

# Multilingual Yoga Education: Designing a National Curriculum

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## ABSTRACT

Multilingual yoga education offers a pathway to broaden access, deepen cultural relevance, and enhance learning outcomes by incorporating regional languages alongside a global lingua franca. Designing a national curriculum that embraces linguistic diversity requires careful alignment of pedagogy, terminology, instructional materials, teacher training, and assessment strategies. This manuscript explores the theoretical foundations for multilingual education, reviews existing models within yoga and allied disciplines, outlines a mixed-methods study to gather stakeholder perspectives, presents pilot implementation results, and offers recommendations for national rollout. Findings indicate that learners and instructors benefit from instruction in their mother tongues, with improved comprehension, engagement, and cultural connection. Challenges include development of standardized terminology, production of high-quality resources in multiple languages, and ensuring teacher readiness. The proposed curriculum framework balances consistency with flexibility, enabling localization while maintaining core competencies. Scope and limitations are discussed to inform future research and policy refinement.

## KEYWORDS

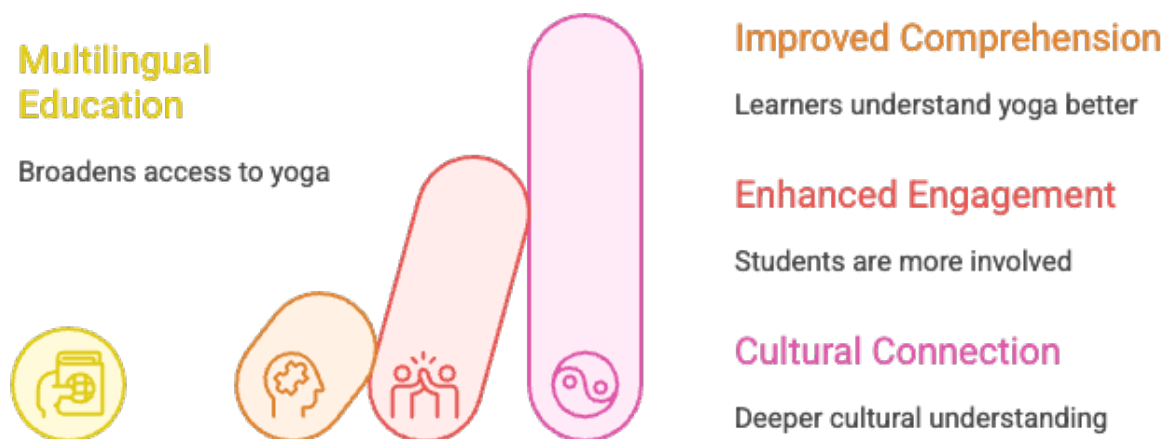
Multilingual yoga education, curriculum design, mother-tongue instruction, cultural relevance, instructional materials

## Introduction

Yoga is increasingly recognized worldwide for its physical, mental, and spiritual benefits. As governments and educational institutions seek to integrate yoga into formal and non-formal learning contexts, the question arises: how can such curricula honor linguistic diversity while ensuring pedagogical coherence? In multilingual societies, instruction delivered exclusively in a dominant language may disadvantage learners

whose primary language differs. This can lead to superficial understanding of philosophical concepts, misinterpretation of technical terms, and reduced engagement. Conversely, mother-tongue instruction has been shown in education research to enhance cognitive development, bolster cultural identity, and improve retention of complex material.

## Multilingual Yoga Education Impacts Learning



A national curriculum for yoga education must therefore reconcile two imperatives: standardization of core competencies—such as posture alignment, breathing techniques, and ethical principles—with adaptability to local linguistic and cultural contexts. This manuscript addresses this challenge by proposing a curriculum design process underpinned by multilingual instructional theory, supported by empirical inquiry, and validated through pilot implementation. By foregrounding stakeholder insights from diverse linguistic regions, the study aims to craft a replicable framework that other countries or federated regions can adapt.

