

WRAP Exams · wrapexams.com

Prelims PYQ, Mains model answers, and copy evaluation. Write to the desk for this paper, a doubt, or the AI waitlist.

ask@wrapexams.com · +91 85951 84903 · wrapexams.com

Q2(b)

Briefly describe the classical models of ethnic and linguistic classification of Indian population. Discuss its relevance today

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2015 · Anthropology GS 2 · 15 marks · Demographic profile of India

2. Demographic profile of India-Ethnic and linguistic elements in the Indian population and their distribution. Indian population-factors influencing its structure and growth.

Core demand of the question

- Briefly describe the classical models of ethnic and linguistic classification of Indian population. Discuss its relevance today
- Keep the answer to a 15-mark length of about 200 words

Revision summary

Risley and Guha classified Indians as racial types tied to region and caste.

Grierson mapped Indo-Aryan, Dravidian, Austroasiatic, and Tibeto-Burman families.

Ghurye already doubted a clean race-caste ladder.

Language families still structure states and schedules.

Racial stocks have little scientific use today.

Introduction

Classical models sorted Indians by race, language, and culture as if these were stable stocks. They still appear in textbooks, but genetics and field ethnography have broken their hard borders.

Body**Ethnic-racial models**

- **H. H. Risley** used nasal index and other measures to invent Indo-Aryan, Dravidian, Mongoloid, and related types. Caste was forced into a race ladder.
- **B. S. Guha** for the 1931 **Census** offered a more careful racial map, still treating tribes and regions as physical types.
- **G. S. Ghurye** criticised simple race-caste equations even while writing of tribes as backward Hindus.

Linguistic models

- **Grierson's Linguistic Survey** grouped Indo-Aryan, Dravidian, Austroasiatic, and Tibeto-Burman families. That four-family map remains the teaching skeleton.
- **S. K. Chatterji** and later linguists refined branches, but the census still asks mother tongue, not gene.

Relevance today

- Language families still organise **Eighth Schedule** politics and linguistic states. That part of the classical map works as administration.
- Racial types do not. **Siwalik** fossils and living variation show deep mix; nasal races cannot explain jati.
- **Relevance is split:** keep **Grierson** for language; drop Risley as science.

Flow diagram

Risley Guha types -> Weak science
Grierson families -> Eighth Schedule states
Field genetics -> Mixture not stocks

Conclusion

Classical ethnic types were colonial measuring sticks. Linguistic families remain useful. Racial stocks are not a living classification of Indians.

Facts & figures

H. H. Risley

Nasal-index racial ranking of Indian groups, now rejected as science.

B. S. Guha

1931 **Census** racial classification, more cautious but still typological.

Grierson

Linguistic Survey that still frames India's language-family teaching.

Eighth Schedule

Constitutional language list that keeps the linguistic map politically alive.

WRAP Exams · Write. Read. Analyse. Practice. · <https://wrapexams.com/upsc/mains-answers/anthropology-gs-2/2015/briefly-describe-the-classical-models-of-ethnic-and-linguistic-classification-of-indian-population-discuss-its-relevance-today/> · ask@wrapexams.com · wrapexams.com