ENDANGERMENT OF LESSER – KNOWN TRIBAL LANGUAGES: WITH FOCUS ON CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN INDIA

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Introduction

There is a considerable indeterminacy regarding the number of languages spoken in India today. The problem is compounded by the lack of scientific criteria to differentiate between language and dialect on the one hand and language verus community, on the other. The linguists' criterion of mutual intelligibility alone will not suffice to resolve the complexity. The attitude of the speakers, the sociocultural setting, the glotto-politics, the socioeconomic status of speakers and many other non-linguistic factors deserve to be considered. From the viewpoint of linguistic structure, for example, Hindi and Urdu can be treated as a single language, but the non-linguistic factors have accorded them the status of two different languages. The linguistic criterion gives prominence to the speech whereas the other criteria take the writing system, the literary tradition, etc., as primary.

Even from the point of view of the spoken (as well as written) language, the number of languages is always at variance. The 1961 Census enumerates as many as 1652 mother tongues for India. According to the estimate by the People of India Project, the number is 325 (Singh and Manoharan 1993). Even this is on the high side in that it includes some of the dialects and communities as languages. The informed guess of the field linguists puts the number of languages at 200 to 250. This precarious situation has to be rectified through a fresh linguistic survey of India by competent linguists. Linguistic fieldwork has unfortunately receded from the linguists' priorities by imitating the West and by ignoring the Indian reality and its needs.

The Census of India 2001 lists the total number of languages in India as 122 eliminating all those having less than 10,000 native speakers. Out of this (number), 22 are scheduled languages and the rest of 100 are non-scheduled. Most of the tribal and Lesser known languages fall under the latter category, though there are two *aadivasi* languages (Santali and Bodo) that find a place in the former division. In other words, the Census enumeration does not reveal the exact number of languages of the country, for the reasons best known to the concerned.

There are several problems vitiating the exact number of Lesser-known tribal languages in

India. One such a hurdle is the distinction between language and dialect. For a long time, Koya, Parji and Naiki had been treated as dialects of Gondi. Similar situation exists with South Dravidian speeches like Soliga, Kurumba, Kattunaickan and others. The second factor is the confusion between language and community. For example, Jatapu is a community, but the Census (2001:4-5) treats it as a language. On the contrary four different names are mentioned for one and the same single language-Banjara, Lambadi, Lamani and Sugali (treating, mistakenly all of them as dialects of Hindi).

Assembling information from the 2001 census and other official sources, Mishra (2011:121-124) convincingly proposes the total number of tribal languages of India as 189. The division of this number is further given language family-wise: Indo-Aryan 20, Dravidian 41, Austro-Asiatic 20, Tibeto-Burman 104; and the Audamanese 4. Taking the other 20 scheduled languages into account, the total number may be put at 209. It may further be guessed that the tribal languages at the national level amount to 90.4% and the others at 9.6%. If we consider the population figures of these two groups, the tribes amount to only 4.2% and the general population (i.e. the non-tribes) account to 95.8%. In other words, 90.4% languages of India are spoken by 4.2% of the tribal population, while a mere 9.6% of languages are spoken by 95.8% of the population. As we shall see below, it is this latter group which dominates the former in economic, social, political, cultural and attitudinal spheres paving the way for endangerment of the tribal languages.

With my experience of linguistic field work in Central and Southern India, the present paper concentrates on certain selected tribal languages of Dravidian and Munda groups. From the former group we will examine Toda, Kota, Irula, Badaga, Koraga, Gondi, Konda, Kui, Kuvi, Pengo, Manda, Indi-Awe, Kolami, Naiki, Parji and Gadaba; while the latter group consists of Kharia, Juang, Savara (Sora), Gorum (Parengi), Gutob(Gadaba), Remo(Bondo) and Didei (Gta?). Both these groups are in active contact with major regional languages like Tamil, Malayalam, Kannada, Oriya, Hindi, Marathi or Telugu depending upon the region. A detailed analyses and description of each language in terms of language retention, shift, loss and moribundity will be examined to explain the status of their endangerment or otherwise.

Unlike the situation in the Americas and Australia where the European invaders had carried out a sort of genocide of the natives, the Indian past had been one of "live and let live". The prevailing illiterate bilingualism leading to underlying common core grammar coupled with code switching has been accelerating the retention of minor tribal languages. But this cannot be extended to and expected in the future. Thus the twin processes of endangerment and retention are the Indian reality. Certain measures are suggested for revitalization of those tribal speeches which are prone to disappear under pressure from the dominant languages.

2. Tribal Languages: An Overview

As defined by Annamalai (1990) "Tribe, commonly called scheduled tribe, in the Indian context is an administrative and legal term to label some ethnic groups based on their socio-economic status, and religious and cultural customs in order to give special attention to them as mandated by the Constitution". The concept of tribe has been a complex one with various ramifications and perceptions right from ancient days in the context of Indian subcontinent. Though the ancient works do not provide the names and characteristics of tribal communities, from historical and archaeological evidence, it is clear that the indigenous people lived with distinct cultures and used their languages in this subcontinent even during the Pre- Vedic period (Levi *et al* 1929). There existed many tribal communities, which were part of the Harappan civilization with unique culture and languages. In fact, we all know that even the Vedas were part of an oral tradition before they were rendered to graphisation. The ancient tribal people had expressed, like all human beings all over the world, their experience, concepts, wisdom, suffering, joy, social relations and other acts of everyday life in their spoken word as well as through their oral literature. This treasure of knowledge consisting of ancient values, human dignity, indigenous knowledge system, equality of persons, respect for nature etc., was passed on to the successive generations by the tribal communities. A close observation of the ordinary life of an ordinary tribal either in the Himalayas or in the Central India or in the South, is sufficient to convince anyone that the humane values among tribal people have much to offer to the so-called civilized world. It this type of heritage, which is encoded into the tribal languages, and their literary output consisting of stories, narrations, poetry, proverbs, riddles, idioms, jokes and other discourse genres, that deserve our immediate attention. Language loss would deprive us of this ancient heritage and indigenous knowledge systems.

The Dravidian Tribal languages

> **Toda:** Toda is one of the Dravidian speaking tribal communities on
> which the anthropologists have carried out intensive studies. Prof. M.B Emeneau
> has done fieldwork on this language during 1935-38 and brought out many articles
> and books on linguistics, ethnology and folklore of this tribal community. The Toda
> speakers live in the Nilgiri hills of Tamilnadu and their number has been
> consistently below 1,000 since a long time. Recently some of the Todas have been
> converted to Christianity. It is reported that Christians Todas may loose their mother
> tongue and opt for a more important language of the area like Tamil.
>
> **Kota:** Kota is one of the four tribal communities of Nilgiri hills in Tamil nadu,
> where they have been living in a symbiotic relationship with the Badaga, Kurumba,
> and Toda. The Kotas form a small community of tribal population when compared
> to Irulas and other communities. From the point of view of linguistic structure, Kota
> is closer to Tamil in its phonology and grammar. The number of speakers is

estimated to be around one thousand. The speakers are bilinguals with more proficiency in Tamil than in Kota.

Irula: Irula is spoken by several tribal communities in the states of Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka. A section of this tribe is also found in Chittoor and Nellore districts of Andhra Pradesh. The number of speakers of Irula is estimated to be about 1,50,000. But it does not find a place in the 2001 Census. The Irual language has several dialects spread across the three southern states. These are Kasaba, Soliga, Urali, Melnadu Irula, Attapadu Irula and several others. The Irula language has close resemblance in its structure to Tamil and Malayalam. The speakers of Kasaba live in the Masinigudi area of Kudalur division in the Nilagiri district, Tamilnadu. The Urali speakers inhabit the Satyamangalam Taluk of Periyar district in Tamilnadu. The total population of Urali speakers may be around 4,000.

Badaga: The Badaga speakers inhabit the Nilgiri hills along with the
Todas and Kotas. Their language was earlier considered as a dialect of Kannada. According to 1991 census the number of speakers of Badaga is 1,75,000. It is said that the Badaga speakers have migrated from the plains of Karnataka during thirteenth to eighteenth century C.E. to the Nilagiri hills. Regarding the status of Badaga community as tribal or non-tribal, there is no clarity. The volume on the schedule tribes by K.S.Singh does not mention Badaga as a tribal community. However, the speech of the community is part of the Dravidian family of languages.

Koraga: Koraga language is spoken in the Dakshina Kannada (South Canara) District of Karnataka. The Koragas speak in Koraga among themselves and in Tulu or Kannada with outsiders. Like many tribal communities they are active bilinguals. The population of the Koraga speakers is estimated to be around 20,000. Koragas are also found in Kasargod district of Kerala and a very few of them live in Tamil Nadu also.

Gondi: Gondi is spoken by the Gond community spread across several states of Central India including Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. The Gonds are also found as migrants in several other parts of the country like Jharkhand and the Northeast. There are nearly thirty different groups of the Gond community, the well known among them being Abuj Maria, Bison horn Maria, Raja Muria, Raj Gond, Pardhan and Thoti. According to the 2001 census the number of Gondi speakers is 23, 13,790. Being a widely spoken tribal language, Gondi has several dialects across the Central India. Gondi is used as a medium of instruction at the primary school levels in some of the states like Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh

and Chattisgarh. The local scripts like Devanagari or Telugu are used for writing Gondi depending upon the region. Among the Dravidian tribal languages, Gondi is spoken by the largest number of speakers across the widest regions in the country.

The Koyas are very important community in the Bhadrachalam region of Andhra Pradesh and also across Chattisgarh and neighbouring districts in Central India. They are involved in many professions like agriculture, fortune telling, construction works and others. Their number is estimated to be 3,62, 070 (2001 census). The status of the Koya language is a disputable point, as some scholars consider it as a separate language while others treat it as a dialect of Gondi. Though community wise the Koyas are distinct and distinguished from the Gonds, linguistically their speech is akin to Gondi and as of now it is treated as a dialect of Gondi. The native speakers claim for independent language status for Koya.

Konda: The speakers of Konda or Kubi inhabit the Araku valley of Andhra Pradesh and neighbouring areas of Odisha. The language is very close to Telugu and Gondi in structural properties. The number of speakers of Konda is 56,262 according to the 2001 census. The speakers of Konda are bilinguals in Telugu besides their mother tongue. The percentage of bilingualism is around sixty percent. The Konda speakers use Adivasi Oriya as a lingua franca in communicating with other tribals and also as a language of their oral literature.

Kui: Kui is spoken by a section of the Khond tribe inhabiting the districts of Khondmals, Baudh, Phulbani and Ganjam in Odisha. There is considerable amount of oral literature recorded from this language and the translation of Bible related pamphlets are available in Kui. The number of speakers of Kui language is 9,16, 222 (2001 census). This is the oldest recognized Khond language on which several missionaries and administrators have done considerable amount of work. It is closely related to other Khond languages like Kuvi, Manda, and Pengo. This group of languages is highly influenced by the neighbouring Munda languages, especially in their verbal structure and numeral system.

Kuvi: Kuvi is one of the Khond languages spoken in Koraput, Rayagad and Malkangiri districts of Odisha and Vizianagaram and Visakhapatnam districts of Andhra Pradesh. The speakers are also known as Kuvi Khonds. The population of Kuvi speakers is 1,57,928 (2001 census). There are several regional dialects of Kuvi in Odisha such as Koraput dialet, Laxmipur dialect, Rayakona dialect, Rayagada dialect, Muniguda dialect, Dongria Khond dialect, Tekiya dialect and Bissamcuttack dialect. Out of these the Rayagada dialect is acceptable as the standardone. The Kuvi speakers are active bilinguals being proficient in Telugu or Oriya. In some

places they are trilinguals also. But in interior places the women and children tend to be monolinguals. A section of the Kuvi speakers in Andhra Pradesh is known as Jatapulu and others as Samantulu. The Telugu people refer to the Kuvi community as Kododu or Kodollu which the native speakers consider as a derogatory term aimed at them to undermine their status.

Pengo: Pengo language is spoken in the eastern portion of the Nowarangpur district and in the Dasamantapur subdivision of Kalahandi district, Odisha. Avut, one of the dialects of Pengo is spoken in the highlands of Thuvamul Rampur of Kalahandi district and Kasipur area of Rayagada district. The speakers of this language are known as Pengo Porja locally. Pengo is closely related to Kuvi and Manda. The number of speakers of this language is not definitely known, but Burrow and Bhattachary reported that their number is slowly declining. It is a severely endangered language.

Manda: Manda is one of the Khond tribal languages spoken in the Thuvamul Rampur highlands of Kalahandi district in Odisha. The number of Manda speakers is estimated by the field worker (B.Ramakrishna Reddy) to be anywhere between 6,000 to 8,000. In its structure, Manda is closely related to Kuvi and Pengo and it is influenced by the local Oriya dialects, especially in its vocabulary. The impact of Munda languages in its verb morphology, numeral system, echo-formation etc., indicates Manda as a typical representative of the Central Indian linguistic symbiosis leading to convergence.

Indi-Awe: Indi-Awe was identified as a separate speech by B.Ramakrishna Reddy in 1979 during his linguistic fieldwork on Manda. Various tests like mutual intelligibility, speakers declaration, opinion of other neighbouring tribes, etc. confirm Indi-Awe as an independent speech, not a dialect. It is spoken by a section of the Khond tribes inhabiting the highlands of Thuamal Rampur (Kalanandi district) and Kasipur(Rayagada district).The number of speakers is estimated to be around 5,000. The ethnonymy is intriguing in that *Indi* is an interrogative, third person, neuter, singular which means 'what or which one'. *Aawe* is the non-past neuter, singualar, third person, negative form of the predicative-copulative verb 'be' which means 'not, not tobe, no' etc. In the absence of other distinguishing unique cultural traits with their fellow tribes, the subtle linguistic expressions are used for separate identity (by the speakers) of different languages. Such as Kuvi is *aaʔe* Pengo known as *awut* and Manda as *aavu*.

Kolami: The Kolami tribal community is found mainly in the border districts of Maharashtra and Telangana. The Kolams are bilinguals in Marathi and Telugu

depending on the place of residence. According to 2001 census the number of speakers of Kolami is 1,21, 855. The percentage of bilingualism among the Kolams is around sixty percent. Most of the speakers of Kolami also know Gondi, the main tribal language of the region.

Naiki (Naikri): The tribal community of Naikpod inhabits the Nanded and Yeotmal districts of Maharashtra and also in the adjoining districts of Telangana. A section of these people lives in Chandrapur or Chanda area of Maharashtra whose speech was studied by Sudhibhushan Bhattacharya, earlier it was thought that Naiki was a dialect of Gondi. Even now the officials and non-tribals refer to this group as the Gonds.

