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सोसाइटी फॉर इंडेन्जर्ड एंड लेसर नोन लैंग्वेज़ेज की शोध पत्रिका

Documenting Dimasa Oral Narratives and Digital Archiving[1]

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Abstract

The authors will discuss how Dimasa traditional knowledge through the oral narratives from diverse genres can be digitally preserved in Mukurtu. Mukurtu is an online platform designed primarily to promote and preserve indigenous heritages and focuses on community based participatory design. Data for oral narratives such as children's games, folk stories, ritualistic chants, to name a few, have been collected using Narrative Inquiry and Narrative Storytelling methods (Clandinin and Connelly 2004). It will discuss the ethnolinguistic aspects of the selected narratives from the Mukurtu portal which can serve as textbook curriculum for the Dimasa language. The paper will finally highlight the importance of digital archiving using Mukurtu as a tool for Dimasa language documentation and revitalization.

Keywords: oral narratives, digital archiving, Dimasa.

1. Introduction

Dimasa is one of the Bodo-Garo languages from the Tibeto-Burman language family spoken mainly in southern Assam and Dimapur in Nagaland in northeast India. In Assam it is spoken in six districts, namely, Dima Hasao, Karbi Anglong, Hojai, Cachar, Karimganj and Hilakandi. The Dimasa language has 4 major dialects: Hasao, Hawar, Dembra and Dijuwa, and these districts comprise the speakers of these dialects as in Hasao in Dima Hasao, Hawar in Cachar, Karimganj and Hailakandi, Dembra in Hojai and Karbi Anglong, Dijuwa in Karbi Anglong in Assam and Dimapur in Nagaland. The term 'Dimasa' means 'sons of the great river' where 'di' means water, 'ma' means 'big' and 'sa' means 'sons' (Singha 2007:1). Some historians claim that 'Dimasa' has been derived from 'Dimbacha' or 'Hidimbacha' meaning 'sons of Hidimba and Bhima' and 'Dimapur' was earlier known as 'Hidimbapur' (Barman 2007). Dimasas and the rest of the Bodo sub-group of people including the Bodos, the Morans, the Chutias, the Thengals, the Tiwas, the Sonowals and the Meches were called by the outsiders as 'Kacharis' meaning 'people belonging to the fertile soil'. The historical records of the Kacharis as mentioned in Gait (2008) discusses only the history of Dimasa Kachari kingdom as that of 'Kacharis', unlike the history of the other Kacharis (Barpujari 1997).

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[1] The current research work has been written and extracted from paper titled 'Digital Archiving of Dimasa oral narratives using Mukurtu' presented in the 4th International Conference of Tibeto-Burman Linguistics Association of North East India, from 7-9 February, 2024 at The English and Foreign Languages University, Shillong.

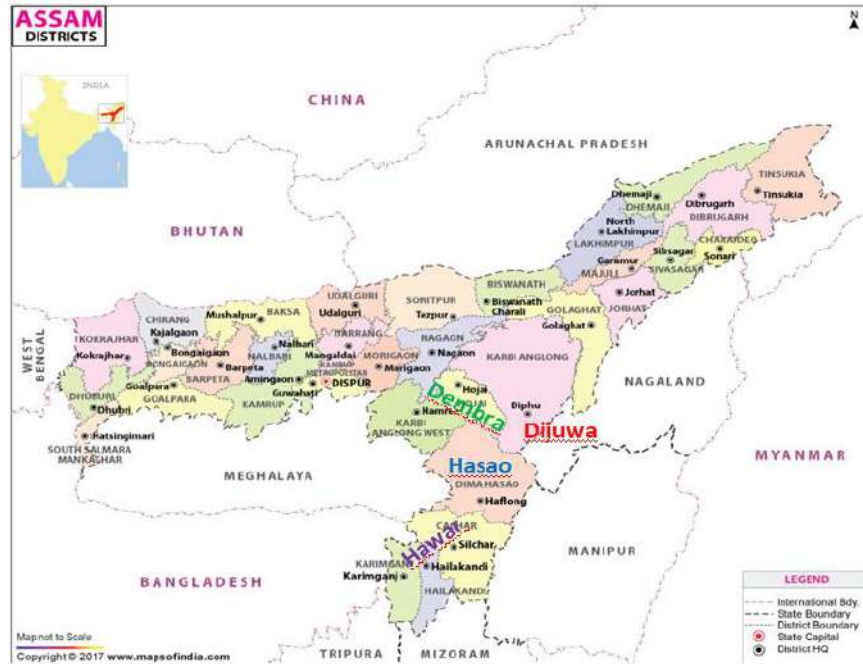Figure 1 shows the Dimasa speaking regions in Assam and adjoining areas:

Figure 1: Map of Dimasa speaking regions[2]

According to the Census of India 2011, the total population of the Dimasa speakers is 137,184. The language does not have a script of its own so they use the Bengali script. In 2004, the orthographic convention adopted the Roman script for the Dimasa language and Hasao as the standard dialect of the language. However, despite its historical significance and cultural richness, the language faces numerous challenges that threaten its survival and vitality. According to the UNESCO's Vitality Report, the language can be labeled as "vulnerably endangered" i.e., it is limited to the home and community domain only. The language is not much documented and so there is less data available including mass media. This passive assimilation into governmental structures has led to a lack of official recognition and support for the language.

To add, Dimasa is not included in the 22 official languages of India. Hence, as a non-scheduled language, it lacks the legal protections given to the scheduled languages. It is offered as an optional subject up to Class 6 in the Dima Hasao district of Assam. The community is having plans for extension of the language till Class 8 but the procedure of implementation is pending till now. The Dimasa Sahitya Sabha in the year 2004 adopted the Roman script for the orthography which signified a step towards standardization and preservation of the language. However, fewer literatures only are available in the language till date.

The present study thus aims to systematically document and analyze the different types of oral narratives present in the Dimasa community. This includes collecting a diverse range of narratives, including folktales, myths, legends, rituals, and historical information, and digitizing them for archival purposes. Secondly, it discusses the scope of creating an awareness about the cultural significance of oral narratives as valuable sources of traditional knowledge by highlighting their role. Lastly, the study will discuss how

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[2] Modified from https://www.mapsofindia.com/maps/assam/assam-district.htm. Accessed on March 30, 2024.

digital archiving platforms can utilize oral narratives and create culture-based textbook materials and language learning.

2. Digital archiving of oral narratives

The project, Bodo and Dimasa Heritage Digital Archive, is an open access archive whose main goal is to support and preserve the linguistic and cultural heritages of the indigenous peoples of northeast India. By doing so, it tries to revitalize the languages of these communities through the creation of blogs, web dictionaries, and digital encyclopedias. The Bodo and Dimasa Heritage Digital Archive portal has been designed as a community-based digital archive, involving the community in the digital preservation of their heritage information. The online digital archive works through the Mukurtu platform in the Bodo and Dimasa Heritage Digital Archive. Mukurtu is based on Drupal, open source content management software that is widely used for websites around the world. The project also aims to make materials for the community. The information used in the archive can take forms of the hard copies which will in result help the community people to understand their culture in a better way. These hard copies can be published in the future and can also be recommended for library and language education for both the communities. http://bododimasaarchive.org/ is the link of the Bodo and Dimasa Heritage Digital Archive.

The Dimasa archive team members collected various types of data from 15 villages of Cachar district of Assam, namely, Rongpur, Dholai, Sheorartal, Kumacherra, Kanakpur, Hawarma, Joypur, Khaspur, Khauthai, Raidilung, Madra, Bijoypur, Lodi, Lodi Kachari, and Borbond in 2022. The data include categories such as, tools and instruments, flora and fauna, folk songs etc. There are 256 Dimasa items added in the archive till date from this fieldwork, and out of which, 50 oral narratives have been archived from Cachar, Assam: Interview (10), Mythical Legend (1), Oral History (12), Short Story (5), Religious Song/Kirtan (1), Folk Song (6), Folk Dance (1), Children's Game (3), Ritual language (3), Idioms and Proverbs (1 Monologue), Taboo (1 Monologue) and Riddles (6).

2.1 Oral Narratives

The portal Bodo and Dimasa Heritage Digital Archive has mainly three sections for digital archiving: categories, communities and cultural protocol. The categories or cultural categories include the cultural information and the oral narratives that are documented and preserved in the archive, the communities refer to the 'community' which is curating the archive (as in the Dimasa community for the Dimasa team members), and the cultural protocol refers to the ownership rights of the community in particular. Thus, oral narratives are preserved inside categories as 'cultural heritage'. Some of the genres of these oral narratives uploaded in the portal are analysed here briefly.

2.1.1 Short Story

2.1.1.1 jaingeluma jang magusha khaiplung khalaiba ni kharmin[3]

The story narrates how a selfish monkey befriends a firefly and a tiger but is devoured by the tiger in the end. The traits attributed with *jaingeluma /*ʤaɪŋgelʊma*/* or *Jengailuma /*ʤeŋgaɪlʊma*/* 'firefly' are friendliness and *magusha* /magʊʃa/ 'monkey' as selfishness. Moral of the story is, 'selfishness devours self'.

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[3] Accessed from https://bododimasaarchive.org/digital-heritage/jaingeluma-jang-magusha-khaiplung-khalaiba-ni-kharmin, on March 29, 2024.

2.1.1.2 Ashampha[4]

Another story that can be mentioned here from the archive is *Ashampha* /aʃampʰa/, whose name is an eponym and popularly related with persons performing stupid actions in life. One of the most significant actions in *Ashampha's* stories is, when he does not recognise his deceased baby after falling from his back in the return trail from a forest, and laughs at it, concluding that other babies also die.

2.1.2 Oral History

2.1.2.1 Gor Ail hillock, Hawarma village[5]

The proper name "Gor Ail" /ɡɔɾ aɪl/ hillock is a historical significance to the Dimasa Kachari history, as it bears its name, *Gor Ail* (in Sylheti Bengali 'Came home'), after the retreat of Dimasa soldiers in the hillock after a battle with Burmese soldiers in the 18th century.

2.1.2.2 Durga Mandir, Thakurbari near *Hawarma*[6]

The *Durga* temple was built during the reign of the Dimasa King *Tamradhvaj Narayan Hasnu*, and it is about 600 years old, (according to the community members of the *Hawarma* village). The temple remains to be protected by the authorities as a heritage site.

2.1.3 Children's games

2.1.3.1 Question-Answer game *"shatraitrai gonthaitrai"*[7]

It is a children's quiz game narrating a series of events that starts from the sky and includes questioning every object identified in every answer until the object reaches the royal house. *shatraitrai* /ʃatraɪtraɪ/ is a reduplication of *ʃatrai* /ʃatraɪ/ 'star' to pluralise it as 'stars and all'; similarly *gonthaitrai* /ɡɔntʰaɪtraɪ/ '*gonthai* (weaving model) and all'. An extract of the text is illustrated here:[8]

1) *shatraitrai gonthaitrai*
   ʃatraɪtraɪ   ɡɔntʰaɪtraɪ
   stars and all (weaving model) and all
   'stars and *gonthais*!'

2) *gonthmai   glau bra thangkha ?*
   ɡɔntʰmaɪ   ɡlaʊ   bɾa   tʰaŋkʰa
   a kind of bamboo   long   where gone
   'Where has the long bamboo gone?'

3) *bari shukha.*
   baɾɪ   ʃʊkʰa
   fence made
   'It fenced!'

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[4] Accessed from https://bododimasaarchive.org/digital-heritage/folk-story-asampha. on March 29, 2024.

[5] Accessed from https://bododimasaarchive.org/digital-heritage/gor-ail-hillock-hawarma-village, on March 29, 2024.

[6] Accessed from https://bododimasaarchive.org/digital-heritage/durga-mandir-thakurbari-hawarma-village on March 28, 2024.

[7] Accessed from on https://bododimasaarchive.org/digital-heritage/question-answer-game-%E2%80%9Cshatraitrai-gonthaitrai%E2%80%9D on March 28, 2024.

[8] The text has been glossed word-to-word (in place of morpheme-to-morpheme and IPA) in the Dimasa archive (which is open access) for the community members and other viewers for easier reading.

4) *bari bra thangkha ?*
baɾɪ   bɾa   tʰaŋkʰa
fence   where gone
'Where has the fence gone?'

5) *purnima jikha.*
pʊɾnɪma   dʒɪkʰa
full moon   eaten
'Full moon had it all'.

6) *purnima bra thangkha ?*
pʊɾnɪma   bɾa   tʰaŋkʰa
full moon   where gone
'Where has the full moon gone?'

7) *purnima   daono khonjikha.*
pʊɾnɪma   daʊnɔ   kʰɔndʒɪkʰa
full moon   hen   pick eat up
'The full moon picked the hen'.

8) *daono   bra   thangkha ?*
daʊnɔ   bɾa   tʰaŋkʰa
hen   where gone
'Where has the hen gone?'

9) *daono daoling kheplangkha.*
daʊnɔ   daʊlɪŋ   kʰeplaŋkʰa
hen   vulture snap become
'The hen got snapped with the vulture'.

10) *daoling bra thangkha ?*
daʊlɪŋ   bɾa   tʰaŋkʰa
vulture where gone
'Where did the vulture go?'

11) *yamjang   sathaikha*
jamdʒaŋ   ʃətʰaɪkʰa
with mat   killed
'It got killed with the mat'.

12) *yam bra thangkha ?*
jam   bɾa   tʰaŋkʰa
mat   where gone
'Where has the mat gone?'

13) *waijang wauthaikha.*
waɪdʒaŋʃaʊtʰaɪkʰa
with fire   burned
'It got burned with fire'.

14) *wai bra thangkha ?*
waɪ   bɾa   tʰaŋkʰa
fire   where gone
'Where has the fire gone?'

15) *dijang lukhlaikha.*
    dɪʤaŋ   lʊkʰlaɪkʰa
    with water   poured down
    'It splashed with water'.

16) *di   bra thangkha ?*
    dɪ   bɾa   tʰaŋkʰa
    water   where gone
    'Where has the water gone?'

17) *mithang sropkha*
    mɪtʰaŋ sɾɔpkʰa
    yak   slurped (it all)
    'The yak slurped it all'.

18) *mithang bra thangkha ?*
    mɪtʰaŋ bɾa   tʰaŋkʰa
    yak   where gone
    'Where has the yak gone?'

19) *Rajani nodain   jaindahi   grum   baishenghikha.*
    ɾaʤanɪ nɔdaɪn   ʤaɪndahɪ   gɾʊm   baɪʃeŋhɪkʰa
    King's new house   after shifting   groom sound   crossed over (inside)
    'It bumped into the new house of the king'.

       The game covers relevant cultural items from Dimasa as in cultural items such as bamboo, fence, moon, hen, vulture, mat, fire, water, yak, and finally the king. This quiz game as Longmailai (2023: 47-50) describes, is an age-old tradition as the animal *mithang* /mɪtʰaŋ/ 'yak' is mentioned in the narrative, whereas the present habitat of Dimasa has only *mishap* /mɪʃep/ 'buffaloes'.

2.1.3.2 yaoshijang mlaoyaba (finger game)[9]
It starts with "yeng yeng gulala" /jeŋ jeŋ gʊlala/ played by using all ten fingers on both hands and repeating the same story in this game. *yaoshi* /jaʊʃɪ/ refers to 'fingers' and *mlao* /mlaʊ/ 'game'. *yaoshijang mlaoyaba* jaʊʃɪʤaŋ mlaʊjaba/ literally translates to 'the game that is played with fingers'.

  1) *yeng yeng gulala,*
    jeŋ jeŋ gʊlala
    tingling sensation
    'The tingling sensation yeng yeng there you go!'
  2) *banju   bathai gelaoba.*
    banʤʊ   bətʰaɪ gelaʊba
    Krishnachura   tree   so big
    'The royal Poinciana (Krishnachura) tree is so big and tall!'

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[9] Accessed from https://bododimasaarchive.org/node/1316 on March 28, 2024.

3) *Arikhidijang Narashing shingshingba.*
   aɾɪkʰɪdɪdʒaŋ   naɾaʃɪŋ   ʃɪŋʃɪŋba
   Arikhi with   Narasingha   rustling sound
   'Arikhidi (mythical mother nature) and the curry leaf (narasingha) tree Murraya Koneigii are rustling and whispering softly in nature'.

4) *bailai   bathai laikhonthaisha.*
   baɪlaɪ   bətʰaɪ   laɪkʰɔntʰaɪʃa
   Dancing as if fruit/veg baby pumpkins
   'dancing like leaves of the baby pumpkins!'

5) *yaoshariha   gdingba.*
   jaʊʃaɾɪha   gdɪŋba
   hands on   rolling
   'rolling on the hands'

6) *Ani ega dainsho!*
   anɪ   ega   daɪnʃɔ
   my   leg   cut off
   'Please numb my leg and let it go!'

The game is a fun activity with children's imaginative concepts from nature and the tingling sensation in the hands (Longmailai 2023: 46-47).

2.1.4 Myths and Legend

Dilaobra-Sangibra /dɪlaʊbɾa-ʃaŋgɪbɾa/ is one of the oldest of Dimasa primordial verses refers to myth of the river confluence *Dilaobra-Sangibra* in which it is narrated how their ancestors met at the confluence of river named *Dilao-Sangi* to formulate all the governing principles of Dimasa socio-religious experience. *Dilaobra* is an endonym of the river 'Lohit/Brahmaputra' and *Sangibra* that of 'Tsang-po'.[10]

2.1.5 Songs

2.1.5.1 Dol Purnima Kirtan

Dol Purnima Kirtan /dɔl pʊrnɪma kɪrtɔn/ is a series of religious songs based on *Dol Purnima* performed by the villagers on Holi festival to collect alms from house to house. The song is devoted to Hindu deities *Krishna* and *Radha*. The Hawar speaking Dimasa community from Cachar, Assam traditionally performs this ritual, which is a dying tradition today.[11]

2.1.5.2 Folk song on Dishru[12]

This is a sentimental Dimasa ballad on princess *Dishru* /dɪʃɾʊ/ who was the daughter of King *Horiram Haflongbar* /hɔrɪram hapʰlɔŋbaɾ/ and Queen *Dumaidi* /dʊmaɪdɪ/. *Dishru* was kept hidden from her father in his kingdom, as the priest instructed to kill the baby if it was a female who'd bring downfall to the kingdom. One day, the king saw his daughter and unknowingly fell in love with her. The fellow kinsmen shamed her and she had to leave the kingdom out of shame and lament. This sentimental Dimasa ballad laments the pain of *Dishru's* mother, as her daughter had to leave the kingdom permanently.

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[10] Accessed from https://bododimasaarchive.org/digital-heritage/dilaobraha-sangibraha on March 30, 2024.
[11] Accessed from https://bododimasaarchive.org/digital-heritage/dul-purnima-kirtan-religious-song on March 28, 2024.
[12] Accessed from https://bododimasaarchive.org/digital-heritage/folk-song-dishru-dishru-ni-rajabthai on March 27, 2024.

