally responsive, and skilled in diverse teaching strategies to effectively engage students from multilingual backgrounds in the teaching-learning process (Feng et al., 2025; Lorenz et al., 2021; Markey et al., 2023; Osipova & Lao, 2022; Samuels, 2018). In a state like Mizoram where the three-language formula has been adopted, there is linguistic diversity based on clan, and people belonging to different regions of the country are working and living with their families; adopting translanguaging approaches that leverage students' existing linguistic knowledge has been shown to improve language acquisition and promote student engagement (Antony et al., 2024; Chaika, 2023; Garcia & Wei, 2014; Storheil & Iversen, 2023).

For the advancement of Hindi education in Mizoram, a well-crafted policy framework is required; one that recognises the unique linguistic background in the region and, based on this, provides necessary support to both teachers and students in the process of learning and teaching Hindi (Dwivedi, 2023). To strengthen Hindi learning in such environments, collaborative efforts among local communities, educational institutions, and government agencies are essential. This approach is particularly important in places that are not inherently conducive to Hindi language learning. Such steps can elevate the standards of instruction and effectively maintain student interest in the subject (Dua, 1994).

The Hindi language environment in Mizoram, the experiences of Hindi teachers, and their professional identities are shaped by a complex mix of linguistic, cultural, and systemic influences. A review of the literature reveals key challenges faced by Hindi teachers in teaching and learning outside Hindi-speaking areas. These studies also highlight promising opportunities for improvement, including providing necessary training, implementing supportive policies, and developing new pedagogical approaches. Drawing on research on second and third language learning, bilingual education, and institutional collaboration, this study presents a comprehensive theoretical framework based on the literature to analyse the challenges faced by Hindi teachers in Mizoram and the impact of professional development efforts on their work practices. The analysis of the findings from existing studies aims to inform the development of more effective and inclusive Hindi language teaching in linguistically diverse contexts, and to examine in depth the proposed solutions to ongoing challenges.

Research Questions

The research conducted by the investigators aims to examine the status, experiences and challenges of Hindi teachers in Mizoram and evaluate the impact of a one-week training programme organised for their professional development. The research questions involved in

the study are as follows:

- What are the major linguistic, cultural, institutional and financial challenges faced by Hindi teachers in Mizoram?
- How effective is the one-week training programme organised to address the pedagogical, linguistic and cultural challenges faced by Hindi teachers?
- What are the views of Hindi teachers about the effectiveness of the training programme?

Method and Materials

In this study, a mixed-methods research design was utilized, integrating both qualitative and quantitative methods in a two-phase data collection process. In the first phase, qualitative methods were used through focus group discussions (FGDs) to explore the experiences and challenges faced by Hindi teachers in Mizoram. The second phase combined qualitative and quantitative methods by administering a semi-structured questionnaire to explore the challenges faced by Hindi teachers as well as to evaluate the effectiveness of a one-week training programme aimed at addressing these challenges.

To participate in the training programme, a total of 168 Hindi teachers from various schools across Mizoram were selected for this study. This selection process was completely done by the School Education Department, Mizoram, and there was no role for the Faculty Development Centre (FDC), Mizoram University. The chosen participants formed a heterogeneous group, with ages ranging from 25 to 63 years. The teaching experience of the teachers included in the study also varied considerably, ranging from newly appointed teachers to teachers with up to 34 years of classroom experience as Hindi teachers in state schools.

Following selection, all these teachers participated in a short-term training program at a training center designated by the FDC as part of the follow-up process. In accordance with the study's objectives, data collection for this study was conducted in two phases from all participants. In the first phase of data collection, FGDs were conducted to gather information about the challenges faced by Hindi teachers in Mizoram. A total of five training sessions were organized for the selected teachers, with each session having 30 to 38 participants. In each session, participants were divided into four to five small groups to ensure effective and easy discussion. Each focus group discussion was guided by a set of open-ended questions designed to elicit answers about specific challenges faced by Hindi teachers in Mizoram. The questions designed for this purpose covered a variety of areas, such as language barriers in the classroom, pedagogical challenges in teaching Hindi as a third language, cultural and ideological barriers faced by teachers, the availability and effectiveness of teaching resources, and institutional support and professional development opportunities.