Parji: Parji is spoken in and around Jagdalpur in Chattisgarh state. Earlier scholars have taken it as a dialect of Gondi, but intensive field work and analysis by T.Burrow and S.Bhattacharya have shown that it is an independent language. According to 2001 census the number of speakers of Parji is 51, 216. Bilingualism among the Parji speakers is around sixty percent, as they are familiar with the local variety of Hindi.

Gadaba: There are two sections of Gadaba community namely, Gutob-Gadaba and the other Gadaba. The former group speaks a Munda language of Austro – Asiatic family and the latter speaks the Dravidian Gadaba, which is related to Telugu and other Dravidian languages. The speakers of Dravidian Gadaba are found in the Vizianagaram district of Andhra Pradesh and in the Koraput district of Odisha. The dialect spoken in Koraput is known as Ollari Gadaba and the one spoken in Andhra Pradesh is known as Konekor Gadaba. The total population of the Gadaba community is estimated around 26,262 (2001). The Gadabas in Odisha are conversant with Oriya and those across the border in Andhra Pradesh are fluent speakers of Telugu. Bilingualism among the Gadabas is very common and in some places they are trilinguals also.

The tribal speeches of Yerukala, Muduga and Kadar are treated as dialects of Tamil; Kurumba and Adiya as dialects of Kannada; Paniya, Mullu Kurumba and Urali as dialects of Malayalam; Koya as a dialect of Gondi and Naikri as a dialect of Kolami.

The Munda Languages

Kharia: is spoken mainly in Jharkhand, Bihar and Odisha. There are several sections of the community like the Dudh Kharias, Hill Khatias and the like. Kharia

is one of the languages studied at the Jharkhand tribal University. The number of speakers is 2,39,608 (2001).

Juang: is spoken in the northern Odisha districts of Mayrubhanj, Keonjhar and adjoining areas. The total population of the community is 23,708 (2001).

Savara (So:ra) : is spoken in the Gajapati and Ganjam districts of Odisha and Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh. The number of speakers is 2,52, 519 (2001).

Parengi (Gorum): The speakers live in the Pottangi, Padua and Nandapur taluks of Koraput district, Odisha. They are also found in Araku of Andhra Pradesh. The exact number of speakers is not available. But it is estimated to be less than 10,000 (9623 in 1981).

Gutob (Gadaba): Gutob is spoken in southern parts of Koraput district numbering around 26, 262 (2001), which is a combined figure with the Dravidian Gadaba.

Bondo(Remo): Speakers are found in the Khairaput area of Malkangiri district of Odisha. They are mostly confined to the hills and their number is around 8000 (5895 in 1981). These are listed as a primitive tribal community.

Didei(Gataq or Gta?): The speakers live in the Chitrakonda and Kudumalagumma areas of Malkangiri distrit of Odisha and also in the Sileru area of Andhra Pradesh. Their number is estimated to be around 5,000 (2000 in 1981) which looks to be dwindling and prone to disaapear.

Central Indian Situation

Central India is the homeland of tribal populations belonging to at least three different linguistic families of Munda (Austro-Asiatic), Dravidian and Indo- Aryan (Indo-European). For centuries the speakers of these languages have been living together exchanging cultural and linguistic traits between themselves. Unfortunately there are no written records of any sort referring to the earlier linguistics situations.

The current sociolinguistic situation in the area is that there is a widespread active bilingualism among the speakers of tribal Dravidian and Munda languages, as they are proficient in the local varieties of Oriya such as Desia or Adivasi Oriya, which is the link language of the region. One may notice some multilingual tribal groups proficient in tribal as well as major languages of this region. In terms of prestige, the dominant languages like Oriya, Telugu, Marathi or Hindi occupy the higher layer and the tribal languages the lower. Within the tribal languages it is hard to place them on the scale of prestige, though the

numerical majority might lead to dominant position, depending upon a particular local situation. There is more solidarity and fraternity among the tribes irrespective of the genetic affiliation of the languages and the speakers involved.

The South Indian Situation

There are 105 communities spread over Six regions-Kerala, Lakshadweep, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. But only 33 languages are noticed as spoken by these communities either as home language [H] or mother tongue or language for in-group communication. Many tribal communities have declared non-tribal languages like Tamil, Malayalam, Kannada, Telugu and Tulu as their first language. This situation attracts either of the following two interpretations: (i)The particular tribal group(s) might have had a distinct language as its native speech but it had lost in course of time under pressure; for example Konda Kapu, Konda Reddi and others. (ii) The tribe might have been speaking a dialect as its native tongue, as is the case with most of the tribal communities of Kerala in having Malayalam as the first language.

There are another 17 Dravidian tribal speeches declared as home languages, namely Gadaba, Gondi, Kuvi, Irula, Muduga, Kadar, Kanikkar, Kattunaikar, Kolami, Koya, Konda, Paroja, Urali, Koraga, Kota, Toda and Yerukala. Out of these, Gadaba, Gondi, Kuvi, Irula, Kolami, Kota and Toda are treated as independent languages.

Besides, there are 8 languages belonging to the Indo-Aryan family that are in use either as home language or as language of outside communication. These include Banjara (Lambadi), Vaghri, Mahl, Dweep Bhasha, Oriya, Marathi, Hindi and Urdu. The first four are tribal speeches, the rest are major non-tribal languages, but used by tribes for intergroup communication. Banjara speakers are spread throughout Telangana, Andhra Pradesh and parts of Karnataka. The Vaghri speakers are a nomadic tribe. Some of them are settled in government-provided housing near Kuppam, Chittoor District, Andhra Pradesh. Mahl and Dweep Bhasha are used in Lakshadweep. Hindi and Urdu are noticed as languages of wider communication of certain tribal groups whereas Marathi and Oriya are spoken as home languages by some tribes and as inter-group communication languages by certain other tribal communities.

There are two languages, namely, Savara and Gutob (Gadaba) belonging to the Munda subgroup of the Austro-Asiatic family spoken in Andhra Pradesh. Savara speakers live in Srikakulam district, while the Gutob speakers are found in the Salur area of Vizianagaram district. Both the groups are trilingual knowing their mother tongue, Telugu and Oriya. The Gadaba situation is ethno-linguistically unique in that there is a single ethnic tribal community i.e. Gadaba, speaking languages belonging to two different language families. The Gutob (Gadaba) is a member of the Munda family with its typical linguistic

characteristics, while the other Gadaba is a member of the Dravidian group. In other words, it is a unique situation of a culturally homogenous ethnic community speaking languages of two different genetic families.\

Tribal Bilingualism

Though everyone does not know more than one language, the incidence of bilingualism is high in India. The acquisition /learning of two (or more) languages is possible either in natural environs or by schooling i.e., natural bilingualism versus tutored bilingualism. Both the illiterates as well as literates exhibit the former, while the latter is confined to the literate or educated persons. Majority of the tribal communities acquire more than one language from the fact that they learn their native mother tongue or home language for intra-group communication and the major regional language for inter-group communication. Basing on the 1991 census Bhattacharya (2002) has tabulated the percentage of bilingualism in the speakers of Scheduled languages as well as the Non-Scheduled languages. The tribal languages fall under the latter category. With no exception, the speakers of all tribal languages show considerable incidence of bilingualism, which ranges from 10% to 70% depending upon the local situation. This bilingualism is preceded by the underlying biculturalism in almost all the cases.

Even trilingualism is not uncommon among the tribes of South and Central India, especially among those communities living across the borders of linguistic states. The tribes of Araku valley and others on Andhra-Odisha border like the Savaras, Kondhs, Dideis, Gadabas and Batras are fluent in three languages namely, their mother tongue, Oriya and Telugu. Similarly the Irulas, Mudagas and Kurumbas of Attapadi valley across Tamil Nadu- Kerala border speak Malayalam and Tamil. The existing bilingualism among the tribes can be made use of in getting them to the literacy fold through bilingual education. The tribal learner includes both the child at the school and the adult learner seeking literacy. Bilingualism among the tribes is no doubt, stable and common, but their language proficiency in second language ranges from mere acquaintance to genuine command over the language. However, it is to be noted that there are also instances where the tribal learner is a monolingual, in his home language, especially children and women living on the highlands. The monolingual tribal child faces cognitive and communicative problems at the school where the instruction is in the regional major language e.g. Gondi children attending the Telugu medium school. The content of the primers is also alien and new with imposition of outside categories, values, perceptions and world-views. The tribal people may be illiterate, but they do not lack communicative skills. Using his socio-cultural and ethnolinguistic inheritance, a tribal speaker can compete with any outsider in oral skills of expression i.e., listening and speaking. Orality (as opposed to literacy) is his basic medium of interaction, both for inter-group and intra-group communication (Pattanayak, 1990 and Mohanty, 1990).

    Oracy is defined as a "Skill in self expression and ability to communicate freely with

others by word of mouth" (Pattanayak, 1990). Oral tradition among the tribal communities includes such items as (i) Long drawn conversations, debates, narrations and instructions (ii) Tribal lore :songs, tales, riddles, idioms, proverbs, puzzles, poetry etc., e.g. Kuvi and Gondi texts. The content or theme of the tribal lore generally refers to (a)Origin of the universe and stories relating to forest, woods, birds, animals etc., (b) Inter-personal interactions and experience, myths and puranas, (c) Tribal view of the world and philosophy of life, (d) Ritual recitations, and (e) Love and romance (Ramakrishna Reddy, 2000).

The Status of Tribal Languages
On the basis of the above mentioned observations the following comparative statement is put forward to indicate the position of tribal languages as against the non-tribal (majority) languages comprising several dimensions.(Ramakrishna Reddy, 2009).

Tribal Languages	Non Tribal Languages
a) Non-literary	Literary
b) Oral (Spoken)	Written
c) Minor	Major
d) Undeveloped or underdeveloped	Developed
e) Non-Scheduled	Scheduled (in the Constitution)
f) Dominated	Dominating
g) Not used in education administration, judiciary legislature or other high levels	Medium of education etc and Languages of wider communication (LWCs)
h) Undermined and Recognized neglected by outsiders	
i) Not vehicles of power and prestige	Command power and prestige
j) Referred (by others) with honour derogatory epithets and ridicule	Treated with
k) High incidence of natural illiterate bilingualism (Even trilingualism)	Mostly monolingualism in rural areas with a few exceptions.Tutored bilingualism
l) Not used as media in electronic and audio and visual programmes	Media on radio,cinema,television etc.
m) No separate exclusive script (with certain exceptions)	By and large have a separate writing system
n) Mostly oral literature	Both oral and written literature.

Maintenance and Endangerment of Tribal Languages
With regards to the tribal languages, the Indian situation provides the contradictory position

of endangerment on the one hand and language maintenance on the other. An observation and comparison of the number of tribal communities with that of the languages suggest language loss and shift. During the last 3000 years or so, many languages might have disappeared, as the speakers switched over to or slided to certain major languages. The tribes living in the plains are more susceptible and vulnerable to language shift than isolated speakers inhabiting the hills. Many speakers of Kuvi, like the Jatapus and Samants, have lost their ancestral language, while the Tekriyas on the hills retain their mother tongue intact.

Tribal languages are endangered under the pressures of modern media of the major languages i.e. the broadcast and telecast, cinemas and other programmes in languages like Hindi, Telugu, Oriya, Tamil, Malayalam and Kannada lure them. As there are no opportunities for the use of tribal languages in mass media, the native speakers have no opportunity to listen to or watch programmes in their own languages. The *Akasavani* broadcasts in nearly 60 to 70 tribal languages but these programmes last only for 30 to 60 minutes in a day or a week and their content is mainly songs and other entertainment programmes. Programmes covering education, information, science, technology and other knowledge oriented domains are not provided in their home languages.

Tribal languages are not used in the administrative sphere meant for their own development, not even in the welfare programmes of the Government. So is the case with judiciary, legislature, etc., even if a tribal is involved in a dispute. The restricted use naturally hampers their development. But interstingly, in spite of socio-economic and cultural pressures from the major languages, the tribes retain their native tongues not only as a marker of identity but also as a treasure of their linguistic and cultural heritage. In certain places in South India, the tribes live similar life to that of the non-tribes. In such a situation, other things being common, language becomes a very important marker of identity. The Indian situation, by and large, has been maintenance of even the minor languages with borrowings (both lexical as well as structural) from contact languages and survival with a common grammar with that of neighbouring languages (Ramakrishna Reddy, 1992 and 2000; and Khubchandani, 1992).

The Red paper of the United Nations on "Endangered Languages" stipulates that any language with less than 5000 native speakers is prone to diappear (Wurm, 1993). From this criterion nearly a hundred languages with less than 10,000 speakers, which are not listed by the census of India should have become extinct.

But the field reality in India is quite different. In Central India languages like Bondo (Remo), Gutob-Gadaba, Parengi-Gorum, Indi-Awe, and many others with less than 5000 speakers continue to be spoken, in spite of the U.N. criterion. Unlike the Americas and Australia, where the immigrant European carried out linguistic genocide, the Indian subcontinent has been maintaining linguistic and cultural tolerance towards the minor groups. This could be one of the reasons for retention of indigenous languages even by the marginalized, lesser-known tribal communities. Only during the post-Indpendence period after the formation of linguistic states, the so-called educated masses of India have been exhibiting linguistic intolerance, taking pride in non-recognition of small identities (Biligiri, 1969).

In a recent article on endangerment of "South Asian Languages" Gorge van Driem (2007) contributed to *Encyclopaedia of the World's Endangered Languages* (ed.Christopher Moseley pp 283-347), argues that all the above Dravidian tribal languages and the Munda languages are endangered. The difference among them is one of degree, with such labels as endangered, potentially endangered, seriously endangered, moribund etc.

The Indian ground reality is that some of them will be maintained and some others might disappear in future. The former may include Gondi, Kui, Kuvi, Kolami, Irula and Parji (of Dravidian); Kharia and Savara of Munda group; while the latter category might include Toda, Kota, Konda, Pengo, Manda, Indi-Awe, Naiki and Gadaba (of Dravidian); Juang, Gorum (Parengi), Gutob (Gadaba), Remo (Bondo) and Didei (Gataq) of Munda group.

Reasons for Retention: Large number of speakers. Literacy in native language. Positive attitude towards mother tongue. Living on hills in isolation. Bilingualism leading to common core grammar and phonology. Indigenous mother tongue (Home language) as a marker of group identity in a multilingual, polycultural society. Considerable oral literature (i.e. tribal folk lore) in the language.