2.1.6 Ritual

2.1.6.1 daosa rataiba[13]

daosa rataiba /daʊʃa ɾatʰaɪba/ is the ritual of sacrificing a pair of birds for purification after childbirth. *daosa* means 'small bird pair' and *rataiba* 'sacrifice'. The old lady narrates and demonstrates in the recording, how the house and village where a child is newly born in the Dimasa community, performs this traditional childbirth ritual.

2.1.6.12 kharoma jukhuba[14]

kharoma /kʰaɾɔorma/ or *khaoroma* /kʰaʊɾɔma/ means 'frog' and *jukhuba* /ʤʊkʰʊba/ means 'marriage'. The ritual is the wedding ceremony of a frog which is often performed by the people of *Joypur* Village to call out the rain from gods. The wedding ceremony of frogs is similar to the wedding ceremony of Dimasa people. Frog is culturally associated as the bringer of rain from heaven, thus the reason for the notion of its marriage to bind heaven and land through rain.

2.1.7 Proverbs

Proverbs in general are words of wisdom passed from generations and carry cultural concepts. Two proverbs are discussed here from the archive:[15]

1) *nikhudada   khudi   thukadeh   jar   na   glaireh*
   nɪkʰʊdada   kʰʊdɪ   tʰʊkʰade   ʤaɾ   na   glaɪɾe
   push if   spit   thrown   self   to   fall
    'If you spit up in the air it will fall down on you'.

The figurative meaning of (1) is, if one spits up, it falls down on the person. Its literal translation is 'What goes around comes around'. That is, you will get rewarded by your actions, good or bad, in the future. The keyword here is *khudi* /kʰʊdɪ/ 'spit (n)' to denote the kind of action that will receive the reward.

2) *shain   ha   thathikadeh   hor   ha   gibrimba   maire*
   ʃaɪn   ha   tʰatʰɪkʰade   hɔɾ   ha   gɪbɾɪmba   maɪɾe
   day   in   store if   night at   helpful   get
   'If you keep things carefully during the day, then it will be helpful for you at night'.

In the second example, its figurative meaning is, if you store in the day, it will be available in the night. Its nearest literal translation can be framed as, 'a stitch in time saves nine'. The keyword here is *thathi* /tʰatʰɪ/ 'store (v)'; that is, saving is a basic requirement in life. Saving in better times can save one in difficult times.

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[13] Accessed from https://bododimasaarchive.org/digital-heritage/daosarataiba-ritual-sacrificing-pair-birds-purification-after-childbirth-shantipur on March 27, 2024.
[14] Accessed from https://bododimasaarchive.org/digital-heritage/khaoroma-jukuba-frog-wedding on March 27, 2024.
[15] Accessed from https://bododimasaarchive.org/digital-heritage/grao-sol on March 25, 2024.

2.1.8 Riddles

Riddles are question-answer puzzles where the answer is hinted at, in the question. These keywords in these riddles serve as cultural metaphors in Dimasa. Two such riddles from the Dimasa archive are illustrated here in (3) and (4):

3) *hadam   guphu, maimu   gishim* :*laishi rebba*
   hadam   gʊpʰʊ   maɪmʊ   gɪʃɪm   laɪʃɪ   ɾebba
   field   white   rice seed   black   book   writing
   'Empty field is white, rice seed is black: writing a book'.[16]

The comparison in (3) of the empty field *hadam guphu* and black rice seed *maimu* with writing a book as in *laishi rebba* has been made as the book is conceptualised as a flat, empty surface without inks like an empty field, and inks that are used to write on a book like black rice seeds. The fact that the primary occupation of Dimasa is cultivation, such a riddle is therefore, culturally associated with Dimasa traditional knowledge.

4) *dama   guphu   birkhlaikha de birkhuphinya* :   *khudi thuba*
   dama   gʊpʰʊ   bɪrkʰlaɪkʰa de   bɪrkʰʊpʰɪnja   kʰʊdɪ   tʰʊba
   butterfly   white   fly if   fly can't again   spit   throwing
   'If a white butterfly jumps, it cannot jump back: spitting'.[17]

In (4), the metaphor is *dama* 'white butterfly' and the target word is *khudi* 'spit (n)'. *dama guphu* are white moths or butterflies which cannot reverse their transformation once they start flying. Similarly, *khudi* 'spit' once is out of the mouth cannot be reverted in action. The comparison here is on the transformation from one medium to another; that is, emerging from a body to air.

2.2 Oral Narratives and Community Based Research (CBR)

The content of the oral narratives discussed in the section 2.1 can be classified under two types of community-based research (CBR) models a) narrative inquiry and b) storytelling. Short stories, children's games, songs, proverbs and riddles fall under 'storytelling', while oral history, myths and legend, rituals and the like are 'narrative inquiry' although the boundary of the two models is marginal. Narrative Inquiry, developed by Jean Clandinin and Michael Connelly (2004) is a "qualitative research method that focuses on the study of human experiences through the process of storytelling. That is, researchers gather and examine the stories that people share to comprehend the significance of these narratives within certain cultural contexts". Interview method is also used in this kind of data collection in which the researchers engage with the participants and collect information. In case of Dimasa narratives, interviews were conducted one-in-one and also in groups, and face-to-face. Traditional stories and oral histories from Dimasa were collected in this process. These narratives help in understanding the "heroes, supernatural beings and symbolic elements" along with the cultural beliefs and values associated with it. Also, 'oral history' is a useful tool during CBR for the documentation of lesser-known narratives not included in historical records.

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[16] Accessed from https://bododimasaarchive.org/digital-heritage/dimasa-riddle-hadam-guphu-maimu-gishim on March 25, 2024.
[17] Accessed from https://bododimasaarchive.org/digital-heritage/dimasa-riddle-dama-guphu-birkhlaika-de-birkhuphinya on March 25, 2024.

Storytelling is a culturally appropriate research methodology which plays an important role in transmitting cultural knowledge, traditions and values from generation to generation. Different forms of narratives like folk stories, monologues and enactments are present in it. Idioms, proverbs, riddles, taboo stories, and other spoken expressions are all included in monologues.

Enactment as a part of storytelling is the act of performing rituals, songs, dances, stories, children's games or other cultural traditions. It promotes cultural identity of a community while protecting and transmitting their cultural heritage. In case of Dimasa oral narratives discussed in the paper, the rituals *Daosa rataiba* 'bird sacrifice for childbirth' and *Khaoroma jukhuba* 'frog marriage', songs such as *Dol Purnima Kirtan* 'Holi festival religious song', children's games *shatraitrai gonthaitrai* 'question-answer game' and *yaoshijang mlaoyaba* 'finger game', were all enactments during the data collection, in which the community participated in performing respective activities to demonstrate the cultural traditions in Dimasa.

Simonsen and Robertson (2013) in Longmailai, Barman, Bihung and Wasson (in print), discusses how the collaborative practices between the 'researcher' and the 'researched', i.e. the community, play an important role in collaborative researchers. The design of the Dimasa archive is participatory and involves community collaboration with the archiving team experts for the digital preservation of the traditional knowledge systems and age-old traditions.

There have been linguistic digital archives introduced in India such as Sikkim-Darjeeling Himalayan Endangered Languages Archive (SiDHELA) (Narayanan 2020; Narayanan and Takhellambam 2021) and abroad as in, Computational Resource for South Asian Languages (CORSAL), University of North Texas, and Endangered Languages Archive (ELAR), Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities. However, most of these archives are digital databases and have restricted access to the community. The Bodo and Dimasa Heritage Digital Archive, on the other hand, in which these oral narratives have been digitally preserved, is not only open access, it is a community-based archive, as it involves community participation as curators and administrators to run and monitor the portals. The Dimasa team members with the Bodos have been doing collaborative research with the respective communities and sharing traditional knowledge directly in the portal since 2021.

That is, the portal Bodo and Dimasa Heritage Digital Archive necessitates the importance of preserving and transmitting traditional knowledge and passing it on to the next generations as a means of safeguarding the cultural heritage of the Dimasa people.

2.3 Archiving for Dimasa Community Based Language Resource

The oral narratives become an important tool to facilitate mother tongue learning through an indigenous curriculum design covering all aspects of traditional knowledge preserved through storytelling and/or enactments. Archiving them as a collection of cultural narratives serves the purpose, thereafter, towards promoting the cultural and linguistic knowledge in digital technology, besides creating a corpus of materials for developing textbooks consisting of traditional knowledge-based curriculum. The National Education Policy (2020) further depicts in the section 22.19 to develop digital platforms and create a scope to add "videos, dictionaries, recordings, and more, of people (especially elders) speaking the language, telling stories, reciting poetry, and performing plays, folk songs and dances". This not only encourages the community members to participate in the designing of the archive, but also in creating a digital repository or source of traditional knowledge for producing language materials.

Moreover, in the section 22 (III, pp.53-56) in NEP, it clearly emphasizes on the 'promotion of Indian languages, arts, and culture', as a part of promotion and revitalization efforts among the individual and the community of India as a whole. Longmailai, Barman, Brahma and Wasson (in print) also pointed that, with NEP's effort to develop high-quality textbooks in Indian languages with culture-based curriculum, more publication is required mostly for language development. In this case, creating a digital corpus with oral narratives in a web platform such as Bodo and Dimasa Heritage Digital Archive is an effective means of keeping the heritage information well preserved for publication purposes and wider access.

Presently, the Dimasa archiving section has 256 items documented in the 'Cultural Heritage' category, among which oral narratives are 54 in number till date (50 are collected from Cachar district and 4 from Dima Hasao district in Assam), besides 256 dictionary words (Dimasa-English) and 3 blogs. The oral narratives are documented through audio and video recordings; audio files are directly uploaded into the Mukurtu platform while video recordings are watermarked and uploaded through Vimeo platform. The images are equally watermarked and protected from content misuse by other sources. The narratives are documented through text into 3 parts: 'summary' states, what x is about; 'description' provides a brief background of the metadata of the item, and 'cultural narrative' provides ethno-cultural information and text translation of the recorded data. The metadata and other necessary details of the narrative collected are available for the viewer for easy reference.

This archive has thus created multiple videos and audio files besides watermarked photos and the text information that can be useful for developing web material for learning Dimasa culture and language as well as exporting them into printed form.

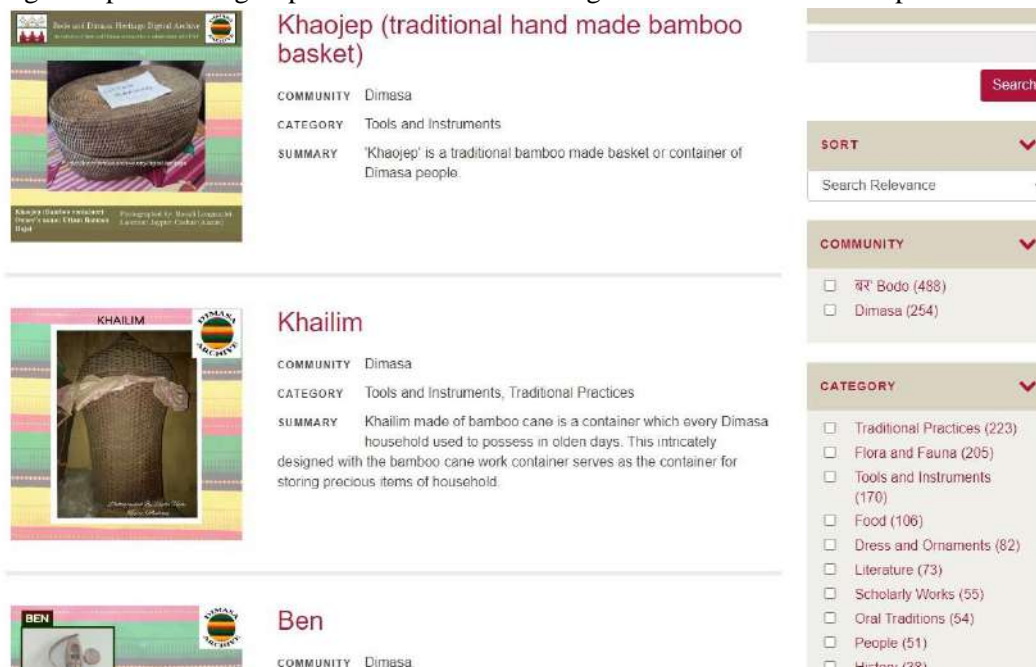Figure 2 provides a glimpse of the Cultural Heritage window of the Dimasa platform:

Figure 2: Screenshot of a sample from Dimasa Cultural Heritage Items[18]

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[18] Accessed from https://bododimasaarchive.org/digital-heritage on March 30, 2024.

Longmailai (2023:p.52) has mentioned how Indian folk tales were preserved and developed into printed story books such as *Amar Chitra Katha, Panchatantra, Jataka Tales,* and how media popularised contemporary drama such as *Squid game* and novel *Game of Thrones (GOT).* Similar attempts can be recreated from the Dimasa narratives such as *Ashampha,* princess *Dishru,* folk epic on *Dilaobra-Sangibra* and other folklore in the form of storybooks, epic series, video documentaries to name a few. This kind of community engagement results in motivating the Dimasa learners in improving language skills both virtually and written literature, besides contributing towards a greater understanding of Dimasa knowledge and local culture.

3. Conclusion

To sum up, digital archiving is essential for preserving and promoting speech communities and their cultural history, including that of the Bodo and Dimasa communities. The project, namely, Bodo and Dimasa Heritage Digital Archive works using Mukurtu platform as an open access and community based archive; its main goal is to support and preserve the linguistic and cultural heritages of the indigenous peoples of northeast India.

Cultural heritages such as oral traditions in the form of folk stories, oral history, songs and ritual, idioms and riddles, myth and legend, and children's games are pivotal in preserving the Dimasa linguistic and cultural knowledge. Digital archiving guarantees that these rich cultural traditions will be preserved for future generations. This process of digital archiving of oral narratives can lead to material production for introducing culture and knowledge based indigenous curriculum in language education. Materials like language primers and illustrative story books, including traditional encyclopedic books can eventually be prepared which further contributes to the revitalization and preservation of the language.

In conclusion, a successful digital archiving project aims to preserve cultural history that incorporates community engagement and the maintenance of an effective connection between linguists and members of the Dimasa community. It is therefore a continuously hand-to-hand collaborative research practice with the community participants, without which documenting oral narratives and creating digital resources remains an upheaval task as such.

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Auxiliary Markers in Garhwa Bhojpuri Through Contact Situations With Magahi And Bhojpuri

Avid Ali

Abstract

This paper examines the use of auxiliary markers within the linguistic frameworks of Bhojpuri and Magahi languages, with a specific focus on Garhwa Bhojpuri. The primary objective of this study is to demonstrate the pivotal role of auxiliary verbs in conveying grammatical accuracy and meaning. The Garhwa variant of Bhojpuri is posited to exhibit distinct linguistic features when compared to other regional varieties or languages, and is predominantly spoken in the urban and semi-urban areas of the Garhwa district in Jharkhand. The district is surrounded by Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and Chhattisgarh, where different languages and dialects are spoken.

This paper tries to provide a comprehensive overview of auxiliary marker systems in the languages Magahi, Bhojpuri, and Garhwa Bhojpuri, highlighting both similarities and differences. We can see the examples of auxiliary markers in all three languages with variations in honorificity and person. First person (H: *hi, hĩ, hiaĩ, hĩwə*), (NH: *hia, hiɛ, hiau, hiyo*), Second person (H: *baɽə*), (NH: *bəɽe, baɽe*), Third person (H: *həthun, həthin*), (NH: *həi, həu*) while in **Magahi**- First person (H: *hi, hĩ, hiaĩ, hĩwə*), (NH: *hia, hiɛ, hiau, hiyo*), Second person (H: *hə, həhu, həthin, həthan*), (NH: *he, həhi*), Third person (H: *həin, həth, həthun, həthin, həkhin*), (NH: *həi, həu*) and in **Standard Bhojpuri**- First person (H: *baɽĩ, baɽi, bani*), (NH: *həĩ, həvĩ*), Second person (H: *batə, baɽə, həvə*), (NH: *bate, baɽe, həv*), Third person (H: *baɽɛ̃, batɛ̃, həvɛ*), (NH: *baɽɛ, bate, ba, baɛ, hə, batе*) are used to indicate the present tense of the verbs.

This study explores how the Garhwa variant of Bhojpuri has been influenced by Magahi and Bhojpuri while still maintaining its unique characteristics and relationship with language contact. These findings contribute significantly to our understanding of language dynamics in multilingual environments.

Keywords: Auxiliary markers, verbs, aspects, language contact, Garhwa Bhojpuri language, Magahi, Standard Bhojpuri.

1. Introduction

Bhojpuri is a prominent language in South Asia, spoken by millions of people across different areas of Indian states of Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, in addition to these areas Bhojpuri is also spoken in Mauritius (Ranjan, 1997), Fiji (Moag, 1978), Surinam (Damsteegt, 1988), Trinidad (Mohan, 1978), Guyana (Gambhir, 1981), and South Africa (Mesthrie, 1992), as cited in Verma (2003). While Magahi, another significant language, is widely spoken in certain parts of Bihar including Patna, Nalanda, Munger, Nawada, Bhagalpur, Gaya, and the eastern part of the Palamu district. Moreover, mixed varieties of Magahi are spoken in neighbouring areas of Bengal, such as Purulia and Malda, as well as in Orissa, including Mayurbhanj and Bamra, as mentioned by Verma (2003). The Bhojpuri and Magahi languages are considered highly significant due to their extensive historical and profound cultural importance. When we study Bhojpuri and Magahi grammar, it is deemed necessary to comprehend the function and use of auxiliary markers. This paper tries to provide a comprehensive overview of auxiliary marker systems in the Bhojpuri, Magahi, and Garhwa Bhojpuri, highlighting both similarities and differences through examples.

Auxiliary verbs, also known as helping verbs, are essential for the construction of sentences in the Bhojpuri and Magahi languages. Singh (1973) states that auxiliaries markers represent temporal, modal, or aspectual characteristics of the main verb, which is also a regular inflected form. Auxiliary verbs in

both languages give complex meanings and show the relationships between various components of a sentence in terms of time and manner.

We have a significant question: why do we call Garhwa Bhojpuri a variety of Bhojpuri? Furthermore, what are the characteristics and structure of the language used as a contact language in the Garhwa district?

