Language Endangerment amongst Hruso-Aka and Koro[1]

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Abstract

Arunachal Pradesh has twenty six major tribes and numerous subtribes. In erstwhile Assam, this region was known as Northeast Frontier Agency (NEFA). Assamese was the official language of NEFA. People used Assamese as a medium of communication. In fact, the common link language, known as Nefamese, was used by the Arunachalis for inter-community communication. Once it became a Union Territory in 1972, Hindi was introduced as the official language primarily for the convenience of administration. After the Union Territory acquired statehood, on 20th February, 1987, English was made the official language of Arunachal Pradesh. With almost all the indigenous languages being mutually unintelligible and most of the languages being *oral*, the Arunachalis had to communicate first with Nefamese as a link language and then Arunachali Hindi as a lingua franca of the state. Their native languages do not have an official status as most of the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh have population below ten thousand and is not included in either the Scheduled or Non-Scheduled list of languages. Census India has labelled the languages with population count below ten thousand as the 'other' languages and these 'other' languages are in various levels of endangerment.

This paper attempts to study the endangerment situation of the Hruso-Aka and Koro languages spoken in West Kameng and East Kameng districts of Arunachal Pradesh.

Keywords: Language Endangerment, Nefamese, Arunachali Hindi, Koro, Hruso-Aka

1.1 Introduction

India is a multi-lingual and multi-ethnic country, speakers of four the major language families namely Indo-Aryan, Indo-Dravidian, Austro-Asiatic, Tibeto-Burman reside in India. Besides, a substantial number of Tai-Kadai speakers are found in Arunachal Pradesh and Assam. There is no accurate estimate as to the total number of languages in India. According to Census 1971, there are more than 1600 languages spoken in India[2]. The rough estimate is 1652. In spite of that, the Constitution of India recognises only 22 languages as Scheduled languages. There are certain criteria set out for a language to be designated as "recognised" by Constitution of India. A language should be (a) indigenous; (b) spoken by a substantial proportion of the population; (c) popularly studied in schools and colleges; (d) rich in literature, tradition and national heritage; and (e) having a script (Gandhi, K.L., (1984) 13)[3]. Based on these criteria the languages of India are divided into scheduled and non-scheduled

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[1] This paper is a modified version of the paper presented in the *International Conference on Endangered Languages with Special Focus on North-East* held on 8th May, 2018 held at National Law University, New Delhi.

[2] Dulcan, Mustafa (2019:1)

[3] Ibid (2019:122)

languages. The officially recognised languages are Scheduled whereas the languages which have population count over ten thousand but do not fulfil the criteria set by the Constitution of India are classified as Non-Scheduled languages. The 1971 Census Report also suggested the language with less than 10,000 do not need a mention in the Census. They may be labelled as 'other' or 'lesser known' languages. In spite of a large number of languages fall under the category of 'other' or 'lesser known' languages; there are a few languages with a large population count. To name a few, Nyishi has 3,00,000 Adi has 1,25,000 and has Galo 1,00,000 population count. These languages are listed under the Non-Scheduled list. Since most of these languages are *oral* they do not meet the criteria set by the Constitution. Besides the Customary Law of the state provides all the twenty six major tribes the same status irrespective of the population count.

Since languages of Arunachal Pradesh do not have any constitutional status, so they are not used for administrative purposes or taught in schools and colleges. In recent years, more and more locals are shifting to Arunachali Hindi and this is leading to a situation where there is a high risk of endangerment of these languages. Most of the non-scheduled and lesser known languages of the state have been deemed as 'endangered' at varying scales by UNESCO Atlas of the Worlds Languages, 2009. In fact, 197 languages of India had been marked as endangered by UNESCO out of which 80 are from Northeast India.[4] Deena Davy who surveyed and documented 780 languages of India mentions that 600 of these languages are in the danger of extinction; close to 250 Indian languages have already died out in the last decade.[5] The current paper analyses the endangerment situation of Hruso and Koro of West Kameng and East Kameng districts of Arunachal Pradesh.

1.2   Arunachal Pradesh: An ethnic and linguistic overview

Arunachal Pradesh, known as 'the land of the rising sun,' is located at the easternmost corner of the Northeast India. The region is famous for its unparalleled beauty, vast natural resources, complicated geography and the rich ethno-cultural, linguistic diversity. Stretched in an area of 83,000 sq. kms, it has a population of 1,382,611 as per the Census Report of 2011[6] with a density of 17 persons per square kilometre, much below the Indian average of 370 per square kilometre. Located at the extreme northeast of Northeast India, it is bordered by Assam and Nagaland to the south, shares an international border with Bhutan in the west, Myanmar in the east and China in the north. The state, alone, boasts of 26 major tribes and numerous subtribes. Arunachal is often considered as ethnically and linguistically most diverse states of India. The languages of Arunachal Pradesh mostly belong to the Tibeto-Burman language family. The classification of the languages in Arunachal Pradesh within the Sino-Tibetan family remains a matter of some doubt, however, considerable progress has been made in recent years towards establishing probable ancestral relationships, even if the subgrouping remains uncertain (Barbora & Post 2008: 258-59). The Tani group is the largest and it covers nearly two thirds of the state. The languages of the western and eastern fringes

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[4] UNESCO 'Atlas of the Worlds Languages,2009'

[5] Indianexpress.com

[6] www.censusindia.gov.in

of Arunachal are heterogeneous, less well known groups, and their relationship with Tibeto-Burman is more problematic (Burling 2003:178). In an updated version of Sino-Tibetan Etymological Dictionary and Thesaurus in 2015[7], Matisoff provides an upgraded classification of the Tibeto-Burman languages of South Asia. Table 1 provides a division of the Tibeto-Burman languages of Arunachal Pradesh based on Matisoff**.**

Table 1

Language Family	Subgroup		Languages	Areas in which spoken
Tibeto-Burman	North Assam Aereal Group	Tani	Adi, Apatani, Galo, Mising, Nyishi, Hill Miri, Tagin,etc	East Kameng, West Kameng, Papumpare, Lower Subansiri, Upper Subansiri, West Siang, East Siang, Upper Siang, Lower Dibang Valley and Lohit
		Deng	Idu and Taraon	Upper and Lower Dibang valley, Lohit and Anjaw district
	SAL	Northern Naga or Konyakian	Konyak, Wancho, Nocte, Tutsa, Tangsa	Changlang, Tirap, Longding
	Himalayish	Tibeto-Kannauri> Bodic	Monpa	West Kameng and Tamang

Table 1: Language subgroups of Arunachal Pradesh

Matisoff, however, leaves out a number of languages in his classification. For instance, Kho-Bwa cluster (Van Driem,2011)[8] consisting of Bugun (Khowa), Duhumbi, Puroik and Lish. The Hrushish languages classified by Thurgood[9] which consists of Hruso-Aka, Miji and Bangru, and there are a number of isolates like Koro, Milang, Sherdukpen, and others. whose genetic affiliation has not been ascertained.

Most of the languages in Arunachal Pradesh are *oral*. Except for Monpa which follows the Tibetan orthography and Tai-Khampti which has its own indigenous script; none of these languages have a script. Roman script has been adopted for the Galo language by the Galo community members. The community has published dictionaries and books related to its language and culture. Other tribes too have followed the Galos by adopting the Roman script. For instance the Bugun community[10] has published a book titled Bugun *Nyo Thau,* a Bugun Reader which is trilingual written in Roman and Devanagari script.

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[7] STEDT,2015

[8] van Driem, George (2001)

[9] Thurgood, Graham (2003)

[10] The book titled *Bugun nyo Thau: A Bugun Reader* is a collaborative work of the Bugun community and the author of the book .

1.3. History

The Ahoms ruled over Assam for almost 600 years (1226-1826). Between 1817 and 1823, there were three major invasions of Assam by the Burmese. This ended the Ahom sovereignty in Assam. From 1821 to 1825, the Burmese ruled over Assam. The Ahoms sought the help of the British to end the Burmese invasion. After the Burmese authority surrendered before the British, erstwhile Assam came under the direct rule of the British in 1875. During the Ahom rule, today's Arunachal Pradesh was more or less an independent territory ruled by sovereign tribes like Miris, Hill-Miris, Tagin, Nyishis, Aka and others. These tribal leaders were paid a settlement fee called 'Posa' by Ahom rulers for maintaining peace, law and order in the border territories of northern Assam.

Fig 1: Map of the Assam during Ahom rule Image Source: 2.bp.blogspot.com

The British followed a policy of isolating the plain and hill areas by creating the 'inner line' prescribed under the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulations (Regulation V of 1873) In 1914, these areas were named as the 'North East Frontier Tract'. In 1950, after independence, these areas were rechristened as Tribal Areas. In 1954, this part of Assam was again renamed as North East Frontier Agency, popularly known as NEFA. On January 21, 1972, the NEFA was upgraded to a Union Territory under Section 7 of the North Eastern Areas (Reorganisation) Act 1971, and named as Arunachal Pradesh. In 1987, Arunachal became a full-fledged State.[11] Throughout this period, Arunachal has had a number of official languages. In the erstwhile NEFA, Assamese was the official language and education was imparted in Assamese till 1972. Most of the older people of Arunachal Pradesh are still proficient in Assamese.

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[11] Grewal, D (1997:6-8)

Fig 2: Map of NEFA, now known as Arunachal Pradesh and Assam Image Source: wikimedia.org

When Assamese was the official language of NEFA the exposure of the language was limited to locals who worked in offices or those who pursued higher education. Students had to go to towns like Tezpur, Lakhimpur, Dibrugarh, Guwahati and Shillong for higher studies of erstwhile Assam. After the Chinese Aggression in 1962, the Indian Army built roads to the border areas. People from different parts of India came to Arunachal Pradesh on various assignments. For them Hindi was the medium of communication. So when NEFA became a Union Territory in 1972, the impact of Hindi was felt by the locals. As the indigenous languages and dialects are mutually unintelligible, constant exposure to Hindi led to the adoption of Hindi as the link language of the state. As a result, Arunachali Hindi evolved which became the lingua franca of the state. In due course of time, people consciously shifted to Hindi as it is considered a prestige language and the Arunachalis realized that Hindi was the window to the world. It would help them to develop economically. Hindi thus reached the home and hearths of Arunachal Pradesh. Schools were opened in far flung areas and Kendriya Vidyalaya (KV henceforth) schools were opened in the Army Cantonment. This facilitated education of the children of the government officials as well as locals too. In KVs the medium of instruction is Hindi.

Though English became the official language when the state was formed in 1987, English could not reach out to all the people of the state. Its use is limited to administrative work and educational institution. However, the rich and the affluent opt for English. Arunachali Hindi is accepted by the Arunachalis in all spheres of everyday life. People are consciously shifting to Hindi as it is seen as a means to socio-economic development. Parents speak to their children in Hindi primarily to make them proficient in the language so they can get admission in a K V. Going to KV would secure the future of their off springs. Parents are keen to send their children to these schools as they too are comfortable with Hindi, also the fees in KV compared to Private English medium schools is relatively less. Schools run by Don Bosco Institute are Hindi medium primarily for the benefit of the local people. The Institute also provides fellowship to students, medical facilities to the natives and other social services.

1.3.1. Dichotomy between spoken and written Hindi

Arunachali Hindi has become crucial to the locals of Arunachal and the lingua-franca is used by the locals in almost all domains[12]. The lingua franca is primarily used for communication. Not everyone is familiar with the Devanagari script. In contrast English which is the medium of instruction in all government and private educational schools and colleges, the learners are familiar with the English alphabet. This is true for most of the locals who have continued school education or are school drop outs. The percentage of school drop outs has been pretty high till recently. Those of them who have pursued their studies have developed reading and writing skills in both English and Hindi. Those who are school drop outs lag behind in reading and writing skills in both English and Hindi. However most of them are familiar with the English alphabet, but this is not the case with the Devanagiri script. This dichotomous situation came to light while writing the book *Bugun Nyo Thau: the Bugun Reader*, which is written in three languages: Bugun, English and Hindi. The target language namely Bugun is written in English and translation of the Bugun language is provided in both English and Hindi. While writing the book, the Bugun informants requested the author to write the Hindi portion in English alphabet as it would facilitate them in reading and understanding the book. Adhering to their request the author included one more section where Hindi was written using the English alphabet. The book is mainly written for the Bugun community.