Reasons for endangerment: Younger generation opting for regional major languages, speakers switching over to regional prestigious tongues, the impact of regional media, lack of prestige associated with mother tongues, economic progress through other languages, intergroup interaction in other tongues-Language loss with tribal identity, oral literature also transmitted into local lingua francia, Displacement of the community due to the so-called developmental projects by the Government and private agencies.

Why bather about these indigenous tribal speeches?

 Because these languages stand for and preserve the following traits.
1. Tribal linguistic identity heritage and diversity
2. Cultural heritage

3. Indigenous knowledge systems
4. Repositoriesof ancient wisdom, humaneness, distinct worldview, philosophy of life, equality of persons, respect for nature and human dignity.
5. Tribal ethnicity preserved in language structure e.g. Lexicon and grammar.
6. Tribal lore- Oral literature in the form of tales, narratives, songs, fables, plays, ballads, epics, proverbs, idioms, charms, riddles, jokes and origin myths.
7. Oral history as conceived by the community.
8. Preservation of linguistic diversity.

Remedial Measures towards Revitalization of Tribal Languages
The following steps are essential for retention and development of tribal linguistic heredity:

1. Documentation of tribal languages through basic and original fieldwork and research including transcription (recording) of the language materials in a systematic scientific fashion, using latest technologies like digitization, audio and video etc.

2. Descriptive grammars of the languages with phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics and pragmatics, including unique traits of the structure of each language.

3. Preparation of bilingual/trilingual dictionaries from tribal languages to major regional language(s) and vice versa. There is an urgent need for pedagogical/ comprehensive dictionaries.

4. Tribal lore consisting of folk tales, folk songs, narrations, idioms, proverbs riddles and special expressions of discourse should be recorded, preserved and stored as linguistic corpus. It represents the indigenous traditional knowledge and humanity.

5. Translation of tribal (oral) literature to other major Indian languages and English; and translation of important works of major languages into tribal languages should be taken up on priority basis as some of the genres are endangered under the threat of mass media.

6. Material production by linguists in collaboration with educationists and psychologists can prepare primers and other text-books in the tribal languages, which should be utilized in schools and adult education programmes; as a step to impart mother-tongue education.

7. Literacy development through production of materials in tribal languages with

familiar content(s) as lessons. Here the oral literature can be accommodated as part of the reading materials. Multilingual education is suggested by experts as a positive measure.

8. Native speakers of the tribal languages (especially the literate ones) should be involved in the preparation of books through production-oriented workshops. These workshops are to be held in different parts of the country to cover each and every language group. Training in linguistic analysis and material production is to be imparted to the literate native speakers of tribal languages. The methodology of documentation has to be taught so that all the languages can be recorded.

9. In selecting the languages for investigation and description, priority should be given to the languages spoken by a relatively small number of native speakers. This is essential as they are endangered and might disappear in near future.

10. Liberal financial support may be provided to individual scholars, University departments, NGOs and other organizations interested in and capable of conducting research work and production of books on tribal languages. Support to literary societies of the tribal people in the form of funds, books, etc., and also to organize literary festivals in tribal oral literature, as is done by the CIIL, Mysore.

11. Pressing need for a comprehensive, indepth, multidisciplinary approach to tribal studies leading to preservation of language, literature, culture and indigenous traditional wisdom.

12. At a practical level the economic, political, social and cultural power and prestige of the tribal communities have to be improved and increased, which would lead to retention of these languages.

13. People-oriented language policy and planning by the Government is essential to prevent endangerment and to retain native tongues.

14. The efforts of the Central Institute of Indian languages (Government of India), Mysore through their project "Scheme for Protection and Preservation of Endangered Langaguages (SPPEL)" may go a long way in documentation, analysis, description and dissemination of endangered tribal languages of India.

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A Sociolinguistic Study of Raji of Nepal

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Abstract

This paper attempts to present the sociolinguistic situation of the Raji language, an endangered Tibeto-Burman language spoken by a small number of speakers in the Mid-western and Western parts of Nepal. It begins with introducing the language and then it examines the dialectal variations by assessing the levels of lexical similarity among the dialectical varieties in the language and then explores the vitality of the language by investigating the patterns of language use in certain domains of language use. It also assesses the mother tongue proficiency and evaluates the language maintenance. And, finally it reveals the attitudes of the speakers towards their language.

The paper presents that there are three regional varieties in the language, that the variation ranges from 35% to 81% and that a few number of Raji parents continue to transmit their mother tongue to their children. Since there is no smooth intergenerational transmission from one generation to next it is weakening in the Raji community. Though, the language is widely used in family gatherings and with children it has lost its use in other domains of language use like singing, shopping and story-telling. It is estimated that approximately 75% of Raji children speak their mother tongue. So, the vitality rate of the language seems high to the present day. The Raji speakers do have positive attitudes towards their language.

1 Introduction to the language

Nepal is diverse in its linguistic makeup. Linguists have been investigating and studying the linguistic diversity for many decades. And, they have made some significant contributions. However, there are varying reports as to the number of languages spoken in Nepal. The Ethnologue: Languages of Nepal (2012) lists 124 languages and Central Bureau of Statistics (2011) suggests 123 languages spoken in Nepal. The guesstimate of Noonan (2005) is that there are approximately 140 languages in the country.

The languages spoken in Nepal fall into four language families: the Tibeto-Burman branch of Sino-Tibetan (86 languages), the Indo-Aryan branch of Indo-branch of Indo-European (26 languages), Austro-Asiatic (3 languages) and Dravidian (1).

There are 125 caste/ethnic groups which speak 123 languages as mother tongue in Nepal. Nepali is spoken as the mother tongue by 44.6 percent (11,826,953) of the total population followed by *Maithili* (11.7% 3,092,530), *Bhojpuri* (6.0%; 1,584,958), *Tharu* (5.8%; 1,529,875), *Tamang* (5.1%; 1,353,311), *Newar* (3.2%; 846,557), *Bajjika* (3.0%; 793,418), *Magar* (3.0%; 788,530), *Doteli* (3.0%; 787,827), *Urdu* (2.6%; 691,546).

The Raji ethnic group speaks a Tibeto-Burman language. They live primarily in Surkhet, Banke, Bardiya, Kailali, Kanchanpur and Dang districts in the Mid-western and Far-western development regions of Nepal. *Raji Shalma Samaj*, the central office, Kailali approximates more than 4,000 Raji in the country. This organization has enumerated their number in four districts: 812 female and 757 male in Kailali; 65 female and 59 male in Kanchanpur; 316 female and 365 male in Bardiya and 409 female and 799 male in Surkhet. While the CBS 2011 lists 3,758 in the country. The Raji people classify themselves into three groups: *Purbiya, Barha-Bandale* and *Naukulya* on the basis of their inhabitant areas as well as linguistic differences. The various clans found are *Khadyal, Gholyan, Railayal, Sikanke, Tokyal, Chimchyal, Gothyal, Naihari, Digyal, Batekwal, Sanjhyal* and *Chhantyal*.

Table 1 presents a complete list of the clans or castes in Raji.

Table 1: Clans/castes in Raji with their inhabitant areas

S N	Clan	Place/District
1.	*Mudyal*	Kanchanpur
2.	*Bhatukwa*	Kailali, Kanchanpur
3.	*Dungryal*	Kailali, Kanchanpur
4.	*Granwal*	Kailali, Kanchanpur
5.	*Kumlyal*	Kanchanpur
6.	*Ghatala*	Kailali
7.	*Kachale*	Kailali
8.	*Damwal*	Kailali
9.	*Naukale*	Kailali
10.	*Kamchwal*	Kailali
11.	*Mauryal*	Kailali
12.	*Tamchwal*	Kailali
13.	*Kharel*	Bardiya
14.	*Kuinyal*	Bardiya
15.	*Naiyari*	Bardiya
16.	*Tolhyal*	Bardiya
17.	*Gothyal*	Bardiya

18.	*Samjyal*	Surkhet, Bardiya
19.	*Dhulyal*	Surkhet, Bardiya
20.	*Kalalyal*	Surkhet
21.	*Samjyal*	Surkhet, Bardiya

2 Lexical similarities in the language

The 210 wordlist was recorded and filled in six major language speaking areas in four districts namely, Kailali, Surkhet, Kanchanpur and Bardiya.

Table 2 exhibits the lexical similarities and differences among three geographical or social dialects of the Raji language.

Table2: Lexical similarity and difference percentages in Raji

	Khailad	Chaumala	Chhinchu	Krishnapur	Sanoshree	Deudakala
Khailad	100%	42%	46%	81%	50%	44%
Chaumala	42%	100%	37%	39%	35%	35%
Chhinchu	46%	37%	100%	41%	69%	69%
Krishnapur	81%	39%	41%	100%	46%	42%
Sanoshree	50%	35%	69%	46%	100%	73%
Deudakala	44%	35%	69%	42%	73%	100%

Table 1 shows lexical similarities and differences between and among three regional dialects in four different districts in the county. It reveals that there is 81% of lexical similarity between *Khailad* and *Krishnapur* and there is 69% of lexical similarity between *Chhinchu* and *Sanoshree* and the same is the degree of similarity to that of *Deudakala*. Likewise, *Sanoshree* and *Deudakala* have 73% of similar lexical items. By contrast, there is only 37% of similarity in lexical items of *Chhinchu* and *Chaumala* and 42% of similarity between *Khailad* and *Chaumala.* It gives us the clue that the variety of language spoken in *Chaumala, Kailali* may be unintelligible to the speech communities in the other Raji speaking areas. However, a more intensive dialectology study is required in order to get more accurate results.

3 Mother tongue proficiency and bilingualism/multilingualism

Almost all the Raji speakers are bilingual; they speak their ethnic language-Raji and Nepali, the language of the wider communication. Except a few children under 5 years and elderly women in

some villages such as Khailad and Lalbojhi in Kailali other Rajis are bilingual and some of them even multilingual.

Table 8 presents the mother tongue proficiency in speaking, reading and writing of the Raji speakers.

Table 3: Mother tongue proficiency in speaking, reading and writing of the Raji

Degrees	Speaking (n=62)			Reading and writing (n=29)		
	Male n=31	Female n=31	Total	Male n=15	Female n=14	Total
Very well	31 (50%)	31(50%)	62 (100%)	4 (14%)	4(14%)	8 (28%)
Some	-	-	-	5 (17%)	6(21%)	11 (38%)
Only a little	-	-	-	6(4%)	4(2%)	10 (6%)

It is to be noted that literacy means being able to read and write in Nepali and only 28 percent Raji people can read and write very well.

The sixty two Raji speakers were interviewed in this survey and it was found that there is no single monolingual (only the mother tongue speaking individual) in the Raji speech community. A large number of parents continue to transmit the language to their children while a few do not so that the intergenerational transmission is weakening in the Raji community. The child-bearing generations, grandparent generations and the leaders of the community, businessmen, teachers and students are bilingual in both Nepali and Raji.

Table 4 presents the multilingualism in Raji speaking community.

Table 4: Multilingualism in Raji speech community (N= 62)

SN	Languages	No of speakers	Percentage
1	Nepali	62	100%
2	Raji	62	100%
3	Rana Tharu	5	8%
4	Dagaura Tharu	42	68%
5	Hindi	32	52%

6	Tamang	1	2%
7	Newar	1	2%
8	English	5	8%
9	Punjabi	2	3%

Table 4 shows that most of the Raji speakers are bilinguals in Raji and Nepali. Except Nepali, they also speak *Tharu* (*Dangaura and Rana*) in most of the cases. They speak other languages such as *Hindi, Tamang, Newar, English* and *Punjab, too*.

4 Domains of language use

The domains of language use means the social contexts in which the speaker uses a language, in most cases, choosing to use the language s/he regards to be the most appropriate or natural for a particular context. Such studies of language use patterns in certain domains can reveal the current status and strength of a language.

Table 5 shows the language use in different domains by sex.

Table 5: Languages most frequently used in different domains by sex

Domains	Sex									
	Male (N=31)					Female (N=31)				
	Raji %	Nepali %	Both %	Hindi %	Hindi & Nepali %	Raji %	Nepali %	Both %	Hindi %	Hindi & Nepali %
Counting	14.51	33.87	1.61	-	-	19.35	24.19	1.61	-	-
Singing	-	43.54	3.22	1.61	1.61	6.50	33.87	-	1.61	-
Joking	24.20	16.12	11.30	-	-	35.50	6.50	6.50	-	-
Shopping	1.61	50.0	-	-	-	1.61	45.16	-	-	-
Story telling	17.75	27.41	4.83	-	-	16.12	20.96	4.83	-	-
Discussing	17.75	20.96	13.0	-	-	24.19	16.12	8.06	-	-
Praying	19.35	14.51	4.83	-	-	40.32	6.50	1.61	-	-
Quarrelling	24.19	16.12	11.30	-	-	29.02	6.50	13.0	-	-
Abusing /scolding	37.09	8.06	4.83	-	-	32.25	6.50	9.67	-	-
Telling stories to	30.64	16.12	3.22	-	-	29.03	11.30	3.22	-	-

children									
Singing at home	-	41.93	-	-	3.22	8.06	30.64	-	-	-
Family gatherings	50%	1.61	-		-	48.38	-	-	-	-
Village meetings	14.51	29.02	8.06		-	17.75	22.58	8.06	-	-

Table 5 presents that the information that they often use the mother tongue in family gatherings. They also speak their mother tongue when abusing, quarrelling, joking and praying. But, in other domains of language use they use Nepali such as in singing and shopping.

5 Language vitality

Language vitality in Raji is weakening.

Table 6: Language vitality in Raji (N=62)

Questions / Places	Do all your children speak your mother tongue?			Do young people speak your mother tongue as well as it ought to be spoken?		What language do most parents in this village usually speak with their children?	
	Yes	No	N/A	Yes	No	Mother tongue	Nepali
Khailad	10	-	2	12	-	12	-
Chaumala	8	-	4	12	-	12	-
Chhinchu	9	-	3	8	4	9	3
Krishnapur	11	-	1	10	2	10	2
Sanoshree Deudakala	7	4	3	7	7	8	6
Total	45(72.50%)	4(6.5%)	13(21%)	49(79%)	13(21%)	51(82%)	11(17.75%)

Table 6 shows that out of 62 informants interviewed, 72% of the respondents said that all the children in their community speak Raji very well. By contrast, 6.5% of the respondents said that the children do not speak Raji. And, the 21% of respondents did not respond to the question since they have no children or they were unmarried. When they were asked whether they spoke Raji as it ought to be spoken, 79% of respondents replied that it is spoken as it ought to be whereas 21% of them responded that it is not spoken as it ought to be. Responding to the question what language the parents in their community speak to their children, 82% of the total population responded that it was Raji and 17.7% responded that they use Nepali.