The explanation lies in the fact that Garhwa called a Bhojpuri area because scholars such as Grierson (1983a & 1984), as well as subsequent researchers like Chatterji (1926), Yadav (2016), Tariq Khan, and Manish Kumar Singh (2019), have categorized it as a Bhojpuri area in their studies. Here, speakers of the Garhwa variety, including myself (a scholar), claim that the Bhojpuri spoken in the Garhwa region exhibits distinct characteristics when compared to other variants such as Magahi and Standard Bhojpuri. The Garhwa variety is spoken widely in both urban and semi-urban areas of the Garhwa district.

2. Demographic Profile of Garhwa Bhojpuri

Jharkhand officially became the 28th state of India on November 15, 2000, after separating from Bihar. Garhwa, which is one of the 24 districts in Jharkhand, was established as an independent district on April 1, 1991, after being separated from Palamu district. The total area of the Garhwa district is approximately 4,044 km^2 (1,561 sq mi). It shares borders with Bihar in the north, Uttar Pradesh in the north-west, Chhattisgarh in the south-west, and Latehar and Palamu in the east. (See Fig. 2). As per the Census of India (2011), Garhwa District has a population of 1,322,387, of which 683,984 were male and 638,403 were female, respectively. The number of inhabitants in Garhwa District constitutes 4.01 percent of the aggregate population of Jharkhand.

According to the 2011 Population Census of India, the population density of the Garhwa locale is 327 individuals per sq. km. The average literacy rate of Garhwa in 2011 was 62.18 percent; the male and female education rates were 74.00 percent and 49.43 percent, respectively. Sex ratio of the district is 935 out of 1000.

Garhwa district is surrounded by a variety of dialects. We can see in Figure 3 how Garhwa district is surrounded by a variety of dialects. Bhojpuri is the dominant language in the northern region of the Garhwa district boundary, whereas Magahi is predominant in the east. Sargujia Hindi is dominant in the southern regions, but Bhojpuri's impact continues to expand again in the western region of the district. The coexistence of many dialects in close proximity has led to a distinctive ecosystem of contact and convergence in the Garhwa region. The diverse language and cultural heritage of Garhwa is mostly a result of social and cultural interactions among the residents, including marriages, involvement in ceremonial rites, and participation in business activities.

Figure 1

Map highlighting Garhwa in Jharkhand

(Source: http://www.mapsofindia.com)
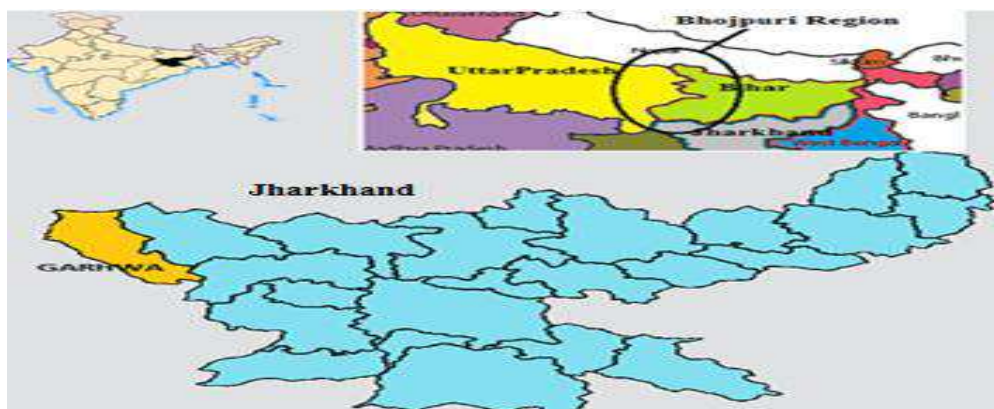
Figure 2
Geographical boundaries of Garhwa District
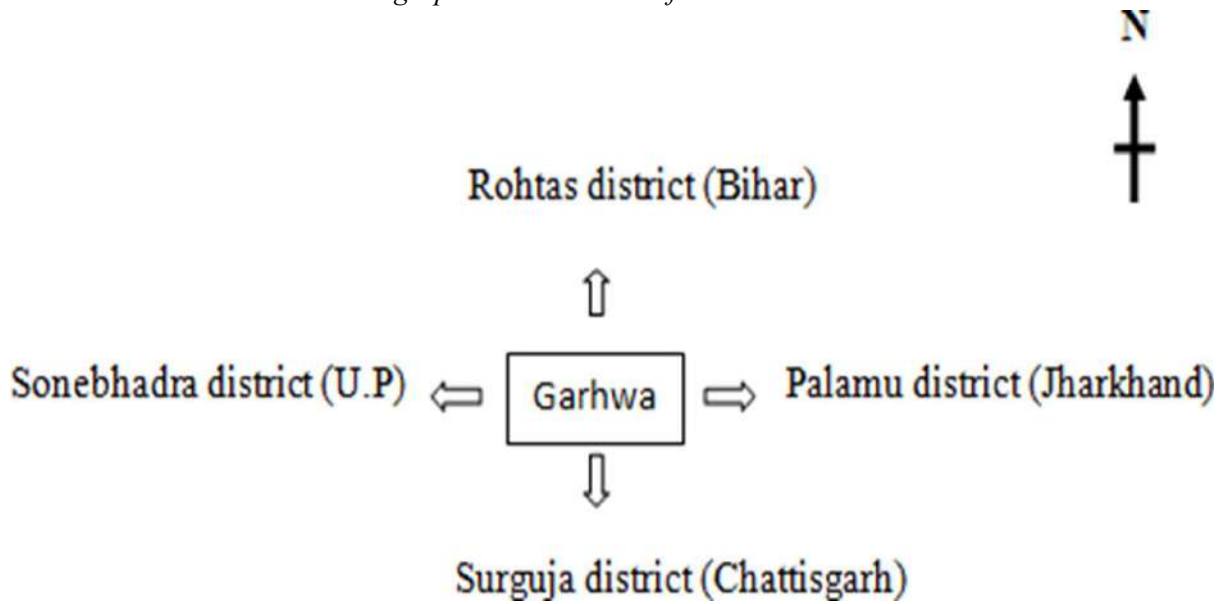
Figure 3
Diverse Linguistic Landscape: Border Areas of Garhwa District

(Source: http://www.mapsofindia.com/maps/jharkhand/tehsil/garhwa.html)
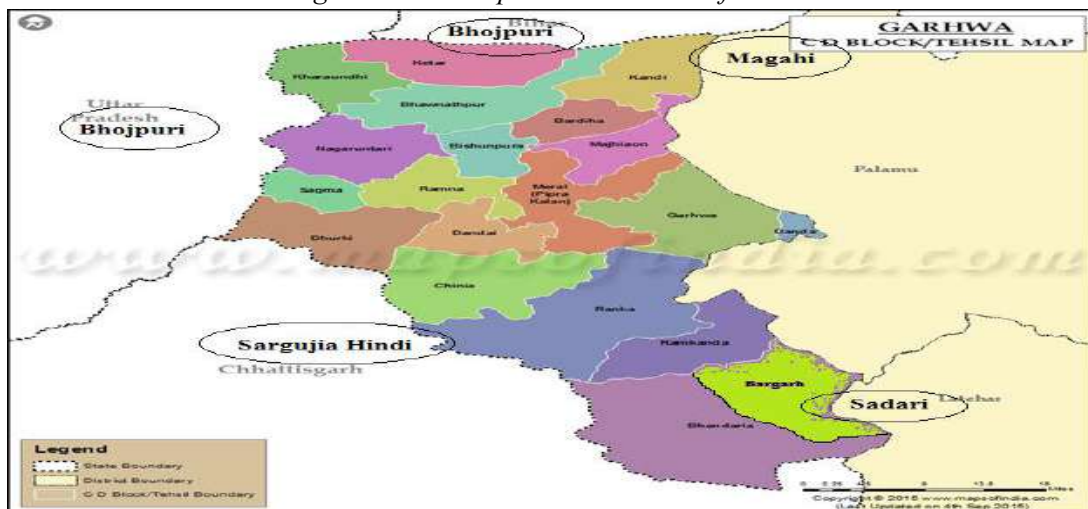
In this paper, we will try to look at the unique characteristics of the Garhwa Bhojpuri that is spoken in urban and semi-urban areas of the Garhwa district, which distinguishes it from other variations of Bhojpuri and Magahi.

In Garhwa Bhojpuri, noticeable influences from both Magahi and Standard Bhojpuri are apparent. However, it is clear that certain grammatical aspects of both Bhojpuri and Magahi have been incorporated into Garhwa Bhojpuri owing to the contact situation and historical background during the periods of Rakshel history in Garhwa-Palamu. Garhwa Bhojpuri maintains its own unique identity and cannot be simply classified as exclusively belonging to either of these influences. Garhwa Bhojpuri stands out as a unique dialect that significantly differs from both Magahi and Standard Bhojpuri. It possesses its own distinct identity, setting it apart from other variations of the language.

2.1 Short History of Garhwa

Based on the history of Garhwa, it has progressed through different stages involving various racial groups. It is believed that indigenous tribes inhabited the Garhwa-Palamu region in ancient times. The Kherwars, Oraons, and Cheros, three native groups, were the primary rulers of this area. According to Ali (2018), we can categorize these periods into five stages, as outlined below:

2.1.A. Periods of Kol-Kirat: (Before 2nd BC).

Considering the historical context, it is prudent to examine Garhwa's history in relation to the historical background of Chotanagpur, as emphasized by Chanchal (1996, p. 7). During the Rigvedic era, Chotanagpur was referred to as 'Kikaṭ Pradesh'. Non-Aryan tribes such as Kol, Kirat, Korwa, and Bijiriya primarily sustained themselves through animal husbandry rather than agriculture. Hunting was also a significant means of livelihood. According to Chanchal (1996), British scholars of humanities and history often classified the Kol tribe as 'Munda'.

2.1.B. Periods of Marh and Oraon: (Before 2nd BC to 13th century).

Haldar (1972), in his historical work on Palamu, suggests that primitive tribes such as Kol-Kirat and Kherwarian inhabited the Palamu area for an extended period. However, with the arrival of Marh and Oraon tribes of Dravidian origin, they relocated to dense forests. According to Vidyarthi (1985), cited by Chanchal (1996, p. 8), Marh and Oraon share the same Dravidian origin, with their language, Kurux, also being Dravidian. These communities, including Marh and Oraon, migrated from Karnataka to settle along the banks of the Narmada River. Oraon settled in Rohtas, while Marh migrated towards Garhwa-Palamu. To establish their central authority and ensure security, the Marh tribe constructed the Palamugarh fort atop a formidable hill near the Oranga River, close to Munkeri. Conflicts with the Oraon tribe may have forced the Kherwars to leave Rohtas, but historians are unable to pinpoint the exact reasons for the Marh people's displacement from the Garhwa-Palamu region. Grierson (1903–28), as referenced in Chanchal (1996, p. 10), identifies 11 dialects within the Mundari and Kherwari language groups of the Austro-Asiatic family, including Santhali, Mundari, Ho, Khariya-birhori, Bhumij, Korwa, Kurku, Juwang, Asuri, Shabar, and Garhwa. These languages exhibit significant mutual intelligibility, allowing speakers of one dialect to understand others within the group. However, it is worth noting that the classification of Garhwa as an Austro-Asiatic language is subject to debate due to its lack of typical linguistic features associated with languages in this family.

2.1.C. Periods of Rakshel: (14th century to early 17th century).

The Marh tribe displaced the Rakshel from the Garhwa-Palamu regions, according to Chanchal (1996, p. 17). Additionally, it is believed that the Rakshel facilitated the migration of various communities, such as Bhuiyan, Beldar, Dusadh, Lohar, etc., from regions like Bhojpur and Rohtas in Bihar, as well as Baniyan, Teli, Brahman, etc., from areas along the Ganga River, to settle in the Garhwa-Palamu area. Hiralal (1939) refers to accounts in Jahangirnama and Alamgirnama, which indicate that in 1613, King Bhagwant Rai of the Chero dynasty defeated King Mansingh of the Rakshel tribe, establishing his kingdom in the Garhwa-Palamu region.

2.1.D. Periods of Cheros: (From 1613 to 1821).

The first king of the Chero dynasty, Raja Bhagwant Rai, started ruling over Garhwa-Palamu after defeating King Mansingh. Over the course of almost 200 years, approximately 15 kings governed the region under the Chero dynasty. The Chero rulers administered the Garhwa area from the fortified stronghold of Ranka Raj. Throughout their reign, they engaged in numerous wars with both the Mughal Empire and the East India Company. Notably, Raja Medani Rai (1662–75) emerged as the most renowned and impartial ruler within their royal lineage. In the Garhwa-Palamu region, two distinct

groups of Cheros resided: the Birbandha and Tiket, each characterized by significant disparities in their lifestyle, customs, traditions, norms, beliefs, and marriage rituals. According to historical records like Alamgirnama and the Palamu Gazetteer, Muslims began coming into the area after King Bhagwant Rai passed away.

2.1.E. Periods British Government (From 1821 to 1947).
The Chero kings of the Garhwa-Palamu region engaged in numerous guerrilla wars with both the Mughal Empire and the British forces, resulting in a considerable weakening of their power. Additionally, many historians assert that internal strife within the Chero royal lineage, driven by ambitions to ascend to the throne, further weakened their authority. Consequently, these factors contributed significantly to the eventual subjugation of the Garhwa-Palamu area by the British colonial administration.

2.2 Linguistic Profile of Garhwa Bhojpuri
Garhwa Bhojpuri is an Indo-Aryan language spoken mainly in the urban and semi-urban regions of Garhwa district in Jharkhand. Garhwa Bhojpuri, an inflecting language, is primarily suffixing in nature. Nouns in this language undergo inflection for case, number, gender, and person, while verbs can be inflected for mood, aspect, tense, and agreement. Similar to other Indo-Aryan languages, Garhwa Bhojpuri uses numeral classifiers such as *go, ʈhe,* and *ʈho.* Syntactically, this language follows the SOV (subject-object-verb) word order, although it allows for a relatively flexible word arrangement.
It is also considered a head-final language and follows a wh-in-situ structure. Notably, Garhwa Bhojpuri permits the omission of pronouns for all arguments and demonstrates agreement in terms of person, number, and gender within the verbal domain. This language also marks the honorificity of the subject within the verbal domain, setting it apart from Hindi. For example: *rauər, rauwa, rauwən.* Unlike Hindi, which utilizes a nominative-accusative case system, Garhwa Bhojpuri incorporates a differential object marking system. The nominative case can be regarded as an unmarked case in Garhwa Bhojpuri, whereas other cases are indicated through postpositions. Unlike Hindi, Garhwa Bhojpuri lacks oblique and ergative cases.

3. Objectives
3.1. To examine the syntactic variations of the auxiliary marker in Garhwa Bhojpuri within the context of contact situations with Magahi and Standard Bhojpuri with the objective of identifying structural similarities or differences that may have resulted from linguistic interaction between these languages.

3.2. To explore the morphological properties of the auxiliary marker in Garhwa Bhojpuri in the context of contact with Magahi and Standard Bhojpuri to identify morphological borrowings that may have been influenced by the presence of Magahi and Standard Bhojpuri in the linguistic environment.

4. Methodology
This research is qualitative in nature, within the framework of descriptive linguistics. Primary data were self-generated by the researcher, who is a native speaker of Garhwa, a variety of Bhojpuri. Additional data were randomly collected through a direct and indirect interview process from 14 respondents residing in urban and semi-urban regions for the study, covering various age groups: (A) 16-25, (B) 26-35, (C) 36-50, and (D) above 50 years. These respondents represented diverse religious backgrounds and genders, as well as different educational and socio-economic backgrounds within society. Data collection involved multiple field trips in urban and semi-urban areas of Garhwa district using qualitative methods, including Abbis' word list and sentence list. Secondary data were also collected

from various sources, such as Bhojpuri and Magahi grammars, relevant published research papers, and online sources.

5. Morpho-Syntactic Observations

Table 1

Auxiliary markers in Magahi language with honorificity

PERSON ➡ TENSE ⬇	First Person	Second Person	Third Person
Present Tense (H)	**hi, hī, hiaĩ, hĩwə** **ही, हीं, हींअइ, हींवअ़**	**hə, həhu, həthin, həthan** **हअ़, हहु, हथिन, हथन**	**həin, həth, həthun, həthin, həkhin** **हहिन, हथ, हथुन, हथिन, हकिन**
Present Tense (NH)	hia, hiɛ, hiau, hiyo हिआ, हिए, हिअउ, हिओ,	he, həhi हे, हही	həi, həu हई, हउ
Past Tense (H)	**həli, həlū, həliain** **हली, हलूँ, हलीअइन**	**həli, hələn, həlthin** **हली, हलन, हलथिन**	**hələn, həlthin, həlthu, həlthun** **हलन, हलथिन, हलथू, हलथुन**
Past Tense (NH)	həliai, həliəu, həlio हलिअइ, हलिअउ, हलियो	həla, həle, həlhin, həlhun, hələ̃, हला, हले, हलहिन, हलहुन, हलें	həl, hələi, hələu, hələthi, hələk हल, हलइ, हलउ, हलथी, हलक
Future Tense (H)	**hoə, होव**	**hoəb, hoəm, hothi, hokhi** **होअब, होअम, होथी, होखी**	**hothkən** **होथकन**
Future Tense (NH)	hobəi, hobəu होबइ, होबउ	hobə̃, hobə̃, hoba, hove, hobəhĩ, होबँ, होबें, होबा, होवे, होबहीं	hoi, hot, hotəi, hotəu होई, होत, होतई, होतउ

Table 2

Auxiliary markers in Standard Bhojpuri language with honorificity

PERSON ➡ TENSE ⬇	First Person	Second Person	Third Person
Present Tense (H)	**baʈī, baɽi, ni, bani** **बाटीं, बाड़ी, नी, बानी**	**baʈə, baɽə, həvə** **बाटअ़, बड़अ़, हवअ़**	**baɽɛ̃, baʈɛ̃, həvɛ** **बाड़ें, बाटें हवे**
Present Tense (NH)	ila, həĩ, həvĩ ईला, हईं, हवीं	baʈe, baɽe, həv बाटे, बाड़े, हव	baɽɛ, baʈe, ba, baɛ, hə, baʈe बाड़े, बाटे, बा, बाय, ह, बाटै
Past Tense (H)	**rəhlī रहलीं**	**rəhlə रहलअ़**	**rəhlɛ̃ रहलें**
Past Tense (NH)	rəhlĩ रहलीं	rəhle रहले	rəhəl रहल

| Future Tense (H) | hoibi होइबि | **hoib, hoibə** **होइब, होइबअ़** | **hoihɛ̃, hoibi** **होइहैं, होइबि** |
| Future Tense (NH) | hoibi होइबि | hoibe होइबे | hoi होई |

Table 3

Auxiliary markers in Garhwa Bhojpuri language with honorificity

PERSON ⟶ TENSE ⬇	First Person	Second Person	Third Person
Present Tense (H)	**hi, hī, hiaɪ, hīwə** **ही, हीं, हींअइ, हींवअ़**	**baɽə** **बड़अ़**	**həthun, həthin** **हथुन, हथिन**
Present Tense (NH)	hia, hiɛ, hiau, hiyo हिआ, हिए, हिअऊ, हिओ,	bəɽe, baɽe, बडे, बाड़े	həi, हई
Past Tense (H)	**rəhlī, rəhī,** **रहलीं, रहीं**	**rəhlə** **रहलअ़**	**rəhlɛ̃** **रहलें**
Past Tense (NH)	rəhi रही	rəhle, rəhe रहले, रहे	rəhəi रहई
Future Tense (H)	**əb, əi,əib, hoəib** **अब, अई, इब, होइब**	**hoib, hoibə** **होइब, होइबअ़**	**hotəthin,** **होतअ़थिन**
Future Tense (NH)	hobəi होबई	hoibe होइबे	hoi, hotəi होई, होतई

The table above, labelled 1-3, displays auxiliary markers used alongside others in Magahi, Standard Bhojpuri, and Garhwa Bhojpuri. These auxiliary markers are shown in English and Hindi, with special emphasis on honorificity highlighted in bold letters. Different scholars have given various examples that show us how to use these auxiliary markers that help in the construction of sentences.