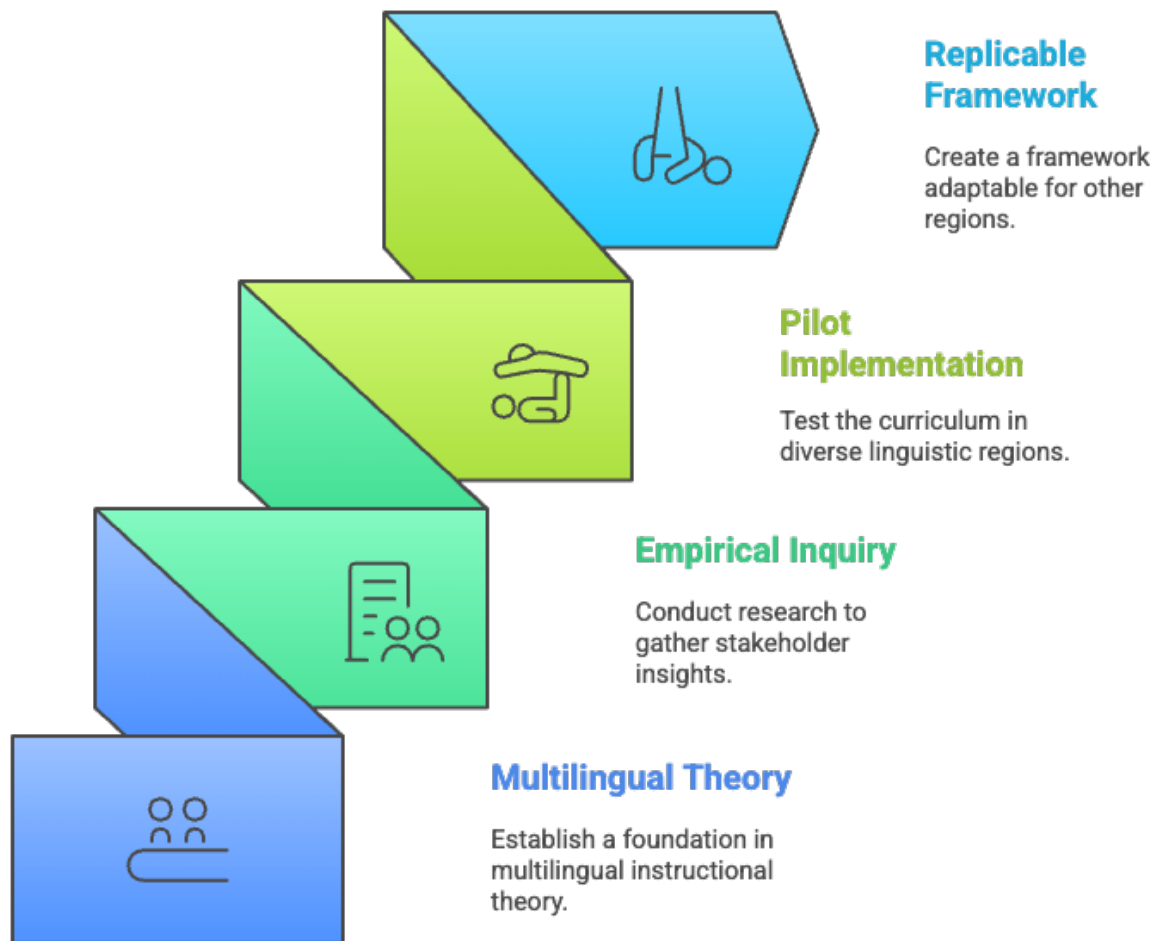
### Literature Review

Research on multilingual education consistently underscores the advantages of mother-tongue instruction for conceptual understanding and learner confidence. Cognitive linguistics highlights that complex ideas are more readily grasped when communicated in a familiar language. In health and wellness education, studies demonstrate that instruction in native languages leads to better adoption of recommended practices and sustained behavior change. For instance, community-based yoga programs delivered in local dialects reported higher attendance and adherence rates compared to those in a dominant national language.

Within the yoga domain, however, literature on multilingual curricula is limited. Most traditional lineages transmit terminology in Sanskrit, sometimes supplemented by a single modern language. While Sanskrit terms

carry precise philosophical meaning, exclusive reliance on untranslated terms may alienate beginners. Some organizations have produced bilingual manuals—pairing Sanskrit with English or other regional tongues—but these resources often lack consistent pedagogical structure and assessment rubrics.

## Developing a National Yoga Curriculum



Frameworks from bilingual science and mathematics education offer instructive parallels. The Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach integrates language objectives with subject content, ensuring that both linguistic competence and domain knowledge progress simultaneously. CLIL pilots in subjects as varied as environmental science and social studies demonstrate that sequencing language support, scaffolding technical vocabulary, and training teachers in dual-focus instruction are critical success factors. These insights inform the design of a multilingual yoga curriculum that equally attends to technical mastery and language development.