2. An introduction to the Hruso-Aka and Koro Communities

The Hruso language is spoken by the Hruso-Aka tribe of West Kameng district of Arunachal Pradesh. They reside mainly in Bhalukpong, Jamiri, Khuppi, Buragaon, Palizi, Thrizino and surrounding areas. The population, according to 2011 census, is 8,167. The Ethnologue enlists the language as 'threatened'. Koro is spoken by the Koro tribe settled in the Richukhrong circle of East Kameng district of Arunachal Pradesh. The villages inhabited by Koro people are Yengsey, Bana Camp, Chijang, Sopung, Khiching, Afaksung, Kadeya and Pochung. According to 2011 census[13], the number of Koro speaking population is 1500. The Ethnologue enlists the language as 'threatened'. The Atlas of the World's Endangered Languages of UNESCO has rated the Koro language as 'definitely endangered'.

The Hruso and Koro people are traditionally agriculturists and are engaged in subsistence farming. Their traditional occupations are farming, hunting, fishing, collecting firewood which continues till date. But modernization and commercial development has made its way in these areas as well. More and more people are engaged in government, private jobs or business. Farming, though, is still taken seriously and majority of the household have their own farmlands. The older generation work themselves on the fields if time befits or else hire labourers, who are mostly non-local.

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[12] Modi (2006: 162-164)
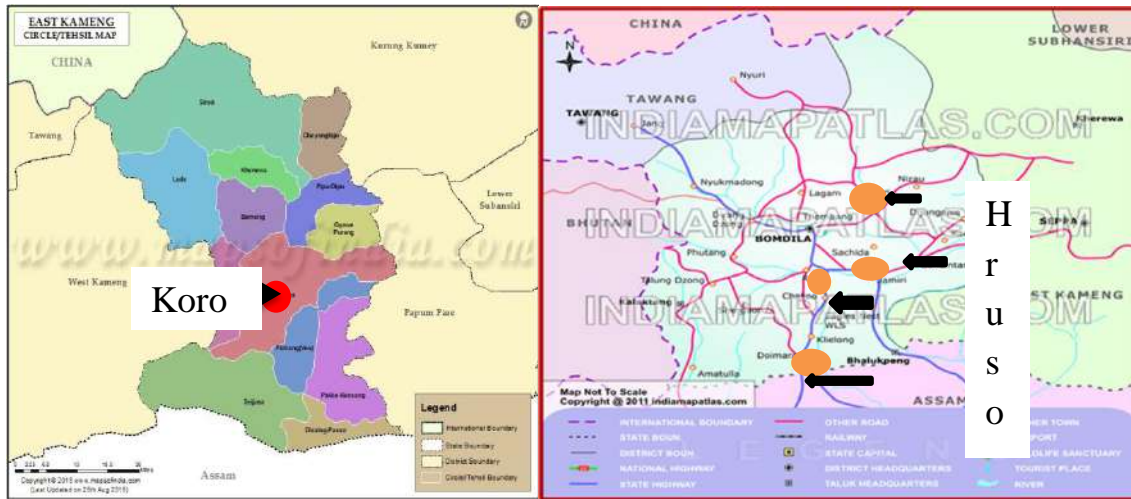
[13] www.censusindia.gov.in

Fig 3: A map of East Kameng and West Kameng district of Arunachal Pradesh highlighting the areas where Koro and Hruso are spoken. Image Source: www.mapsofindia.com

The traditional religion of both the communities is Shamanism and Animism. Nowadays, the traditional religious practices are followed by few people as most of the people have converted either to Christianity or Buddhism. However, once a year, they do celebrate their ancient gods. These two communities, usually, celebrate their annual harvest festival in the month of January. They worship their traditional god 'the ruler of earth and sky or one who presides over all the elements' offering animals as sacrifices followed by days of singing, dancing and merriment. All the rituals are same except both the groups have different names for their respective festivals. The Hrusos call it *nyeji no* and the Koros call it *sarok*. Hruso and Koro people claim to have ethnic and cultural alliance with each other. Koro people cherish a belief that they are a subtribe of the Hruso-Aka. Both the groups are actually similar to each other in terms of their lifestyle, food habits, dress, customs and rituals, and differ only in terms of language.

Fig 4:   Hruso-Aka (Left) and Koro (Right) women in their traditional dresses

2.1. Linguistic Differences between Hruso-Aka and Koro

Although culturally similar, Hruso-Aka and Koro are linguistically very different. Anderson (2010) mentions that though ethnically similar, both the groups are linguistically different. He further quotes that the native people from both sides maintain that they follow the same culture except they have a different term for everything. Abraham et all (2005) asserts that 9% lexical similarity exists between Hruso-Aka and Koro. Post & Blench (2011) also asserts that Koro is unlike any of the neighbouring languages from the Kameng area.

In Table 2 we have a list of lexical items consisting of human body parts, animals, natural elements, numerals and colour terms, collected during our field trips.

Table 2

Gloss	Hruso-Aka	Koro
Human	nɔna	muru
Man	nɔna	mɔru
Woman	mim	ŋɯnɔ
Eye	iɲi	ɲiram/niram
Head	ikʰe	dʒopra
Hair	ikʰe-tʰrə / kʰetʃʰù	dʒumi
Hand	igdz	la
Sky	ɲedzə	muŋpe
Earth	nɔ	məŋku
Moon	huve	ala
Sun	dru	mene
God	ɲedznɔ	sarok
Pig	vɔ:	lele
Mithun	fu:	su
Meat	fu:	su
Arrow	məts, mədra, mətsə	pa
Archer	khikhru nənə	lepa
Bamboo	sə	fu
Tree	ʃoɲi	la
Rice	olgə (uncooked), ava (cooked)	kerakɯ (uncooked), mam (cooked)
Opium	tsadʒio / tʰudʒio	sai
One	â	etʃe
Two	kʃî	kene
Three		kala
Black	gjɔ	ma
Red	tsû	lã
Blue	ɲedzhodu	
White	qro	laplõ

Table 2: Lexical differences between Hruso-Aka and Koro

Table 3 shows that the Hruso and Koro words are not similar. In Table 3 below we have Hruso and Koro kinship terms. These kinship terms shows limited cognates with the Proto Tibeto-Burman family.

Table 3

Kinship	Hruso-Aka	Koro	Proto Tibeto-Burman
Grandfather	mukhro-ao	abo murdʒi	*pəw
Grandmother	aime-aije	aije məsəŋ	*ʔ-pəy
Father	ao	abo	*p/ba
Mother	aiŋ	aije, aje	*ma
Brother (elder)	nju	ama	*ʔik
Sister (elder)	b,sa	ofo/oɸo	*sriŋ
Younger siblings	ama	nə	*nu
Child	aŋasa	uŋa	*bu
Son	aphu	umro	*tsa-n-zan
Daughter	sam	mimi	*la(:)
Husband	ilʃi	ratʃi	*b/m-laŋ
Wife	ufum/ifum	ui	*s-nam

Table 3 shows the basic kinship terms in Hruso-Aka and Koro

Only a few terms like the grandfather, grandmother, father, siblings, son, correlates with the Proto Tibeto-Burman kinship roots.

2.2 Typological Features of Hruso-Aka and Koro

The word order of Hruso-Aka and Koro is SOV.

Hruso

1.   ni   fulkʰune   gɯ
       1pl   cow   beat
      'We beat the cow'

Koro

2.   e-me   sati-dɯ   ve-go
       1pl   cow-DEF   beat-PRS
      'We beat the cow'

Hruso follows the Nominative-Accusative case marking system.

3.   sɯmdɔsɯ-i   fum-a   kigɔla   da-wa
      hunter-NOM   deer-ACC   forest   catch-PST
      'The hunter caught the deer in the forest.'

Koro agentive subjects do not take any overt case marker. The direct object takes the accusative case marker -məŋ/-m.

4.   suram-go   sui-de-m   sempe-lo   dəbəŋ-ba
      hunt-NOMZ   deer-DEF-ACC   forest-LOC   catch-PST
      'The hunter caught the deer in the forest.'

The various case markers in Koro are listed in Table 5.

Table 4

Case Markers	Hruso-Aka	Koro
Nominative	-i	ø
Accusative	-a	-məŋ/-m
Dative	-ge	-məŋ/-m
Genitive	-na	-gɯ, -pa
Locative	-ge/-gɯ	-ko, -pa, -lo,
Ablative	-gɔ	-pa, -ko
Instrumental	-yo	-da

Table 4 shows case markers in Hruso-Aka and Koro

Both Hruso-Aka and Koro exhibit distinctive Tense-Aspect-Mood (TAM) features. In Table 5 we have the tense, aspect and mood markers in both the languages.

Table 5

Tense	Hruso	Koro	Aspect	Hruso	Koro	Modal	
						Hruso	**Koro**
Present Tense	-hu	-go	Present Progressive	-koime	-dõje	-ba	-pefo, -pare, lage
Past Tense	-wa	-gɯ/ba	Past Progressive	-kuwa	-		
Future Tense	-dzowa	-ləŋ	Present Perfective	-kume	-bəɣa		
			Past Perfective	-ba	-jega		

Table 5 shows TAM in Hruso-Aka and Koro

3. 0. Endangerment scenario amongst the Hruso-Aka and Koro

During our fieldworks in West Kameng and East Kameng district of Arunachal Pradesh, we observed that both Hruso-Aka and Koro people speak Hindi at home, market place and other domains. In fact, Hindi is mostly spoken by people below 55 years. The older people do still continue to speak their mother tongues. Table 6 shows the domains in which Hruso and Koro people use their mother tongue. Lack of education and indifference amongst the speakers towards their mother tongue has led to this situation.

Table 6

Domains	Hruso	Koro	Hindi	English
Home	√	√	√	
Marketplace		√	√	
Official			√	√
Social Gatherings		√	√	
Others		√	√	√

Table 6: Domains in which Hruso-Aka and Koro is used

Let us look at the literacy rate among the Hruso and Koro people as per the 2011 Census Report.

Table 7

Hruso areas	Population	Literacy rate	Koro areas	Population	Literacy rate
Upper Bhalukpong	Total-1896 Male-1035 Female-861	Total- 84.57 Male-90.96 Female-77.09	Bana	Total-165 Male-83 Female82	Total-65.32 % Male-75.00 %, Female-56.25 %
Lower Bhalukpong	Total-1370 Male-733 Female-637	Total-84.92% Male-91.30, Female-77.49%	Yengsey	Total-575 Male-284 Female-291	Total- 55% Male- 61%, Female-l49%
Jamiri	Total-274 Male-143 Female-131	Total-77.82% Male - 86.07%, Female-69.23%	Pochung	Total-73 Male-37 Female-36	Total-23.21 % Male-29.63 % Female-17.24 %.
Buragaon	Total-490 Male-235 Female-255	Total-73.71%, Male-81.03, Female-66.98%	Chijang	Total-490 Male-235 Female-255	Total-73.71%, Male-81.03, Female-66.98%
Thrizino and surrounding areas like Palizi are also dominated by Akas.	Total-1334 Male-645 Female-689	Total-84.39% Male-89.71% Female-79.31%	Afaksung	Total-114 Male-62 Female-52	Total-34.09 % Male-45.10 % Female-18.92 %.
			Kadeya	Total-66	NF
			Khitching	Total-206 Male-104 Female-102	Total-57.65 %, Male-62.35 %, Female-52.94 %.