Singh (1973) categorizes Bhojpuri auxiliary verbs into two major groups: temporal and non-temporal, with each group further divided into multiple types based on their functions. The temporal auxiliaries, represented by stems such as *ho*, *ba*, and *rəh*, denote tense and also convey obligation, contingency, or hypothetical meanings. On the other hand, the non-temporal auxiliaries, regular verbs used as main verbs, are subdivided into obligatory, modal, durative, frequentative, passive, and other types based on the form of the main verb they follow and the meaning they express. Singh (1973, p. 139) states that Temporal denotes three tenses in Bhojpuri:

(a) Non-past denotes *hai, bāī* etc.
(b) Past denotes *rahe, rahal* etc.
(c) Future-Presumptive denotes *hob, hoi* etc.

(a.) Non-past: *hai, bāī* etc. Although they are referring to as present tense auxiliaries, they serve the purpose of conveying any tense other than the past tense.
For examples;

Present Tense   [Singh, 1973, p.139]
1. *həm parhət həi.* 'I am reading.'
2. *u bəjare jāt bā.* 'He is going to market.'

Past Tense   [Singh, 1973, p.139]
3. *həm pəṛhət rəhe.* 'I was reading.'
4. *ū bəjāre jāt rəhəl.* 'He was going to market.'

Future Tense   [Singh, 1973, p.139]
5. *ū kāli āvət bā.* 'He is coming tomorrow.'
6. *tū bənārəs kəhiya jāt həyə.* 'On which day are you going to Varanasi.'

Future-Presumptive Tense   [Singh, 1973, p.139]
'hob' denotes future or presumptive
7. *ū āvət hoi.* 'He will be coming.'
8. *hamaniy kā pəta ki tū etni rati tək jāgət hobə.*
   'How could I know that you would be awake so late in the night?'

9.   *laika laiki   se   chota   bati*   [Mesthrie, 1985, p. 52]
     boy girl   ABL   short   be. 3SG.PRES
     'The boy is shorter than the girl.'

According to Tiwari (1960, p. xxxvii), auxiliary verbs are verbs that act as the main verb in a sentence. For example, the word "*bāṛe*" means "he is." in all districts north of the Ganga River, this word might be pronounced as "*baṭe*" instead of "*baṛe*." This can lead to different forms of the verb, such as "*baṭĩ*" for first person masculine and "*baṭa, baṭe, aṭe*" for second person masculine and *baṭai, aṭai, bāy, āy* for third person masculine. The standard form "*bā*" is not commonly used in the Northern Standard Bhojpuri dialects.

According to Khan and Singh (2019, p.67), in the Bhojpuri language, people have various ways to say *"he"* (be). In Varanasi, when they say *"he"* they sometimes elongate the pronunciation, so it sounds like *"hə"* or *"həv,"* and sometimes it can even sound like *"həuva:"*. However, people from Buxar and Ara-Bhojpur districts say *"he"* (is) differently. They use words like *"ba:ya:, ba:ta:, ba:ṛe"*, and *"ba:te"*. And when talking about females, these words change slightly to *"ba:yu:, ba:tu:, ba:ṛu"*, and *"ba:tu:"*. These differences show how the Bhojpuri language varies depending on where you are from. It highlights that even small things like how we say *"he"* can change based on the region.

Now we can see some examples from the research work of Rakesh and Kumar (2013) in Magahi. We can see in the first example that when the person doing the action is someone or something else, the auxiliary verb "*hii*" must match that person. In the second example, when the person is doing the action on the second person, the auxiliary verb "*he*" must match the second person. And in the third example, when the person doing the action is someone or something else, the auxiliary verb "*haii*" still must match the third person, and examples 4-7 show the honorificity or non-honorificity of the addressee in Magahi. In examples 3 and 4, *"tu"* (you) is used as a non-honorific subject, while the auxiliary marker *"he"* is non-honorific, and *"ha"* is used as an honorific marker. Conversely, in sentences 6 to 11, the Magahi language employs the subject *"tu"* and auxiliary marker *"ha-thu(n)*, *hələi*, *he"* as a non-honorific, while the subject *"apne"* and *"hii/hath"* and *"hiaii/hathan/hathin"* indicate honorific markers.

1. *ham   jaa   hii*   [Rakesh and Kumar, 2013, p. 180]

    I   go   be.PRS.1

    'I go.'

2. *tuu   jaa   he*   [Rakesh and Kumar, 2013, p. 180]

    you   go   be.PRS.2

    'You go.'

3. *raam   jaa   haii*   [Rakesh and Kumar, 2013, p. 180]

    Ram   go   be.PRS.3

    'Ram goes.'

4. *tu   jaait   he*   [Rakesh and Kumar, 2013, p. 180]

    you.NH   going   be.PRS.NH

    'You are going.'

5. *tu   jaait   ha*   [Rakesh and Kumar, 2013, p. 180]

    you.NH   going   be.PRS.H

    'You are going.'

6. *apne   jaait   hii/hath*   [Rakesh and Kumar, 2013, p. 180]

    you.H   going   be.PRS.H

    'You are going.'

7. *apne   jaait   hiaii/hathan/hathin*   [Rakesh and Kumar, 2013, p. 180]

    you.H   going   be.PRS.H

    'You are going.'

8. *Baabaa   jaait   ha-thu(n)*   [Alok, 2021, p. 6]

    grandfather.H   go.PROG   be.PRS.3NH

    'Grandfather is going.'

9. *MasTar-saaheb   jaait   ha-thi(n)*   [Alok, 2021, p. 6]

    teacher.H   go.PROG   be.PRS.3H

    'The teacher is going.'

10. *ser-wa   ujəra   hələi*   [Kumar, 2018, p. 76]

    lion-DD   white   be.PST.3NH

    'The lion was white.'

11. *həmmər   ləl(ki) sətwa   kene   he*   [Kumar, 2022, p. 40]
    I.GEN   red shirt.DD   where   be.PRS.3NH
    'Where is my red shirt?'

We can now delve into some examples from the Garhwa Bhojpuri language, gathered from respondents residing in both urban and semi-urban areas of the Garhwa district. The auxiliary markers *"li, le, lə, ləthin etc."* are used in the below sentences, indicating the present tense in Garhwa Bhojpuri in Examples 1-4. In contrast, examples from Magahi exhibit the use of *"hii, he, haii, ha etc."* as auxiliary markers for the present tense, while examples from Standard Bhojpuri languages, on the other hand, explain how to use *"baṭĩ, baɽi, bani, baṭə, baṭe, baɽə, baɽe, həvə, həve etc."* for the same tense. These observations underscore the distinct auxiliary marker patterns present in Garhwa Bhojpuri, Magahi, and Standard Bhojpuri languages for the present tense.

Examples 5-7 show how we talk about things that happened in the present perfect tense in Garhwa Bhojpuri. We use auxiliary markers like *"leli, lele-hia:, cukəl-hia:"* in different ways, but they all mean the same thing with the same intended meanings. This illustrates that Garhwa Bhojpuri has many ways to express the same idea, making it flexible and interesting.

Examples 8-15 demonstrate the use of auxiliary markers such as *"hi, bəɖe, bəɖə, həi, hə-thin"* to illustrate the continuous or progressive aspect of the present tense in Garhwa Bhojpuri. In examples 16-17, *"hi/hia:"* is utilized to showcase the perfect continuous tense. Furthermore, examples 18-20 exhibit the past tense through the use of *"rəhi, rəhe, rəhəi"*. In examples 21-23, *"əib, əib-ba, hotəthin"* are employed to indicate the future tense, alongside the consideration of the addressee's honorific status in the Garhwa Bhojpuri language. These examples collectively illustrate the nuanced ways in which different tenses and aspects are expressed in Garhwa Bhojpuri, reflecting its complexity and depth of expression.

1.   *həm   roz   iskul   ja: -li*
     I   daily   school   go- 1SG.COP.PRS
     'I go to school every day.'

2.   *tu   roz   iskul   ja: -le*
     you   daily   school   go- 2SG.COP.PRS
     'You go to school every day.'

3.   *tohən   roz   iskul   ja: -le/ ja:-lə*
     you   daily   school   go- 2PL.COP.PRS
     'You go to school every day.'

4.   *ohən   roz   iskul   ja: -ləthin*
     they   daily   school   go- 3PL.H.COP.PRS
     'They go to school every day.'

5.   *həm   khana   kha   leli*
     I   food   eat   do-1SG.COP.PRF
     'I have eaten food.'

6.   *həm   khana   kha   lele-hia:*
     I   food   eat   do-1SG.COP.PRF
     'I have eaten food.'

7. *həm   khana   kha   **cukəl-hia:***
    I   food   eat   do-1SG.COP.PRF
    'I have eaten food.'

8. *həm   əbhi   kam   kər-ət   **hi***
    I   now   work   do- PROG   1SG.COP.PRS
    'I am working right now.'

9. *həmən   əbhi   kam   kər-ət   **hi***
    we   now   work   do- PROG   1PL.COP.PRS
    'We are working right now.'

10. *tu   əbhi   kam   kər-ət   **bəɖe***
    you   now   work   do- PROG   2SG.COP.PRS
    'You are working right now.'
                        or

11. *rauwa   əbhi   kam   kər-ət   **bəɖə***
    you   now   work   do- PROG   2SG.COP.PRS.H
    'You are working right now.'

12. *tohən   əbhi   kam   kər-ət   **bəɖe/ bəɖə***
    you   now   work   do- PROG   2PL.COP.PRS.H
    'You are working right now.'
                        or

13. *rauwən   əbhi   kam   kər-ət   **bəɖə***
    you   now   work   do- PROG   2PL.COP.PRS.H
    'You are working right now.'

14. *u   əbhi   kam   kər-ət   **həi***
    he/she   now   work   do- PROG   3SG.COP.PRS
    'He/She is working right now.'

15. *ohən   əbhi   kam   kər-ət   **hə-thin***
    they   now   work   do- PROG   3PL.COP.PRS
    'They are working right now'.

16. *həm   car   sal   se   goa-me   rəh-ət-**hi***
    I   four   year   for   Goa-POST   live-PROG-1SG.COP.PRS
    'I have been living in Goa for 4 years.'

17. *həmən   car   sal   se   goa-me   rəh-ət-**hi/ hia:***
    we   four   year   for   Goa-POST   live-PROG-1PL.COP.PRS
    'We have been living in Goa for 4 years.'

18. *həm   roʈi   khəi-le   **rəhi***
    I   bread   eat-PST1SG.COP.PST
    'I ate bread.'

19. *tu   kirkeṭ   khəl-ət   **rəhe***
     you   cricket   play-PROG   2SG.COP.PST
     'You were playing cricket.'

20. *u   sut-ət   **rəhəi***
     he/she   sleep-PROG   3SG.COP.PST
     'He/she was sleeping.'

21. *həm   bhat   kha   **əib***
     I   cooked rice   eat   1SG.COP.FUT
     'I will eat cooked rice.'

22. *rauwa   bhat   khə-   **əib-ba***
     you   cooked rice   eat   2SG.COP.FUT-Q
     'Will you eat cooked rice?'

23. *ohən   khəl-ət   **hotəthin***
     they   play-PROG   3PL.COP.FUT
     'They will be playing?'

6. Comparative Analysis of Magahi, Hindi, Standard Bhojpuri, and Garhwa Bhojpuri

1. *həm   jaa   **hii***
     I   go   be.SG.1
     'I go.'   (Kumar & Rakesh, 2013, p. 180) (Magahi)

2. *mai   jata   **hũ***
     I   go   be.SG.1
     'I go.'   (Hindi)

3. *həm   jaa   **ila/ ni***
     I   go   be.SG.1
     'I go.'   (Standard Bhojpuri)

4. *həm   ja   **li***
     I   go   be.SG.1
     'I go.'   (Garhwa Bhojpuri)

5. *chəuṛa   roj   iskul   ja   həi/ləi*
     boy   daily   school   go   be-3SG.M.COP.PRS
     'Boy goes to school every day.'   (Garhwa Bhojpuri)

6. *chəuɽi   roj   iskul   ja   həi/ləi*
   girl   daily   school   go   be-3SG.F.COP.PRS
   'Girl goes to school every day.'   (Garhwa Bhojpuri)

For comparative analysis, we have selected examples to highlight the distinctions in auxiliary markers across Magahi, Hindi, Standard Bhojpuri, and Garhwa Bhojpuri languages. Example 1 uses the auxiliary marker *"hii"* to indicate the present indefinite tense in Magahi. Example 2 showcases the use of *"hũ"* as the auxiliary marker for the present indefinite tense in Hindi. In contrast, example 3 illustrates *"ila"* in Uttar Pradesh and *"ni"* in Aara-Buxer (Bihar) serving as auxiliary markers for the present indefinite tense in Bhojpuri. However, example 4 demonstrates the use of *"li"* as an auxiliary marker for constructing present indefinite sentences in Garhwa Bhojpuri, indicating a divergence from Magahi, Hindi, and Standard Bhojpuri. There are more distinctions to be observed in Garhwa Bhojpuri, as shown in tables 1-3 and examples 5-6, where the gender of a noun does not always affect the form of a verb or auxiliary verb. These variations underscore the distinctiveness of Garhwa Bhojpuri within the broader spectrum of these languages.

7. Findings and Conclusion

Auxiliary verbs in all three languages play a crucial role in expressing the mood and modality of a sentence, reflecting the speaker's attitude. They convey abilities, possibilities, necessities, and obligations towards the main verb. In Garhwa Bhojpuri, auxiliary verbs like *"tu kər səkəl **le**, həm kər sakə **hia**, or səkə-**li**"*express the ability or possibility of performing an action, while auxiliary verbs such as "*chaa-**hi**, chaahət-**ba***" indicate necessity or obligation in all three languages.

Due to historical interactions and contact situations within the Garhwa-Palamu and border regions of different languages, the Garhwa Bhojpuri language has assimilated auxiliary markers from both Magahi and Standard Bhojpuri. We can also observe similarities and differences among all three languages in auxiliary markers in Tables 1-3. In Table 3 the auxiliary marker *"hi, hĩ, hiaĩ, hĩwə"* with honorific for 1st person present tense was borrowed from Magahi. ***baɽə*** (auxiliary marker with honorific for 2nd person present tense) is borrowed from Standard Bhojpuri. ***həthun, həthin*** (auxiliary marker with honorific for 3rd person present tense) borrowed from Magahi. ***hia, hiɛ, hiau, hiyo*** (auxiliary marker with non-honorific for 1st person present tense) borrowed from Magahi. ***baɽe, baɽe*** (auxiliary marker with non-honorific for 2nd person present tense) from Standard Bhojpuri. ***həi*** (auxiliary marker with non-honorific for 3rd person present tense) borrowed from Magahi.

The auxiliary marker ***rəhlĩ***, which includes an honorific for 1st person past tense, was borrowed from Standard Bhojpuri. But the marker ***rəhĩ*** is not borrowed from any one of the languages. ***rəhlə*** (auxiliary marker with honorific for 2nd person past tense) is borrowed from Standard Bhojpuri. ***rəhlɛ̃*** (auxiliary marker with honorific for 3rd person past tense) borrowed from Standard Bhojpuri. ***rəhi*** (auxiliary marker with non-honorific for 1st person past tense) is not borrowed from any one of the languages. ***rəhle*** (auxiliary marker with non-honorific for 2nd person past tense) from Standard Bhojpuri. But the marker ***rəhe*** is not borrowed from any one of the languages. ***rəhəi*** (auxiliary marker with non-honorific for 3rd person past tense) is not borrowed from any one of the languages.

hoəib (auxiliary marker with honorific for 1st person future tense) is not borrowed from any one of the languages. ***hoib, hoibə*** (auxiliary marker with honorific for 2nd person future tense) is borrowed from Standard Bhojpuri. ***hotəthin*** (auxiliary marker with honorific for 3rd person future tense) is not borrowed from any one of the languages. ***hobəi*** (auxiliary marker with non-honorific for 1st person future tense) is borrowed from Magahi. ***hoibe*** (auxiliary marker with non-honorific for 2nd past future tense) from Standard Bhojpuri. ***hoi*** (auxiliary marker with non-honorific for 3rd past future tense) is borrowed from both Magahi and Standard Bhojpuri while ***hotəi***) is borrowed from Magahi.

Furthermore, auxiliary verbs in all three languages help to express aspect and voice. They help in distinguishing between different aspects of an action, such as whether it is ongoing, completed, or habitual, through the examples.

In conclusion, auxiliary verbs play a fundamental role in the grammatical structure of all three languages. They serve as indispensable linguistic tools for expressing various grammatical features such as tense, mood, aspect, and voice. Understanding the usage and functions of auxiliary verbs in these languages is essential for gaining insights into the language's syntax, semantics, and pragmatic nuances. Through comprehensive research and analysis, further exploration of auxiliary verb usage in Garhwa Bhojpuri can contribute to a deeper understanding of this vibrant and culturally significant language.

Abbreviations

1	-	First Person	2	-	Second Person
3	-	Third Person	ABL	-	Ablative
COP	-	Copula	DD	-	Definite Determiner
F	-	Feminine	FUT	-	Future tense
GEN	-	Genitive	H	-	Honorific
NH	-	Non-honorific	POST	-	Post-position
Q	-	Question	M	-	Masculine
NOM	-	Nominative	PL	-	Plural
PRF	-	Perfect aspect	PR/PRS	-	Present tense
PST	-	Past tense	PROG	-	Progressive aspect
SOV	-	Subject-Object-Verb	SG	-	Singular

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Some aspects of classifier in Kokborok

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Abstract

This paper deals with some aspects of classifier in Kokborok language spoken mainly in the North Eastern State of Tripura. Kokborok has a rich set of classifiers. Classifiers in Tibeto-Burman and Bodo-Garo are expressed by bound morphemes. Classifiers in Kokborok always occur with the numerals while counting any nouns. The order is N CLF-NUM.