6 Language maintenance/transmission

Language maintenance in Raji is satisfactory till now. Because of modernization the Raji speakers are slowly shifting to other languages specially Nepali in order to get better job, to adopt in a new environment and so on.

Table 6 presents the situation of language maintenance in the key points in Raji.

Table 7: Language maintenance in Raji

S N		Is there intermarriage in your community?		Do you like your children learn/study in mother tongue?		Which other language groups have common marital relationship with your language group?				
		YES	NO	YES	NO	NEPALI	THARU	GURUNG	MAGAR	OTHER
1	**Khailad**	2	8	12	-	2	1	-	-	-
2	**Chaumala**	4	11	11	1	3	3	1	1	-
3	**Chhinchu**	6	9	11	-	4	1	1	2	1
4	**Krishnapur**	3	7	12	-	3	5	1	1	1
5	**Sanoshree& Deudakala**	2	10	14	1	4	4	2	3	-
Total		17	45	60	2	16	14	5	7	2
%		24.40	72.50	97	3	25.80	22.58	8.06	11.29	3.25

Table 7 shows that 72.50% of informants interviewed responded that there is no intermarriage with other language groups. On the other hand, 24.40% of the speakers responded that there remains a situation of intermarriage in their community. Out of the 62 respondents, 97% of them

responded that they would like their children to study or learn their mother tongue. They respondents accepted that there is intermarriage culture in their community, Nepali (25%), Tharu (22.58%), Magar (11.29%), Gurung (8.06%), other (3.25%).

7 Language attitudes

Language attitudes may refer to the expressions of positive or negative feelings towards their mother tongue by a speech community. In general, Raji people have positive attitudes towards their language. However, they prefer to speak Nepali in wider domains of language use. Table 7 presents the distribution of the responses to the question what languages they loved most.

Table 8: Distribution of the responses to what languages they loved the most

S N	What languages do you love the most?	Male n=31	Female n=31	Total
1	**Raji**	29 (47%)	31 (50%)	60 (97%)
2	**Nepali**	2 (3%)	-	2 (3%)

Table 8 shows that the most of the informants (97%) replied that they love Raji the most whereas only a few (3%) of them responded that they love Nepali more than their mother tongue.

Likewise, Table 8 presents the feelings of the informants while speaking their mother tongue in the presence of the speaker of the dominant language.

Table 9: Feeling of the informants towards their mother tongue

	When you speak your mother tongue in the presence of the speaker of the dominant language what do you feel?	Male N=31	Female N=31	Total
1	Prestigious	11 (18%)	13 (21%)	24 (39%)
2	Embarrassed	10 (16%)	12 (19%)	22 (35%)
3	Neutral	10 (16%)	6 (9%)	16 (25%)

Table 9 shows, 39% of the total 62 (male 31 and female 31) respondents replied that they felt prestigious while speaking their mother tongue in the presence of the speaker of the other dominant language. On the other hand, 35% of the informants said that they felt embarrassed > And, 25% of the informants showed their indifference to the question.

With regard to the question what language the children of Raji people should speak first all of the informants (i.e. 100%) responded that their children should speak Raji first since it is their ancestral language as well as the symbol of their ethnic identity.

Table 9 presents the responses to the question what language should their children speak first.

Table 10: Responses to what language should their children speak first

S N	What language should your children speak first?	Male N=31	Female N=31	Total
1	Raji	31	31	62(100%)
2	Nepali	-	-	-

Table 10 shows that Raji people are very much positive towards preserving their mother tongue. Among the total 62 respondents all (100%) of them said that they want their children to speak Raji as their first language (mother tongue).

8 Language development

The Raji speakers are proud of speaking their ethnic language. They want to develop their language.

Table 11 displays their responses towards their attitudes regarding the development of their language.

Table 11: Summary of the findings of the appreciative inquiry in Raji

Good things that made Raji people feel happy or proud about their language	What they want to do in their language	What they want to do to save and promote their language
▪ Easy to communicate ▪ "Simple and sweet" ▪ Easy to communicate secrete matters ▪ Ancestral language ▪ Symbol of ethnic identity of Raji	▪ To prepare textbooks for children in Raji ▪ To have equal access to media ▪ To start mother tongue based education at primary level ▪ To use Raji in local bodies/offices ▪ To develop a dictionary	▪ To start mother tongue based education at primary level

Table 11 shows the dreams and aspirations of the Raji speakers towards the development and promotion of their language.

9 Conclusion

The Raji people are one of the indigenous nationalities of Nepal who reside primarily in Kailali, Surkhet, Banke, Bardiya, Kanchanpur and Dang districts of western Nepal. They have their own culture and language. The Government of Nepal has recognized Raji as a minority indigenous people. The Raji use a distinct language which belongs to Tibeto-Burman language sub-family of Sino-Tibetan language family to communicate among them in the community.

The Raji speak three varieties of their language. The varieties of Raji language spoken in Chhinchu of Surkhet, Sanoshree of Bardiya and Deudakala of Bardiya are found to be very much similar in terms of word list comparision. The variety spoken in Khailad VDC of Kailali and Krishnapur and Daiji VDCs of Kanchanpur resemble to a greater extent. The variety spoken in Kuchaini village of Chaumala VDC (Kailali district) is different from the other two varieties. This variety is not intelligible to the other two speech communities whereas Khailad variety speakers and the speakers of Surkhet and Bardiya districts understand each other and can continue speaking their variety when they meet each other. From this situation we can conclude that Raji has been developed in three different varieties.

In terms of language maintenance there are a number of parents continues to transmit the language to their children. On the other hand, some Raji do not do this. This situation reveals that the intergenerational transmission is weakening in Raji community. They often use their language in the family gatherings and with their children. Almost 75% percent of Raji children speak their mother tongue. So, the vitality rate of the language seems high to the present day. They have very much positive attitudes towards their language.

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वाक् मंथन

Language, Hyperreal and Nation state: A special focus on Lodha Community

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If we take a quick look in the Indian history from the colonial period, we see that the Language has been the best option to be maintained as a totality with a flagged identity for the Indian communities. Language based (nation-) states are the regular evidence of this fact. The prior Indian states, which as a member of Indian nation take part in the central politics are made on the basis of the linguistic homogeneity. Even the subaltern groups, accepting and not accepting the state as a 'lead', both use language as identity to introduce themselves in the national politics. Though there is no universal theory of linguistic identity, language is prioritized as a prestigious and supreme factor in case of self identification in India, even for the 'other' who are not accepting the state as a lead. Irony lies in the fact that language itself has no authority over its speakers but it is used as a tool by which state rules.

We have three spaces to observe this state-language-other nexus, i.e., 'real' where newspapers report, 'subjective' where researchers involve and 'hyperreal' where communities that accept state and negotiate the situation bound condition provided by the state. This time we focus on hyperreal on one hand and non-utilitarian question of language on the other, exploited by the 'accepting' communities of the state as diplomatic strategies to wield power.

To proceed in this study we have to presuppose some practical departure made in the previous studies, for example 'inner domain' proposed by Chatterjee (1993). According to Chatterjee inner domain defines sovereign territory and refuses to allow the colonial power to intervene in that domain …'' keeping this idea in mind we proposed an idea on 'linguistic inner domain' which still exist in India as a primitive space of identity (Ghosh Datidar and Mukhopadhyay 2014). Now the fact is that each community is fronted by a mediator, a member of the negotiating intelligentsia, to represent voice of their existence but the mediator defines the community through his own politicized approach. Therefore, whenever we try to examine a situation of worse in the real, we have to face a hyperreal in which the mediators develops inner domain into a solidified self.

Linguistic Human right (LHR) is now a popular and prominent issue for discussion in international level. LHR concerns the individual and collective right to choose the language or languages for communication in a private or public atmosphere. State speaks on it; Parliament passes the message; Meetings are held; Statesman passionately delivers long lectures; make unpredictable promises. But the people who actually experience the death of their mother tongue, who virtually feel the humiliation while speaking in their indigenous language in mainstream area are never focused. State claims for a prestigious language which should be standardized. 'Standardization' of one dialect within a province leads other dialects to be degraded in terms of its prestige and ethnicity. One language-variety takes a big shape, which includes 'other' varieties, in turn becomes a standard language. The Standard variety comes to signify a 'total' end with its metaphysical existence.

In this paper, there are two different ways to bear with the question of linguistic human right (LHR). One, where speakers must have their say and two, irrespective of social class, caste, religion and national identity one has to have the freedom to speak in his/her own language, i.e., the vernacular defined as mother tongue by the governing state as per the constitution. LHR as a part of the enterprising issue of human right is basically an endeavour where a complex negotiation happens between selves. Other always works as the subjected factor of that negotiation but not as a subject. Negotiation is not a universal strategy but very surprisingly established as a universal relation in diaspora

Now let's have a look on Lodha community whom we are referring in our paper to denote the 'real' where the people must entertain the negotiating strategy and maintain the diaspora in amalgamation which is truly shocking. Lodha is a primitive tribal community in India, mainly situated in Odisha and West Bengal, though Odisha is the homeland of lodha people. Lodha tribe was marked as the criminal tribe since 1871 under Criminal tribal Act and in 1956 they were officially notified as the scheduled tribe in West Bengal. Geneologically Lodha is classified under Indo-European language family and derived as an Indo Aryan language in Eastern region.

Though our paper concerns linguistic minority in this commentary, we try to seek the cultural exhaustion arising through the minority factors as linguistic identity itself is strongly intertwined with the cultural identity of a self and a language can give birth to a civilization unique in its cultural value and custom. To examine the present situation of lodha both of its linguistic and social-cultural domain we did our survey on Lodha in Narayangarh, a community block in Kharagpur subdivision of West Midnapore District in West Bengal. We talk about them who are considered as a well known scheduled tribe by the census and maintaining their 'self' in the synthesis of state power. We will typically restrict our survey on a Lodha community and also try to find how 'they' are defined by the state. Our primary task will be to see how language interferes in the sphere of hyperreal.

Narayangarh village is 31 km. far from Kharagpur and 160 km. away from Kolkata. This village typically belongs to lodha community. The people of this village are aware of their ethnic identity but somehow the consciousness of preserving this ethnicity is absent in their approach. We observed a triangle opinion in the village. One group is completely silent and has no say regarding any issues of live hood. This group signifies the true sense of poverty. Their silence seems to ridicule the upgrading society. Second group is the representative of ruling power irrespective of any political color and seeks to have the economic privilege using their subaltern status. They aspire for development but this development exploits globalization which can welcome the comprehensive transformation and replacement but globalization fails to conserve the root or to restore convention. The third group speaks for their ethnicity. They think for their cultural practice. They crave to sustain their struggle to survive with their ethnic identity. This doesn't mean that they indulge the orthodox and dislike to step in the world, but they like to live with recognition, reviving selves and avoiding negotiation.

There is a triangular relationship between language death, globalization and universal subjectivity. This triangle, as far as my concern, is best understood by the diachronic chain of the capitalism worldwide. Language death in this diachronic chain is the result of such politico-administrative transformation. Globalization cannot be associated with only uniformity but simultaneously it brings discrimination too. With "globalization", loss of human languages increases at a high level. People find it easier to conduct business and communicate with outsider in more widely used languages. Now-a-days linguistic diversity is disappearing relatively much faster than biological diversity. The percentage of languages that will probably perish in the next century is much larger than the percentage of all biological species that will be killed in the same period. [Tove,2000]. Therefore, conservation of a language means it penetrates an attitude on the topic of conservation for nature.

When we talked to the lodha people, we found most of them aged above 45 have a fluency while speaking lodhi language where as the young generation are ashamed to speak in it in front of outsiders and tend to converse in Bangla which they think to be the prestigious language. They come to believe, based on more dominant cultures, that their language is obsolete, backwards and not suited for the modern world; or the only way to advancement is to switch over entirely to global languages which will provide them credit and status.
 Even the aged people feel embarrassed to talk in their language. The academic institutions in the locality opt for Bangla as the medium of teaching and lodha children are being educated in Bangla. Their native vernacular has no place in the formal territory though it survives within inner domain. But the alarm lies. How long this inner domain will be alive? To preserve a language this inner domain needs a psycho analysis process. Inner domain marks the sphere of self identity. According to Chatterjee inner domain defines sovereign territory and refuses to allow the colonial power to intervene in that domain …''

We consider linguistic minority as a dreadful situation because the phenomenon like endangerment of a language, death of a language is not like the death of some phonemes and words and grammars. Language loss means a loss of a culture. When one language begins to be lost, the culture related to it also sinks. Knowledge regarding medicinal plants, about ecosystems, about crops, the historical information, the mythology; creation myths is the part of culture. These are amazing things have no written document and don't exist in books anywhere. They are part orally transmitted from generation to generation. Indigenous people are the only expert to convey this knowledge. But if they leave no survivor; these valuable and intellectual concepts bubble in air.

Now if we try to draw the map of a given negotiation and the subjected individuals termed as a homogeneous community and defined as a totality, we find it is the first priority in Indian state to keep homogeneity among the variety of speeches to ensure a geopolitical boundary. Homogeneity exists within heterogeneity. This is the same happening for language too. There is a monogamy observed in linguistic diversity. As if all languages tend to merge within one. This homogeneous tendency is an outcome of colonialism. Specially in post colonial period human being started to practice this tendency. However In the process of keeping such type of homogeneity, the state has to exercise its power to include or to exclude the varieties of speech spreading around the periphery. The game of the exclusion may lead a culture or a language to be extinct. The excluded or included (in many cases) variety either commits suicide or switches from their identity to a higher version of what the state maintains.