Table 7: Census data and literacy rate according to 2011 Census Source: www.census2011.co.in

As we can see in Table 7, the literacy rate is much higher among the Hruso people compared to the Koro areas. What is also noticeable is that the male literacy rate is higher than the female literacy rate in both the cases. Another important aspect is that the literacy rate also takes into account the drop-outs which are very frequent in Arunachal, especially among the females. Socially and economically, the Hruso people are quite well-off compared to the Koro people. The high literacy rate and having a relatively steady income make most of the Aka people nonchalant towards their own language. Shift to Hindi has affected the women far more than the men. Women are losing out on their language faster while men from age of 35 and above can still communicate in Aka. But they are not proficient as there is limited use of the language. When the locals are asked about the future of Aka, the response is not positive. A few local leaders do ask when a book on Aka will be written but generally the people are not aware of the significance of preserving their own mother tongue.

On the other hand, the Koro people, who lag behind the Hruso-Akas in literacy and economic prosperity, do realize the threat of language loss. Though they speak Hindi, they have a positive outlook towards their language. Of course, the persistent exposure to Hindi has influenced and impacted their mother tongue proficiency. They often mix up Koro and Hindi while speaking, which are instances of code mixing and switching . The problem is children of 3 years and above have adopted Hindi as their first language. When asked as to why they speak Hindi, the common response was they have grown up listening to Hindi at home and elsewhere. Speaking Hindi comes naturally to them. Once again, it is mostly the young girls and women who have difficulty communicating in their native language compared to men in general.

3.1. Factors leading to Endangerment

From our observation during the fieldworks, we have come to notice a host of factors responsible for the endangerment of Hruso and Koro language. The major causes of endangerment are provided below:

- The on-going road construction work has accelerated the dominance of Hindi in these areas. There is a large influx of construction workers in the Hruso and Koro areas ever since the road construction project started. The insurgence of workers and officials from other parts of India to Arunachal Pradesh has impacted on the native languages. The outsiders mostly rent houses from the locals or stay in government circuit houses. Their only medium of communication with the local people is Hindi. Another factor is the teachers who work in both the public and private schools come from different parts of country. We have already discussed about the classroom where students are taught mostly in Hindi though the medium of instruction is English.

- Religion plays an important role in the social and cultural life of Arunachal Pradesh. The churches conduct prayers, sermons and Bible lessons in Hindi. Maybe once the Bible translations are complete in the native languages; there may be a revival of the indigenous languages.

- Intermarriages are quite common among the indigenous communities. The Hruso people often get married to Mijis, Koros, and even to non-tribals like Nepali, Bengali. Assamese. The Koro people marry into Hruso-Aka and Miji mostly. As their

languages are mutually unintelligible, they adopt Hindi for communication. As a result their offspring's use Hindi as their first language.

- A lot of Hruso and Koro educated men and women are settled in Pune, Bangalore, Chennai, or in other parts of India for job and educational opportunities. The only medium of communication for them outside their village is Hindi. In addition, since they chose to settle outside, the contact to the mother tongue is completely lost. They have but to embrace Hindi

- Nowadays, the impact of internet and tele culture also has to be taken into account while discussing the endangerment scenario. People enjoy Hindi and Western songs, dance, movies, latest fashion trends and try to emulate what they see onscreen. Even in the festivals which are supposed to celebrate their cultural practices; these functions are conducted in Hindi. Celebrations are replete with Hindi and English songs and dances.

4.0 Multilingualism

Besides Hindi, contact with other languages is also responsible for the weakness to efficiently communicate in one's own language. The people of Arunachal are multi-linguals since childhood. Most of the communities live in close proximity to one another. Since childhood, one comes across different linguistic experiences apart from one's own native language. For instance, both Hruso and Koro are surrounded by Miji, Bugun, Puroik, and Nyishi communities. Apart from Hindi, Nyishi is another influential language in the Koro speaking villages. Nyishis have a large population and their villages are in and around Koro villages. Almost all the Koro people speak or at least understand Nyishi. Similar is the case with Hruso and Miji people. Most of the Hruso people can speak and understand Miji and vice-versa.

Moreover, as mentioned earlier, there are plenty of other language communities from various parts of north east as well as other states of India for business and other occupations. Servicemen like army personnel, teachers, administrative officers, stay for a specific period of time. There is a large migration of Nepali population to Arunachal. This people first entered the West Kameng and East Kameng districts in the late 90s as labourers. After spending a long time in Arunachal, the Nepali community has gained relevant social prominence. They have started their own businesses. Inter marriages between the Nepalis and the native Hruso and Koro people is common. Thus, Hruso and Koro people can be often seen interacting in Nepali with Nepali people. Even if they can't speak, they can understand Nepali. But the Nepalis do not speak Hruso or Koro.

Contact with so many languages at once makes it difficult to keep command on one language. Most of the Hruso and Koro people can speak at least two or more of these languages. Obviously, speaking or listening to so many languages since an early age deters one from focussing on one language solely. During our several visits to both Hruso and Koro areas, we failed to find any monolinguals. Sanguin Sopung, a Koro woman in her mid-forties, from the Sopung village, speaks only the indigenous languages of the area namely, Koro, Miji and Nyishi. She cannot speak Hindi. During our visit to Chijang village, we met Gadi Chijang, an old man who speaks only Koro and Nyishi. Locals claim that he is above 100 years. With the

exception of these two speakers, Hindi is predominant amongst the locals in this multi-lingual situation.

Sanguin Sopung

Gadi Chijang

4.1. Language Attitude among Hruso and Koro people

During our interaction with the Aka people, when we enquired about speaking Aka at home, the people seemed confused and nervous. They did not have a clear cut answer as to why they prefer Hindi over their own language but simply replied "Everybody speaks Hindi. It has been like this." The literacy rate is quite high in the Hruso areas but the level of awareness towards the endangerment of their native language and its after effects is relatively low.

On the other hand, the Koro community is aware about the danger of the disappearance of their language. In case of Hruso, the number of active speakers ranges from 70 above to 30-25. The people below the age group 25 have difficulty in communicating in their native language, and some of them do not speak the language at all. The scenario is a bit different in case of Koro. The people from the age-group 15-45 can speak the Koro language with moderate proficiency. The people above this age-group can still speak the language accurately with high proficiency.

4.2 Awareness level and Revitalization Measures

The visit of the members of the 'Énduring Voices Project' consisting of Gregory Anderson, David Harrison and Ganesh Murmu to the Koro areas in 2007 paved way to the new identity of the Koros. This project was initiated by National Geography and Living Tongues Institute for documenting and saving endangered languages. Different groups and associations are now working to produce their own books retelling their history, folk stories, composing songs in Koro and also attempting to produce some primer books on their own. Bachi Degio, Baburam Chijang, Maidam Chijang, Singda Chijang, from Yengsey has been working to produce a primer for Koro children. They often sit for active discussions on how to train the kids to speak in Koro, or request the older people to teach their children speak in their native language.

The Hruso people also have some such groups who are actively involved in attempts of documenting their oral literature. Afo Aglasow, Miali Sidisow, Gimrow Sakrinsow are a few people from Thrizino who are trying to develop a script for Hruso and also documenting the oral stories, narratives,etc.

5.0 Conclusion

From the discussion in the paper, we find that the endangerment scenario is grim in both the Hruso and Koro community. The languages are not being spoken at home. Therefore there is no way they can be transferred to the next generation. The only way of saving these languages is first the change in the attitude of the people. The native speakers will have to consciously choose and decide to speak the language at their home and immediate vicinity. A common awareness needs to be generated among the Hruso and Koro speakers about the problem of language endangerment. There needs to be proper planning and assistance from government for the maintenance and survival of these languages. There has been a number of research work on the lesser known and endangered languages of Arunachal. These researchers are from both India and abroad. Mark Post is one linguist who has contributed immensely to the Galo community with his research and goodwill. The current endangerment scenario demands a rapid production of primers, textbooks, dictionaries, etc. which would be comprehensible to the people of all age-groups. There is an urgent necessity of educating the people, especially the women, about the endangerment issues. There is a need for well-planned strategy from the Government, Local Bodies, NGO's and Academia. They can also seek the help of Centre of Endangered Languages (CFEL) at Rajiv Gandhi University, Doimukh, Arunachal Pradesh Tezpur University, Tezpur, Assam in this regard. The Centre at Tezpur University has been working for the preservation and documentation of languages since 2016. The Centre for Endangered Languages (CFEL), Tezpur University has brought out six Learner's Book on Biate, Khelma, Hrangkhol of Dima Hasao district in Assam, Onaeme of Senapati district and Purum of Kingpokpi districts of Manipur and Liangmai of Tenning Peren district of Nagaland. These are the first text books of the community and all the people feel greatly indebted to Tezpur University. Such endeavours have to be made by other academic and social organisations in order to preserve the linguistic heritage of endangered languages like Hruso-Aka and Koro and others.

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Tharu Language: A brief study on Sociolinguistic aspect
(With special reference to Tharu variety spoken in Bahraich district of Uttar Pradesh, India)

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Abstract

Tharus are spread over the Himalayan Tarai Region on the Indo-Nepal border. Tharu people speak the language of Indo-Aryan language family. This study is based on the sub-group of Tharus residing in Bahraich district of Uttar Pradesh. The sociolinguistic situation of Tharu language is multilingual. They use their mother tongue in most domains and also use other languages outside the community.

1.Introduction

Tharu tribe people are spread at the Himalayan foothills in the Tarai area at Nepal and India border. Tharu is an umbrella term and there are many ethnic and language groups under it. Outsiders generally view the Tharu as one homogeneous group. The Tharu, however, recognize many different subgroups distinguished by clan, region, cultural differences, and language (Webster 1993: 4). Tharu is an 'ethnonym', as it is used for language as well as for the community. The name 'Tharuhat' is famous for the region where Tharus live. Tharus are the ethnic minorities of Nepal. They are around 6 % of total population of Nepal. Tharus are spread on both side of the India and Nepal border from Bihar to Uttarakhand. Out of the two, larger population of Tharus live in Nepal. Both sides of Tharus share a common culture and still make marital bonding. But being two different countries, Tharus are also linked with their respective countries' language, culture and civilization. In India, Tharus are more developed than the Tharus of Nepal. Although the condition of Tharus is not much better in India when compared with other communities in India.

There are many groups of Tharus, such as Rana, Dangaura, Kathariya, Kochila, Chitwania etc. All the Tharus exists in Himalayan Tarai Region on the Indo-Nepal border. Tharu tribe live in Udham Singh Nagar, Pilibhit, Lakhimpur-kheeri, Gonda, Basti, Bahraich, Shrawasti, Gorakhpur and Motihari districts of India and Dang, Chitwan, Bardiya, Kailali, Kanchanpur, Morng, Saptari, Jhapa districts of Nepal. They are of the Mongoloid physical appearance and grow distinct from the Mongoloid tribes towards the middle ranges of Nepal. Srivastava (1958), in his description of Tharus cultural characteristics, confirms the view that they represent the northernmost extension of the middle Indian aboriginal races rather than the Mongoloid peoples inhabiting at the Himalayan ranges.

Tharu people speak the language of Indo-Aryan language family. This study is based on the sub-group of Tharus residing in Bahraich district of Uttar Pradesh. Generally, people do not know about their sub-category of language or language variety of Tharu. There are many contradictions about the origin and name of Tharu community. The famous proposition is that the name 'Tharu' came from the 'Thar desert'. Many writers, without any substantial evidence, have put forward their proposition that the Tharus migrated from the Thar desert in the 13th to 15th century and they began to call themselves, or others call them the Tharus. One of the beliefs is that after the defeat of Maharana Pratap, King of Chittour Garh of Rajasthan, in the battle of Haldi Ghati with the Mughals, the women fled away from there and they came in this dense forest region near Nepal with their bodyguards and servants for shelter. Thereafter the women made marriages with the servants and bodyguards.