Key words: Classifier, Kokborok, Tibeto-Burman, Bodo-Garo

1. Introduction

Tripura is a small and hilly state that is located in the North Eastern parts of India and is surrounded by our neighbouring country Bangladesh on three sides i.e., the north, south, and west. Tripura on the eastern side shares the boundary with the state of Assam and Mizoram.

Kokborok (ISO 69303 trp) is a Bodo-Garo language Tibeto-Burman language spoken primarily in the North Eastern state of Tripura by approximately more than 1 million population. Kokborok is extensively used by majority of the tribes of Tripura. Speakers of two dominant language families mainly Indo-Aryan and Tibeto-Burman are found in Tripura. Bengali is a dominant Indo-Aryan language in Tripura. Other than Kokborok speaking communities; Molsom, Hrangkhawl, Kaipeng, Munda, Santhal, Urang also speaks Kokborok. Two communities of Halam such as Rupini and Kalai also speak Kokborok language. Apart from Tripura Kokborok speakers are found in Assam and Mizoram. Kokborok is also spoken in Bangladesh. The primary data for the present study has been collected from the field where Kokborok is spoken. The data was collected through elicitation method. The data was collected in two consecutive years i.e., 2021 and 2022. The area of study is Unakoti district of Tripura which includes two villages namely Saidacherra and Rajkandi.

The present paper focuses on some aspects classifiers in Kokborok in terms of semantic criteria.

2. Review of Literature

No extensive work on classifiers in Kokborok has been carried out so far. Karapurkar (1976) has listed 27 classifiers of Kokborok in her Kokborok Grammar. She has stated that "classifiers classify the nouns into several sub-groups and are prefixed to the numerals." She further stated that classification is done mainly on the basis of the shape or the quality of the nouns. She also said that classifiers are separate morphemes. According to Jacquesson (2007), numerals normally do not come without a classifier (CL), and the group classifier + numeral comes after what is to be counted. He has provided a list of the following classifiers viz. *pʰaŋ-*, *bar-*, *kʰuŋ-*, *kʰorok-*, ma, *lai-*, *dek-*, and *kai-*.

3. Classifier construction

Classifiers are defined as morphemes which occur 'in surface structures under specific conditions'; denote 'some salient perceived or imputed characteristics of the entity to which an associated noun refers' (Allan 1977: 285).

Classifiers in Kokborok always occur with the numerals while counting, which makes it close bound syntactic unit in the following order: classifier + numeral. This syntactic unit may occur after or before the noun. However, the preferred order is N CLF-NUM as in (1) and (2). It is worth mentioning that the noun is never known to intrude between classifier and numeral.

(1)   *tak^{h}um   ma-sa*
          duck   CLF-one
          'One duck'

(2)   *malk^{h}uŋ   k^{h}uŋ-sa*
          vehicle CLF-one
          'One vehicle'

It is observed that the possible reverse order is CLF-NUM N as in (3) and (4).

(3)   *ma-sa   tak^{h}um*
          CLF-one   duck
          'One duck'

(4)   *k^{h}uŋ-sa malk^{h}uŋ*
          CLF-one   vehicle
          'One vehicle'

(5)   *kaŋ-sa   ri*
          CLF-one   cloth
          'One cloth'

4. Classifiers in Kokborok

All the classifiers in Kokborok are prefixes. Most of the classifiers in Kokborok are typically mono-syllabic, mostly ending in consonant and some in a vowel as in (8) – (9) and few are bisyllabic as in (6). The following lists of classifiers are found in Kokborok.

k^{h}orok-NUM

This classifier is used with human nouns. The classifier *k^{h}orok-* is derived from the word *bok^{h}orok* 'head'.

(6)   *borok   k^{h}orok-t^{h}am*
          person CLF-three
          'Three person'

(7)   *borok   kʰorok-ba*
        person   CLF-five
        'Five person'

ma-NUM

This classifier is used with animals including reptiles, birds, worms, and insects as such.

(8)   *pun   ma-sa*
        goat   CLF-one
        'One goat'

(9)   *sinjo   ma-sa*
        rat   CLF-one
        'One rat'

pʰaŋ-NUM

This classifier is used with trees, plants, herbs and weeds. Etymologically, the morpheme *pʰaŋ-* is copied from the second syllable of the word *bu-pʰaŋ* 'tree'.

(10)   *bupʰaŋ   pʰaŋ-tʰam*
        tree   CLF-three
        'Trees trees'

(11)   *kʰum   pʰaŋ-sa*
        flower   CLF-one
        'One flower plant'

dek-NUM

This classifier *dek-* is used with branches of any weeds, trees and plants. This classifier is copied from the second syllable of the word *be-dek* 'branch'.

(12)   *bedek   dek-tʰam*
        branch   CLF-three
        'Three branches'

(13)   *tʰaipuŋ bedek   dek-ba*
        jackfruit   branch CLF-five
        'Five branches of mango'

ceŋ-NUM

The classifier *ceŋ-* is used with twig. The twig may be of trees, herbs, plants like bamboo etc. The classifier *ceŋ-* is copied from the second syllable of word *be-ceŋ* 'twig'.

(14)   *beceŋ   ceŋ-ba*
        tree twig   CLF-five
        'Five twigs of tree'

(15)   *waceŋ   ceŋ-tʰam*
        bamboo.twig   CLF-three
        'Three twigs of bamboo'

kol-NUM

This classifier is used with any kind of grains i.e., small piece of hard substance, seeds, eye etc. This classifier is copied from the second syllable of the word *bo-kol* 'grain'.

(16)   *bokol   kol-tʰam*
        grain   CLF-three
        'Three grains/substances'

(17)   *mokol   kol-sa*
        eye   CLF-one
        'One eye'

(18)   *bucului kol-ba*
        seed   CLF-five
        'Five seeds'

tuŋ-NUM

This classifier is used with long narrow or thin objects such as rope, wire, thread, roads, hair, blood vessels/veins, tails, bamboo strips etc. It is copied from the second syllable of the word *kʰu-tuŋ* 'thread'.

(19)   *kʰutuŋ   tuŋ-nui*
        thread   CLF-two
        'Two threads'

(20)   *lama   tuŋ-sa*
        road   CLF-three
        'one road'

(21)   *buduk   tuŋ-sa*
        rope   CLF-one
        'One rope'

tʰop-NUM

This classifier is used with any kind of drops of liquid such as water, blood, oil, kerosene etc.

(22)   *beleŋtuitʰop-ba*
        sap   CLF-five
        'Five drops of sap'

(23) *tʰok   tʰop-tʰam*
      oil   CLF-three
      'Three drops of oil'

kaŋ-NUM

This classifier is used with flat objects, like books, cloths, mat etc.

(24) *kamcului   kaŋ-tʰam*
      shirt   CLF-three
      'Three shirts'

(25) *lamtʰai kaŋ-sa*
      mat   CLF-one
      'One mat'

(26) *kisip   kaŋ-ba*
      fan   CLF-five
      'Five hand fans'

koŋ-NUM

This is used with long or short objects like sticks, pen, spear, firewood and some of the body parts such as teeth, finger, limbs etc.

(27) *buwa   koŋ-sa*
      teeth   CLF-one
      'One tooth'

(28) *yak   koŋ-nui*
      hand   CLF-two
      'Two hands'

(29) *suikoŋ   koŋ-ba*
      pen   CLF-five
      'Five pens'

pʰon-NUM *(bo-pʰon)*

This classifier is used with pieces, such as meat, fish etc.

(30) *bahan   pʰon-ba*
      meat   CLF-five
      'Five pieces of meat'

(31) *wahan   pʰon-tʰam*
      pork   CLF-three
      'Three pieces of pork'

(32)   *a*   *pʰon-tʰam*
        fish   CLF-three
        'Three pieces of fish'

bar-NUM

This classifier is used with blossoms of any plant, flowers or buds etc.

(33)   *kʰum*   *bar-sa*
        flower CLF-one
        'One flower'

(34)   *sotoroboŋgo*   *bar-sa*
        marigold   CLF-one
        'One marigold flower'

(35)   *uribar*   *bar-tʰam*
        Hibiscus   CLF-three
        'Three blossoms of hibiscus flower'

khuŋ-NUM

This classifier is used with voluminous objects like houses, vehicles etc.

(36)   *birkʰuŋ kʰuŋ-sa*
        Plane
        'One plane'

(37)   *malkʰuŋ*   *kʰuŋ-sa*
        vehicle CLF-one
        'One vehicle'

lai-NUM (bu-lai)

This classifier is used with leaves of trees and plants, herbs etc.

(38)   *bulai*   *lai-tʰam*
        leaf   CLF-three
        'Three leaves'

(39)   *banta*   *lai-nui*
        basil   CLF-two
        'Two basil leaves'

lep-NUM

This classifier is used with coins and baked things like bread, biscuits etc. This classifier is copied from *be-lep* 'flat object'.

(40)   *cuwan   lep-tʰam*
         yeast   CLF-three
         'Three bread of yeast'

(41)   *puisa   lep-sa*
         paise   CLF-one
         'One coin of paisa'

tui-NUM

This classifier is used with eggs, underground tubers or roots and yam etc.

(42)   *butui   tui-tʰam*
         egg   CLF-three
         'Three eggs'

(43)   *tʰakun   tui-nui*
         yam   CLF-two
         'Two yams'

(44)   *tʰakun   tui-nui*
         yam   CLF-two
         'Two yams'

kʰor-NUM

This classifier is used with holes in tree, bamboos, earth etc.

(45)   *hakor   kʰor-ba*
         hole   CLF-five
         'Five holes in earth'

(46)   *bokʰor   kʰor-tʰam*
         tree hole   CLF-three
         'Three tree holes'

jor-NUM

This classifier is used for pair of things or animals etc. It is copied from the word *bo-jor* 'pair'

(47)   *bojor   jor-sa*
         pair   CLF-one
         'One pair'

(48)   *kamcului   jor-tʰam*
         shirt   CLF-three
         'Three pair of shirts'

kʰop- NUM

This classifier is used with swallows of eatable or drinkable items etc.

(49)   *urum*   *kʰop-sa*
       puffed rice   CLF-one
       'One swallow of puffed rice'

(50)   *mai*   *kʰop-tʰam*
       rice   CLF-three
       'Three swallows of rice'

(51)   *kuwai*   *kʰop-tʰam*
       betel-nut   CLF-three
       'Three swallows of betel-nut'

*pʰak-*NUM

The classifier *pʰak-* is used with bundles of bamboo, wood, firewood etc. as exemplified below.

(52)   *wa*   *pʰak-sa*
       bamboo   CLF-one
       'One bundle of bamboo'

(53)   *bol*   *pʰak-nui*
       fire wood   CLF-two
       'Two bundles of fire wood'

*dul-*NUM (*bu-dul*)

This classifier is used with clod, molded things like molded pellets, and rice balls etc. It is copied from the second syllable of *bu-dul* 'clod'.

(54)   *budul*   *dul-sa*
       clod   CLF-one
       'One clod'

(55)   *hadul*   *dul-tʰam*
       mud.clod   CLF-three
       'Three clods of mud'

*kʰok-*NUM

This classifier is specifically used for rupee.

(56)   *rang*   *kʰok-sa*
       money CLF-one
       'One rupee'

(57) *raŋ*   *kʰok-dok*
      money   CLF-six
      'Six rupees'

eŋ-NUM

This classifier is used to with node of bamboo and sugar cane etc.

(58) *wa*   *eŋ-sa*
      bamboo   CLF-one
      'One node of bamboo'

(59) *kuruk*   *eŋ-tʰam*
      sugar cane   CLF-three
      'Three nodes of sugar cane'

mocom-NUM

This classifier is used for amount in a single or doubled-up hand i.e., fistful.

(60) *gundak*   *mocom-sa*
      husk   CLF-one
      'One fistful amount of husk'

(61) *haiciŋ*   *mocom-nui*
      sand   CLF-two
      'Two fistful amount of sand'

tuk-NUM

This classifier is used for counting pots of rice, rice beer etc.

(62) *maituk*   *tuk-tʰam*
      rice pot CLF-three
      'Three pots of rice'

(63) *cuwak*   *tuk-ba*
      wine   CLF-five
      'Five pots of wine/rice beer'

tʰai-NUM

This classifier is used for counting fruits.

(64) *tʰaicuk* *tʰai-tʰam*
      Mango   CLF-three
      'Three mangoes'

(65) *tʰailik*   *tʰai-tʰam*
      Banana   CLF-three
      'Three bananas'

5. Basic word order of Kokborok

Like most of the Tibeto-Burman languages, Kokborok is an SOV language where the verb usually follows both the subject and object. The word order in Kokborok is rigid.

(66) *bo*   *bo-no*   *nuk-kʰa*
      he   he-ACC see-PST
      S   O   V
      'He went to eat'

(67) *bo*   *mai*   *pai-na*   *tʰaŋ-nai*
      he   rice   buy-INF go-FUT
      S   O   V
      'He will go to buy rice'

6. Conclusion

Kokborok uses classifier while enumerating nouns from lower to higher numerals. Most of the bound classifiers in Kokborok are monosyllabic. But few disyllabic classifiers are also attested in the language. Like other Tibeto-Burman languages of the Northeast India the order in Kokborok is CLF NUM. As like other Bodo-Garo languages, classifiers in Kokborok are bound morphemes that are only prefixed to the numerals.

Abbreviations

CLF   classifier
FUT   future
INF   infinitive
N   noun
NUM   numeral
O   object
S   subject
V   verb

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Phonology of Khiamniungan[1]

Keen Thaam & Mimi Kevichüsa-Ezung

Abstract
Khiamniungan is a hitherto undocumented language spoken in the State of Nagaland in North East India. This paper examines the segmental phonology of the language as well as tone, and the syllabic structure of the language. The language attests 20 consonants, 8 monophthongs, and 9 diphthongs. The language does not exhibit voiced plosives. Khiamniungan is a tonal language and attests 3 level tones and 2 contour tones. The language permits the given syllable structures: V, CV, VC, and CVC.
Keywords: consonants, vowels, monophthongs, diphthongs, tone, syllable structure.

1. Introduction
Khiamniungan (ISO 639-3˙kix; Glottolog khia1236) belongs to the Tibeto-Burman language family under the Bodo-Konyak-Jingphaw > Konyak group of the Central area in the North East of India (Burling, 2003:175) [source: Dattamajumdar, 2017:434].
Khiamniungan is a Naga tribe located in Noklak district in the State of Nagaland. It is bounded in the North by the Konyak tribe, South by Yimkhiung, West by Chang, and East by the Khiamniungan speech community in Myanmar. The language spoken by the tribe is known as Khiamniungan. 'Khiamniungan' means the 'source of mighty water'. It is a major language spoken in the State of Nagaland and is a State recognized language. There are four ranges in the Khiamniungan area: Thang, Wolam, Patsho, and Nokhu. Khiamniungan is the standardized language of the variety spoken in the Thang range.
According to the 2011 census there are 61,983 speakers of Khiamniungan which constitutes 3.13 % of the total population of Nagaland. Roman script is used in writing. At present, Khiamniungan language is taught up to Class VIII in all Government Schools within the Khiamniungan area. This study is on the Thang variety. The language is hitherto an undocumented language and hence this work is a seminal paper which examines the segmental phonology of the language including tone. As the language exhibits tone sandhi, the tonal marking used for the purpose of this paper is the citation tone. The data presented in this paper includes the orthography in parenthesis keeping in mind the graphization stage of the language.

2. Consonants of Khiamniungan

	Bilabial	Labial-velar	Alveolar	Post alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Plosive	p		t			k	ʔ
Plosive Aspirate	pʰ		tʰ			kʰ	
Nasal	m		n		ɲ	ŋ	
Fricative			s	ʃ			h
Affricates			ts	tʃ			
Affricate Aspirates			tsʰ				
Approximant		w				j	
Lateral Approximant			l				

Table 1: Consonants of Khiamniungan

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[1] This paper is a unit of a TRI sponsored project report under the Department of Art & Culture, Government of Nagaland.

Khiamniungan has 20 consonants. It has 7 plosives which includes 3 plosive aspirates; 4 nasals; 3 fricatives; 3 affricates including 1 affricate aspirate; 2 approximants and 1 lateral approximant.

Plosives / Stops

There are 7 plosives: /p/, /pʰ/, /t/, /tʰ/, /k/, /kʰ/ and /ʔ/. The language does not exhibit voiced plosives. The contrast between voiceless unaspirated and aspirated plosives are:

/p/ - /pʰ/
/**p**/   /pēm/ (bem)   'body'
/**pʰ**/   /pʰēm/ (phem)   'arm'

/t/ - /tʰ/
/**t**/   /tʌ́/ (ta)   'good portion'
/**tʰ**/   /tʰʌ́/ (that)   'to fit'

/k/ - /kʰ/
/**k**/   /kʌ́n/ (kan)   'basket'
/**kʰ**/   /kʰʌ́n/ (khan)   'grave'

/ʔ/ - /k/
/**ʔ**/   /tsʌ̌ʔ/ (tsah)   'flesh'
/k/   /tsʌ̌k/ (tsak)   'one'

The distribution of plosives in word-initial, word-medial, and word-final positions is given in Table 2.

	Word-initial			Word-medial		Word-final	
/**p**/	/pō/ (po)	'father'	/ʌpō/ (apo)	'your father'	/ūp/ (op)	'to beat'
/**pʰ**/	/pʰʌ̄ʔ/ (pha)	'hand'	/ʌ̄pʰí/ (aphi)	'last'	---	---
/**t**/	/tʌ̄n/ (tan)	'to tire'	/ʌ̄táu/ (atao)	'time'	/tʰʌ̄t/ (that)	'to measure'
/**tʰ**/	/tʰēn/ (then)	'bed'	/ʌ̄tʰʌ̀ŋ/ (athang)	'place'	---	---
/**k**/	/kín/ (kin)	'stick'	/ʌ̄kŏp/ (akop)	'to shoot'	/tsʌ̌k/ (tsak)	'one'
/**kʰ**/	/kʰìʌm/ (khiam)	'water/to melt'	/ʌ̄kʰím/ (akhim)	'to finish'	---	---
/**ʔ**/	---	---	/tʃ͡əiʔtʃ͡i/ (tseiji)	'biting'	/tʃ͡əiʔ/ (tsei)	'to bite'

Table 2: Distribution of plosives in Khiamniungan

It is observed that:
1) the plosive aspirates do not occur in the final position.
2) the glottal stop does not occur in the initial position.