To ensure smooth interaction during the FGDs, discussions were facilitated by participants who knew all three languages: Hindi, English, and Mizo. This multilingual approach encouraged participants to share their experiences and thoughts in the language they felt most comfortable with, resulting in richer and more detailed responses.

After the focus group discussions, a structured one-week training programme was held by FDC, Mizoram University, to address the key challenges identified during the discussions. The training sessions for Hindi teachers were centred on effective pedagogical approaches, methods and strategies for teaching Hindi in a multilingual setting, techniques for overcoming linguistic and cultural barriers, the role of Hindi across the curriculum, development, utilisation, and improvisation of teaching aids and resources for Hindi classes, strategies for engaging students and increasing interest in Hindi language learning, development of an adequate lesson plan for prose, poetry, grammar and composition, professional development and policy awareness.

A second phase of data collection involved the use of a semi-structured questionnaire to evaluate the effectiveness of the training sessions. After completing the training program, each participant was asked to prepare an ideal lesson plan and answer a semi-structured questionnaire to assess the effectiveness of the training program. The questionnaire contained a total of 34 questions designed to assess both subjective and objective outcomes of the training. On a broad analysis of the questions, the questions included in the semi-structured questionnaire were as follows:

- Closed-ended questions that assess participants’ perceived improvement in their teaching methodologies.
- Open-ended questions that enable teachers to reflect on their experiences and the applicability of the training within their classroom settings.
- Questions that evaluate the relevance and effectiveness of the training materials and strategies provided.

This mixed-methods design gave a detailed insight into the influence of the training sessions on teachers' confidence, instructional strategies, and overall professional growth.

The information obtained from the focus group discussions and semi-structured questionnaires was analysed using both qualitative and quantitative methods to produce factual and reliable outcomes as well as rich, detailed and valid processed data (Verhoef & Casebeer, 1997). The investigators used thematic analysis to elucidate prevalent themes and patterns in the qualitative responses obtained from the focus group discussions and the open-ended questionnaire. Descriptive statistics (percentages and frequencies) were used to analyse the responses obtained from the closed-ended questions of the semi-structured questionnaire. This dual strategy allowed a more focused and evidence-based evaluation of the effectiveness of the training programme in providing a clearer view of the problems faced by Hindi teachers as well as in addressing them.

Interpretation of Focus Group Discussion Data

The focus group discussions conducted before the training programme provided valuable insights into the challenges faced by Hindi teachers in Mizoram as well as possible solutions. The responses expressed during the discussions revealed systemic problems, pedagogical difficulties and socio-cultural barriers affecting Hindi teaching and learning. The following explanation categorises the findings based on themes.

Systemic Challenges in Hindi Education

- **A concern repeatedly raised by many teachers regarding Hindi is that the introduction of Hindi as a subject in the curriculum from Class 5 is quite delayed. By this stage, students have already developed proficiency in Mizo and English, making it a bit challenging for them to understand the basics of Hindi. There was a consensus among Hindi teachers that Hindi should be introduced in Mizoram schools from Class 3 to establish a strong foundation.**
- **Teachers do not receive the same recognition or support as teachers teaching other subjects in school. Many teachers are employed under CSS, which does not provide them with job security, and there are gaps in their employment. In addition, some teachers are appointed without fulfilling the minimum qualifications, which adversely affects the overall quality of Hindi teaching. The participants advocated for regularisation of Hindi teacher posts and greater recognition from the state government to increase motivation and job security.**
- **The lack of quality institutions for Hindi is a significant factor hindering the language's progress in Mizoram. Without dedicated institutions, students are deprived of exposure to an immersive Hindi learning environment.**

Pedagogical and Curriculum Challenges

- Teachers discovered that the Class V Hindi textbook was overly advanced for beginners, which hindered students' ability to understand lessons.
- A **large number of poems** are difficult for students to understand.
- **Inadequate focus on communication skills** makes it difficult for students to use Hindi in daily life.
- The suggested solution is to **revise Hindi textbooks**, emphasising **practical, communication-based learning** rather than literary-heavy content.
- **As Hindi is introduced late, teachers must begin with the basics (vowels and consonants) while also addressing the syllabus, which becomes overwhelming for both teachers and students. The failure to complete the syllabus effectively results in low student engagement and poor learning outcomes.**
- Teachers reported that they are frequently asked to teach other subjects during staff shortages, yet these assignments are not officially documented. This not only distracts them from their focus on Hindi education but also diminishes the significance of their role as Hindi teachers.