Some scholars proposed that the Tharus are a pre-Aryan race of Mongoloid origin. Another story of Tharu origin is that they originated in Nepal and are the descendants of Gautama Buddha, and Suddhodhana was Tharu King of Kapilvastu. Some scholars also believe that the Tharus are a branch of Kirat because of their Mongoloid appearance. Some Tharu have Mongoloid appearance and others are of Australoid appearance, pointing to that Tharus are hybrid of Kirat and Nishadhas. Nepali historian 'Shiva Raj Shrestha' wrote that Tharu are a hybrid of Mongoloid race (Kirat) and Australoid race (Nishadhas). This can be visibly seen in Tharu appearance where most of them are Mongoloid. Some genetics study says about Tharus that, "the East Asian layer in the genetic ancestry of the Tharu is older than the expansion of the Tharu within the subcontinent (potentially from the Tarai region) and also, the expansion of the Tharu was followed by extensive admixture and assimilation with the local populations[1]".

2. Demography

In this study, we have taken data of Tharu language of Bahraich district only. According to the 2011 Census, Bahraich district has a population of 3,487,731. It is situated between the 28.24 to 27.4 Latitude & 81.65 to 81.3 eastern Longitude. Bahraich share its border with Lakheempur- Khiri, Sitapur, Barabanki, Gonda and Shravasti districts in Uttar Pradesh as well as Bahraich borders with Nepal's Bardiya and Banke

Map-1 Bahraich district

districts. Northern part of the district is Tarai region which is covered by the dense natural forest where Tharus resides.

Total population, according to Census 2011, is 11,159 (5606 male, 5553 female). Mostly, Tharus are spread in Mihinpurwa block of Motipur tehsil and few are in Bahraich. During our visit we took the data of population of each village of Mihinpurwa block. Tharu community belongs to the Schedule Tribe category. Tharus live in total 26 villages and total population is 10,760. In these 26 villages, there are 8 villages where Tharu population is less than 10 and in 5 villages Tharu population is between 10 to 50.

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[1] Chaubey, G., Singh, M., Crivellaro, F. et al. 2014. Unravelling the distinct strains of Tharu ancestry. Eur J Hum Genet 22, 1404–1412. https://doi.org/10.1038/ejhg.2014.36

3. Society

The Tharu people themselves say that they are the people of the forest. Tharu people have always been backward and poor. Their daily life has been very difficult and they are not connected with the main stream and therefore could not benefit from the developments. Tharus have a rich indigenous knowledge system that help them in their livelihood. They have lived in the forests for hundreds of years practicing a short fallow shifting cultivation. Their main occupations are agriculture, hunting and fishing. They also plant rice, mustard, corn and lentils, but also collect forest products such as wild fruits, vegetables, medicinal plants and materials to build their houses; hunt deer, rabbit and wild boar, and go fishing in the rivers and oxbow lakes. Historically, they were the only ones that were able to reside in the malarial jungles on the Indo-Nepal border.

On social level they are also not strong. They lag behind in education, technology and communication. Literacy among Tharus is not good; especially women are deprived of higher education. The economic condition of the Tharus of this area is poor and backward. Many people are below the poverty line. Many people go to work outside the district and state. People are doing the work of worker and labour class. Very few people are in government service and other jobs.

In spite of innumerable external influences, the tribes have retained their uniqueness and ethnicity. They have distinctive cultural characteristic which can easily be differentiated from the other community. They are culturally distinct and ethnic population.

Tharus are very rich in their culture and tradition. They have a unique way of life. The goods and artifacts of their daily life like- dresses, ornaments are attracting and fascinating. They have a strong ritual system for various occasions. They celebrate many festivals, dance and other gatherings.

Image 1   Tharu dance at the time of DASAIN festival

Tharus have a rich folk literature. They have a variety of literature genre, i.e., story, song, joke, proverbs etc. But they lack in written records. In the past, they used to write their folk literature and it was in some different style of writing in Devanagari script.

4.Tharu language

Tharu community live in contact with other languages, specifically Nepali and Hindi, and it makes language vitality necessary to investigate. "Tharus do not have a language of their own and speak more or less the language of Aryan races with whom they are in immediate contact" (Grierson 1903). But his observation was flawed. Like other tribes, Tharus have their own language. Lewis (2009) and Eppele et al. (2012) lists four dialects of the Tharu language, namely- Rana Tharu, Dangaura Tharu, Chitwania Tharu, and Morangiya or Kochila Tharu. It is still debated whether different Tharu groups speak the dialects of the same language or separate languages having distinctive features of their own.

Ethnologue lists five Tharu dialectal varieties, based on the sub-categorisation of Tharu language. It lists Tharu (Dangaura), Tharu (Kathariya), Tharu (Rana), Tharu (Madya Ksetriya) and Tharu (Madya Purbiya). All the varieties have been assigned different ISO (International Organization for Standardization) codes. Each community claim their language is different and they have prestige issue in using their mother tongue.

Most of the Tharus of Bahraich district uses the surname as 'Chaudhary'. There are some who use surname as 'Rana.' Some people say that their variety belongs to Dangaura sub-category. This area is very close to Bardiya district of Nepal and here mostly Dangaura speech variety is spoken. Throughout the Bahraich district, same variety of Tharu language is used. As compared to other languages in the region, Hindi, Bhojpuri, Awadhi and Nepali, Tharu shows differences in linguistics characteristics. Although they all are from the Aryan language family.

Tharu speaker are not much aware for the protection and preservation of their language. People use the vocabulary that they find suitable for the communication. Generally, people are multilingual and they understand Hindi, Awadhi, Bhojpuri. Young generation is also familiar with English. Tharu vocabulary is used in other Indo-Aryan languages in the neighbourhood. Bhojpuri and Awadhi too have many of words from Tharu. Tharu pronunciation is different and in some cases is similar with other Indo-Aryan languages. A comparative list of vocabulary in Tharu and Hindi is given below:

Sl.	Tharu (In Devanagari)	IPA	Hindi	English
1.		*ləura*		boy
2.		*ləwərıja*		girl
3.		*dusər*		another
4.		*dada*		big brother
5.		*gʰorəwa*		horse
6.		*pʰʋa*		father's sister
7.		*kaka*		uncle
8.		*kərıja*		black
9.		*lal*		red
10.		*bədəri*		sky
11.		*təre*		under
12.		*hatʰ*		hand
13.		*nak*		nose
14.		*ʋppər*		above
15.		*loʈa*		a type of pot
16.		*dəsə̃i*		a festival
17.		*mənəi*		man
18.		*bəhınıja*		sister
19.		*mus*		mouse
20.		*bəʋrəha*		mad
21.		*bʰittər*		inside
22.		*dʋbbər*		weak
23.		*kʰun*		blood

24.	⬜⬜⬜⬜	*sura*	⬜⬜⬜⬜	pig
25.	⬜⬜⬜	*gal*	⬜⬜⬜	chick
26.	⬜⬜⬜	*moc^h*	⬜⬜⬜	mustache
27.	⬜⬜⬜	*dal*	⬜⬜⬜	pulse
28.	⬜⬜⬜	*dəhi*	⬜⬜⬜	curd
29.	⬜⬜⬜⬜⬜	*gehũ*	⬜⬜⬜⬜⬜	wheat
30.	⬜⬜⬜⬜⬜	*hərdi*	⬜⬜⬜⬜⬜	turmeric
31.	⬜⬜⬜⬜	*rəsəri*	⬜⬜⬜⬜⬜	rope
32.	⬜⬜⬜⬜⬜⬜	*kurəkuʈ*	⬜⬜⬜⬜	dust etc.
33.	⬜⬜⬜⬜⬜	*bʰəlʊwa*	⬜⬜⬜⬜	beer
34.	⬜⬜⬜⬜	*bəgʰəwa*	⬜⬜⬜	tiger
35.	⬜⬜⬜⬜⬜	*bʰerɪja*	⬜⬜⬜	sheep

5. Domains of language use and language vitality

Domain of use of language is very important for the development and sustainability of language. It also reflects the sociolinguistic situation. In the time of globalization, people live in a society where they have to make contact with other communities for various purposes. Tribal communities are also adopting to the modern lifestyle. According to Khubchandani (2001: 26), "The inter group communications among tribal record a wide range of variation in the claims of bilingualism, mostly depending upon the degree of heterogeneity in their contact environments and their attitude to languages surrounding them."

Tharu language is not used for official or education purposes. Tharus use other languages in addition to their traditional language which is Tharu. Here is some the description of the different domain where the languages are used by Tharus:

1.	**What language (s) is used at home?**	
	With grandparents?	Tharu
	With spouse?	Tharu, Hindi
	With children?	Tharu, Hindi
	With grand children?	Tharu, Hindi
	With siblings?	Tharu, Hindi
	With pets and livestock?	Tharu, Hindi
2.	**What language(s) is used at school?**	
	With the teacher in the classroom?	Hindi
	With the teacher outside the classroom?	Hindi
	With friends of the same community in the classroom?	Tharu, Hindi
	With friends of other community in the classroom?	Hindi
	With friends of the same community outside the classroom?	Tharu, Hindi
	With friends of other community outside the classroom?	Hindi

3.	**What language(s) is used at the market?**	
	With the merchant of the same tribe/community?	Tharu, Hindi
	With the merchant of the other tribe/community?	Hindi
	With an acquaintance in the market?	Hindi
4.	**What language(s) is used at a place of worship?**	
	While praying to god?	Tharu, Hindi
	While reciting or performing rituals?	Tharu, Hindi
	While singing religious songs?	Tharu, Hindi
	When get possessed?	Tharu
	While talking with other worshippers at the worship place?	Hindi
	For religious discussions at the place of worship with the priest?	Tharu, Hindi
5.	**What language(s) is used at the community meetings?**	Tharu, Hindi
6.	**What language(s) is used with a stranger?**	Hindi
7.	**What language(s) is used with the healer/native doctor?**	Tharu, Hindi

The use of Tharu is limited to few domains only. In the assessment of vitality as per the UNESCO language vitality parameters, Tharu would fall in 'unsafe' category, where language is used in only specific social domains. People know their language but when they come in contact with other communities for various social and educational purposes, then it becomes necessary for them to speak Hindi. Although, within the community, Tharu is used as a main language for day-to-day communications. This language is active in various domain of daily use as well as community have a strong attachment with their heritage. Community is getting used to the modern livelihood yet they want their culture and tradition alive.

6. Conclusion

Tharu region is surrounded by dominant languages like Hindi, Awadhi and Nepali speakers. English is also taught in school and in social media platforms too English is used. These diverse domains see different languages being used in the area apart from their mother tongue. People use their language in domains of language use such as singing, recreation, storytelling, debating, praying, quarrelling, abusing, singing at home, family gatherings, village meetings etc. Tharus use their mother tongue with their family members discussing different family matters. But they have to use other languages when communicating with other community and because of this there is a shift from their mother tongue towards the dominant languages, although there is much intergenerational language transmission. Tharus people are very rich in their culture and tradition. But they lack in written records. Their folk literature is not much available in writing.

In conclusion, the sociolinguistic situation of Tharu language is multilingual as the community use their mother tongue as well as other languages in their daily life. People know and understand the languages of surroundings as well as languages like Hindi and English that is official languages of the country. Tharu community is not much economically strong and they are struggling to benefit from modern livelihood and education. Globalization is also affecting their language vitality and it is difficult to avoid the mixing of language. Although community

have an attachment for their mother tongue and they want it to grow in future. Tharu is used in local music and films. Young generation is keen for using the language and in maintaining their culture and traditions. From the evidence of use language and the practice of culture and traditions, it can be said that Tharu is not facing a situation of endangerment.