Nasals

Khiamniungan has 4 nasals: 1 bilabial, 1 alveolar, 1 palatal, and 1 velar.

/m/ - /ɲ/
/**m**/   /mîʌm/ (miam) 'shy'
/**ɲ**/   /ɲîʌm/ (niam)   'smell'

/n/ - /ɲ/
/**n**/   /nʌ̀t/ (nat)   'to rub eyes'
/ɲ/   /ɲʌ̀t/ (nyat)   'needle'

/ŋ/ - /m/
/**ŋ**/   /ŋʌ̄t/ (ngat)   'to pluck'
/m/   /mʌ̄t/ (mat)   'to blow'

Table 3 gives the distribution of nasals in word-initial, word-medial, and word-final positions. The palatal nasal /ɲ/ does not occur in the final position.

	Word-initial		Word-medial		Word-final	
/**m**/	/mâu/ (mao)	'ant'	/ʌmᴧ̄i/ (amai)	'price/rate'	/mîʌm/ (miam)	'shy'
/**n**/	/nê/ (ne)	'cloth'	/ʌnūi/ (anoi)	'sit' (IMP)	/ûn/ (on)	'spirit'
/**ɲ**/	/ɲîn/ (nin)	'snow'	/ʌɲíʌm/ (aniam)	'scent/odour'	---	---
/**ŋ**/	/ŋᴧ̄t/ (ngat)	'to pluck'	/ʌŋᴧ̄n/ (angan)	'your nose'	/jʌŋ/ (yang)	'craft'

Table 3: Distribution of nasals in Khiamniungan

Fricatives

Khiamniungan has alveolar, postalveolar and glottal fricatives. The fricatives are illustrated here with their minimal pairs. The alveolar, post-alveolar fricatives do not have the voiced contrast.

/**s**/ - /**h**/
/**s**/ /sʌt/ (sat) 'to write'
/**h**/ /hʌt/ (hat) 'fear'

/**ʃ**/ - /s/
/**ʃ**/ /ʃʌm/ (sham) 'mat'/ 'to halt'
/s/ /sʌm/ (sam) 'tasty'

The distribution of fricatives within the word is given in Table 4. The alveolar and post alveolar fricatives do not occur in the final position, and the glottal fricative occurs only in the initial position.

	Word-initial		Word-medial		Word-final	
/**s**/	/sᴧ̄n/ (san)	'backbone'	/ʌsōu/ (asou)	'your slave'	---	---
/**ʃ**/	/ʃēp/ (shep)	'fruit'	/ʌʃì/ (ashi)	'to come'	---	---
/**h**/	/hʌt/ (hat)	'fear'	---	---	---	---

Table 4: Distribution of fricatives in Khiamniungan

Affricates

The language has one post alveolar affricate /ʧ/, and two alveolar affricates, i.e. unaspirated /ʦ/ and aspirated /ʦʰ/.

/**ʦ**/ - /**ʦʰ**/
/**ʦ**/ /ʦʌt/ (tsad) 'to adopt'
/**ʦʰ**/ /ʦʰʌt/ (tshat) 'to bark'

/**ʧ**/ - /t/
/**ʧ**/ /ʧᴧ̄t/ (jat) 'to spray'
/t/ /tᴧ̄t/ (tat) 'left side'

The distribution of affricates within the word is given in Table 5. Affricates do occur in the final position in Khiamniungan.

	Word-initial		Word-medial		Word-final	
/**ts**/	/t͡sʌ̀t/ (tsad)	'to adopt'	/ʌ̄t͡sʌ̄m/ (atsam)	'your house'	---	---
/**tsʰ**/	/t͡sʰʌ̀t/ (tsat)	'to bark'	/ʌ̀t͡sʰʌ̄t/ (athsat)	'gravy'	---	---
/**tʃ**/	/t͡ʃʌ́ŋ/ (jang)	'cow'	/ʌ̀t͡ʃiu̅/ (ajio)	'your pipe'	---	---

Table 5: Distribution of affricates in Khiamniungan

Approximants

Khiamniungan has 2 approximants: a bilabial /w/ and a palatal approximant /j/, and 1 lateral approximant /l/.

/w/ - /l/
/**w**/   /wíːʲʌn/ (vi-an)   'accident'
/**l**/   /líːʲʌn/ (li-an)   'getting late'

/j/ - /l/
/**j**/   /jʌ́m/ (yam)   'way'
/**l**/   /lʌ́m/ (lam)   'warm'

The distribution of approximants within the word is given in Table 6. Approximants do occur in the final position in Khiamniungan.

	Word-initial		Word-medial		Word-final	
/**w**/	/wâu/ (wao)	'walnut'	/ʌwáù/ (awao)	'your walnut'	---	---
/**j**/	/jʌ́ŋ/ (yang)	'craft'	/ʌjʌ́ʔ/ (ayah)	'your pig'	---	---
/**l**/	/lʌ̀t/ (lat)	'a type of leech'	/ʌlĕʔsán/ (alesan)	'interest'	---	---

Table 6: Distribution of approximants in Khiamniungan

3. Vowels of Khiamniungan

There are 8 pure vowels in Khiamniungan. They are close, front unrounded **/i/**, close back rounded **/u/**, close-mid front unrounded **/e/**, close-mid back rounded **/o/**, open-mid back rounded **/ɔ/**, open-mid back unrounded **/ʌ/**, open front unrounded **/aː/**, between close-mid and open mid central **/ə/.** The vowel chart below illustrates the monophthongs of the language.
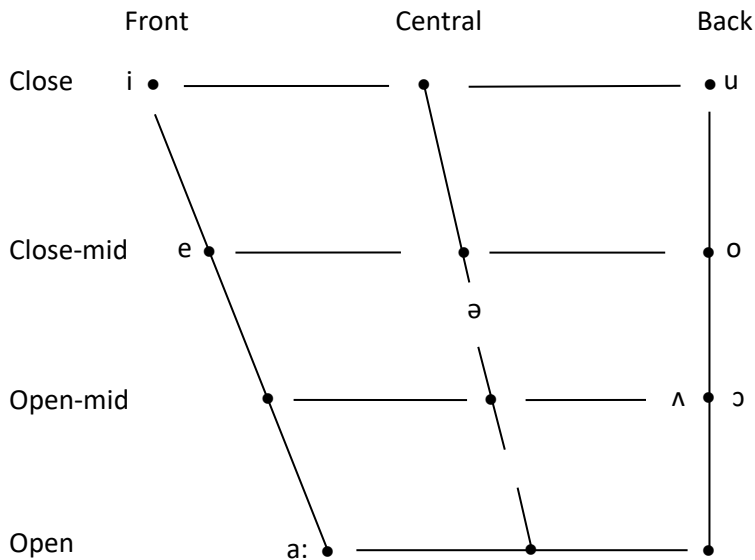
Figure 1: Monophthongs of Khiamniungan

Monophthongs

/i/ - /u/
/**i**/   /ìn/ (in) 'fire'
/**u**/   /ùn/ (on)   'spirit'

/e/ - /u/
/e/   /ēp/ (ep)   'to see'
/u/   /ūp/ (op)   'to beat'

/o/ - /i/
/**o**/   /pō/ (po)   'father'
/i/   /pī/ (pi)   'a type of hut'

/ʌ/   /sʌ̄n/ (san)   'top' (spinning)
/u/   /sūn/ (son)   'iron'/ 'mouth'

/ɔ/ - /e/
/ɔ/   /kɔ̌ŋ/ (kong)   'strong'
/e/   /kěŋ/ (keng)   'free'

/a:/ - /u:/
/**a**:/   /á:/ (ah) 'weather'
/**u**:/   /ú:/ (u)   'bone'/ 'rib'

/ə/ - /o/
/**ə**/   /tsə̌n/ (tsün)   'RELATIVE MARKER'(-er AGENTIVE)
/o/   /tsǒn/ (tson)   'to invite'

The long vowel /u:/ as found in /ú:/ 'bone'/'rib' is an allophone of /u/. Its occurrence is restricted to a V syllable. There is another long vowel /e:/ which is an allophone of /e/, and similar to /u:/ its occurrence is restricted to a V syllable. For example: /é:/ which means 'enemy'.

The distribution of the monophthongs within the word is given in Table 7. The back, close-mid, rounded vowel /o/ does not occur in the initial position. The back, open-mid, rounded /ɔ/ occurs only in the medial position. The front, open, unrounded vowel /a:/, does not occur in the medial position.

	Word-initial		Word-medial		Word-final	
/**i**/	/īn/ (in)	'fire	/kīm/ (kim)	'basket'	/ʧ ī/ (tsi)	'fly'
/**u**/	/ùn/ (on)	'spirit'	/sún/ (son)	'iron'/ 'mouth'	/ʌ̀lǔ/ (alu)	'to look'
/e/	/ēp/ (ep)	'to see'	/ʃ ē̃p/ (shep)	'fruit'	/nè/ (ne)	'cloth'
/**o**/	**---**	---	/nôŋ/ (nong)	'this'	/pō/ (po)	'father'
/ʌ/	/ʌtʰʌŋ/ (athang)	'place'	/pʌ̄n/ (pan)	'to depend'	/ŋʌ̄ / (nga)	'to wonder'
/ɔ/	---	---	/kɔ̌ŋ/ (kong)	'strong'	---	---
/**a**:/	/á:/ (ah)	'weather'	---	---	/sǎ:/ (sah)	'machete'
/**ə**/	/ə̄-úŋ/ (ü-ung)	'horn'	/tsə̌n/ (tsün)	'RELATIVE MARKER' (-er AGENTIVE)	/-nə̄/ (-nü)	'PRED POSS'

Table 7: Distribution of monophthongs in Khiamniungan

In addition, the language exhibits 9 diphthongs **/ou/,** /**ʌi**/, /**iʌ**/, **/iu/, /au/, /oi/, /ai/,** /**ɔi**/, /**əi**/.** The diphthong chart is illustrated in the next page.
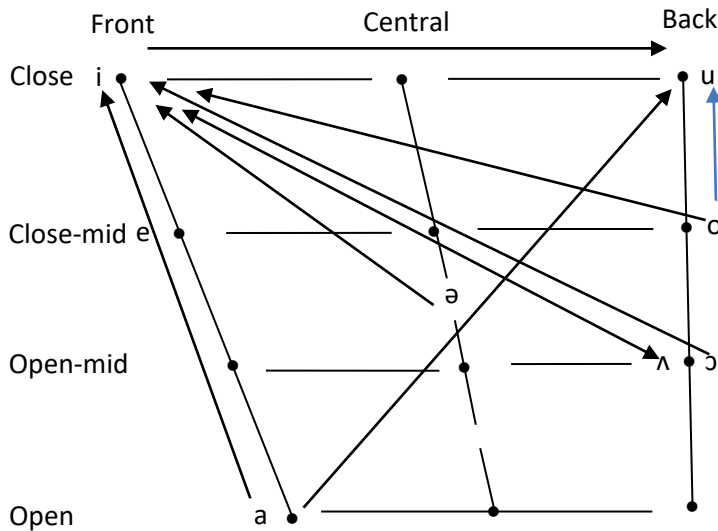
Figure 2: Diphthongs of Khiamniungan

Diphthongs

/ou/ - /e/
/**ou**/   /nòu/ (nou)   'sister'
/e/   /nè/ (ne)   'cloth'

/ʌi/ - /iʔ/
/**ʌi**/   /ʌ̂iʔkō/ (aihko)   'together'
/i/   /î ʔkō/ (ihko)   'to suspect'

/iu/ - /au/
/**au**/   /pīu/ (piu)   'farming'
/au/   /pāu/ (pao)   'snake'

/oi/ - /ai/
/**ai**/   /hōi/ (hoi)   'group'
/**ai/**   /hāi/ (hai)   'friend'

/**iʌ**/ - /ɔi/
/iʌ/   /mî ʌm/ (miam)   'shy'
/ɔi/   /mɔ̂im/ (moim)   'to massage'

/əi/ - /u/
/**əi**/   /phə̂i/ (phei)   'rash from caterpillar, stinging nettle etc.'
/u/   /phû/ (phu)   'to go' (horizontal)

The distribution of the diphthongs within the word is given in Table 8. It is observed that /ou/ does not occur in the medial position, /iʌ/ does not occur in the initial position, /ɔi/ occurs only in the medial position, and /əi/ occurs only in the final position.

	Word-initial		Word-medial		Word-final		
/**ou**/	/óu/ (ou)	'to be bright'	---	---	/nòu/ (nou)	'sister'	
/**ʌi**/	/ʌ̂iʔkō/ (aihko)	'together'	/pʌ̂iko/ (paiko)	'often'	/ʌmʌ̄i/ (amai)	'price'	
/**iu**/	/íuʔ/ (eiu)	'field'	/ʌkʰīupō/ (akhiupo)	'your floor'	/pīu/ (piu)	'farming'	
/**au**/	/āuʃēp/(aoshep)	'passion fruit'	/háuwé/ (haove)	'number'	/pāu/ (pau)	'snake'	
/**oi**/					/hói/ (hoi)	'group'	
/**ai**/	/ái/ (ai)	'garden'	/hāīmōŋ/ (haimong)	'river'	/hái/ (hai)	'friend'	
/**iʌ**/	---	---	/mîʌm/ (miam)	'shy'	/mîʌ/ (mia)	'dream'	
/**ɔi**/	---	---	/mɔ̂im/ (moim)	'to massage'	---	---	
/**əi**/	---	---	---	---	/phə̂i/ (phei)	'rash from caterpillar, stinging nettle etc.'	

Table 8: Distribution of diphthongs in Khiamniungan

Vowel sequence /**aiɯ**/
There is a vowel sequence /aiɯ/ in the language and it occurs in the final position. Whether the vowel sequence is a triphthong or not needs to be further investigated.

/**aiɯ/ - /ai/**
/**aiɯ**/   /kʰáiɯ/ (khaiu)   'head'
/**ai/**   /kʰái/ (khai)   'to organise'

/**aiɯ**/ - /**ai**/
/**áiɯ/**   /tʰáiɯ/ (thaiu)   'somebody's share'
/**ai/**   /tʰái/ (thai)   'to follow'

4. Tone
Khiamniungan is a tonal language and attests 3 level tones: high, mid and low, and 2 contour tones: rising and falling. Due to the complicated tonal patterns, pure minimal pair contrast for the 3 level tones was not found. Hence, two sets of minimal pairs are being used to demonstrate the 3 level tones. In the /sʌŋ/ (sang) series, the mid tone contrast is not present, while in the /sai/ (sai) series, the low tone contrast is not present. Both the sets however, attest the high, rising, and falling tones. A detailed study on the tones in Khiamniungan (Wolam) dialect is in preparation (van Dam and Thaam, personal communication).

/sʌŋ/ (sang) series

Level tones

High:	/sʌ́ŋ/ (sang)	'to kill by piercing repeatedly' / 'to administer'
Mid:	-	
Low:	/sʌ̀ŋ/ (sang)	'to grass'

Contour tones

Rising:	/sʌ̌ŋ/ (sang)	'to ask'
Falling:	/sʌ̂ŋ/ (sang)	'to sink'

/sai/ (sai) series

Level tones

High:	/sái/ (sai)	'to create'
Mid:	/sāi/ (sai)	'to shake'
Low:	-	

Contour tones

Rising:	/sǎi/ (sai)	'intestine'
Falling:	/sâi/ (sai)	'to console'/ 'to sleep'

5. Syllable Structure

Khiamniungan has 20 consonants out of which 6 consonants, unaspirated plosives /p/,/t/,/k/, and nasals /m/, /n/, /ŋ/ can occur in both onset and coda positions. The glottal stop occurs only as a coda. Aspirated plosives, fricatives and approximants do not occur in the coda positions.

The different types of syllables possible in Khiamniungan are as follows:

	Syllable Type	Example 1		Example 2	
1.	V	/û:/ (u)	'bone'	/ʌ̄/ (a)	'NOZ'/ '2 POSS'/ NEG
2.	CV	/ʧʰī / (chhi)	'work'	/pīu/ (piu)	'farming'
3.	VC	/ìn/ (in)	'fire'	/ép/ (ep)	'to see'
4.	CVC	/lûŋ/ (lung)	'stone'	/lʌ̄k/ (lak)	'necklace'

Disyllabic words

A large number of Khiamniungan words contain two syllables with different structures. Examples are:

V.CV	/ʌ.pʰá:u/ (aphao)	'your neighbour'
V.CVC	/ʌ.tʰʌ̀ŋ/ (athang)	'place'
VC.CV	/ʌ̂iʔ.kō/ (aihko)	'together'
CV.CV	/wê.kə̄/ (wekü)	'slope'
CV.CVC	/mè.sʌ̄n/ (mesan)	'guest'
CVC.CVC	/tʰʌ́ŋ.mʌ̀ŋ/ (thangmang)	'to suppress'

Trisyllabic words

V.CV.CV	/ʌ.kʰíu.pō/ (akhiupo)	'your floor'
V.CV.CVC	/ʌ.kʰú.ʦʌ̀m/ (akhutsam)	'prison'
V.CVC.CV	/ʌ.hʌ́tʰ.sú/ (ahathsou)	'helping hand'
V.CVC.CVC	/ʌ.nʌ̀p.jʌ́m/ (anapyam)	'entry point'
VC.CVC.CV	/ìn.mʌ̄t.kʌ̀i/ (inmatkai)	'blower'
CV.CV.CVC	/pái.ʃǐ.kʰíʌm/ (paishikhiam)	'plants'
CVC.CVC.CV	/hɔ̄k.tʰèŋ.pʰú/ (hokthengphu)	'steps'

6. Conclusion

This paper presents the phonological system of Khiamniungan with focus on the segmental features covering consonants, vowels, and syllabic structure. The language being a tonal one, the paper further presents the 5 tones which the language exhibits. The language does not attest voiced plosives. The absence of the voiced plosive is a feature which marks the Northern languages of Nagaland (Author 2023). However, similar to the majority of the languages in the region, the language exhibits voiceless stop aspirates (Author 2023). This seminal paper is by no means exhaustive and requires further intensive research.

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Beyond Translation: Understanding Indian Languages through Literature

Naved Alam

Abstract

This research study delves into the intricate tapestry of Indian languages, offering English language learners a nuanced understanding through the lens of literature. The exploration extends beyond mere translation as it seeks to unravel the rich linguistic landscape inherent in Indian literature. The study scrutinizes major language families, encompassing Southern and Indo-European, alongside lesser-known ones, shedding light on their pivotal role in shaping literary traditions.

While analyzing the linguistic and cultural subtleties embedded in Indian literature, the research focuses on representative works spanning languages such as Bengali, Tamil, Hindi, and more. Through the translation of the works into English, the study preserves the authenticity of the original texts, providing valuable insights into diverse topics, styles, and storytelling strategies.