Sociocultural and Attitudinal Barriers

- **One of the most significant findings is that students and parents do not prioritise Hindi because it is not included in board examinations. As Hindi is not considered a necessary subject for academic advancement in Mizoram, students view it as unnecessary, reducing motivation to learn it. To address this issue, teachers suggested including it as a subject in the tenth-level board exams to increase the importance of Hindi in the curriculum and among students.**
- **The dominance of Mizo and English in the state creates an environment where Hindi is not considered an essential language for Mizoram to learn. Language proficiency, which relies on practice, results in students having limited opportunities to speak Hindi outside the classroom, which hinders their language proficiency and makes it difficult to speak the language. This impacts their ability to remember words.**

- **A major concern raised during the second training session was the lack of Braille materials for students with visual impairments, which hinders access to Hindi education. Teachers suggested that to increase inclusivity in learning, Braille resources in Hindi should be developed and made available in schools.**
- **Teachers cited the late introduction of Hindi, lack of institutional support, and low student participation in Hindi classes as key issues. Early introduction of Hindi as a subject and language, improvements to curriculum and textbooks, and increased government support could offer a path to improving Hindi education in the state.**

Analysis and Interpretation of Data Collected in the Second Phase:

Of the total 168 Hindi teachers in the state, only one teacher was found to be untrained, while the remaining 167 teachers were trained. Regarding in-service training, 79 Hindi teachers (47%) reported not having attended any training programs. In contrast, the majority (53%) reported receiving in-service training; however, they also clarified that this training was not relevant to Hindi teaching. Although the percentage of teachers who reported receiving in-service training was high, 47% had not participated in any professional development programs. Furthermore, the training experiences reported by those who had participated were largely unrelated to the pedagogical strategies required for teaching Hindi.

Table 1

Challenges Faced by Hindi Teachers in Mizoram in the Teaching and Learning Process

Problems	Yes	No	Can't say
Lack of interest among students for Hindi	77.4%	11.3%	11.3%
Lack of interest among Hindi teachers for Hindi	38.1%	50.6%	11.3%
Lack of interest among other teachers for Hindi	61.3%	27.4%	11.3%
Lack of interest among Parents for Hindi	64.9%	22%	13.1%
Lack of interest of the Government in Hindi	79.2%	16.1%	4.8%
Untrained Teachers	7.7%	86.3%	6%
Students don't get a chance to speak Hindi	28.6%	59.5%	11.9%
Only writing and reading are emphasized in the classroom; no other skills are	44%	47%	8.9%
Students face Fear and hesitation in speaking Hindi	62.7%	30.7%	6.6%
Lack of a Hindi language environment in the classroom	42.9%	45.2%	11.9%
Knowledge of the mother tongue hinders speaking Hindi	76.8%	16.1%	7.1%
Being a Hindi speaker for a short time is tough	63.7%	29.8%	6.5%

Table 1 illustrates the multifaceted challenges faced by Hindi teachers in Mizoram. Explaining the problems, 77.4% of teachers reported a lack of interest in Hindi among students, while 64.9% also observed a similar lack of interest among parents. This finding indicates that motivation and cultural factors profoundly influence the language learning process. Furthermore, 79.2% of teachers believed that the government itself has no significant interest in promoting Hindi, resulting in little institutional support.

Surprisingly, 38.1% of teachers admitted a lack of interest in Hindi despite being Hindi teachers themselves. This statistic points to low professional morale among teachers, perhaps due to their perceived neglect by the system or their lack of linguistic background in the Hindi language. Conversely, a large majority (86.3%) completely rejected the notion that their problems in teaching Hindi were due to their lack of training. Another problem they reported was that 62.7% of students felt nervous and hesitant when expressing themselves in Hindi. This suggests that challenges are not limited to a lack of training, but are also linked to other factors, such as the classroom environment and students' confidence levels.

Additionally, 76.8% of respondents reported that interference from students' mother tongue hinders their proficiency in Hindi, and 63.7% indicated that a lack of exposure to Hindi in daily life hinders language learning. These findings reflect attitudinal and pedagogical issues and point to the importance of comprehensive policy, curriculum design, and community reforms.

In addition, participants were also asked about the challenges they face as Hindi teachers. Most notably, they cited students' inability to develop listening, reading, speaking, and writing skills, their lack of interest in Hindi, and their overall attitude toward the subject.