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Extra-temporal functions of the tenses in Assamese

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Abstract

An attempt is made in this paper to find out the extra-temporal functions of the tenses in the Assamese language. The primary function of tense is to ground a state or an event in time. However, the use of the tense markers in Assamese beyond time reference is a concern in linguistics. In many contexts, Assamese speakers use tense markers, not for time reference. Thus, the tense in Assamese has a secondary meaning as well. This paper, therefore, will delve into the pragmatics of the Assamese tenses.

This paper discusses how the tense markers in Assamese express extra-temporal meanings, for instance, of politeness and probability. For example, "apʊnaɹ lɔgɔt ɛta kɔtʰa asilɛ" (apʊnaɹ '2.HON.GEN', lɔgɔt 'with', ɛk-tʊ 'one-CLF', kɔtʰa 'talk', as-il-ɛ 'be-PST-3'/"I had something to discuss with you.") does not mean that the speaker literally "had" a talk with the hearer. It is rather a polite expression of the speaker's desire to talk with the hearer.

Another fascinating phenomenon of the Assamese language is that it allows referring to the future with the help of the present tense (which is not marked), as in, "mɔi kailoi tɛzpuɹɔloi ɡoi asõ" (mɔi '1SG', kailoi 'tomorrow', tɛzpuɹ-ɔloi 'Tezpur-DAT', za-i 'go-NF', as-õ 'PROG-1'/"I am going to Tezpur tomorrow."). This paper attempts to explain this phenomenon as well.

Moreover, this paper also deals with the fuzziness of the tense marker when the root, i.e. the verb, is negated. For example, the negated form of the tensed verb "zam" (za 'go', -im 'FUT.1') is not "nazam", but "nazaõ" (na- 'NEG', za 'go', õ '1').

The source of the Assamese data used in this research is the authors themselves, who are native speakers of the language.

1. Introduction

Tense is grammaticalised expression of location in time. (Comrie, 1985) We use tense to ground actions or states in time. However, it is seen that a purely temporal description of tense is inadequate to explain its range of interpretations and use as they can have meanings other than their reference to time. This is what Comrie refers to as "secondary meaning". The present paper aims to discuss the extra-temporal functions, i.e. the secondary meanings, of the Assamese tenses.

In Assamese, tense is inflected in the verb. It is suffixed to the verb stems if there is no aspect marker. But if there is an aspect marker, it precedes the tense marker. Past and future tense in Assamese is marked by suffixation on the verb but present tense does not have any overt

suffixation and, therefore, can be expressed by the symbol Ø. For example, kʰa 'eat' + Ø + õ = kʰaõ (verb root + Ø + person agreement).

The past tense in Assamese is marked by "-isil". In the absence of aspect markers, past tense makers are directly suffixed to the verb stems and the person markers are added to them. For example, kʰa 'eat'+ -isil + õ = kʰaisilõ (verb root + past tense + person agreement).

The future tense in Assamese is marked by "-ib", and for the first person, it has the allomorph "-im". For example, "kʰa" (meaning 'eat') + "-im" = "kʰam" (verb root + (future tense + person agreement)).

Tense	Tense Marker	
Present	Ø	
Past	-isil	
Future	**1ˢᵗ Person**	**2ⁿᵈ Person and 3ʳᵈ Person**
	-im	-ib

2. The past tense and its extra-temporal function: a deictic shift from the present to the past

In Assamese, certain situations are portrayed as if they have taken place in a different deictic time sphere other than the present. Such use of the language has some special communicative effects. Thus, the past tense in the Assamese language has a function beyond time. The speaker may use it not to refer to an action of the past but for another purpose.

(1) apʊnaɹ lɔgɔt ɛta kɔtʰa asilɛ
    apʊnaɹ   lɔgɔt   ɛk-tʊ   kɔtʰa   as-il-ɛ
    2.HON.GEN with   one-CLF   talk   exist-PST-3
    "I had something to discuss with you."

This sentence does not necessarily mean that the speaker had to talk with the listener in the past. By using the past tense, the speaker rather expresses their desire to talk with the listener in a polite manner. By using the past tense, the speaker rather approaches the hearer politely to have a talk with them. Thus, the past time reference is the basic meaning of the past tense, while politeness is a secondary meaning of the same form. The expression of politeness with the help of the past tense in Assamese was frequently discussed by Prof Gautam Kr Borah (2019) (also see Borah, 2006). A similar example can be drawn from the English language as well:

(2) I just wanted to ask you if you could lend me a pound. (Comrie, 1985)

As Comrie writes, this sentence, "in most circumstances, is unlikely to be intended or to be interpreted as a report on the speaker's desires in the past, but rather as an expression of a present desire to borrow some money." Thus, the use of past tense in sentence (1) indicates politeness, as the hearer is someone that the speaker honours, which reflects in the honorific pronoun, "apʊnaɹ". It sounds politer than:

(3) apʊnaɹ lɔgɔt ɛta kɔtʰa asɛ
    apʊnaɹ   lɔgɔt   ɛk-tʊ   kɔtʰa   as-ɛ
    2.HON.GEN with   one-CLF   talk   exist-3
    "I have a talk with you."

Thus, the past tense in the Assamese language has a function other than the temporal one; it serves the sociolinguistic function of politeness. The use of past tense instead of present serves the purpose "of minimising the negative effects of what one says on the feelings of others and maximising the positive effects". (Cruse, 2006)Similarly, if an unknown visitor comes to our house, we might ask them:

(4) ki kɔtʰa asil baɹu apʊnaɹ?
  ki   kɔtʰa   as-il   baɹu   apʊnaɹ
  what talk   be-PST   POL   2.HON.GEN
  "What did you have to discuss?"

This is a deictic shift of the present situation. In this case, the speaker portrays the situation as having taken place in the past. The use of the past tense makes our question less threatening. The use of past tense along with the politeness particle "baɹu" makes the sentence politer. If we directly ask them:

(5) ki kɔtʰa asɛ apʊnaɹ?
  ki   kɔtʰa   as-ɛ   apʊnaɹ
  what talk   be-3   2.HON.GEN
  "What do you have to discuss?"

it might appear that we do not like their coming to our house. The use of the past tense in this case sounds less immediate as the speaker mentally shifts themselves to the past time.

Another example can be drawn from classroom communication. A teacher may ask one of their students:

(6) tʊmaɹ namtʊ ki asil?
  tʊmaɹ   nam-tʊ   ki   as-il
  2.GEN   name-CLF   what   be-PST
  "What was your name?"

It does not mean that the particular student had a different name in the past, but the teacher uses it to create a distance from an obligation. It is to reduce the threat as a teacher is given a higher rank in our society. If the teacher asks the same question without a deictic shift, the student may be threatened. However, it can also be the other way around. A student may also ask their teacher their name by using the past tense.

(7) apʊnaɹ namtʊ ki asil
  apʊnaɹ   namtʊ   ki   asil
  2.HON.GENname-CLF   what   be-PST
  "What was your name?"

3. The future tense and its extra-temporal functions

(8) mɔdɔn ɹamɔtkoi ʊkʰɔ ɦobɔ
  mɔdɔn   ɹam-ɔt-koi   ʊkʰɔ   ɦɔ-ib-ɔ
  Madan   Ram-AM-LOC   tall   be-FUT-3
  "Madan might be taller than Ram."

As the translation of sentence (8) says, it does not mean that Madan *will* grow taller than Ram, but indicates a probability of the former's being older than the latter. Here, the speaker is not sure about who is taller but assumes that Madan might be taller than Ram. The use of future tense in this sentence does not ground the state in the future time, but its use in this context indicates epistemic probability.

Let us examine another Assamese sentence in the future tense:

> (9) ei kitapkʰɔn poɹʰiba
> ei   kitap-kʰɔn   poɹʰ-ib-a
> this   book-CLF   read-FUT-2.NONHON.IMP
> "Read this book."

In this sentence, the future tense "-ib" does not predict that the hearer will read that book. By using the future tense, the speaker suggests the hearer read the book.

4. The present tense and its extra-temporal function

> (10) xɔbʰakʰɔnoloi zai neki?
> xɔbʰa-kʰɔn-oloi   za-i   neki
> meeting-CLF-DAT go-2.HON   Q
> "Do you go to the meeting?"

The present tense is not marked in the Assamese language. A sentence grounded in the present tense does not carry a tense marker. It can also be said that the present tense in Assamese is marked by "Ø". In many languages, the present tense is also used with habitual aspectual meaning. (Comrie, 1985) It happens in Assamese too, as in:

> (11) mɔi kɔlɛzoloi basɛɹɛ zaõ
> mɔi   kɔlɛz-oloi   bas-ɛɹɛ   za-õ
> 1SG.NOM   college-DAT bus-INS   go-3
> "I go to college by bus."

However, in sentence (10), it is not necessary that the speaker questions the hearer's habit of going to the meeting, but the former might propose going to that place together. It is also a polite way of proposing someone to do something. Accompanied by the question particle "neki", the sentence sounds more polite. Even English speakers use interrogatives to express politeness. For example,

> (12) Could you please lend me a pen?

sounds politer than:

> (13) Lend me a pen.

This is how interrogatives play a role in sociolinguistic politeness. Thus, sentence (10) sounds politer than:

> (14) xɔbʰakʰɔnoloi bolɔk
> xɔbʰa-kʰɔn-oloi   bol-ɔk
> meeting-CLF-DAT let.us.go-2.HON
> "Let us go to the meeting."

In sentence (15), it seems that the speaker is asking about the hearer's habit of eating rice, but it could also be possible that they are asking if the hearer desires to have a meal at that particular time:

(15) bʰat khʋa nɛ?
      bʰat   kha-a   nɛ
      rice   eat-2   Q
      "Do you want to have a meal?" (Literally: "Do you eat rice?")

Here, the speaker might be asking the hearer if they want to have a meal in the immediate reality.

4.1 Prospective form in Assamese: future time but present tense

While anterior times involve a backward-looking stance from a viewpoint at a reference time, posterior times involve a forward-looking stance at one of the deictic reference times. In Assamese, they are coded by prospective forms. Thus, Assamese speakers can talk about the future with the help of the present tense.

(16) mɔi kailoi tɛzpuɹoloi zaõ buli bʰabisõ
      mɔi kailoi   tɛzpuɹ-oloi   za-õ   buli   bʰab-is-õ
      1SG tomorrow   Tezpur-DAT   go-1   COMP   think-INGR-1
      "I am thinking of going to Tezpur tomorrow."

In sentence (16), the speaker is expressing their desire to go to Tezpur the next day. Yet they are using the present tense with the verb "go".

Similarly, in sentence (17), the speaker is talking about their plan to go to Tezpur the next day. But the tense they are using is present, and the aspect, progressive:

(17) mɔi kailoi tɛzpuɹoloi ɡoi asõ
      mɔi kailoi   tɛzpuɹ-oloi   za-i   as-õ
      1SG tomorrow   Tezpur-DAT   go-NF   PROG-1
      "I am going to Tezpur tomorrow."

Sentences (16) and (17) involve a forward-looking stance from a viewpoint at the present time. Here, the viewpoint is at the present time, which is also the speech time (S). The event, i.e. the speaker's going to Tezpur, is going to take place in the future. Thus, the event time (E) is the future time. The viewpoint that the speaker occupies at this time is known as the reference time (R). In this case, the speaker is talking about going to Tezpur in the future with reference to the present time. It is done as these future events are felt to be of current relevance. These two sentences express an intentional future.
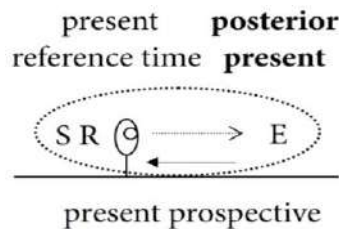

Figure 1 Posterior present (Dirven & Radden. 2007.)

Another example of using the present tense to talk about the future is:

(18) mɔi zaõ
      mɔi   za-õ
      1SG go-1
      "I am leaving." (Literally: "I go.")