We don't claim for establishing linguistic right in the minority group but we desire let these groups get back their linguistic right. As the scope of ecology covers a wide array of interacting levels of organization spanning micro-level to macro level, languages should have the ecological balance. As we cannot eradicate saplings only to give space big trees, we cannot too extirpate the minor languages. One of modernist responses for language conservation is to codify the language and the main chore of language documentation is to maintain the comprehensive records of the linguistic data containing essential features of that language of a speech community. Skuttnab Kangas (2000) says ,"Much work by sociolinguists and educationists on linguistic diversity and endangered languages is descriptive. It often stops at asking 'what?' questions and some 'how?' questions. This gives too little prominence to a focus on analysing (= 'why?' questions) and, especially, on trying to change the economic, techno-military, social and ideological circumstances that lead to language endangerment and disappearance of linguistic diversity in the first place . Documenting endangered languages is often necessary and always positive, but it should be secondary to a holistic/ecological analysis, and change." (2009)

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Deictic Categcries in Galo

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Defining Deixis

The word 'deixis' is derived from the Greek word '*deickticos*', which simply means 'pointing'. It is also variously known as 'pointers', 'shifters', 'indexical expressions', 'indexical symbols' and 'pure index'. In descriptive grammar it refers to "all cues provided by a language that localize a speech event and its participants (Speaker, Hearer and narrated participant) in space and time." It has been described variously by various linguists. Charles Fillmore defines it as the aspect of language which requires contextualization in terms of the social context, "that context defined in such a way as to identify the participants in the communication act, their location in space, and the time during which communication act is performed" (Fillmore 1975:38). Similarly John Lyons gives quite a comprehensive definition of deixis: "the location and identification of person, objects, processes and activities being talked about or referred to in relation to the spatio-temporal context created and sustained by act of utterances and participation in it, typically of a single speaker and at least one addressee." (Lyons 1975) Stephen Levinson defines it as "the ways in which languages encode....features of the context of utterance" (Levinson 1983:54)

While deciding a deictic element, there is always a point from which everything else is pointed at. This is referred to as '*origo*', which is the zero point. This is the starting point in a deictic category; the point where we start referring to temporal, spatial and other deictic categories. And this deictic field is an extra-symbolic, and extra-linguistic field.

Generally deixis is divided into four categories, depending on the context which is taken into account while pointing:

a) <u>Spatial deixis</u>: The place or places in the individuals involved in the communication are located at the time of communication is referred to by spatial deixis. In English the adverbs

'here' and 'there' and demonstratives 'this' and 'that', and their plural form are the spatial deictic word. These spatial deictic words can be used in three ways—*gestural* (which can be properly interpreted only when the physical aspect of communication situation is considered); *symbolic* (which can be interpreted only by having certain knowledge of aspects of the speech communication situation, whether this knowledge comes by current perception or not); and *anaphoric* (which can be interpreted only knowing what other portion of the same discourse the expression is co-referential with).

b) <u>Temporal deixis</u>: The time at which the communication act takes place is encoded in the temporal deixis. This time is divided into *encoding time* (the time at which the message is sent); and *decoding time* (the time at which the message is received). In English the temporal deictic words are 'now', 'today', 'yesterday', etc.

c) <u>Personal deixis</u>: The identity of the participants in a communication situation is covered under personal deixis. There are basically four categories of personal deixis—*speaker or first person* (the sender of the message); *addressee or second person* (the message's intended recipient); *audience* (who may be considered a part of the conversational group but who is neither speaker nor addressee); the fourth category is that of the persons who are referred to in sentences and who is not in either of these three categories (it is not necessarily third person as third person can be a part of the *audience*).

d) <u>Social deixis</u>: The social relationships on the part of the participants in the conversation, that determines things like the choice of honorific or polite or intimate or insulting speech levels, etc.

Besides these there are two other kinds of deixis that are sometimes identified—*visual deixis* and *discourse deixis*. Among these visual deixis refers to the the linguistic elements encoding visibility in space. This might be considered a part of or, at least, overlapping with the spatial deixis. Discourse deixis takes into consideration the preceding and following parts of the discourse. It is also overlapping with the social and personal deixis.

In this paper I shall discuss in detail the encoding of spatio-temporal, personal and social information in Galo through different kinds of deictic elements.

About Galo

Galo is spoken by around 30-40,000 people of Galo tribe, almost throughout the West Siang district of central Arunachal Pradesh. It has two major varieties—

(A) Pugo, spoken around the district capital Along, and

(B) Lare, spoken to the south of Along.

Besides these there are several other varieties of Galo, which often correspond to regional or clan

groupings. For example Karka is considered one such variety but may also be a different language altogether and not just a variety of Galo. Galos are socio-economically dominant in their area. And so the language is also considered quite respectable. It has been passed over to the next generation and almost all the Galo children learn Galo as their mother tongue. However, most of them are multilingual and are proficient in other languages, chiefly their variety of Hindi, English and some other neighbouring languages. Education is mainly in Hindi.

Like most central and eastern Tani languages, Galo is largely synthetic and agglutinating. In some older variety of Galo, two tones—high and low – were phonemic. Even now it lingers in the speech of older people and the people living the the villages. However the new city dwelling generation has lost these tones.

The major lexical classes in Galo are noun, verb and adjective. Galo exhibits a very strong finite/non-finite asymmetry. There are also many instances of clause chaining and nominalization. There does not seem to be any instance of verb serialization. But there is a very rich and productive system of derivational suffixation.

Other chief grammatical features of the language include the presence of postpositions, relator nouns, a very rich numeral classifier system, an extremely large system of aspectual suffixes, and a rich set of constituent-final particles having functions like showing evidentiality, discourse/pragmatic status, modality, and other related functions. Case-marking is basically accusative. There is also a very large system of deictic elements.

Spatial Deixis in Galo

Galo is largely spoken in the hills of Arunachal Pradesh. So the spatial deictic categories encoded by the language is very different from those being encoded in the languages of the plains like Hindi, Gujarati, Bangla and other well-known languages. It reflects the environment in which the language is spoken.

Encoding of the terrain

Since Galo speakers live almost exclusively on the hills, it is expected that they would classify and encode spatial position on the hills in great details. In general, 'moḍi' refers to the generic mountain. If the size of the mountain is to be encoded then there are two divisions – 'bi:ʈə', meaning huge mountain and 'bi:me', meaning small mountain.

In addition to size, the spatial position of the origo with respect to the mountain can also be encoded in Galo. So as the origo shifts, the word used for the mountain also changes. The three words on the left side in Fig. 1 encodes three different positions of the origo.

The encoding of spatial position becomes even more interesting when we look at the case of superimposed origo. When the speaker herself is the origo, the words for the mountain encoding

her own different spatial positions is different from the words that encode the spatial position of some other object. The words on the right side in Fig. 1 encodes the spatial position of the superimposed origo.
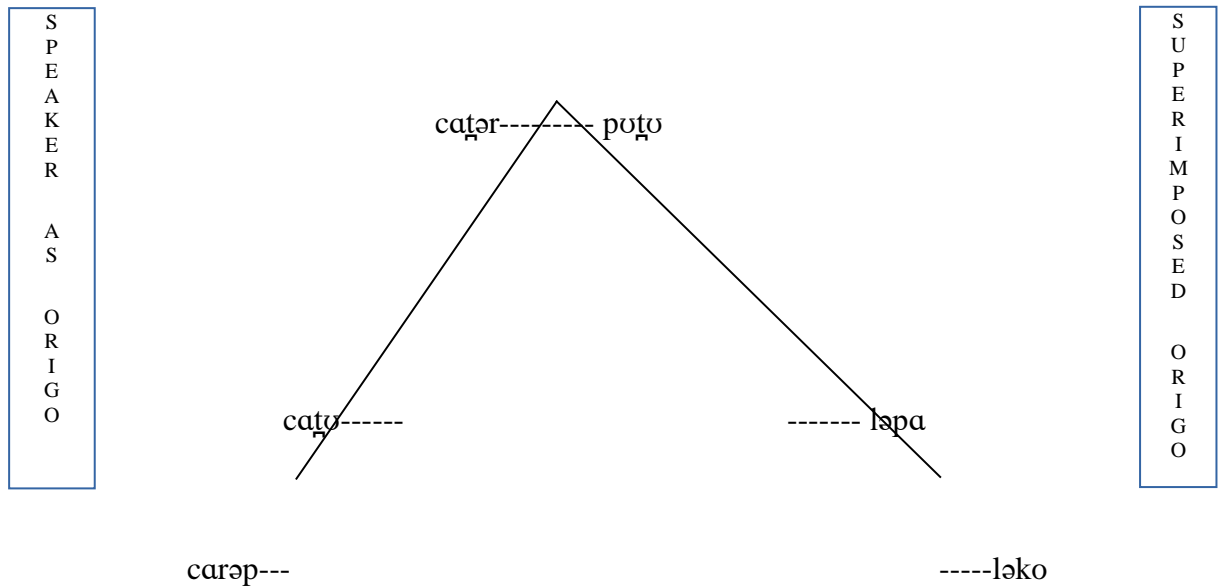

Fig 1: Encoding of spatial position with respect to the terrain in Galo

Intrinsic and relative spatial position

The location of one object in space in relation to another object can be determined on the basis of two criteria—

a) Intrinsic front or back of the object in whose relation this object is being seen.For example, the intrinsic front of a car is the side in front of its headlights; it is unchangeable in any case and that side will always be front.

b) Referential front or back i.e., location according to the position of the origo. For example, if a person is standing on the side of the right-hand side door then he will refer to any object in between himself and the car to be on the front of the car, although that object is not on side of the intrinsic front of the car; its just the position of the person that is determining the location of the subject.

Some languages encode the intrinsic and referential spatial location differently. But Galo does not exhibit this kind of encoding in the language. However the most natural way of speaking is to use the intrinsic reference. For example a sentence like 'sikəl-ə   nəm ɑbo ɑ ɖoɖʋ' (the bicycle is in front of the house) will generally mean that the cycle is kept on the side which is considered the intrinsic front of the house.

Spatial location in Galo

Galo has a rich array of lexical items encoding different kinds of spatial location. Some of the words expressing the location in Galo are as follows:

(1) ɑbo—front

(2) kokɯ--behind

(3) kokɯ --back

(4) cərə--beside

(5) ʈɑjo-lo—top/up

(6) ʈɑjo-ʈə-- above

(7) ʈebəl ʈʊko-bə ɖoɖo—under the table (nearer to the floor)

(8) ʈebəl cəmpɯk-bə nɑ-- under the table (nearer to the table)

(9) ɑrɑ-- inside

(10) lɑkcɯ pele—left side

(11) lɑkbək pele—right side

(12) ɑg-- front (of the tree)

(13) ɑgʊm—outside

(14) ləpɑ--between (e.g., cycle between the trees i.e., which fits in easily)

(15) pəŋko—between(which has used some kind of force to come in between)

(16) ɑlʊm—among

(17) nəci—near

(18) oɖo--far

 (20) holʊ-- around(encircling)

(21) rəgo—around (town) i.e, here and there

(22) doloŋ—across (spanning)

(23) inlə-- (along)

(24) iɲo—past (the temple)

In some cases these words encode the physical properties of the origo. For example, if the origo is a tree then its front is referred to as ' ɑg'; however for other non-tree objects it is ' ɑbo'. Similarly the objects which fits easily in between two objects, their location is encoded by the word ' ləpɑ', while the one which takes effort to get in between is encoded by the word ' pəŋko'.

Direction of Motion in Galo

Besides the lexical items for stating the static location of an object, Galo also has a large set of deictic prefixes which encode the directionality of motion of an object with respect to the origo. For example, in the following examples, the verb 'kɑ' (go/come) always occurs with a prefix which marks the direction of the movement of the object with reference to the origo.

(1) iŋ   -kɑ-- go to (principal's office)
(2) nəŋ -kɑ-- go out/come out
(3) ilo   -kɑ-- go/come down (literally downside)
(4) inlik -kɑ-- go inside
(5) iɲo   -kɑ-- go/come past
(6) inbo -kɑ—come past
(7) iŋŋek -kɑ-- come past
(8) cɑ   -kɑ-- go up (the stairs)
(9) ɑlɯk -kɑ-- go into
(10) i   -kɑ-- go down
(11) cɑ   -kɑ-- went up
(12) cɑŋo— going to the top (from bottom)

e.g. ŋo ritesh ne cɑŋo-t̪o

   I ritesh ACC top-go

   I reached the top leaving behind Ritesh

One of the most interesting features of Galo is that the motion with different spatial description is completely distinguished. It implies that the 'to' and 'via' readings that are expressed through the same expression in languages like English, are expressed through different expressions. In sentences which is said to have 'to' reading, the internal argument of those sentences get the goal θ-role i.e., the subject has to reach there and then stop there itself. But in case of 'via' reading, the internal argument will get the theme/patient θ-role i.e., the subject will pass through it but will not stop there. Some of the examples which show this distinction in Galo are as follows:

(1) kod̪ɑ pelə ɑl **iŋkɑ**--went in front of the house ('to' reading)

(2) ko̱d̪a pelə ək **inləkɑ**-- went in front of the house ('via' reading)

(3) koku lo **iŋkɑ**-- went behind the house ('to reading)

(4) koku ək **inləkɑ**-- went behind the house ('via reading)

(5) cərə lo **iŋka**-- went beside the house ('to' reading)

(6) cərə ək **inləkɑ**-- went beside the house ('via' reading)

(7) t̪ʊko bokkə **cad̪ʊ**-- came from under the bridge ('to' reading)

(8) t̪ʊko bokkə rɯlɑ **calend̪ʊ**-- came from under the bridge ('via' reading)

(9) jobbo lɑ ad̪ʊ—came from over the wall ('via' reading)

(10) əkkə ad̪ʊ—came from over the wall ('to' reading)

However, besides these there are some examples where both 'to' and 'via' readings are possible. For example (7) can also be interpreted to have 'via' reading, but the 'to' reading is more natural and also appropriate.

Galo also makes a distinction between the locative reading and the directional meaning of the sentences. Locative reading means that there is no movement i.e., action takes place over a particular location and so internal argument gets the theme/patient θ-role. While in directional reading something comes to somewhere from somewhere and thus internal argument gets the goal θ-role. We can take the following examples:

(1) pət̪ɑ	hil	t̪ajo	t̪olok	**d̪əkɑ**
Bird	lake	over		flew

The bird flew over the lake (Goal reading)

(2) pət̪ɑ	hil	t̪ajo	t̪ol	**d̪əl-rəkɑ**
Bird	lake	over		flew

The bird flew over the lake (Locative reading)

1. **Temporal deixis**

Galo being a language spoken by those who traditionally survived on farming, their conception of time, like that of space, is very different from other well-known languages. Their division of time is done more minutely and is much more elaborate than these languages. Another factor behind this difference is the natural location of the language-speaking community. It is a spoken in a place where Sun rises very early and so this naturally affects the notion of time that is encoded in the language.