Respondent No. 2- *In Mizo society, the absence of Hindi as a spoken language poses significant challenges for students.*

Respondent No. 43- *Students realize they only need to study Hindi for three to four years and do not plan a future in it; therefore, they pay less attention to Hindi.*

Respondent No. 98- *Many students feel shy when it comes to using the Hindi language, largely because it is not widely accepted in Mizo society. This societal stigma creates a conflict, leading to a reluctance among students to express themselves in Hindi. As a result, the vibrant use of Hindi diminishes, affecting not only their confidence in the language but also the cultural richness that comes with it.*

Respondent No. 156- *As it is the students' third language, they start learning it in fifth grade by learning the alphabet. Therefore, it becomes challenging for students to achieve proficiency in the Hindi language.*

Teachers were also asked about the specific challenges they face as Hindi teachers in their interactions with their colleagues. Each teacher shared a unique set of concerns. The challenges they shared with their colleagues, including the lack of consistent use of Hindi in their conversations, negative attitudes toward the Hindi language, and a general lack of interest in it, were largely similar to the challenges they face in their interactions with other stakeholders. Some Hindi teachers also mentioned that even among their colleagues, Hindi teachers do not receive the same level of respect as other teachers.

After asking questions related to teachers, we also wanted to learn about the challenges they face from parents or guardians. Most teachers replied that parents' negligence towards Hindi is a significant issue because the home is the first place where children receive proper motivation and guidance. Some key responses include:

Respondent No. 52- *Since Hindi is not a subject included in the board examination, parents also show little interest or relevance in learning it. They argue that English is an international language with ample opportunities, so they prefer to choose English over Hindi. The second preferred language for them is Mizo, as proficiency in it is highly required in the Mizo context.*

Respondent No. 113- *Parents don't show any interest in Hindi; as a result, their wards also lack enthusiasm for learning Hindi, whether as a subject or as a language.*

Respondent No. 167- *Parents lack a background in the Hindi subject or language, so they are unable to assist their children even if they wish to. Additionally, since Hindi is not included in the board exams, they are reluctant to seek separate tuition for it because they do not understand its usefulness.*

Table 2

Problems Hindi teachers face in Hindi classes

Problems	Yes	No
Insufficient academic knowledge to tackle the situation of Hindi teaching	59.5%	40.5%
Fluency in Hindi speaking	60.7%	39.3%

The table above indicates two significant findings. While 59.5% of teachers believed that their academic background was adequate to teach Hindi in Mizoram, 40.5% did not, which indicates a stark need for continuous academic enrichment. Similarly, 60.7% stated that they could speak Hindi fluently, leaving almost 40% who are not confident about their fluency, a cause for concern among language teachers. The findings indicate a need to enhance the linguistic proficiency and content knowledge of Hindi teachers through continuous training.

Based on the mentioned challenges, a training program was organized for all the respondents, and further feedback from participants was taken. Some of the responses of participants are mentioned here.

Respondent No. 19- *In the training programme, appropriate interaction was ensured in all the sessions, and adequate time was allocated for this, whether it involved the resource persons or the participants themselves.*

Respondent No. 72- *The training programme helped in acquiring new skills and sharpening the existing ones.*

Respondent No. 112- *The knowledge level of all the resource persons invited to the programme was exceptional.*

Respondent No. 156- *All the resource persons invited to the programme were well prepared, which made it easier for me to understand all the topics covered.*

When respondents were asked about the strengths of the training programme, they highlighted the expertise, excellence, preparation, and sincerity of the resource persons, good interaction with them and others, the topics selected to enhance their understanding of teaching methods during the programme, suitable models and teaching aids employed, effective training approaches, and proper assistance in acquiring new skills as well as refining existing ones.

Some responses included the following:

Respondent No. 16- *The training programme was very useful, but it would have been better had it lasted longer. This would have provided an opportunity to learn additional topics.*

Respondent No. 33- *This training programme was excellent, and we learned many things that will be beneficial in the Hindi class.*

A few respondents also mentioned additional points related to the programme, such as the motivation provided to them, the hospitality they experienced during the training, the punctuality of the resource persons, and the facilities available at the Department of Education that greatly aided the programme, among others.