Here, the speaker talks about leaving in the immediate reality. The event time follows immediately after the speech time. By contrast,

(19) mɔi zam
      mɔi   za-im
      1SG go-FUT.1
      "I will go."

refers to an uncertain event time. Here, the future tense here denotes projected reality.

According to Dirven and Radden, in English, "In addition to temporal information, the simple tenses convey information about the reality status of a situation. … [T]he present tense typically signals immediate reality of the situation; … and the future tense indicates that the situation is to be seen in projected reality." The same happens in Assamese as well. As we have already seen, "mɔi zaõ" signals immediate reality of the situation and "mɔi zam" indicates that the situation conveys a predicted future, based projected reality.

5. Negation

To negate a regular verb[1] in Assamese, "n-", followed by the first vowel of the root, is prefixed to it, as in:

(20) kɔɹõ   >   nɔkɔɹõ
     kɔɹ-õ   >   nɔ-kɔɹ-õ
     do-1   >   NEG-do-1
     "I do."   >   "I don't."
(21) zaõ   >   nazaõ
     za-õ   >   na-za-õ
     go-1   >   NEG-go-1
     "I go."   >   "I don't go."
(22) pindʱa   >   ni-pindʱa
     pindʱ-a   >   ni-pindʱ-a
     wear-2   >   NEG-wear-2
     "You wear." >   "You don't wear."
(23) xua   >   nuxua
     xu-a   >   nu-xu-a
     sleep-2   >   NEG-sleep-2
     "You sleep." >   "You don't sleep."

---

[1] There are some irregular verbs as well. The verb "paɹ" (be able to) does not become "napaɹõ/napaɹa/napaɹɔ/napaɹɛ", but "nʊwaɹõ/nʊwaɹa/nʊwaɹɔ/nʊwaɹɛ", when tensed, concorded and then negated. Similarly, the negated form of "asɛ" (as 'be', -ɛ '3') is not "nasɛ", but "nai". (Sharma, 2010)

(24) dɛkʰɛ   >   nɛdɛkʰɛ
     dɛkʰ-ɛ   >   n-dɛkʰ-ɛ
     leave-3   >   NEG-leave-3
     "They see."   >   "They don't see."

These verbs are in the present tense and have different person agreements. However, when a verb in the future tense is negated, it takes no tense marker. Let us now take a declarative sentence in the future tense and then negate it.

(25) mɔi kailoi zam
     mɔi   kailoi   za-m
     1SG   tomorrow   go-1
     "I will go tomorrow."
(26) mɔi kailoi nazaõ
     mɔi   kailoi   na-za-õ
     1SG   tomorrow   NEG-go-1
     "I will not go tomorrow."

Here, in sentence (26), the speaker says that they will not go tomorrow, yet the form they use is that of the present tense, which is unmarked. Although the future form of the verb "za" ("go"), in concord with the first person, is "zam", the speaker does not say "mɔi kailoi nazam". The future tense and the negative particle appear together only when the speaker is uncertain about the event:

(27) mɔi kailoi nazam
     mɔi   kailoi   na-za-im
     1SG   tomorrow   NEG-go-FUT.1
     "I might not go tomorrow."

Thus, the negative particle and the future tense appear together only when the sentence denotes probability. By saying this, the speaker expresses that they are uncertain about their going.

It should also be noted at the same time that the negated forms of the verb in the present tense and the future tense are the same:

(28) mɔi nazaõ
     mɔi   na-za-õ
     1SG   NEG-go-1
     "I do not go."

Similarly, when the future is negated in concord with the second person, the tense marker is absent, as in:

(29) tumi kailoi nahã
     tumi   kailoi   n-ah-ã
     2SG   tomorrow   NEG-come-2
     "You will not come tomorrow."

However, if the sentence is in imperative, the future tense for the second person, i.e. "-ib", is used, as in:

(30) tumi kailoi nahiba
    tumi   kailoi   n-ah-ib-a
    2SG   tomorrow   NEG-come-FUT-2
    "Do not come tomorrow."

Again, when the future is negated in concord with the third person, the tense marker is absent, as in:

(31) xi nahɛ
    xi   n-ah-ɛ
    3SG   NEG-come-3
    "He will not come."

But if the speaker assumes that the referent will not come, i.e. if there is a probability of the referent's not coming, they will use the future tense with the negative marker, as in:

(32) xi nahibɔ
    xi   n-ah-ib-ɔ
    3SG   NEG-come-FUT-3
    "He might not come."

Thus, the negative particle and the future tense together in a word in Assamese denotes uncertainty.

6. Conclusion

It is thus seen that a purely temporal description of tense is inadequate to explain its range of interpretations and uses as tense do not have only a primary meaning, i.e. of time reference, but also a secondary meaning.

Tenses in Assamese not only serve the purpose of time reference but have some other special communicative effects as well. The past tense, "-isil", has a secondary meaning of sociolinguistic politeness. The present tense, Ø, is used to make polite proposals. The future tense, "-ib", indicates epistemic probability and imperative. It involves a deictic shift from the present to the past. Thus, tense in Assamese is not merely a grammatical expression of notions of time. Moreover, Assamese speakers can talk about the future using the present tense. Such sentences involve a forward-looking stance from a viewpoint at the present time, as the situations they describe are felt to be of current relevance. While uttering such sentences, the speaker forms an intention at reference time about doing something in the future. Similarly, a verb in the future tense, when negated, looks like its negated present form. The negated present and future forms of a verb look alike. If the future tense and the negative prefix appear together with the verb root, it conveys a different meaning. It denotes uncertainty.

This paper adds to the description of tense markers in Assamese and presents a re-analysis of the Assamese tense system concerning the complexity of the language used in various contexts, including larger discourse units. This paper presents a new approach to the Assamese tense system, showing extensive use of the markers.

Abbreviations

1	First Person
2	Second Person
3	Third Person
AM	Adverbial Marker
E	Event Time
CLF	Classifier
COMP	Complementiser
DAT	Dative
FUT	Future
GEN	Genitive
HON	Honorific Marker
IMP	Imperative
INS	Instrumental
LOC	Locative
M	Masculine
NEG	Negation
NOM	Nominative
NONHON	Non-honorific
POL	Politeness Particle
PST	Past
R	Reference Time
S	Speech Time
SG	Singular
Q	Question Particle

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Zomi Script

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Abstract

Speakers of Zomi script are found and located in North – East India since time immemorial. The said script can be described as logographic writing system, it is written from left to right. There are twenty-one (21) initial consonants, eight (8) final consonants and six (6) vowels. The symbol letters of the initial and final consonants differ from each other. Locally known as "Zotuallai" (Zo native script), the script was founded by Pau Cin Hau and named after him as "Pau Cin Hau script."
Keywords: Logographic, Revitalization, Documentation, Z /Zomi/

1.Language Information of Zomi Script

Language make society through script is commonly known, however, scripts cannot be created without an unseen God and hence scripts of languages are gifts from God for a community. The Pau Cin Hau Script also locally known as "Zotuallai" (*Zo* is the ancestor name of Zomi, *Tual* means native and *Lai* means script) can also be described as "The Zo descendant's script" or "The Zomi Script" was initially documented by Grierson in 1904 in his Linguistic Survey of India, part -3 of Tibeto – Burman Language Family. Pau Cin Hau and his colleague Thang Khan Kham carry out the 1st (first) revision in 1902 and make changes of the script from Logographic to Alphabetical writing system prior to the documentation of the script in 1904.

The Zomi Language & Literature Society (ZOLLS) organized the 2nd (second) and final revision in 2019. In the final revision, the following changes in the script were made as shown below in Table 1:

Table 1:   <u>Final Revision</u>

Symbols	Alphabetic Letters
O	< ai >
∧	< aw >

The symbols '४' for < aa > and '९' for < ai > are placed in vowel section as they are regarded as diphthongs rather than consonants when paired. It should be noted that the symbol '९' in < ai > occurs in the initial and medial position in a word whereas the symbol 'O' for < i > is found occurring only in the final position in a word, for example as shown below in Table 1.1:

Table 1.1.   <u>Occurring Position of Vowels</u>

Word	Place	Symbol	Glossing
pai	final	₲४O	goes/go
mai	final	⊖४O	face
im	initial	९⊖	(to) keep secret
ip	initial	९₲	rug sack
min	medial	⊖९2	name/ripe
pil	medial	₲९C	wise

The symbols '∧' for < aw > is included in the script due to its similarity to the orthographic letter < aw > having a back rounded phonetic [ɔ] sound as shown in table 1.2 as below:

Table 1.2.   <u>Occurring Position of Vowels</u>

Word	Place	Symbol	Glossing
awm	initial	∧V	"chest"
awn	initial	∧G	slanting position
nawn	medial	2∧G	transporting
kawk	medial	⊙∧T	pointing
mawtaw	final	⊖∧L∧	motor
taw	final	L∧	buttock

All together seven vowels are found to occur in the Zomi Script as shown in Table 1.3 below:

Table 1.3.   Total Number of Vowels

Word	Symbols	Alphabetic Letters	Glossing
a	ȣ	< a >	'(to) wear'
en	Ƨ	< e >	' (to) look'
it	ɿ	< i >	' love'
oi	A	< o >	'medicinal plant'
ui	d	< u >	'dog'
maw	Λ	< aw >	'fool (person)'
pai	O exceptional	< i >	'go' or goes
	(only used in final position)		

Final consonants used therefore in the final revision include only eight (8) consonants as shown below in Table 1.4:

Table 1.4.   Final Consonants

Word	Symbols	Alphabetic Letters	Glossing
kap	ꝋȣ꒦	< ap >	'(to) cry'
pak	Ꮐȣт	< ak >	'flower'
pat	ꞬȣꞦ	< at >	'cotton'
am	ȣV	< am >	'embers'
pan	ꞬȣG	< an >	'(to) begin'
pang	Ɡȣƨ	< ang >	'(to) participate'
kal	ꝋȣꞶ	< al >	'(to) climb'
kah	ꝋȣP	< ah >	'(to) cry after'

There are twenty – one (21) initial consonants in the Zomi script. This initial consonant differ from the final consonants in their symbols as shown in table 1.5 as below:

Table 1.5.   Initial Consonants

Word	Symbols	Alphabetic Letters	Glossing
pa	Ꮐȣ	< pa >	'father'
ka	ꝋȣ	< ka >	'branches'
lam	CȣV	< la >	'(to) dance'
mam	ꝊȣV	< ma >	'smooth'
dak	Bȣт	< da >	'bell'
za	Zȣ	< za >	'(to) hear'
va	Ꞷȣ	< va >	'bird'
nga	ꝰȣ	< nga >	'fish'
ha	ꝋȣ	< ha >	'teeth'

gah	ᴦᴕP	< ga >	'bearing fruit'
kha	Xᴕ	< kha >	'bitter'
sa	Cᴕ	< sa >	'meat'
bang	Ɛᴕꝑ	< ba >	'what'
cim	ИꞋV	< c >	'feeling bored'
ta	Lᴕ	< ta >	'children'
thak	Gᴕᴛ	< tha >	'new'
na	ɟᴕ	< na >	'pain'
phat	Zᴕℝ	< pha >	'(to) praise'
ram	ꝑᴕV	< ra >	'land/plot'
fel	ʰᴢꝍ	< fa >	'worthy'
chiam	ℝꞋᴕV	< ch >	'tasting'

Only numeral symbols from one (1) to three (3) follows Roman Numerals as shown in Table 1.6 as below:

Table 1.6.   Numerals

Word	Figure	Symbols	Glossing
khat	1	1	'one'
nih	2	2	'two'
thum	3	3	'three'
li	4	ꝍ	'four'
nga	5	ꝓ	'five'
guk	6	ɡ́	'six'
sagih	7	ꝓ	'seven'
giat	8	ꞃ	'eight'
kua	9	G	'nine'
sawm	10	10	'ten'

2. Conclusion

The main aim of the paper is to sensitize the mind of the present and future generation of Language developers and scholars working on language discipline. It also aims to promote, preserve and protect Zomi script for the native speakers as well as for other language speakers unaware of the existence of the script, its language and its people. Speakers of Zomi script in India participates in the preservation and revitalization of the script as their primary duty.The extension of this work may attract and find enormous scope for generating new interests in this field of study.