Encoding of the moment

Galo has 8 different temporal deictic elements to indicate the temporal position of the origo in terms of 'moment' or 'nowness'. It is represented diagrammatically in Fig 2.
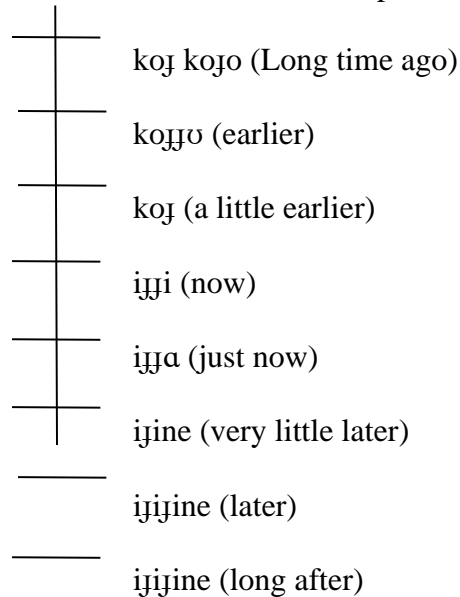
koɟ koɟo (Long time ago)

koɟɟʊ (earlier)

koɟ (a little earlier)

iɲi (now)

iɟɑ (just now)

iɟine (very little later)

iɟiɟine (later)

iɟiɟine (long after)

Fig 2: The concept of 'Nowness' as seen in Galo

Encoding of a single day

Day and night are divided into 10 unequal parts in Galo. It is represented in a 24-hour clock in Fig 3.
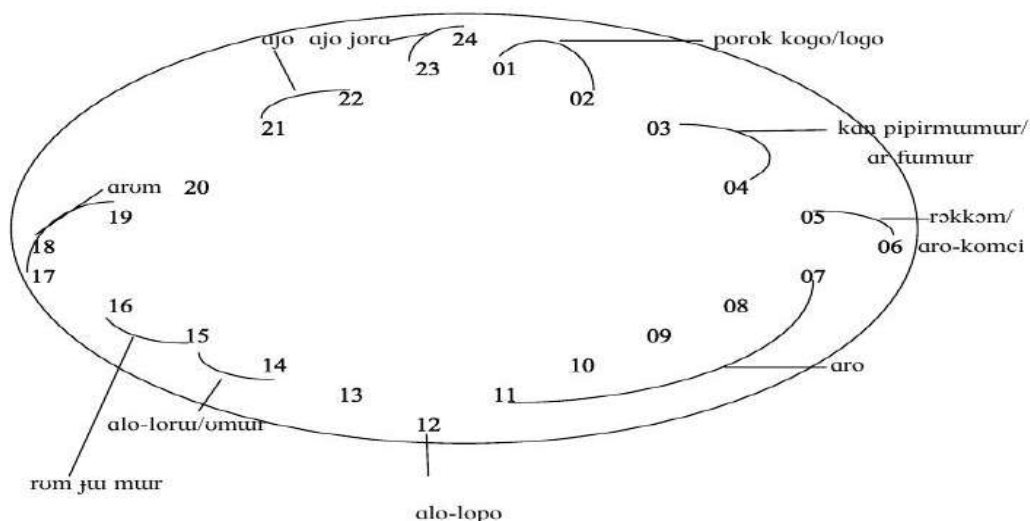

Fig 3: A somewhat 24-hour clock-like structure showing Galo's division of day and night

Encoding of multiple days in Galo

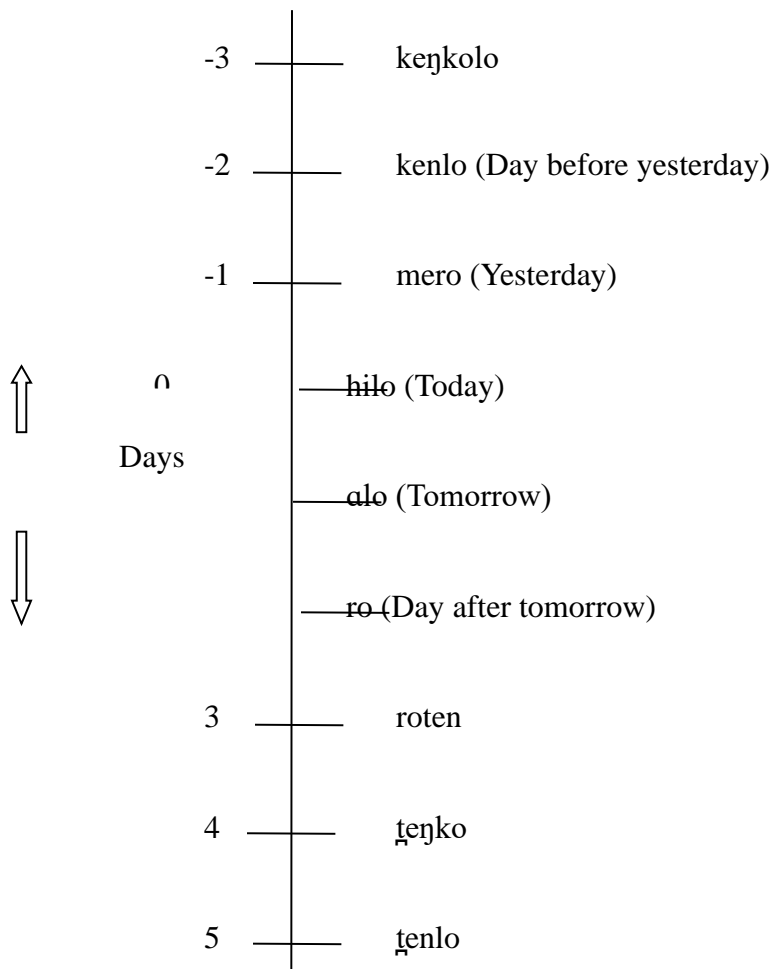Fig 4 and 5 give a representation of the way multiple days and nights are encoded in Galo:

-3	keŋkolo
-2	kenlo (Day before yesterday)
-1	mero (Yesterday)
∩	hilo (Today)
Days	alo (Tomorrow)
	ro (Day after tomorrow)
3	roten
4	ţeŋko
5	ţenlo

Fig 4: Encoding of multiple days in Galo

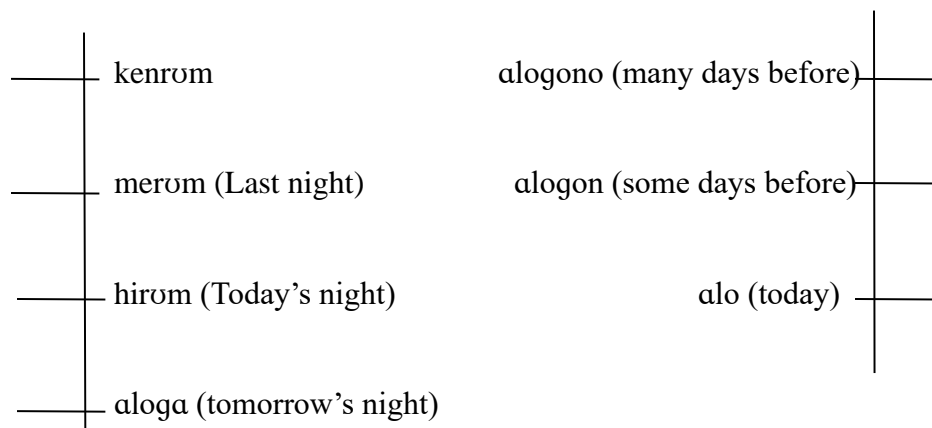|		
kenrʋm		alogono (many days before)
merʋm (Last night)		alogon (some days before)
hirʋm (Today's night)		alo (today)
aloga (tomorrow's night)		

Fig 5: Encoding of multiple days and nights in Galo

Grouping of days in Galo

Galo has a productive way of forming lexical items for grouping the days. The group of days are formed by compounding the lexical item for day = 'lo' – with the lexical items for numerals. Fig 6 shows the groups of days thus formed in Galo.

ɑlo	—┼—	1day
loɲi	—┼—	2 days
lom	—┼—	3 days
lopi	—┼—	4 days
loŋo	—┼—	5 days
lokə	—┼—	6 days
lokɑn	—┼—	7 days
lopin	—┼—	8 days
lokeŋə	—┼—	9 days
loru	—┼—	10 days

Fig 6: Grouping of days in Galo

In addition to this, Galo groups its days into 'ɑlokɑn' (something like a week), which is grouped into 'pol' (equivalent to month) which is further collectively called 'əɲjʊ' (equivalent to year).

Personal deixis

Galo depicts the three-way grouping of first person (+S), second person (+A, -S) and third person (-S, -A), which interacts with the 3-way distinction in number -singular, dual and plural. However unlike lot of other Tibeto-Burman languages, Galo does not have Inclusive/Exclusive distinction in first person. Table 1 gives a complete paradigm of the personal deixis in Galo.

	I person	II person	III person
Singular	ŋo	no	mɯ
Dual	ŋʊɲi	nʊɲi	mʊɲi
Plural	ŋʊn/ŋʊlʊ	nʊn/nʊlʊ	mʊn/bʊlʊ

Table 1: Paradigm of personal deixis in Galo

Social deixis in Galo

The most striking feature of Galo is, probably the absence of any honorific form, or any deictic category that may either point to 'absolute' or 'relational' social deixis. However like most other Indian languages it has a a rich system of pointing towards the kinship relationship.. Here I have listed some of these terms, which are in a way deictic:

(1)   aṯo—Grandfather
(2)   ajo—Grandmather
(3)   abo—Father
(4)   aci—Elder brother/ uncle's son who is elder
(5)   aɲi—Elder sister/ uncle's daughter who is elder
(6)   abɯr—Younger brother or sister
(7)   ɲiɲi—Mama's daughter
(8)   ɲibɯ-- Mama's son
(9)   abokɑi—Eldest uncle
(10)   aboɑja--Uncle younger to the eldest uncle
(11)   abooi—Youngest uncle
(12)   abo niɹir—aunty
(13)   ki—Younger mama
(14)   kooṯə-- Elder mama
(15)   moṯə--Elder mami
(16)   moi—Younger mami
(17)   ɲim—Wife
(18)   ɲilo—Husband
(19)   nəṯə--Eldest Bhabhi
(20)   nəro—Youger to the eldest bhabhi
(21)   nəi—Youngest bhabhi
(22)   ḍʊnə--daugter-in-law/ daughter (after marriage)
(23)   məkbo—son-in-law
(24)   məkṯo- jiju
(25)   məgi—jiju's brother
(26)   rɯgo—Saala
(27)   rɯgnə-- Saali
(28)   aṯo—father-in-law
(29)   ajo—mother-in-law
(30)   bərbo—Saadhu
(31)   bərnə--husband's brother's wife

In addition to these, Galo also provides a system of productively creating new kinship terms by compounding the ordinal numerals with generic kinship terms. Following examples illustrate this.

nə-tə (first brother's wife)
nə-ro (second brother's wife)
nə-də (third brother's wife)
nə-ko (fourth brother's wife)
nə-i (last brother's wife)

A similar pattern could be observed in another example also
ɲam-tə (first (grand)daugther-in-law)
ɲam-ro (second (grand)daugther-in-law)
ɲam-də (third (grand)daugther-in-law)
ɲam-ko (fourth (grand)daugther-in-law)
ɲam-i (last (grand)daugther-in-law)

Summing Up

Galo provides a rich system of pointing towards the spatio-temporal and social position of the origo/speaker within a discourse. While certain parts of the spatial deictic system could be attributed to the local topological properties, a large part of the system like the expressions for 'direction of motion' is purely linguistic in nature. The temporal deictic system provides a pretty comprehensive and fine-grained system for pointing towards distinctive temporal position of the action. Galo presents a very canonical picture of personal deixis with 9-way distinction for depicting the position of the speaker and the addressee within a discourse. Like most of the other Indian languages, Galo provides a rich system of encoding and pointing towards the relationship among individuals as well as productively creating new terms for representing the kinship. In this paper I have barely touched upon the rich array of deictic elements in Galo and it would require further study to understand it completely, particularly the elements related to spatial deixis and social deixis.

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Dhimal: A Struggle for Existence

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Introduction

Dhimal is a Tibeto-Burman language spoken in a pocket of Darjeeling district of West Bengal. It has been considered as one of the endangered languages of India by SPPEL project. SPPEL stands for Scheme for Protection and Preservation of Endangered Languages. It is formed in principle by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, India with the aim of documenting the endangered languages of India. The present paper describes the mixed language attitude of Dhimal speakers towards their native language. The study is based on first hand data collection done in October 2014.

A variety of Dhimal is also spoken in Nepal. But the variety spoken in India is highly endangered. The language is surrounded by Indo-Aryan languages like Bengali, Rajbanshi and Hindi. The Dhimal community mostly speaks Rajbanshi and Bengali. Rajbanshi is the local language of the area and Bengali is taught in the schools. Only people above the age of sixty can speak fluent Dhimal. However they too have problem in recalling the numbers, names of seasons and various body part terms. The present paper describes the situation of Dhimal speech community and their struggle for existence.

Location and Population

Dhimal is mainly spoken in Darjeeling district of West Bengal. In south of Darjeeling district near Naxalbari, there are three villages named Hatighisa, Mallabari and Moniram. Dhimal is mainly spoken in these villages. Hatighisa is also known as Chengadhari as the river Chenga flows through the village. Mallabari has more Dhimal families than Chengadhari. They are more fluent in Dhimal. According to the head of the Dhimal community and the Panchayats of the villages, there are overall around 185 Dhimal families in the three villages. The overall population of Dhimal in the Darjeeling district is around 1000.

Dhimal speakers other than Dhimal can also speak Rajbanshi, Bangla and Hindi. Some of them are also fluent in Nepali. Most of them claim to understand Santali, Sadri and Nepali. Male members of the community work as farmers, laborers and government contractors. Some of the females who have primary education work in Aganbari (Government schools). Other female members of the community either help their husbands in the field or work as home makers.

Dhimals generally avoid getting married to other communities. They even claim that they do not allow inter-community marriages. But in many Dhimal families inter-community marriages between Dhimal and Nepali or Rajbanshi can be found. Dhimals take Rajbanshi and Nepali as their equals however Santal and Oraon communities are considered as lower to Dhimals by the Dhimal community. Marriages between equals (Dhimal and Nepali or Rajbanshi) can be witnessed but marriages between unequals (Dhiamls, Santal or Oraon) are hard to find.