Table 3

Perception of Hindi Teachers regarding Training Programme

Items	Yes	No	Can't say
Concepts learned during training can be applied in the classroom	97%	1.2%	1.8%
Innovative methods from training can be utilized in Hindi classes	98.8%	0%	1.2%
Experiences of the training program can be used to develop a suitable lesson plan for Hindi classes	94%	1.8%	4.2%
Provided learning materials can be utilized for class	88.7%	4.2%	7.1%
Training will help to develop teaching-learning materials by topic	90.5%	3.6%	6%
Training experience will help to refine the teaching-learning materials	85.7%	7.1%	7.1%
Training will help make classes inclusive for multicultural and multilingual students	82.1%	4.2%	13.7%
Training helped to understand the status of students in third-language classes	98.8%	0	1.2%
Training will help you deal with the problems faced by students in the third language	88.1%	3%	8.9%
Training will help to guide students in class to learn the third language	97.6%	0	2.4%
The training program helped to gain knowledge in the lacking areas	100%	0	0
Training will help teachers foster positive Hindi attitudes in parents and students	79.2%	3.6%	17.3%
Training will enable students to liaise among government, school, teachers, parents, and students	68.5%	16.7%	14.9%
Training helps create better Hindi learning in your classes	87.5%	8.3%	4.2%
Training will help to develop a positive attitude toward learning Hindi in society	74.4%	15.5%	10.1%

Table 5 provides detailed information on the impact of the training program on Hindi teachers' classroom practices, their self-confidence in teaching Hindi, and their broader professional roles as third language teachers in the state. Teacher feedback clearly indicates that they found the training program a positive experience. Most teachers reported that the program increased their competence, awareness, and classroom preparedness.

A significant number of Hindi teachers (97%) agreed with the application of the concepts and skills learned during the training in their classrooms. This indicates that the training content was not only relevant but also practical, helping to bridge the often-observed gap between theoretical concepts and real-world classroom challenges. Another positive aspect of the training program was that 98.8% of teachers felt more confident in using new teaching methods in their Hindi classes. This means that the programme introduced teachers to

'learner-centred' and 'interactive' strategies that are capable of promoting active student participation, which is crucial in a state like Mizoram, where Hindi as a lingua franca is challenging.

Pointing to the positive outcomes of the training program, 94% of participants said they would be able to create more learner-centric lesson plans for their Hindi classes, drawing on the experiences gained during the training program. Teachers also expressed positive views about the reference books and materials provided during the training program, which would serve as a helpful aid in their future teaching. A total of 88.7% of teachers said they would be able to use this information effectively in their classrooms. Approximately 90.5% of teachers believed that they could now prepare appropriate teaching and learning materials for specific topics in Hindi. Furthermore, 85.7% of teachers said that the training had increased their confidence in their ability to improve teaching and learning materials. This suggests that the training successfully promoted adaptive teaching strategies, which would prove very beneficial, especially in resource-poor classrooms.

As participants reported, the training program focused on classroom inclusion and multilingual teaching. A total of 82.1% of teachers who participated in the training program believed they could make their classrooms more inclusive for students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, which is particularly important in Mizoram's multilingual environment. Furthermore, 98.8% of teachers reported a better understanding of students' needs in a third-language learning environment, and 88.1% expressed confidence in addressing specific challenges students face when learning Hindi as a third language in an environment dominated by Mizo and English. This suggests that the training program significantly enhanced teachers' abilities to create student-friendly and culturally responsive classrooms, a requirement outlined in the National Education Policy 2020.

As a result of their training experiences, 97.6% of teachers felt they could better understand the challenges faced by students in their classes with a third language, and all participants reported that after the training, they would be able to guide their students in their classes to help them learn a third language. However, teachers expressed relatively less confidence in influencing external stakeholders such as parents or students, which is understandable, as this is somewhat beyond their competence. Only 79.2% felt confident in creating positive attitudes about Hindi among parents and students, and only 68.5% believed they could serve as a communication link between the government, school administrators, fellow teachers, parents, and students. These responses indicate a relative limitation in the program's ability to strengthen teachers as agents of community-level change.

The majority of teachers believed they could now create a better environment for Hindi learning in their classrooms, while 74.4% felt prepared to promote a more positive attitude towards the Hindi language in society. While this is positive, the gap between classroom impact and broader community impact suggests that future training should also focus on advocacy skills, stakeholder engagement, and language policy awareness to strengthen teachers' roles outside the classroom.