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Kanauji and Awadhi: Two Dialects Different Status

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Abstract

Several languages are spoken in our country India. Hindi is the most commonly spoken language of the country. All the varieties of the languages in India come from the various regions of the country. The major languages in the country are further divided into various smaller groups of languages that are spoken by the local communities of the respective regions. The two most popular languages i.e., Kanauji and Awadhi are still the most commonly spoken language in the respective regions of Kanpur and Awadh that are the most popular regions of the Uttar Pradesh state. However, various languages are still hard to trace the origin but those languages are still being spoken in various parts of Awadh and Kanpur. This paper talks about the status of both the languages that are commonly spoken in neighboring parts of Uttar Pradesh.

Keyword: Kanauji, Awadhi, Hindi, Comparative Study

In our multilingual country, 28 languages have been recognized by the constitution. Hindi is the most common language spoken by the majority of the population across the country and it has also been given official recognition The two major branches of the Hindi language are Eastern Hindi and Western Hindi. Two languages from Eastern Hindi groups like- Awadhi & Chhattisgarhi have been recognized by the Indian Constitution. Kanauji and Bangru are two important languages of the Western Hindi group. The language Kanauji belongs to the people of the Kanpur specifically the common people of Kanpur who use this language in present times also. According to the resources, the name of the language Kanauji was initially derived from the name of the place is an ancient place in the northern areas which was commonly known as Kanauji (Singh, and Sharma, 2012).

On the other hand, Awadhi is the most common language spoken in the region on Awadh which is considered as a western part of the Hindi language. In the modern world, the practice of speaking native languages at home and with family and friends is still a common trend in India but if we compare two major languages of Hindi dialects i.e., Kanauji and Awadhi then the former has more speakers as compared to the latter and the former also has more recognition officially and

unofficially as compared to the later. India still comprises various small communities of people speaking different languages that are undiscovered. Various languages are still hard to trace the origin but those languages are still being spoken in various parts of Awadh and Kanpur (Nayyar, 2002).

India is a country of diverse culture and the country still practices the ancient rituals and follows the historic paths of carrying on things in the country when it comes to cultures, customs, and traditions. Those languages that were in practice in the official documents or the educational institutions in the era of the kings of the kingdoms is easier for them now to get recognition or to get official support in comparison to those languages that were in minor use in the ancient past and were not used in any kind of publications or official documentation makes it difficult for the scholars or the experts to find the origin of the languages (Kulshreshtha, and Mathur, 2012). Most of these languages are in practice from the ancient past but due to lack of proper evidence and due to lack of proper recognitions these languages are not considered as the major languages or the part of the branches of the languages. The origin of a language and the proper documentation of a language helps the language to get recognition and the recognition of the historical language is very difficult to achieve because of the absence of evidences.

The recognition of languages by the State is an essential factor because it gives official status to the language and importance to the speech- the community also. Although, there are various languages in India that are being spoken in several parts of the country and these languages still need official recognition. The permission to give recognition to the ancient languages is quite difficult as compared to giving recognition to the modern languages. Kanauji is an ancient language and it created a lot of controversies when the existence of the language came into the outer world (Mishra, and Bali, 2011).

The controversies of the Kanauji language rose because neither there was any evidence about its origin nor any published or documented data. The proper documentation of a language helps it to get recognition. In absence of such shreds of evidence which is very difficult to attain. On the other hand, according to the sources Awadhi was considered as an official language in the eras of the kings and kingdoms, and many pieces of evidence were found regarding its origin and also related to its sub-dialects. As a result, the language was given utmost recognition by its speech community. The state of Uttar Pradesh is one of the largest states in the country and apart from that, it has the maximum number of populations. The state not only boasts of great political leaders but also comprises the maximum historical places of the country. According to the research, most of the relevant historical-political signs of progress have their seeds in this state. Similarly, when it comes to the growth of languages the commonly used languages or native dialects have been established through the historical movements of this state. However, the study says that the speaking frequency of the various languages is different from each other. There can be a language that can be found as the most common languages and every community can speak that language, on the other hand, there are languages that are unique in their identification and requires special efforts and attention to make it a common practice. Hindi is considered the major language in the country and especially in the state of Uttar Pradesh (Mishra, and Bali, 2010).

As mentioned earlier various dialects come under the two major branches of the Hindi language - Eastern and Western. When one compares the origin and development of Kanauji and Awadhi one finds that though the societal recognition and the use of the Kanauji language were much greater than the Awadhi yet as the Awadhi language was established as an official language in the olden time's researcher could trace its origin easily and could maintain the documented history of the language. Due to written- well-documented proofs its identity and presence were easily accepted

by other communities. The literature, knowledge, customs, and traditions documented in Awadhi were passed on to the next generations. On the other hand, in the absence of state support and well-documented written records the identity of Kanauji got recognition very late. In present times speakers of different dialects have become aware of their mother tongue and their cultural identity and have started using their native voices. But if compare between these two major dialects of Hindi i.e., Kanauji and Awadhi we find that the former is more popular presently used by a large number of speakers on day-to-day basis but still trying hard to get a place in the constitutionally recognized list of languages of India.

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Some Problematic Aspects of Manipuri Lexicography

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Abstract

Manipuri is a Tibeto-Burman Language as well as the Scheduled language of India. Various dictionaries in Manipuri have been compiled in various combinations: Manipuri, Hindi, and English. The paper is to present the problems faced by the compilers in compiling Bilingual Manipuri dictionaries as there are no pure monolingual Manipuri dictionaries compiled so far. The bilingual dictionaries could be either English-Manipuri or Manipuri-English dictionaries. In this process, the compiler faces lots of problems in achieving the target goal. However, it is general to apply some techniques to minimize the various problems and make the dictionary user-friendly. And Manipuri is quite a distinct and different language from English. Whatever rules and norms applied to the Dictionary in the English Language cannot be applied to Manipuri Dictionary because English has SVO word order and Manipuri has SOV word order. The paper intends to investigate the various aspects of problems faced by the compiler in compiling Manipuri Dictionary (Monolingual or Bilingual).

Key Words: Head-word, Lingua-Franca, Monolingual, Tibeto-Burman.

1. Introduction

Manipuri, the official language in the state of Manipur has been recognized as the Scheduled Language of India on August 20, 1992, by the 71st Amendment Act of the Indian Constitution. Regarding the language classification, it belongs to the Kuki-Chin-Naga group of the Tibeto- Burman subfamily of the Sino-Tibetan family of languages (Grierson & Konow, 1903-28). R.A. Shafer (1955, 1966, and 1974) placed Manipuri in the Meitei branch of the Kukish section. Paul K. Benedict (1972) classified this language as being included in the Kuki-Naga of Kukish section However, there are various opinions made by different linguists but the classification made by Grierson and Konow is treated to be more suitable.

Being a Tibeto-Burman language it shares some of the features of Tibeto-Burman such as tone, SOV word order, the occurrence of velar nasal /ŋ/ in the initial position of a word, postposition instead of a preposition, agglutinating, and so on. Various dictionaries have been

compiled in Manipuri in various combinations: Manipuri, Hindi, and English (Monolingual, Bilingual and Multi-Lingual) to meet the various purposes for different users but it can be said that there are no pure monolingual Manipuri dictionaries. The research paper is mainly based on the study of various problems in compiling the Manipuri Dictionary.

2. **Development of Manipuri Lexicography**

There is no doubt that the British had done the pioneering work in the development of Manipuri Lexicography. The first Manipuri involving Dictionary was compiled by George Gordon, the British Political Agent of Manipur in the year 1837 (Singh 2011:7). It is a dictionary in English, Hindi, and Manipuri. After a century the people started to realize the importance of having a Manipuri dictionary and the compilation of Manipuri involving dictionaries started to increase in various combinations: English, Hindi, and Manipuri. There are around 40 Manipuri involving dictionaries and which are likely to be increased later on. The names are given below[1]:

Sl. No	Compilers	Name of the Dictionaries	Year
1	George Gordon	*A Dictionary in English, Bengali, and Manipuri*	1837
2	William Pettigrew	*A Dictionary in English, Bengali, and Manipuri*	1857
3	Dwijamani Dev Sharma	*The Anglo-Manipuri Dictionary*	1957
4	Nameirakpam Dinachandra Singh	*Khunung Longee Artha*(A Dictionary of Manipuri Archaic Words)	1960)
5	R.K. Shitaljit Singh	*Friend's English to Manipuri Dictionary*	1962
6	Dwijamani Dev Sharma	*The Hindi-Manipuri-English Dictionary*	1962
7	Radhamohan and Narayan Sharma	*Hindi Manipuri Sabdakosh*	1962
8	D.M. Dev Sarma	*A Dictionary of English Idioms and Phrases*	1963
9	L. Narayan Sharma	*Manipuri Hindi Sabdakosh* (Manipuri Longei)	1963
10	N. Khelchandra Singh	*Manipuri to Manipuri and English Dictionary*	1964
11	N.S. and B.S.	*Standard Pocket Dictionary of Idioms*	1965
12	Ch. Pishak Singh	*A Manual of Anglo-Manipuri Dictionary of Idioms*	1965
13	Shitaljit	*Friend's Pocket Dictionary* (English-Manipuri)	1966
14	O. Iboyaima Singh	*Students' English Word-Book* (Book-one)	1967
15	Shitaljit	*Beginner's Word Book*	1973
16	Phalendra Singh	*Manipuri Lolgei* (Ashamba Sharuk)	1975
17	Jadumani Singh	*Hindi to Manipuri Dictionary*	1977
18	N. Khelchandra Singh	*Ariba Manipuri Longei* (A Dictionary of	1978

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[1] The list of the names of these dictionaries (1-38) has been taken from Dictionary-Making: English to Manipuri by L. Sarbajit Singh.

		Manipuri Archaic Words)	
19	Mani Mairenbam.	*Literary Tarmsingi Manipuri Glossary*	1980
20	Committee on Official Language, Manipur Legislative Assembly	*First Report on Manipuri Equivalent of Parliamentary, Legal, and Administrative Terms*	1981
21	Committee on Official Language, Manipur Legislative Assembly.	*Second Report on Manipuri Equivalent of Parliamentary, Legal, and Administrative Terms*	1982
22	Krishna Muarari Mittal	*A Dictionary in English, Bengali, Manipuri*	1983
23	L. Jnanendra Singh.	*Manipuri Glossary of Political Terms*	1983
24	L.Kesho Singh	*A Dictionary of Geography* (Anglo-Manipuri)	1984
25	N. Ibobi Singh	*Hindi-English-Manipuri Word Book*	1984
26	Khangembam Tomchou Singh	*Dictionary of Trilingual Proverbs (Manipuri, Hindi, and English)*	1985
27	H. Mani Singh	*Concise Anglo-Manipuri Dictionary*	1987
28	H. Mani Singh	*Students' Anglo-Manipuri Dictionary*	1987
29	H.Mani Singh	*Students' English Word Book*	1987
30	Sanabam Raghumani Mangang	*Anglo-Meitei Legal Dictionary*	1987
31	Narayan Sharma	*Students' Favourite Pocket Dictionary* (Hindi-Manipuri)	1989
32	L.O. Clarke	*A Vocabulary: Manipuri to English Dictionary*	1991
33	PhurailatpamGokulchandra Sharma	*Official Technical Terms English, Hindi Manipuri*	1994
34	ShoubamShyamkishor	*Ariba Meitei/Meetei Longee Lon-kei*	1996
35	T. Kesho Singh	*Model Word Book*	1999
36	I.R.Babu Singh	*The Millenium Dictionary of Anglo-Manipuri*	2001
37	Dr. Soibam Imoba	*Manipuri to English Dictionary*	2004
38	H. Surmangol Sharma	*Learners' Manipuri-English Dictionary*	2006
39	Hidam Dolen	*A Comprehensive Manipuri to English Learner's Dictionary in Meitei Mayek and Bengali Scripts*	2012
40	Dr. Chirom Rajketan Singh, Keithelakpam Meghachandra Meetei, Ayekpam Amarjit (Ta Mobi), Kamaljit Chirom	*Manipuri Longei (Manipuri-Manipuri-English)*	2013

Table 1: Lists of Manipuri involving dictionaries

3. Literature Review

The compilation of dictionaries requires the arts and crafts of lexicography. Most of the Manipuri involving dictionaries compiled so far are meant for the practical aspect neglecting the theoretical aspects. Even though it has its scripts (called Meetei Mayek or Meetei scripts), Manipuri dictionaries are generally compiled in Bengali scripts. The 55 Bengali symbols have been represented by 38 Manipuri phonemes (including two tones) creating lots of

phonological problems (Singh and Singh, 2007). Semantic issues are discussed by Singh and Singh (2006) in making the English - Manipuri dictionary where English is the source language (SL) and Manipuri is the target language (TL). As "there are no exact correspondences between words in different languages" (Nida, 1958:281), finding the equivalent word is a big issue especially when the two languages are not closely related (linguistically as well as culturally).