Effect of Dominant Language

Dhimal is a Nature worshipping tribe. When asked about their religion, one of the informants said, "Some people say themselves as Hindu but we are not Hindus we are practicing *Prakritik Dharmo* (Natural Religion). We worship trees, hills, rivers etc", - (Prosonjit Mallick, Age 38, M). Due to intense contact with Hindu Bengali and Rajbanshi neighbours, now the community has been highly influenced by the Hindu religion. Dhimal has adopted concepts, which are not present in Dhimal but are prevalent in the neighbouring communities. As the concepts have been borrowed so have been the words.

One of the reasons of lexicon borrowing is acquiring of new concepts by the speech community (Campbell 1999). Dhimal community did not have the concept of religion. Due to long contact with the Rajbanshis and Bengalis, Dhimals have acquired the concept of religion. The concept of religion also needed a name for their religion. So, they have named their religion as *prakriṭik ḏʰarmo* (Natural Religion), which means they worship Nature. However both the words *prakriṭik* and *ḏʰarmo* are Bengali words.

Dhimals have also adopted the deities of the neighboring Hindu communities. Dhimals now have started celebrating Hindu religious rituals those are performed by their neighbouring speech communities. They celebrate Hindu festivals like Diwali and Dussehara. To perform these religious rituals Dhimals had borrowed the names of the Hindu Gods as well. But the Dhimals do not recognize themselves as Hindus. So to keep the difference they named their Gods as *parvaṭi beɟa:n* (Parvati-Godess). *parvaṭi* is a Bengali/Hindi name of a female Goddess which has been borrowed but the word *beɟa:n* is a Dhimal word used for females.

Rituals are still done in Dhimal language by Dhami (priest)- /ḏʰami/. Other than worshipping, *Dhami,* gives medicines for various diseases. The community has such faith on *Dhami* that their first preference is *Dhami* for treatment of any disease. If *Dhami* can not cure then only the members of the community go to doctors. Once in a year, the God of village is worshipped which is known as Pat Puja (village worship).

Dhimal speakers have forgotten many of the words which include names of birds, animals, kinship terms and body part terms. The forgotten terms have been replaced by the borrowed

Hindi or Bengali words with or without some phonological changes. Though the speakers could recall some of the body part terms like *pu:ʃun* (hair)*, puriŋ,* (head)*, mi* (eye) and *ḍilbe* (chin) but for some they used borrowed words like *ḍarih* (beard) same word used in Hindi and Bengali, *aŋuli* (finger) *aŋul* in Bengali and *ʈala* (palm) *ʈalu* in Bengali. Borrowing can be found in colour terms as well. But the basic colour terms were recalled in Dhimal by the speakers, *ḍaka* (black), *ɟeka* (white), *ika* (red) and *peŋʃa* (green). Whereas, other terms were borrowed ones like *holḍia* (yellow) *holḍe* in Bengali and *ʃonʈola* (orange) *sɔntəra* in Hindi and *ḍaka begna* (violet) *begne* in Bengali.

Language Attitude

Language attitudes are of key importance in assessing the longevity of a language (Sallabank 2013). Attitude of the speakers towards the language can make the language endangered or it can even help an endangered language revitalize. In the case of Dhimal it can be seen that there is a change in the attitude of the speakers towards their language though the situation do not encourage them to learn Dhimal. Dhimal speakers have no motivation for speaking Dhimal. The language is neither taught in the schools nor does anyone outside their community understand the language so they are forced to learn and speak Bengali or Rajbanshi. Effect of media on the community is such that they are forced to learn Hindi. Though now the literate members of the group feel that they should not abandon their language yet it has been quite late as they themselves do not know the language. But still they are trying to save their language through various activities. They are struggling for their existence though they have very restricted means.

The community feels that the language is getting endangered basically because of the following four reasons;

- Dhimal is difficult to learn.
- Dhimal population is lesser than the other community.
- Dhimal community was ignorant about the individual identity of their community.
- Dhimal is not as prestigious as the neighbouring languages like Rajbanshi, Bengali and Hindi.

For a linguist the reason, Dhimal is difficult to learn seems to be invalid yet for the aged Dhimal speakers it is one of the reasons why the younger members of the community do not learn or speak Dhimal and why they prefer Rajbanshi or Bengali over Dhimal. It may be the thing that what they mean by difficult to learn, is that, the younger generation is not getting proper input of Dhimal so it is difficult for them to learn Dhimal. Their neighbours speak Rajbanshi or Bengali. In schools and colleges English, Bengali or Hindi are used. The languages of entertainment (in TV, radio and newspaper) are English, Bengali or Hindi so it becomes difficult for a Dhimal child to learn Dhimal. A young Dhimal person passes minimum time in home as he/she is engaged with his studies or job outside the house. Moreover when he/she is in the house then also his/her time is consumed by means of entertainment which is not in Dhimal.

Secondly, as the Dhimal speakers are less in number they want to be the part of the larger group which are the dominant communities of the area. One way of doing this is through inter community marriages. This decreases the number of Dhimal families which further decreases the population of Dhimals. Dhimal speakers also feel that "Our forefathers ignored our language so our tribe is almost lost" (Rojoni Mallick, 54, M). They feel that the older generation was ignorant of the fact that they should maintain their language and culture. They did not understand the loss of their language which will lead to loss of their identity.

Prestige issue is always related to endangered languages. Many people feel ashamed of speaking Dhimal. "Many times people laugh at us when we speak Dhimal. Dhimal people who have been educated feel, what others will think if we speak Dhimal", (Rojoni Mallick, 54, M). All these reasons are leading to endangerment of Dhimal. But the interesting thing is that the Dhimal community has become conscious of their identity. They think losing the language will lead them to political as well as identity loss so they want to maintain the language. Many researches have shown that this attitude shift has affected communities. Those who taught their children or those who themselves got education in English or the major language of the area, for economic reasons now regret not having preserved bilingual competence and a link to their heritage for their children (Sallabank 2010). However, paradoxically these members of the community, who are politically aware, studied in Bengali/English medium schools, understand the loss but they can hardly speak Dhimal.

Struggle to Revitalize

The Dhimal community is trying to spread the words that the loss of the language Dhimal will lead to various related losses. The community has formed two groups *Dhimal existence preservation welfare society* and *Dhimal folk-culture preservation group (Dhimal Lok-Sanskritik Rokha Dal).* Through these groups they spread awareness about the importance of learning their native language, among the community members. The group organizes traditional dance, song and language teaching classes. They also organize various cultural programs. They encourage people to establish themselves as a tribe with distinct characteristics like by promoting their traditional dress. The community people are asked to wear the traditional dress */patanig^{h}at/*, (a skirt type of dress in black colour with red dots or stripes on it), specially when going out to market place or somewhere outside the community so that people from other communities know that people wearing this particular dress is from Dhimal community. There are some houses in Mallabari called */g^{h}ɔrelu/* where these dresses are made.

They published a magazine named Somdin. It was a fortnight magazine. In that magazine poems and stories were written in Dhimal using Bengali script. But they could not continue it due to financial crisis, though they tried hard to push the magazine in every house hold. They used to keep the magazine in the shops so that people can take and read but due to less number of literates in the community, the magazine was not well appreciated.

A book named *Dhimal* was published by, Shekhar Banerjee, in 2004 with the help of the community people. Another book named *Dhimal Bhasar Vyakaran* (Dhimal Language's Grammar) was written by Garjan Mallick, (2010) who is the founder and president of Dhimal folk-culture preservation group.

Conclusion

Dhimal is being largely affected by Rajbanshi and Bengali. Dhimal speakers have already forgotten a large part of their lexicon. Though earlier they were not conscious of their Dhimal identity but now they have become aware of it. Dhimal community is trying to retain their language. But they have to face lots of problem in doing so. Those who got so called good education in the schools and universities feel that they are losing their native language and along with the language they are losing their identity. But paradoxically, in the process of getting the education they lost their language. So those who have lost the language know the importance of the language but then they cannot practice the language as they cannot speak it.Those who can speak it do not want to speak as either they feel ashamed of it or they feel easier to switch into Rajbanshi, the language of their neighbours or Bengali, the lingua franca of the area.

Young people interact mainly in Rajbanshi as they hear it the most. Bengali and Hindi are prestigious and attractive languages for them as these are the languages of entertainment and hence of fashion for them. Moreover education and jobs are available through these languages in that area.

Though some members of the Dhimal community understand the need to retain the language, the major part of the community still does not understand the importance of speaking the native language.But these few conscious members are trying to save Dhimal from dying. They are struggling to exist.

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राजी आदिम जनजाति एवं जनसंचार

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शोधसार

जैसा कि आप जानते हैं कि भारत विविधताओं वाला देश है यहाँ भौगोलिक, सांस्कृतिक, आर्थिक, भाषिक तथा धार्मिक सभी स्तरों पर भिन्नता दृष्टिगत होती है। भाषिक दृष्टि से भारत एक बहुभाषिक देश है। भूमण्डलीकरण के दौर में भाषाओं तथा समाजों के मध्य की दूरियाँ समाप्त हो रही हैं। इन दूरियों को समाप्त करने में जनसंचार के योगदान को भुलाया नहीं जा सकता है। सूचना क्रान्ति की इस सदी में जनसंचार महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभा रहा है जिससे समाज विकास की ओर अग्रसर है। भाषा एवं समाज के परिप्रेक्ष्य में वर्तमान में तीव्रगति से परिवर्तन हुए हैं जिनसे बड़े-बड़े भाषा-समुदाय तो प्रभावित ही हुए, छोटे भाषा-समुदाय भी अछूते नहीं रह गए। इन्हीं छोटे भाषा-समुदाय के अंतर्गत उत्तर भारत के पिथौरागढ़ जिले के दुर्गम पहाड़ों के मध्य राजी आदिम जनजाति के द्वारा बोली जाने वाली भाषा 'राजी' है। आज भी मौखिक रूप से प्रयुक्त होने वाली यह भाषा दिनों-दिन अन्य भाषाओं के सम्पर्क में है तथा राजी समुदाय का दूसरी भाषाओं के प्रति बढ़ता आकर्षण इस भाषा के लिए एक चुनौती बन गया है। प्रस्तुत लेख का उद्देश्य जनसंचार का राजी जनजाति पर पड़ने वाले प्रभाव पर प्रकाश डालना है।

भारत के उत्तर में विशाल मध्य हिमालय क्षेत्र, जिसे उत्तराखण्ड के नाम से जाना जाता है। मध्य हिमालय को दो भागों में विभाजित किया जाता है एक कुमाऊँ तथा दूसरा गढ़वाल। कुमाऊँ हिमालय के अन्तर्गत छः जनपदों में से एक जनपद पिथौरागढ़ में 'राजी आदिम जनजाति' दस छोटे-छोटे गाँवों में निवसित हैं जिनकी जनसंख्या जनगणना 2011 के अनुसार 732 है। इस जनजाति से लोगों का सामान्य परिचय 1823 में हुआ। आरम्भ में इनका व्यक्तित्व मिलनसार न होने तथा लकड़ी से बने बर्तनों को दूसरे समुदाय तक अँधेरे में पहुँचाने के कारण इन्हें 'अदृश्य व्यापारी' की संज्ञा दी गयी।

राजी भाषिक क्षेत्र

इन लोगों का लकड़ी से बर्तन निर्मित करना तथा शिकार करना मुख्य कार्य था। आधुनिकता की चकाचौंध एवं

समय की माँग से राजी समुदाय के लोगों के जीवन में अधिक परिवर्तन आए हैं। कुछ वर्ष पहले तक अन्य समाज से कम से कम सम्पर्क रखने वाली राजी जनजाति आज अन्य समुदायों के साथ कदम से कदम मिलाकर रख रही है। इस सम्पर्क से इस जनजाति में मूलभूत परिवर्तन दृष्टिगत होते हैं यथा- सामाजिक, सांस्कृतिक, आर्थिक, भाषिक तथा शैक्षिक। राजी जनजाति का इतिहास बताता है कि ये कंदमूल, गिरि, कंदरा, आखेट, शिल्पकारी, गरीबी तथा अशिक्षा के मध्य पले-बढ़े तथा अन्य समाज से सम्पर्क न रख कर एकाकी जीवन व्यतीत किया है किन्तु वर्तमान में ये जनसंचार की तीव्रता से नहीं बच पाए हैं। इस संदर्भ में यह कहना भी गलत न होगा कि जब दुनिया चाँद पर घर बसाने की सोच रही है तब किरातों के वंशज माने जाने वाले राजी लोग घरों से बाहर आए।

भूमण्डलीकरण तथा वैश्वीकरण के दौर में जनसंचार की भूमिका अत्यन्त महत्वपूर्ण है। जनसंचार सामाजिक परिवेश पर सदैव दृष्टि रखता है और यह सूचना-क्रान्ति का वह अंग है जो जनसामान्य की सामाजिक, सांस्कृतिक, आर्थिक तथा भाषिक धारा को सबसे अधिक तथा तीव्रगति से प्रभावित कर रहा है। आज से कुछ दशक पूर्व मुद्रित माध्यम जनसंचार के क्षेत्र में अपनी पैठ बनाए हुए था। 7वें दशक में कुछ प्रदेशों में इलेक्ट्रानिक मीडिया ने कदम रखा तथा यहीं से जनसंचार का विकास आरम्भ हो गया। जनसंचार संचार का वह रूप है जिसके द्वारा एक साथ अनगिनत लोगों को सूचना प्रेषित हो सकती है। यह समाज में निहित सामाजिक मूल्यों तथा परिवेश पर अपनी दृष्टि रखता है और समाज में होने वाले परिवर्तनों से व्यक्ति को अवगत कराता है।

जनसंचार का सबसे पहला माध्यम मुद्रण था जो सूचना, ज्ञान-विज्ञान तथा मनोरंजन का साधन था। स्वतंत्रता से पूर्व भारत में अशिक्षा का स्तर अधिक था किन्तु आज शिक्षा के स्तर में सुधार आया है जिसमें जनसंचार के योगदान को भुलाया नहीं जा सकता है। स्वतंत्रता के बाद जनसंचार के क्षेत्र में तीव्र गति से बदलाव आए है। इस तीव्रता का अनुमान इन आँकड़ों से किया जा सकता है कि 43 वर्षों में रेडियों लगभग 10 लाख लोगों तक पहुँचा, 28 वर्षों में दूरदर्शन, 11 वर्षों में कम्प्यूटर, 17 महीनों में इन्टरनेट तथा 48.84 करोड़ लोगों तक मोबाइल पहुँचने में कुछ समय लगा है।