Proposed Solutions and Recommendations

To enhance the effectiveness of Hindi education in Mizoram, several policy and institutional reforms are required. Firstly, Hindi should be introduced from Class III instead of Class V to help students build a stronger linguistic foundation at an earlier stage. Additionally, inclusion of Hindi in board exams will increase its educational importance among students and parents. The establishment of quality Hindi medium schools in Mizoram will provide students with better opportunities for language learning. Apart from this, a proper recruitment process is required to ensure the quality of Hindi teaching. If the posts of Hindi teachers are regularized, schools may get well-trained Hindi teachers. A regular position will attract teachers from other states to come and contribute, as they will have job security and recognition.

Along with the institutional reforms, important pedagogical reforms are also necessary, such as revising Hindi textbooks to emphasize communication skills rather than literary content. Hindi curriculum should also be made available in Braille script for visually impaired students. Teachers should receive training in bilingual and multilingual teaching strategies in their classes to effectively bridge the gap between learning Mizo, English and Hindi. It's also required for the teachers to develop mastery over the various components of the Hindi language. Teachers should prioritize engagement and motivation strategies to make learning Hindi more effective and enjoyable. Special emphasis should be placed on verbal learning of Hindi to build students' confidence and promote practical use. A more engaging learning environment should be created by incorporating innovative teaching methods such as storytelling, role-playing, and interactive exercises for teaching third languages. Emphasis should also be placed on raising government and community awareness about the importance of Hindi, which will help develop a more positive attitude towards the language among students and parents, ultimately promoting the teaching of Hindi in Mizoram. Furthermore, regular in-service training programs should be organized to help teachers stay updated with new methods and prevent burnout.

Discussion

The present study presents a multidimensional perspective of the information obtained from focus group interviews, components of the training program, quantitative responses from teachers and perception analysis. The findings of the study point to systemic and structural problems underlying the teaching and learning of Hindi in schools of Mizoram. One of the major ones is the late introduction of Hindi in Class V, which was seen by Hindi teachers as one of the significant barriers to third language acquisition. The teachers argued that Hindi, which is taught as a third language at the school level in Mizoram, should be introduced from Class III in an attempt to provide a broader exposure to students.

Another of the major problems was found to be the lack of institutional recognition and regularization for the working conditions of Hindi teachers who are employed on insecure terms, like CSS. With a lack of institutional support, a lack of exposure to the third language in everyday life and inadequate training in teaching Hindi in general, all these teachers were facing problems on multiple fronts.

From a pedagogical perspective, there is a strong correlation between textbook content and student proficiency. If the textbook content is not rich, students will not be proficient. Also, problems arise if the curriculum is not student-level appropriate. This is the case when the content is both too simple and too difficult. An overly literary curriculum, limited focus on oral communication, and unrealistic completion deadlines make this situation even worse. Assigning Hindi teachers to teach other subjects without formal approval, and treating their subject as inferior to others, distracts them from their true responsibilities as teachers of a specific subject and diminishes the value of learning Hindi.

Most teachers reported a lack of interest in Hindi among students, parents, and even other teachers at school. This is primarily due to the lack of Hindi in board exams and the perception of Hindi's uselessness in Mizoram's linguistic ecosystem, where Mizo dominates as the local language and English as the international language. In addition, students face pronunciation difficulties, hesitation, and social stigma and isolation in speaking Hindi, which leads to poor linguistic performance (Sibanda, 2017). To acquire Hindi as a third language, it should be taught in conjunction with Mizo by teachers. Flynn, Foley, and Vinnitskaya (2004) proposed that learning additional languages cumulatively builds on the learner's existing linguistic knowledge rather than imposing limitations. While the study is based on the theory of the linguistic proximity model by Westergaard et al. (2017), it posits that the influence of L1 and L2 on L3 is feature-specific rather than holistic, depending on structural proximity, and this is proved to be true in the context of Hindi as a third language in Mizoram, where the lack of similarity with Mizo and English hinders its learning. A similar finding was also acquired by Jensen et al. (2021) and Luan et al. (2024), who found that the relationship between the positions of sub-grammars in sentence structure and the languages previously learned was significant. Additionally, the structural similarity of the chosen sub-grammars affect the learning of a third language. Cenoz (2022) found that using bilingual resources and translanguaging effectively supports the learning of a third language. It enhances metalinguistic awareness and utilizes the full linguistic repertoire of students in the classroom. These approaches could be beneficial in the classrooms of Mizoram under similar circumstances.