### Methodology

A mixed-methods design was employed, combining qualitative interviews and focus groups with quantitative

surveys and pilot program evaluation. Stakeholders included yoga instructors, curriculum developers, teacher educators, and learners across five linguistically diverse regions.

Participant selection leveraged purposive sampling to ensure representation of major regional languages, dialect clusters, and both urban and rural settings. Data collection methods comprised semi-structured interviews exploring perceptions of existing materials, terminological clarity, and teaching challenges; focus groups eliciting preferences for resource formats and modalities; and questionnaires measuring learners' comprehension and satisfaction before and after exposure to pilot multilingual modules.

The pilot phase involved co-developing four thematic modules—Foundations of Asana, Pranayama Practices, Yoga Philosophy, and Ethics and Lifestyle—translated into three regional languages alongside a national lingua franca. Materials included printed manuals, video demonstrations with bilingual narration, and digital quizzes. Instructors received a two-week training workshop on multilingual pedagogical techniques, terminology standardization, and assessment strategies. Pre- and post-module tests assessed factual knowledge and conceptual understanding. Observations and reflective journals captured process data on instructor experiences, learner engagement, and logistical issues.

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and paired t-tests to evaluate comprehension gains. Qualitative data underwent thematic coding to identify recurring patterns related to linguistic clarity, cultural resonance, and resource usability.

## Results

Learner comprehension significantly improved after engaging with the multilingual modules. Average test scores rose from 58 percent pre-pilot to 82 percent post-pilot ( $p < 0.001$ ), indicating enhanced retention of both practical techniques and philosophical concepts. Participants reported greater confidence in discussing principles when materials were presented in their mother tongues.

Thematic analysis revealed three principal benefits. First, linguistic accessibility: learners noted that reading explanations and instructions in their primary languages reduced cognitive load and enabled deeper reflection on nuanced philosophical ideas. Second, cultural resonance: localized contextual examples—such as metaphors drawn from regional folklore—heightened relevance and learner motivation. Third, teacher empowerment: instructors valued standardized glossaries of Sanskrit terms paired with precise regional equivalents, which streamlined lesson planning and reduced ambiguity.

Challenges emerged around resource production time and cost. Translating and culturally adapting materials required coordination among linguistic experts, yoga scholars, and instructional designers. Ensuring consistency across language versions—for instance, maintaining exact alignment of module objectives,

sequencing, and assessments—demanded rigorous quality assurance protocols. Additionally, some technical terms lacked direct equivalents in certain dialects, necessitating the co-creation of neologisms and back-translations to validate accuracy.

Trainer feedback highlighted the importance of interactive, scaffolded learning activities. Instructors who integrated group discussion, storytelling, and peer teaching reported higher learner engagement than those relying solely on didactic delivery. Digital platforms facilitated asynchronous support, though connectivity issues in rural areas sometimes impeded access.

## Conclusion

The study demonstrates that a thoughtfully designed multilingual national yoga curriculum can significantly enhance learner comprehension, cultural relevance, and instructor efficacy. By combining mother-tongue instruction with rigorous standardization of core competencies, the proposed framework balances flexibility and consistency. Key components include a shared multilingual glossary of technical terms, modular resources adaptable to local contexts, teacher training in bilingual pedagogical strategies, and digital platforms to support blended learning.

Effective implementation at scale will require investment in high-quality translations, collaborative development processes, and ongoing professional development for instructors. Policymakers should allocate resources for production and dissemination of multilingual materials while establishing a central coordinating body to oversee curriculum fidelity and innovation. Future research may explore long-term learning outcomes, cost-benefit analyses, and expansion to additional languages and contexts.

## Scope and Limitations

This study focused on five major regional languages and one national lingua franca, which may limit generalizability to languages with significantly different syntactic structures or smaller speaker populations. The pilot involved four thematic modules; scaling to a full eight-module curriculum may reveal additional logistical hurdles. Learner samples were drawn from both urban and rural areas, but did not include remote or indigenous communities with distinct dialects and cultural traditions. Digital resource access was uneven, highlighting the digital divide as a constraint on blended learning strategies. Assessment relied on immediate pre- and post-tests; long-term retention and behavior change were not measured. Finally, the cost and time estimates for material development are preliminary, and further economic analysis is required for national budgeting. Despite these limitations, the findings offer a robust foundation for designing and implementing a multilingual yoga curriculum responsive to linguistic diversity and pedagogical best practices.

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