4. Microstructure and macrostructure of dictionary

The Microstructure of a dictionary deals with the information related to the part of speech, class member, translation equivalents, meaning explanation, and cross-references. In other words, it can be said that microstructure concerns the information about the lemma[2]. A lemma should be systematically followed by a tonal indication for tonal languages. Very often, lexicographers compiling dictionaries for Manipuri are found to neglect the phonological analysis of the language. Macrostructure deals with the corpus. The front matter of the dictionary is one of the basic features of macrostructure as it will decide who the target users of the dictionaries are, what are the sources of the dictionary (primary or secondary), and how the information is provided in the dictionary. Out of these 40 above-mentioned dictionaries, I prefer to use a dictionary compiled by Dolen 'Manipuri Dictionary' (2012) because of the much valuable information provided by it. It uses both Meetei Mayek as well as Bengali alphabet. Pronunciation is provided using International Phonetic Alphabets (IPA). It can be used by both the native or non-native speakers of Manipuri. Some of the basic problems in compiling Manipuri involving dictionaries are listed below:

4.1 The Selection of the lexical units for inclusion in Manipuri Dictionary

This is the first problem the lexicographer faces in compiling a dictionary. The choice among different possible answers depends upon the type to which the dictionary will belong. Who are the users of the dictionary, the size of the dictionary should also be the main consideration? The number of items to be recorded must be determined. The compiler must decide whether the dictionary should contain an obsolete word or archaic word, technical terms, dialectisms, colloquialism, and so on. So, the compiler first has to decide what kind of dictionary he is planning to compile. "The entire work of dictionary-making from the planning stage to the preparation of the press copy, at its different stages, viz, the collection of materials, selection, and setting of entries an arrangement of entries and their meaning is largely governed based on which the dictionary is classified" (Singh, 1991:11).

Some of the criteria for the classification of dictionaries are given below:

(i) Density of entries: It decides whether the word list is general or restricted or special; whether it will cover regional dialect or social dialect, jargon, slangs, or archaisms.

(ii) No. of languages involved: Whether it is monolingual, bilingual, or trilingual dictionaries.

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[2] It is the headword that is entered into the dictionary. A lemma could have various inflected forms such as break, breaks, broke, broken, breaking are all the lexemes of the lemma 'break'.

(iii) The nature of entries: Whether lexical or encyclopaedic.

(iv) Axis of time: Whether diachronic or synchronic dictionary.

(v) Arrangement of entries: Alphabetical or semantic or casual.

(vi) Purpose: Whether normative or influential.

(vii) User: Whether general user or special users.

4.2 The Arrangement of the selected Lexical units

The order of arrangement of entries in a dictionary is different according to the different purposes of the dictionary. Generally, entries are arranged in alphabetical order. However, cluster-type of arrangement can be found in few dictionaries. Each mode of presentation has its advantages. The alphabetical form of arrangement provides for an easy finding of any word along with its meaning, usage, frequency value, etc. Whereas the latter requires less space and presents a clearer picture of the relations of each unit under consideration with some other units in the language system, grouping together the words of the same roots, same denotational meaning or connotational meaning or close in their frequency value. In some dictionaries, the combination of the two modes of the presentation is also found. Generally, in most Manipuri involving dictionaries, the alphabetical arrangement of entries is done based on the Bengali format. Entries can be grouped in families of words of the same root. The basic units are given as main entries that appear in alphabetical order while the derivatives and the phrases which the word enters are given either as subentries or in the same entry. For instance, /u/ is itself a noun (tree), as well as a verb (see), is first entered as the main entry in the dictionary next comes the various derived forms of the verb /u/ (see) as *u.de* (not seen), *u.gə.ni* (will see), *u.dri* (not yet seen), *u.niŋ.de* (unwillingness to see), *u.re* (have seen), etc. are given as subentries. Most of the dictionaries fail to provide the derivational or the inflected form of the lemma. Being an agglutinating language suffix extension is prominent in the language but the compilers extend their information up to verbal noun[3] only. However, it was claimed that up to ten suffixes can be extended to the same verbal root even though there are some restrictions on their combinations (Shobhana 1997: 26). But it was meant for colloquial construction and it is not meant for daily conversation. For instance, the conjunction /ə.mə.suŋ/ 'and is only used in the written form. In the spoken form it is replaced by /su/ or /ne/ which mean 'in addition to'.

4.3 The Selection and Arrangement of word meaning

The selection and the arrangement of the entries in a dictionary is one of the difficult problems faced by lexicographers. The number of meanings a word is given and their choice depends mainly on the following factors-

(i) The aim of the compilers in which the dictionary is set

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[3] As all the verbs in Manipuri are bound in nature, they require affixes to form or derive a new word. And the entire verbal root can be made a verbal noun by nominalizing it. Manipuri has two nominalizing suffixes -*pə* and -*bə*. -*pə* is suffixed for voiceless plosive and -*bə* is used elsewhere.

(ii) The compiler should decide the extent to which obsolete, archaic, dialectal meaning to be recorded

(iii) How the problem of polysemy and homonymy is solved

(iv) How the segmentation of different meanings of a polysemous word is made etc.

Word meaning should be arranged according to the sequence of historical development, in conformity with frequency use and finally in their logical connection. Generally, meanings are organized by frequency of use but sometimes the primary meaning comes first followed by the secondary meaning.

4.4 Choice of adequate equivalents

As Nida himself pointed out that there is no isomorphism in two languages, "there are no exact correspondences between related words in different languages" (Nida, 1958:281). Among these cultures, bound words are most notable. For example, */kəi.na kət.pə/* Manipuri word which when translated into English it may be written as 'marriage' but it is quite different from the general marriage that we understood. In the Manipur context, it is taken as a kind of marriage not frequently occurred and is not accepted and blessed by either one of the families of the bride or the groom or vice versa. That's why the general proceeding is done in a marriage is not performed in this case. So, it has its own cultural-specific identity. So if a person wants to learn Manipuri using English to Manipuri bilingual dictionary, he may not be properly understood the meaning of a word if the word is not defined well through cultural context as well as some illustrative definitions and examples will be helpful. There are many factors and semantic gap or semantic issue is one among them. Lyons (1977:303) maintains that lexical gaps are attributed to unlexicalized concepts or objects across languages. For example, words are referring to dead humans and dead animals as 'corpse' and 'carcass' but there is no word for dead plants. In Meeteilon, even though the concept is the same, there are different word forms for different items used for the word "wear". For example, '*si.bə'* is used for wearing ornament like necklace, bangles, etc, '*set.pə'* or '*lit.pə'* for clothing, '*up.pə*' or '*toŋ.bə*' for shoes and '*ke.bə*' for wearing make-up. These are some examples of the semantic gap which are not available in English. Again, a married woman in Manipuri is called '*məu*' but there is no term for a married man. So language is culture-bound. If the same concept of one language is available in another language, finding the equivalent word is not much a problematic. The three verb roots */kai/, /tət/ and /tek/* are provided the meaning 'break' in the Manipuri to English dictionary compiled by Singh (2009: 70,165, 183) neglecting the semantic restriction. */kai/* implies the breaking of items related to fragile items such as glass, earthen pot, or a container made of plastic. */tek/* applies to stick, pen, tree, and house. While */tət/* applies to the garments or items related to a garment. The semantic restriction on the use of the words is often neglected by the lexicographers in compiling the Manipuri dictionary.

4.5. Grammatical information of head entry in Manipuri dictionary

In a Dictionary the head entry plays a very significant role and it provides a lot of information about the word, its usage semantically and syntactically. In Manipuri, noun, verb, adjective and adverb are the main grammatical category because they involve the formation of a new word employing prefixation and suffixation.

'The first and the basic purpose of indicating grammatical information in the dictionary is to indicate the morphosyntactic peculiarities of the lexical unit'. (Singh, Ram Adhar: 116). To provide grammatical information of the head entry especially for the language like Manipuri is a big challenge to be tackled by the lexicographer in compiling a dictionary. Because Manipuri is highly agglutinative where one root may link with many attributes to form a new word. It has various functional categories and a word may mean a sentence. Syntactically the same word may have a different category according to the condition. For example, the common noun */kʰuk.u/* when it is used as *i.siŋ kʰuk.u jəu.rəm.me*, it indicates quantifier. Nouns can be either countable or uncountable, singular or plural, proper noun or common noun. The identification of the definite noun is not shown in the Manipur dictionary. The adjective also has different kinds- quantitative, qualitative, demonstrative, etc and there is a lack of information about the adjective. Most of the adjectives in Manipuri are formed by the prefixation of /ə/ to the head noun. But adjectives can perform the function of a noun according to the context. For example, *ə.i.bə* 'writer' which is a noun and *ə.i.bə lai.rik* 'written book' which indicates adjective. Syntactically when the adjective carries the negative meaning /ə/ is not prefixed and the adjective follows the noun. For instance, *kup.tə.bə* has two meanings: not minute and not a miser. The structure of the sentence will look like this. *tom.bə kup.tə.bə mi.ni* 'Tomba is not miser' (Singh, 2004:81). Verbs also can be transitive and intransitive. Transitive verbs take objects and intransitive verbs do not. Words in Manipuri dictionaries provide only verbs whether it is transitive or intransitive is not shown. Most Manipuri involving dictionaries do not provide detail grammatical information of the entry. In a Learner's dictionary, there should be more grammatical information than in a general-purpose dictionary. However, special dictionaries like pronouncing and orthographical dictionaries do not require grammatical information.

5. Conclusion

Manipuri is a tonal language as well as agglutinating language which poses a great problem to lexicographers. The lexicographer before compiling a dictionary first needs to plan the main objectives of the dictionary, for which purpose the dictionary is to be compiled, who are the users of the dictionary, whether is a general or specific dictionary, and so on. There is no doubt to say that most Manipuri involving dictionaries compiled so far whether it is monolingual, bilingual, or trilingual dictionaries are not up to the level comparing to that of Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary or Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary. This is because most compilers are not from the lexicographical background. It will be wise to collect all the roots and basic forms (noun and verb) found in Manipuri and then their derived forms in a systematic manner. Grammatical information should be properly given looking

for the prospective users of the second language learners. Regarding the meaning presentation, it should be from both diachronic as well as synchronic points of view. Because the meaning of a word changes from time to time. Findings of adequate equivalents are also major criteria in a dictionary (bilingual and trilingual). If not found it should be described by definitions with illustrations and examples.

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