By comparing and contrasting literary pieces from various language families, this article aims to equip English language learners with a comprehensive knowledge of Indian languages and cultures. The study not only emphasizes literature as a catalyst for linguistic acquisition and cross-cultural communication but also underscores the importance of fostering intercultural understanding. In the context of Indian literature, it highlights the value of embracing linguistic diversity and promoting broader perspectives through this investigative exploration.

Keywords: Language Families, Indian Literature, Linguistic Diversity, Translation, Literary Exploration, Cross-Cultural Communication

1.1. Background and Rationale

India is home to several languages and dialects that reflect its rich cultural legacy and historical background, making it a linguistic mosaic. India has a linguistic fabric of remarkable complexity and diversity, with over 1,600 languages spoken throughout its enormous breadth. India's social, cultural, and historical fabric is intricately woven with its linguistic variety, which is not only a reflection of geographic divides.

In India, language plays several roles beyond simple communication, such as identity marking, tradition-bearer and archive of communal memory. Every language spoken in India has its own distinct literary expressions, oral traditions, and cultural customs that add to the nation's diverse cultural heritage. Each linguistic minority gives its unique flavor to the rich tapestry of Indian culture, from the Dravidian languages of the south to the Indo-Aryan languages of the north.

A society's cultural identity is greatly shaped and reflected by literature, which is a reflection of the human condition. With its ability to provide insights into the common experiences, values, and goals that bind disparate linguistic communities together, literature in the Indian setting acts as a bridge across languages. Indian literature conveys the language, culture, and spirituality of the country via works as diverse as the modernist novels of current authors, the mystic poetry of Sufi saints, and the classical epics of Sanskrit literature.

However, India's multilingualism also presents serious difficulties, especially when it comes to comprehending and communicating across language barriers. Even though translation is vital for promoting communication between speakers of various languages, Indian languages and literature sometimes lack depth and subtlety in their translations. Although a literal translation could capture the essence of a book, it frequently falls short in capturing the cultural background, colloquial language, and literary devices that are essential to the source material.

Additionally, minor languages and dialects are in danger of disappearing because of the marginalization caused by the dominance of some languages in the literary and academic domains. Therefore, there is an urgent need to investigate non-translation-based alternative methods for comprehending and enjoying Indian languages.

By presenting a qualitative manner-based approach to understanding Indian languages via literature, this research work aims to close this gap. Through an examination of the literary traditions of many linguistic communities, the goal of this research is to show the linguistic, cultural, and historical details incorporated into Indian languages. The study aims to illustrate the relationship between language and literature and how they influence our perception of Indian society and culture via in-depth literary text evaluation and analysis.

This research seeks to further the conversation on linguistic variety and cultural diversity in India by reaching out. By encouraging a greater understanding of Indian languages and literature, this study hopes to foster greater empathy, understanding, and solidarity among India's diverse linguistic communities, ultimately contributing to the enrichment and preservation of India's cultural heritage for generations to come.

1.2. Objectives

- To investigate the linguistic diversity present in Indian languages beyond mere translation, emphasizing the need for a deeper understanding of languages through literature.
- To discuss the implications of studying Indian languages through literature for language learning and understanding, including its role in promoting cultural sensitivity, enhancing linguistic proficiency, and fostering cross-cultural communication skills.
- To promote awareness and appreciation for the linguistic and cultural diversity of India, highlighting the importance of preserving and promoting indigenous languages and literary traditions.

2.0. Literature Review and Theoretical Frameworks

2.1. Literature Review

1. **Translation Studies in Indian Context**
   Indian languages and literature can be challenging when translated, as past translation studies has shown. Acknowledging the cultural and linguistic changes that transpire during the translation process, scholars like Walter Benjamin, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, and A.K. Ramanujan have provided insightful analyses on the politics and art of translation, stressing the significance of preserving the original text's authenticity. The politics of language, linguistic variety, and cultural distinctiveness have all been examined in Indian translation studies, which have given light on the challenges of translating across languages that have radically diverse vocabularies, grammatical structures, and cultural contexts.

2. **Indian Literature and Cultural Identity**
   Studies on Indian literature have brought attention to how the literature shapes and reflects the country's cultural identity. Writings that explore themes like identity, tradition, and social change—such as R.K. Narayan's "Malgudi Days," Rabindranath Tagore's "Gitanjali," and Mahasweta Devi's "Mother of 1084"—have garnered praise and given readers an insight into the rich and complex fabric of Indian society.

   Researchers have also looked at how Indian literature responds to colonialism, globalisation, and other socio-political factors, showing how resilient and flexible it is in the face of outside influences.

3. **Multilingualism and Language Politics**
   Language relations in India and multilingualism have drawn attention to the intricate relationship that exists between language, identity, and power. Academic studies have focused on the language policies of the Indian state, namely on the official language Hindi and the language-based identity politics that are enforced.
   Literature has also been studied for its potential to promote linguistic diversity and subvert linguistic power; authors frequently use a variety of languages and dialects to create their works.

2.2. Theoretical Frameworks

1. **Postcolonial Theory**
   - This research paper explores how language and literature engage with questions of power, representation, and identity in the Indian setting, drawing on the ideas of postcolonial theory.
   - The frameworks provided by postcolonial theorists like Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak are invaluable for examining the interplay between language and literature and the processes of colonialism, nationalism, and cultural hybridity.

2. **Literary Theory and Criticism**
   - To examine and evaluate Indian literary texts, this research paper makes use of ideas and techniques from literary criticism and theory.
   - Methodologies like structuralism, formalism, and reader-response theory are useful in comprehending the formal aspects, narrative frameworks, and aesthetic standards of Indian literature.
   - On the other hand, perspectives like post structuralism, feminism, and Marxism shed light on the ideological foundations and socio-political settings of literary compositions.

3. **Sociolinguistics and Language Policy**
   - This research paper examines how language serves as a site of power conflicts and a symbol of social identity in India, drawing on concepts from sociolinguistics and language policy studies.
   - A framework for comprehending the dynamics of language usage and language policy in multilingual situations is provided by theories of language planning, ideology, and maintenance, which throw light on the intricate links between language, culture, and society.

The objective of this research study is to provide a thorough knowledge of the various aspects of language, culture, and identity in the Indian setting by incorporating these theoretical frameworks into the examination of Indian languages and literature.

The purpose of the article is to explore how Indian literature may provide a window into the linguistic, cultural, and historical aspects of Indian society via close reading and textual analysis. This will help readers gain a greater understanding of India's linguistic variety and cultural legacy.

Case Studies

   3.0.   **Case Study 1**

Tagore's "Gitanjali" (Bengali)
Rabindranath Tagore's "Gitanjali" is a collection of poems originally written in Bengali and later translated into English by the author himself.
The work holds immense cultural and linguistic significance, providing insights into both Bengali language and Indian spirituality.

Linguistic Analysis
The lyrical beauty of Bengali is reflected in Tagore's use of methodologies and pictures in poetry.
A rich legacy of Bengali culture and religion is showcased via the selection of words and expressions that reflect these traditions.

Cultural Insights
   - "Gitanjali" explores themes of love, devotion, and spiritual desire that are central to Indian religious systems like Bhakti and Vedanta.
   - The poems convey a sense of Bengali culture, which is characterized by a deep respect for spirituality and the natural world.

Translation Challenges

- Even in Tagore's own translations from Bengali into English, essential variations of the original language—particularly linguistic challenges and cultural allusions—may be lost in the process.
- The difficulty is in making non-Bengali readers understand the richness of feeling and intellectual foundation found in the Bengali original.

3.1. Case Study 2

Mahakavi Subramania Bharati's "Pudhumai Penn" (Tamil)

"Pudhumai Penn" ("Modern Woman") is a seminal work by the Tamil poet Mahakavi Subramania Bharati.

Through this poem, Bharati addresses the societal norms and expectations placed on women in Tamil Nadu during the early 20th century.

Linguistic Analysis

- Bharati's use the way that the Tamil language in "Pudhumai Penn" is both poetic and innovative, fusing traditional Tamil with the current language.
- With its extensive vocabulary and range of poetic forms—from current verse to Sangam poetry—the poem demonstrates the adaptability of Tamil.

Cultural Insights

- Reflecting the social reform movements of Bharati's day, "Pudhumai Penn" criticises traditional gender roles and promotes women's independence and empowerment.
- The poem paints a vivid picture of Tamil society's cultural background, traditions, and changing views on gender equality.

Translation Challenges

- Since a large portion of the poem's effect depends on the complexities of Tamil, translating Bharati's subtle expressions and wordplay into other languages is extremely difficult.
- The reader's comprehension of the social context in which the poem was written may be impacted by the loss or decreasing of Tamil Nadu-specific cultural references in translation.

Beyond simple translation, these case studies highlight the significance of learning Indian languages by illuminating how literature in these languages offers insightful perspectives on linguistic variety, cultural variations, and societal conventions.

3.2. Case Study 3

Saadat Hasan Manto's "Toba Tek Singh" (Urdu)

The heartbreaking Urdu short tale "Toba Tek Singh" by Saadat Hasan Manto is set against the backdrop of India's Partition.

The title character, Bishan Singh, who refuses to leave his own country during the partition, is one of the asylum's patients whose tale it portrays.

Linguistic Analysis

- The simple speech patterns of characters from a variety of backgrounds, including rural Punjabi and formal Urdu, are reflected in Manto's usage of the language.
- Common and informal vocabulary is used in the text to give the conversation and sketch a more realistic feel.

Cultural Insights

- "Toba Tek Singh" explores issues of displacement, identity, and belonging while going into the psychological and emotional effects of partition on common people.
- Drawing on dark humour and harsh social commentary, the novel reflects Manto's complaint about political and religious conflicts while capturing the chaos and stupidity of separation.

Translation Challenges

- Translation of "Toba Tek Singh" requires advanced knowledge of Urdu language and culture in addition to strong awareness of partition history.
- At the same time, the translator must preserve Manto's narrative approach while handling the language diversity of the characters and communicating the story's socio-political undertone.

4.0. Research Findings

Qualitative analysis of the literature of Indian languages provides deep insights into the socio-political, cultural, and language aspects of Indian society. A comprehensive evaluation of a few chosen literary pieces yields numerous important conclusions:

Linguistic Diversity and Expression

The research highlights the great variety of languages found in Indian literature, with each language displaying its own linguistic traits, phrases, and styles. Indian languages exhibit a complex tapestry of linguistic traditions that represent regional identities and cultural sensitivities, ranging from the rhythmic cadences of Tamil poetry to the elaborate prose of Urdu literature.

Cultural Significance and Symbolism

Literary works provide insights on the practices, beliefs, and customs of many language communities, acting as legacies of cultural knowledge and symbols. Indian literature is filled with symbolism derived from religious scriptures, folklore, and mythology, which gives the stories more nuance and levels of significance. For example, Sanskrit epics such as the Mahabharata and the Ramayana still serve as a source of inspiration for writers' worldwide, influencing Indian society's cultural imagination.

Historical Context and Social Commentary

Indian literature offers insightful perspectives on the social dynamics and historical background of various linguistic areas. Poets, novelists, and playwrights question dominant ideas and promote social change by critiquing political injustices, cultural norms, and social disparities via fictional tales.

Works like Saadat Hasan Manto's "Toba Tek Singh", Periyar's lectures in Tamil and Premchand's "Godan" in Hindi serve as prime examples of how literature may spur social change and political action.

Language Revitalization and Preservation

Literary works serve as a collection of linguistic history and identity, which is critical to the preservation and revitalization of endangered languages. The preservation of linguistic variety is aided by writers' frequent use of regional dialects, idioms, and vernacular terms in their writing. Regional writers that emphasize the diversity and strength of Indian languages are Shivarama Karanth in Kannada and Mahashweta Devi in Bengali.

Global Influence and Cross-Cultural Dialogue

Indian literature is a significant contributor to the global literary debate, reaching beyond national borders. Translations of Indian literary works into foreign languages foster intercultural communication and advance a better knowledge of Indian languages and cultures throughout the world. Language and cultural barriers are bridged by writers such as Rabindranath Tagore, whose writings have been translated into many languages.

As a whole, the results of this qualitative study illustrate the linguistic variety, social critique, and cultural expression of Indian languages and literature, underscoring their complex nature. This research advances a broader knowledge and comprehension of the diverse fabric of Indian society and culture by exploring the linguistic and cultural subtleties present in literary writings.

Implications for Language Learning and Understanding

The research's findings highlight the complex interrelationship between Indian languages and literature, displaying a mosaic of linguistic variety, cultural depth, and social criticism.

In exploring the consequences of these results, the literature's importance as a means of comprehending and valuing the intricacies of Indian languages is emphasized.

Preserving Linguistic Heritage

- Language legacy may be effectively preserved using the literature of different linguistic communities. Writers are stewards of linguistic diversity; they intentionally include local slang, dialects, and dialects in their works.
- The strength of India's linguistic fabric is enhanced by this preservationist approach, which is essential in the face of language endangerment.

Cultural Expression and Identity

- Indian literature is a medium through which cultural identity is expressed and preserved.
- The stories are filled with significance derived from historical events, folklore, and mythology, which serves to highlight the distinct cultural identities of the various language groups.
- The way language and culture interact in literature serves as a mirror to represent the complexity of Indian society.

Social Change

- Indian language literature is becoming seen as a powerful force for political activity and social transformation.
- Writers confront injustices, question cultural standards, and promote social change via their stories.

- This cross-linguistically apparent social consciousness in literature emphasises the work's potential to change society for the better.

Variety and Unity in Diversity
- Literary works display linguistic unity that highlights the variety and diversity of Indian culture. A sense of connectivity is fostered by authors who skillfully combine language components from several cultures.
- The flexibility and plasticity of Indian languages are highlighted in this synthesis, which questions the idea of inflexible language borders.

Global Impact and Cross-Cultural Dialogue
- Translations contributed to the global impact of Indian literature, which has improved intercultural communication and advanced linguistic knowledge of Indian languages. Literary pieces represent Indian culture internationally, surpassing language barriers.
- The way Indian literature is received throughout the world attests to its universal themes and capacity to strike a chord with readers everywhere.

Challenges and Opportunities
- The article also highlights the obstacles that Indian languages and literature confront, such as the common use of certain languages in literary domains, challenges to linguistic variation, and the influence of globalization.
- On the other hand, it also points out chances for intercultural dialogue, language revival, and using literature as a forum to discuss current concerns.

Implications for Research and Policy
- More research and policy initiatives will be impacted by the results of the research. Scholars can go further into particular linguistic groups, investigating lesser-known languages and their literary traditions.
- These findings can help officials establish plans for supporting regional literature, encouraging linguistic variety, and protecting languages in decline.

Limitations and Areas for Further Exploration
- The study's obstacles have been highlighted in the discussion, including India's enormous language variety and the subjectivity that always comes with literary translation.
- It provides suggestions for further investigation, such as cross-language evaluations, comprehensive reviews of certain literary genres, and studies of how digital media affects linguistic expression in literature.
- The subject matter highlights the literary genre's profound role in unraveling the variety of Indian languages.
- It highlights the importance of ongoing study, admiration, and assistance for the various language traditions that make up the rich fabric of Indian literature.
- Society may promote linguistic variety, protect cultural identities, and appreciate the diversity of India's linguistic legacy by developing a greater awareness of Indian languages that is influenced by literary inquiry.

5.0. Conclusion

India's languages are richly diverse in terms of language, culture, and historical circumstances, as evidenced by the literature exploring these languages. With an emphasis on the function of literature as a doorway to linguistic and cultural discoveries, this research paper has emphasized the need of understanding Indian languages through means other than translation.

By closely examining case studies like "Gitanjali" by Tagore, "Pudhumai Penn" by Bharati and Saadat Hasan Manto's "Toba Tek Singh", we have been able to see how literature captures the spirit of Indian languages and provides insightful looks into the social dynamics and cultural ethos of various locales.
These case studies illustrate the depth of language and cultural complexity found in Indian literature, going beyond simple translation to capture the nuances of language use and cultural expression.

The present study has clarified the significance of literature as a means of understanding the language variety, cultural details, and sociological settings established in Indian languages through a combination of qualitative research, case studies, and theoretical ideas.

Moreover, the reasons for acquiring and comprehending the language clarify the innovative possibilities of combining Indian literature into language instruction. Literature acts as an inspiration for a deeper connection with Indian languages and cultures by encouraging inclusion, developing cultural awareness, and developing cross-cultural communication skills. The research highlights the transformational potential of integrating Indian literature into language education through the implications for language acquisition and understanding. Literature acts as an outlet for a deeper connection with Indian languages and cultures by cultivating critical thinking, cross-cultural communication skills, cultural sensitivity, and flexible minds.

This research study promotes innovation in the field of Indian language studies by acknowledging the unbreakable connection between language and literature as well as the priceless insights that literature provides into the diverse range of Indian language and cultural heritage. Scholars, educators, and language learners can enhance their understanding of language, culture, and humanity by exploring the details of Indian literature. Literature acts as a ray of hope in our globally linked world, overcoming linguistic gaps and promoting understanding between different social groups.

The study of Indian languages via literature becomes not only an academic endeavor but also a way to promote understanding and respect for linguistic variety as we traverse an increasingly linked globe.
Language learners and academics may both enhance their own grasp of language and culture while preserving and promoting India's linguistic legacy by embracing the complexity of Indian literature.

In conclusion, Indian literature invites us to go out on a journey of linguistic research and cultural discovery, revealing a universe of discovery and enlightenment beyond translation. We may create a deeper understanding of the rich diversity of Indian languages and civilizations by extending our comprehension beyond linguistic bounds via literature.

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Declining multilingual capabilities among Jharkhand youth

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Abstract

This study explores how the present generation is equipped in terms of languages with respect to their previous generation. It surveys the students in two districts of Jharkhand – Giridih and West Singhbhum. A structured questionnaire to collect mother-tongue related data was used in the classrooms. In this study, we assess their range of vocabulary in the semantic domains of number system and body parts. The overall finding establishes that there is a sharp decline in the multilingual capabilities in terms of vocabulary in the present school-going generation with respect to the older generation.

Keywords: Multilingualism, Santhali, Kudmali, tribal bilingualism and linguistic diversity.

1.0 Introduction

Jharkhand is a state brimming with vibrant cultures and diverse linguistic traditions. Beneath the surface of this rich and vibrant tapestry, there lies a quiet erosion – the gradual decline of multilingual capabilities among its populace. Once celebrated for its linguistic diversity, Jharkhand now grapples with a growing trend that threatens to dim the voices of its indigenous languages.