Based on personal interactive sessions and written assignments of the participants, it was found that the actual proficiency level of Hindi teachers did not match the claimed level, and it was found to be very low. Findings of Dwivedi and Chuaungo (2023a) also indicate that Hindi teachers' proficiency levels directly influence student learning outcomes.

Regarding the effectiveness of the training program, over 95% of teachers reported they could implement the strategies learned in their classrooms, indicating that the theory and practical experience provided during the training sessions were applicable in real classroom settings. Teachers praised the interactive training model, the expertise of the resource persons, and the practical nature of the training. However, some limitations of the training programme were also noted, such as language barriers, time constraints, and difficulties in accessing the university due to its distance from the city where the training was taking place.

The critical reflection is essential for teachers to gain a deeper understanding of their teaching (Bartlett, 1990; Wallace, 1991). Teachers need self-inquiry (Richard & Lockhart, 1994) to improve their teaching practices, develop self-awareness, and understand their own thinking about language and learning. This improves student outcomes and promotes a student-centred approach in the classroom. It not only helps them to reflect on their experiences, assess their impact, and identify areas for growth, making them more adaptable and responsive to their students' needs, but it also cultivates metalinguistic awareness within them, particularly when they are facilitating the acquisition of a third language and distinguishing between bilingual and non-bilingual learners (Rutgers & Evans, 2015).

Conclusion

This study reveals that Hindi education in Mizoram is hampered by systemic delays, curriculum flaws, a lack of proper training, and socio-cultural-political apathy. Late introduction of the language, lack of institutional support, inadequate teaching training, and a low-priority mindset among stakeholders all contribute to students' ability to effectively learn Hindi.

Although the one-week training program has made significant progress in improving teachers' classroom practices, significant improvements are still needed. These improvements include introducing Hindi from early grades, including Hindi in board exams, creating inclusive learning materials (e.g., Braille) for Hindi, revising textbooks to focus on communication and practical use, strengthening teachers' Hindi proficiency, and promoting community participation and awareness of the importance of Hindi.

It's worth noting that all strategic efforts align with the NEP 2020, which emphasizes the use of multiple languages and equal access to languages. By addressing both classroom and institutional challenges, Mizoram can create a more conducive environment for third language learning, thereby improving the status and impact of Hindi education in the state.

Declarations

Declaration of Interest: The authors declare no competing interests

Consent to Participate: Informed consent was obtained from all participants before they participated in the study. The participants were informed about the purpose and academic nature of the study, the voluntary nature of their participation, the type of information being sought, the confidentiality of the information provided, and their right to decline participation or withdraw from the study at any stage without any adverse consequences. Participants were allowed to seek clarification regarding the study before completing the questionnaire. Consent to participate was documented through the consent statement included in the questionnaire. Participants voluntarily agreed to participate and provide the requested information for academic research purposes.

Ethics Approval: The study involved in-service school Hindi teachers in Mizoram who participated in a teacher training programme conducted at the FDC, Mizoram University. The participants were appointed by the School Education Department, Government of Mizoram, and participated in their professional capacity. Along with this, ethical approval for this study was obtained from the Human Ethics Committee, Mizoram University, Aizawl, Mizoram, India. The Committee reviewed the research protocol, Participant Information Sheet and Informed Consent Form, curriculum vitae of the investigator(s), and other relevant study documents. The study entitled ‘Challenges and Transformations in the Teaching Practices of Hindi Teachers in Mizoram’ was formally approved by the Committee on 15 September 2026 (Approval No. MZU/HEC/2024/108). The study was conducted in accordance with the ethical requirements of the institution.

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Availability of Data and Materials:

The datasets used and/or analysed during the current study are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

Human Ethics and Consent to Participate declarations: The study followed the basic ethical principles of educational research. The Hindi teachers who participated in the training programme were informed about the purpose of the study and how their responses would be used. Participation was completely voluntary, and the participants were given the freedom to decide whether or not to take part in the study. They were also assured that their responses would be kept confidential and would be used only for academic and research purposes. No personal information that could identify individual participants was disclosed in the study.

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Table

Table 5 is not available with this version