वर्तमान में वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम की भावना रखने वाला जनसंचार देश के कोने-कोने तक पहुँच चुका है। जनसंचार की आधुनिकता से सुदूर दुर्गम पहाड़ों में रहने वाली राजी जनजाति भी विकास के मार्ग पर अग्रसर है। प्रो. रस्तोगी (2008) के अनुसार यदि देखें तो कुछ वर्ष पूर्व इस समुदाय का जनसंचार से सम्पर्क न के बराबर था। जनसंचार के रूप में रेडियो एक मात्र साधन था। वह भी दस प्रतिशत राजी लोग आस-पास के गाँव में रेडियो सुनने की बात स्वीकार करते हैं। इस समुदाय के तीन प्रतिशत लोगों के पास अपना रेडियो था जिससे कुमाउँनी आधारित कार्यक्रम सुना करते थे।[2] उपरोक्त तथ्य राजी समुदाय की निम्न आर्थिक दशा की ओर भी संकेत करते हैं। यदि देखा जाए तो रेडियो, टेलीविज़न तथा अन्य संसाधनों की अपेक्षा कम मूल्य रखता है और वह भी राजी समुदाय के लोगों की पहुँच में नहीं था। वर्तमान में यह समुदाय भी दिनों-दिन प्रगति कर रह रहा है तथा इनकी आर्थिक स्थिति में भी अधिक सुधार आया है। अब इनके पास अन्य संचार के

साधन भी देखने को मिलते हैं। जैसे-जैसे यह समुदाय अन्य समाजों के सम्पर्क में आए, वैसे-वैसे इनमें भी धीरे-धीरे नाना प्रकार के परिवर्तन होते गए। स्पष्ट है कि कभी राजी भाषिक समुदाय के पास जनसंचार के रूप में सिर्फ शून्य था परन्तु अब इनका वर्तमान कल से अच्छा है।

मोबाइल कैमरे से तस्वीर खींचती एक राजी महिला तथा अपनी भाषा का डाटा रिकार्ड कराती अन्य राजी महिला

हमने अक्टूबर 2014 में फील्डवर्क सम्पन्न किया, जिसमें जनसंचार से संबंधित प्रयोगों के संदर्भ में अनेकानेक क्रान्तिकारी परिवर्तन देखने को मिले। आज इनके घरों में रंगीन टेलीविज़न सज रहे हैं जिसका अधिकाधिक प्रयोग मनोरंजन के लिए करते हैं। कई राजी लोग डी.टी.एच., जिसमें कोई शुल्क देय नहीं होता है तथा कुछ मासिक शुल्क वाले जैसे- डिश टीवी, एयरटेल टीवी कनेक्शन का प्रयोग करते हैं तथा टेलीविज़न के साथ कुछ राजी भाषी सी.डी. प्लेयर का भी प्रयोग कर रहे हैं। इस तकनीकी क्रान्ति में चीन का योगदान स्मरणीय है। इस पर्वतीय क्षेत्र के बाज़ारों में चीन से निर्मित वस्तुएँ भरी पड़ी हैं और ये इतने सस्ते दर पर उपलब्ध हैं कि इन्हें आसानी से खरीदा जा सकता है। आर्थिक रूप से कमजोर राजी लोग भी इन उत्पादों को सरलता से खरीद लेते हैं तथा इनका उपभोग करते हैं।

एक समय था जब गिने-चुने लोगों के पास टेप रिकार्डर हुआ करता था किन्तु वर्तमान में सभी आय वर्ग के लोगों के पास मनोरंजन संबंधी नाना प्रकार के संसाधन उपलब्ध हैं। राजी जनजाति भी इस संदर्भ में किसी से पीछे नहीं है तथा मनोरंजन के लिए अन्य इलेक्ट्रानिक संगीत यन्त्रों का प्रयोग कर रहे हैं। इस प्रकार के कुछ यंत्रों में एफ.एम. रेडियो के अतिरिक्त मेमोरी कार्ड लगाने की सुविधा होती है। ये लोग इस मेमोरी कार्ड में गीत-संगीत (ऑडिओ-वीडियो) कम्प्यूटर द्वारा संग्रह करवाने के लिए आस-पास के कस्बों में जाते हैं। जब हम किसी वस्तु का उपयोग अपने दैनिक जीवन में करते हैं तो उस वस्तु से संबंधित अनेक शब्द भी हमें प्रयोग करने पड़ते हैं।

मोबाइल संचार क्रांति का सबसे तीव्र और सशक्त माध्यम माना जा सकता है। राजी समुदाय की युवा पीढ़ी मोबाइल का भी प्रयोग कर रही है। इन लोगों के हाथ साधारण, मल्टी मीडिया तथा टचस्क्रीन वाले मोबाइल फोन से सुसज्जित हैं जिसके माध्यम से सम्प्रेषण के अतिरिक्त मनोरंजन भी कर रहे हैं। इसके माध्यम से कुछ राजी लोग एस.एम.एस(SMS) से सूचनाओं का आदन-प्रदान करते हैं। इन लोगों को सरकारी व गैरसरकारी

सूचनाएँ एस.एम.एस या फोन कॉल द्वारा मिलती है। कतिपय राजी लोग (पूर्व विधायक) सोशल नेटवर्किंग साइट का भी प्रयोग कर रहे हैं यथा- फेसबुक, व्हाटसऐप आदि। जहाँ अन्य समाज (कुमाउँनी तथा भोटिया) इन सब का प्रयोग अधिक कर रहे हैं वहीं राजी समाज कम। यह कहना कदापि असत्य न होगा कि जनसंचार क्रांति ने इनके जीवन में परिवर्तनकारी क्रांति का आरम्भ कर दिया है।

मोबाइल फोन का प्रयोग करती राजी समुदाय की युवा पीढ़ी

जनसंचार का सबसे सस्ता माध्यम है समाचार पत्र। वर्तमान में देश के कोनें-कोनें तक अनेक प्रकार के समाचार-पत्रों का वितरण होता है। इसे विडम्बना कहें या आवागमन की असुविधा कि समाचार-पत्र आज भी इनके निवास स्थान (कस्बों में रहने वालों को छोड़कर) तक नहीं पहुँच पाता है किन्तु शिक्षित राजी लोग आस-पास के कस्बों में जाकर पढ़ते हैं जिनकी संख्या नाम मात्र की है। सन् 2008 से पूर्व राजी जनजाति समुदाय में राजी और कुमाउँनी भाषा के अतिरिक्त हिंदी के अल्प ज्ञान के संकेत मिलते हैं। इसी क्रम में हम यह जोड़ना चाहते हैं कि वर्तमान में राजी समुदाय के शिक्षित युवा तथा अन्य लोग जो कस्बों के अधिक सम्पर्क में हैं, धारा-प्रवाह हिंदी का प्रयोग कर रहे हैं। हमें कई ऐसे लोग मिलें जो हिंदी पढ़ने में भी दक्ष हैं। इसका मुख्य कारण इनकी पढ़ाई का माध्यम हिंदी होना भी कहा जा सकता है।

समाचार पत्र एवं पत्रिका पढ़ती राजी महिलाएँ

आधुनिक युग को ऑनलाइन युग के नाम से अभिहित किया जा सकता है। सरकारी तथा ग़ैरसरकारी काम-काज ऑनलाइन के माध्यस से क्रियान्वित किए जा रहे है जैसे- ऑनलाइन खाता, ऑनलाइन परीक्षा फार्म, ऑनलाइन

खसरा-खतौनी, आधार कार्ड, ई-जाति व आय प्रमाण पत्र, लोकवाणी तथा न्यायालय संबंधी गतिविधियाँ। इस प्रकार अनेकों कार्य ऑनलाइन के माध्यम से सम्पन्न किए जाते हैं। इन सभी कार्यों के लाभ के लिए राजी समुदाय के लोगों को एक न एक बार इसके मध्य से जाना पड़ता है। अतः इन कार्यों से संबंधित अनेक शब्द इनकी जीवन-शैली में प्रचलित हैं जैसे- ई-जाति व आय प्रमाण पत्र, फोटोकॉपी, फोटो, प्रिंट आदि।

होर्डिंग एवं दीवार पर लिखी हिंदी में सूचनाएँ

जनसंचार माध्यम से होने वाले दृश्य, श्रव्य एवं प्रिंट विज्ञापन भी समाज को प्रभावित करते हैं। विज्ञापनों की बनावट ही ऐसी होती है कि व्यक्ति को अपनी ओर सरलता से आकर्षित कर सकें। इन लोगों तक विज्ञापनों के माध्यम से अनेकों सूचनाएँ, खाद्य पदार्थों, दैनिक उपयोग वाले घरेलू उपकरण, सौन्दर्य प्रसाधन की सामग्री तथा अन्य वस्तुओं की जानकारी पहुँच रही हैं। पहाड़ी रास्तों के किनारों पर लिखे विज्ञापन तथा होर्डिंग जगह-जगह दिखाई देते हैं जिन पर आते-जाते समय इन सबकी दृष्टि पड़ती रहती है। सरकार द्वारा समय-समय पर अनेक कार्यक्रम जैसे शिक्षा, स्वास्थ, स्वच्छता, स्वरोजगार तथा सुरक्षा आदि जनसंचार माध्यम से प्रसारित एवं प्रचारित किए जाते हैं। इन कार्यक्रमों की जानकारी भी इस समुदाय तक पहुँच रही है। अधिकांशतः इन सभी सूचनाओं को जन-जन तक हिंदी माध्यम से पहुँचाया जाता है जिसका प्रभाव आज राजी समुदाय पर स्पष्ट रूप से दिखाई देता है।

आधुनिकता के दौर में पर्वतीय भाग का राजनीतिक क्षेत्र भी जनसंजार माध्यमों से अछूता नहीं है। आज चुनावी प्रचार के लिए अनेक प्रकार के माध्यमों का प्रयोग किया जाता है जैसे, लाउडस्पीकर, पोस्टर, बैनर, पम्पलेट, टीवी तथा फोन के माध्यम से। इस जनजाति को समाज की मुख्यधारा से जोड़ने के लिए उपरोक्त साधनों का प्रयोग ग्राम पंचायत चुनाव में पोस्टर के माध्यम से प्रचार किए जा रहे हैं। इस प्रकार राजनीतिक क्षेत्र में प्रयुक्त होने वाले संसाधनों ने राजी जनजाति को कहीं न कहीं प्रभावित किया है तथा विषय से संबंधित शब्दों का प्रयोग भी प्रचुर मात्रा में देखने को मिलता है जैसे- वोट, चुनाव, विधायक आदि।

उपरोक्त तथ्यों से स्पष्ट है कि राजी आदिम जनजाति जनसंचार माध्यमों का उत्साहपूर्वक प्रयोग कर रही है और इस जनसंचार माध्यम को बहुभाषिकता का एक प्रमुख कारण भी माना जाता है। जनसंचार के क्षेत्र में सर्वाधिक प्रयुक्त होने वाली भाषाएँ हिंदी, कुमाउँनी व अँग्रेज़ी है। शान्त और एकान्त जीवन व्यतीत करने वाला राजी समुदाय का बाह्य जगत से सम्पर्क बढ़ा है और इस सम्पर्क से इनके जीवन-स्तर, जीवन-शैली तथा भाषा पर प्रभाव पड़ा है। राजी समुदाय में भाषा के साथ-साथ सांस्कृतिक स्तर पर भी परिवर्तन दिखायी देते हैं। आज यह समुदाय दीवाली, दशहरा, आठू, होली जैसे अनेक त्योहार मनाने लगे हैं तथा नमस्ते/नमस्कार जैसे संस्कार का भी प्रयोग कर रहे हैं जो कि इनकी प्राचीन परम्परा में प्रचलित नहीं था। यद्यपि राजी समुदाय इन परम्पराओं तथा संस्कारों का प्रयोग तो कर रहे हैं तथापि अपनी शैली से। 'अतिथि देवो भवः' की भावना रखने वाले अन्य पहाड़ी लोगों से यह राजी समुदाय अलग है। ये लोग आज भी सैलानियों तथा अपरिचित लोगों से घुलते-मिलते नहीं हैं। अन्य समुदायों से नमस्ते/नमस्कार करने पर लोग मुस्कराकर उत्तर देते हैं किंतु राजी लोगों के उत्तर में यह मुस्कराहट सम्मिलत नहीं रहती है। इनका ऐसा व्यवहार दर्शाता है कि नमस्ते/नमस्कार जबरदस्ती कर रहे हैं।

निष्कर्षतः हम यह कह सकते हैं कि राजी आदिम जनजाति जनसंचार के माध्यमों का प्रयोग करना प्रारम्भ कर चुके हैं। जनसंचार एक ओर तो समाज के विकास में सहायता प्रदान करता है तो दूसरी ओर जनसामान्य के सांस्कृतिक, आर्थिक, सामाजिक तथा भाषिक मूल्यों को प्रभावित करता है। जनसंचार माध्यमों का प्रयोग करना इस बात का संकेतक है कि वर्तमान में इनकी आर्थिक दशा में सुधार आया है और यह जनजाति भी आधुनिकता की दौड़ में सम्मिलित है।

परिवर्तन सृष्टि का शाश्वत नियम होने के कारण, परिवर्तन होना निश्चित है। जिस रूप में किसी वस्तु का जन्म होता है उसी रूप में वह सदैव नहीं रहती है, उसमें धीरे-धीरे विकास होता है। भाषा मानवीय एवं सामाजिक उपादान है जिसमें प्रवाहशीलता एवं गत्यात्मकता का गुण निहित होता है। भाषा भी इस प्राकृतिक शाश्वत तथ्य से अछूती नहीं रहती है। इस पहाड़ी क्षेत्र में जनसंचार के माध्यम से प्रयुक्त होने वाली भाषा, कुमाउँनी तथा हिंदी है और इन दोनों भाषाओं का प्रभाव राजी भाषा पर स्पष्ट रूप से दृष्टिगत होता है। इस संदर्भ में यह कहना समीचीन होगा कि राजी समुदाय की युवा पीढ़ी द्विभाषिकता एवं बहुभाषिकता की ओर अग्रसर है। निःसंदेह भाषा को जीवित रखने के लिए युवा वर्ग की भूमिका महत्वपूर्ण होती है क्योंकि इसी वर्ग के द्वारा भाषा परिवार या समुदाय में गति प्राप्त करती है। युवाओं की अन्य भाषाओं के प्रति बढ़ती रुचि इस भाषा के लिए अत्यन्त हानिप्रद है।

सहायक ग्रंथ सूची

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