UNICEF in its joint study (2013) with JTWRI (Jharkhand Tribal Welfare Research Institute) about the linguistic diversity in Jharkhand has reported thirty-two languages being spoken in the state. Majority of these thirty-two languages belong to the primitive tribal groups (PTGs) from Austroasiatic (AA) and Dravidian (DR) language families while some of them are from Indo-Aryan (IA) group. However, despite such diversity of languages in the state, it is Hindi which is the state official language. Education is made available throughout the state via Hindi medium. On the one hand, such language policy of the state unifies it with the majoritarian Hindi speakers of the country, and on the other hand, it paves way for the state official language to swallow the linguistic space of these indigenous languages. With Hindi becoming the language of opportunity, there was a massive headway towards this new state official language while orphaning the mother-tongues in the process. Ishtiaq (1992) has pointed out the gradual loss of linguistic space of traditional language/s to official language eventually leading to language shift in his study of Bhili in the state of Gujrat. Skutnabb-Kangas (2008 & 2014) holds the mediums of instruction which are state official languages but not the mother-tongues of the students as the primary factor behind the death of most of the languages across the world.

In this study, we report how along with Bangla and Odiya, the other two dominant languages from the neighbouring states, Hindi has played a vital role towards the decline of multilingual capabilities across generations and factored in obsoletion of several vocabulary from various semantic domains as well as of some unique concepts from various languages of Jharkhand. We conducted a survey-based study in Giridih, and West Singhbhum – two districts of the state with a large tribal population.

1.1 Rationale for selecting rural Jharkhand

Majority of the linguistic studies on the languages of Jharkhand by far have chiefly confined to the urban spaces. However, Jharkhand resides largely in the rural area. The degree of variance between the urban bilingualism (tribal – non-tribal) and rural bilingualism (inter-tribal) has already been reported by the likes of Annamalai (1990, 1997, 2001 & 2004), Hasnain (1997) and Mohan (2002 & 2013). Mohan (2013) particularly reports that tribal bilingualism in Jharkhand among the ethnolinguistic communities "seems to be quantitatively and qualitatively different from the mainstream Indian bilingualism" (p.300). It was thus, important to focus on the unurbanized space and see if the linguistic spaces were dwindling there too. UDISE[1] (2017) data for the majority of the districts falling in rural Jharkhand shows a significantly reduced number of enrolments between class VI to VIII. Exploring the causative factors, Gupta and Padel (2021) in a full-page article in *The Hindu* highlight the absence of mother-tongue from the classrooms.

> Key national and international guidelines on indigenous education have not been followed [so far]. The 1961 Dhebar Commission had recommended integration of tribal knowledge and language into the curriculum, and ensuring that school times didn't clash with tribal festivals and agricultural work, which are vital learning spaces.

The non-compliance of such directives at the policy and/or implementation level gradually led to the dominance of the state official language. Availability of education via only the dominant language/s, during both pre- and post-independence as well as even after the formation of the state of Jharkhand in the year 2000, ensured the departure of several original concepts like the indigenous system of counting for many of the languages in the state. Greater use of the dominant languages by the later generations has been posing a severe threat to the indigenous ecosystem of local languages. Consequently, the linguistic behaviour of the youth today is characterized by a declining vocabulary in their mother-tongue and reduced competence in the languages surrounding them. This largely forms the premise for the current study and we attempt to measure its extent.

1.2.1 Hypothesis

It is noteworthy to think of the declining vocabulary skills in the mother-tongue and reduced competence in other tongues are phenomena across all the languages among the youth in Jharkhand. We begin the research, thus, with a question: Is the present generation less equipped in terms of languages with respect to their grandparents? We set off with an established notion about exploring a language that the grandparent generation are the best resources. Nothing can be more crucial than the grandparents' inputs particularly when it is about the less/undocumented languages. Therefore, we hypothesize that the linguistic competence of the grandparents' generation shall be higher than the present school going generation both in terms of quality of vocabulary and number of languages. Our hypothesis is further boosted by the fact that the present school going generation has more literacy rate than that of the grandparents which entails less penetration of the dominant language/s to the latter.

2.0 Review of literature

The sociolinguistic studies have largely recognised the multilingualism prevailing in the state of Jharkhand. This studied plurilinguality has largely concentrated to the urban space of the state. For instance, Mohan (2002 & 2013) does highlight the harmonial coexistence of state official language along with the indigenous mother-tongues. However, he does not delve into the rural space of the state for his study. Neither does he

look at it through the lenses of medium of instruction at school level nor does his sample include students. Skutnabb Kangas, one of the pioneers in multilingualism, underlines the prefernce for the state official languages but not the mother-tongues of the students for medium of instruction as the primary factor for the death of most of the languages across the world (2008 & 2014).

Ishtiaq (1992) has reported the gradual loss of linguistic space of indigenous vernacular/s to official language in his study of Bhili in the state of Gujrat. he identified that it eventually lead to language shift. The same phenomenon was observed in Giridih during this study where the Kudmi tribe did not report its community language Kudmali as their mother-tongue. Rather, they showed a preference for Khortha.

The joint study by UNICEF and JTWRI (2013) is the only comprehensive work on the linguistic diversity of Jharkhand. It reaches out to all the twenty-four districts of the state, and surveys three blocks in each of them. Thus, it covers seventy-two blocks in the state encompassing 4000 respondents. This is the largest sample ever surveyed for linguistic exploration in the state. This study reports a strong multilingualism for the state. The present study, however, identifies a decline in the multilingual capabilities among the school going population. Unlike the UNICEF and JTWRI study (2013) which covers a cross-section of the society in Jharkhand, this study concentrates on the school-going youth and its linguistic competence. However, the former study has been the frontrunner for multilingual education in Jharkhand.

3.0 Methodology

Data collection:

A survey[2] was conducted in the middle schools of Jharkhand related to the competence in mother-tongue and the other tongues. Data pertaining to the linguistic competence was elicited in the classroom using a structured questionnaire. Their competence in two semantic domains, viz., counting system and body parts (name of fingers) was checked. The information thus received was verified at the speech community level through informal interviews. The interviewer was particularly interested in the grandparents as more authentic linguistic inputs were to come from them. Therefore, informal interviews of the selected parents/family members from the speech community were done in a structured manner.

While engaging in a conversation during the interviews, the interviewer engaged the interviewees in counting through fingers. This activity created the scope for the testing their knowledge in both, the indigenous counting system and the names of the fingers. The inputs were recorded in a spread-sheet. This technique was supplemented with two handouts during the classroom research. Of the two handouts circulated in the classroom for each student, one checked their knowledge of the name of their fingers and contained the diagram of a human palm with arrows pointing the fingers. The other handout checked their knowledge of the indigenous counting system and had blank spaces along with small images of various relatable objects to be counted by them.

4.0 Discussion

Historically, Jharkhand has been a melting pot of languages, with tribal communities and immigrant populations coexisting harmoniously, each contributing to the linguistic mosaic of the region. From the melodic rhythms of Santhali to the lyrical cadences of Kudmali and Ho, these languages have been integral to the identity and heritage of the people of Jharkhand. However, in recent years, this linguistic landscape has undergone a seismic shift, driven by various socio-economic factors.

One of the primary drivers of this decline is the pervasive influence of globalisation and urbanization. As Jharkhand made its strides towards economic progress and modernisation, there has been a palpable shift in language preferences, with Hindi emerging as the language of aspiration and opportunity. The allure of economic mobility and access to global markets has led the young Jharkhandis to prioritize Hindi over their mother tongues, relegating indigenous languages to the periphery.

Additionally, the education system in Jharkhand has played a pivotal role in shaping the linguistic preferences among its youth. With Hindi and English predominantly favoured as mediums of instruction in schools, indigenous languages receive scant attention, relegated to the status of vernacular subjects which are not being offered right from the early education at the primary level. The institutional neglect not only undermines the value of indigenous languages but also perpetuates a shadow of linguistic marginalisation, particularly among disadvantaged communities.

Furthermore, the pervasive influence of mainstream media and popular culture has further exacerbated the decline of multilingualism in Jharkhand. The infotainment (information + entertainment through electronic or TV/print media) segment here is largely dominated by Hindi and English content, with little representations from the tribal and regional languages. Resultantly, majority of the Jharkhand youth is inundated with a monolingual media diet reinforcing the primacy of Hindi and English.

4.1 West Singhbhum

West Singhbhum is a district with vast rural area. It has a population of 15,02,338, of which 12,84,303 (85.4%) resides in the rural area . The tribals form the major chunk in this district. Their population is 10,11,296 (Ibid) which is two-third of the total population and together with the SCs i.e.,56,986, they consist 71.10% of the district. It is one of the largest districts of Jharkhand and hosts a number of languages including Ho, Mundari, Kudmali, Santhali, Kudukh, Gondi, Bhumij, a sub-variety of Bangla, a sub-variety of Odiya and Urdu. Such demographic distribution ensures a great linguistic diversity in a classroom.

4.1.1 Linguistic diversity in the classroom

We began this study with a middle school in the Sonua block of West Singhbhum district. The school, Middle School, Madangjahir, Sonua, represents almost all the languages present in the district. Table 1 below is indicative of the linguistic diversity in a classroom.

Table 1: Linguistic diversity in MS, Mdangjahir

No. of languages	No. of speakers (students)	No. of speakers against each Language combinations
05	07	3 - [Santhali, Ho, Hindi, S-Odiya*, Bhumij] 1 - [Mahali, Santhali, Ho, Hindi, S-Odiya] 3 - [Kudmali, Ho, Hindi, S-Odiya, Bangla]
04	11	2 - [Ho, Hindi, S-Odiya, Kudmali] 3 - [Ho, Santhali, Hindi, S-Odiya] 2 - [Santhali, Ho, Hindi, S-Odiya] 2 - [Ho, Gondhi, Hindi, Kudmali] 2 - [Kudmali, S-Odiya, Hindi, Bangla]

03	21	7 - [Santhali, Ho, Hindi]
		4 - [Ho, Hindi, S-Odiya]
		4 - [Kudmali, Ho, Hindi,]
		4 - [S-Odiya, Kudmali, Hindi]
		2 - [Mahali, Ho, Hindi]
02	14	8 - [Ho, Hindi]
		4 - [S-Odiya, Hindi]
		2 - [Santhali, Hindi]
01	00	--
	Total = 53	

*S-Odiya: A sub-variety of Odiya.   Source: Survey data, 2021-22.

It can be observed from table 1 that majority of the students (21 of them) are competent in three languages. Eleven students reported their proficiency in four languages. Fourteen of the students reported themselves as bilinguals. It is clear from the table 1 that Ho figures in majority of the language combinations reported by the students here as the Singhbhum region is the hub of the Ho tribe. Odiya figures the most after Ho in the languages reported. The Odiya that we report here is not same as the Odiya that is spoken in Cuttack/Bhubaneshwar. This is primarily a locally configured hybrid variety which borrows maximum from Kudmali. This sub-variety of Odiya (we call it Singhbhum Odiya and use S-Odiya for it henceforth in our study) is not mutually intelligible to the Odiya speakers of Odisha in absolute terms. Merit of this S-Odiya is that it is the language of wider communication (LWC) in the Kolhan region (Combining East and West Singhbhum) for inter-tribal communication. It was and still is the market language to a great extent.

It is noteworthy that not a single student from the class of 53 students (table 1) reported himself/herself as a monolingual. The fourteen students who reported themselves as bilinguals have Ho and S-Odiya as their mother-tongues. S-Odiya, of course, for its wider utility made way to the households and families of a few communities now have it as their home language. Investigation to this migration requires a separate study, and therefore, we leave it at that. Hindi is the other language known to the students due to it being the medium of instruction at school.

4.1.2 Linguistic diversity of the grandparents

Among the grandparents of these students, there were ten trilingual, eleven bilinguals and nine monolinguals. However, a majority of them had four or more languages with them. As it appears in table 2, linguistic richness is clearly visible among this generation as 21 of them had four or more languages. On an average, this generation has competence in five languages. Interestingly, two of them had communicative competence in 07 languages which included all the languages available in the region, i.e., Ho, Santhali, Kudmali, Bhumij, S-Odiya, Bangla and Hindi apart from some degree of literacy competence in Hindi and Odiya, too. The Bangla mentioned here as well as in table 1 is not the Bangla that is hallmark of Kolkata. This variety is commonly referred to as *gɔða bãŋla* (documented as G-Bangla in our study) and is spoken by the migrant fishing community commonly referred to as *gʰʊnɪya:* here. The women from this community play an important role in the supply-chain of consumable goods.

Table 2: Linguistic diversity among the grandparents of MS, Madangjahir students.

No. of languages	No. of speakers (Grandparents)	No. of speakers per language combination
4 or more languages	21	7 - [Kudmali, Ho, Santhali, Bhumij, S-Odiya, G-Bangla] 6 - [Ho, Santhali, Bhumij, S-Odiya] 4 - [Ho, Santhali, Bhumij, S-Odiya, Hindi] 2 - [Ho, Santhali, S-Odiya, Hindi] 2 - [Kudmali, Ho, Santhali, Bhumij, S-Odiya, G-Bangla, Hindi]
03	10	3 - [Ho, S-Odiya, Santhali] 2 - [Kudmali, Ho, Hindi] 1 - [S-Odiya, Kudmali, Hindi] 1 - [Santhali, Hindi, S-Odiya] 3 - [Ho, Hindi, S-Odiya]
02	11	6 - [Ho, Hindi] 3 - [Ho, S-Odiya] 1 - [Kudmali, Ho] 1 - [Gondhi, Ho]
01	09	8 - [Ho] 1 - [S-Odiya]
	Total = 51[*]	

* Grandparents of two students were no more.   Source: Survey data, 2021-22.

The Grandparents generation does exhibit monolingualism. Nine of the informants reported competence in a single language. Eight of them were Ho speakers and one was S-Odiya which are arguably their mother-tongues. This fractional degree of monolingualism is pertaining to illiteracy as well as too little exposure to other communities or the market. Of these nine monolinguals, six were women. Being women is not a restrictive factor in the region for venturing out. However, the monolingualism of these six women can be attributed to their lack of exposure to other communities. On the other hand, the women from the fishing community called *gʰʊnɪyaːɪn* (feminine of *gʰʊnɪyaː*) are a significant cog in the village-to-village delivery of consumable kitchen items. They determine the rates of goods with the village women and use barter system for their transaction. Such transactions are primarily women-to-women and make use of indigenous counting system. The interaction during such transactions is quite interesting as the *gʰʊnɪyaːɪn* is generally a monolingual G-Bangla (Goda Bangla) speaker and the village women make the necessary adjustments in their repertoire to facilitate the communication.

4.1.3 Where do they stand?

It is noteworthy that there are twenty-one of the fifty-one grandparents (table 2) who are proficient users of four or more languages. Seven of them could communicate in six languages including Kudmali, Ho, Santhali, Bhumij, S-Odiya and G-Bangla. Interestingly, there were two men who had undergone elementary education, and thus, were proficient in Hindi in addition to the six languages mentioned above. There were other eighteen respondents who showed some degree of proficiency in Hindi. Some of them had had formal elementary education or had some irregular employment outside the district. However, the overall number

of languages they could communicate in was five or less. On an average, the number of languages with the grandparents' generation is five.

The present school-going generation, on the other hand, shows proficiency in lesser number of languages in comparison to the grandparents' generation. Out of fifty-three students only seven showed capabilities to communicate in five languages and eleven in four languages. There were twenty-three trilinguals and fourteen bilinguals. On an average, this generation has three languages to itself. It is also to be noticed that Hindi is present in the number of languages for each respondent. Their exposure to Hindi begins right from the introduction of education in their early life in school through the teaching and learning materials (TLMs) and medium of instruction. So, practically, each one of them gradually adopts Hindi to whatever degree is achievable/feasible to him/her based on the resources and exposure. Therefore, it is hard to find monolinguals among them.

4.2 Giridih

Like West Singhbhum, Giridih, too, has a large share of population residing in the rural area. It was separated from Hazaribagh district on 04th December 1972. It is the third most populated district of the state with a population of 24,45,776 of which 22,37,450 (91%) reside in the rural area. The scheduled tribe population of 3,25,493 comprises approximately the 13 % of the district (Ibid). The tribals here are largely the Santhals and have Santhali as their language. The scheduled castes who are 13.31% of the district (Ibid) along with the Muslims and other indigenous communities form considerably a big chunk of the population that uses Khortha as the mother-tongue. The sex ratio in the district is 944 females per 1000 males.

4.2.1 Linguistic diversity in the classroom

Our survey included participants from two schools – MS Kurumdiha and UMS Baddiha – located in the interior parts of Giridih. In total, 120 students were surveyed for their mother-tongue and their capacities in the other tongue from these schools. Table 3 shows the linguistic diversity in these three schools.

Table 3: Linguistic diversity among students in MS Kurumdiha and UMS Baddiha

No. of languages	Total No. of speakers	No. of speakers (students) per language combination
> 4	00	Nil
4	06	2 - [Khortha, Magahi, Hindi, Bhojpuri] 4 - [Santhali, Khortha, Hindi, G-Bangla]
3	25	7 - [Khortha, Hindi, Santhali] 12 - [Santhali, Hindi, Khortha] 6 - [Magahi, Hindi, Khortha]
2	48	21 - [Khortha, Hindi] 16 - [Santhali, Hindi] 11 - [Magahi, Hindi]
1	41	26 – [Hindi] 9 – [Khortha] 6 – [Santhali]
	Total = 120	

Source: Survey data, 2021-22

In these two schools in Giridih, it was seen that there were a large number of bilinguals (40%) and monolinguals (34.1%); and fewer trilingual (20.83%) and quadrilingual (05%). The number of speakers with more than four languages was nil.The Peoples' Linguistic Survey of India (PLSI) (Devy et. al., 2018) documents Kurmali/Kudmali, actually pronounced as *kuṛmali:* and the written texts, of late, has started asserting that distinction in the spelling and Khortha as the primary languages in the district. However, surprisingly, the speech community of the Kudmali language (the Kudmi - Mahtos) did not report Kudmali as their mother-tongue here. All the surveyed members of this community reported not Kudmali but Khortha as their mother-tongue. Interestingly, Khortha is the lingua franca and the medium for inter-community transactions here. It is due to such language shifts that we see a meagre one-fourth of the strength as multilinguals (with three or more languages) among the school goers here. The preference for other tongue as mother tongue was at a bigger display in this district. It can be further noticed in the 41 monolingual students, 26 have reported Hindi to be the only language they speak. Since the catchment area is a rural place and all the speech communities have an indigenous language, either regional or tribal, it is not quite disturbing to perceive the governing factors that led to these many L1 Hindi speakers. Enquiring at the community level and with the parents revealed that it is the parents who have consciously chosen the language to be the new home language with a belief that it would be useful for their ward/s future.

4.2.2 Linguistic diversity of the grandparents

Sixty-four grandparents of the surveyed students could be reached out and their competence in various languages was explored. These respondents comprised thirty-three individuals with Khortha, twenty-five with Santhali, three with G-Bangla and two with Magahi as their respective L1. It was observed that there were six monolinguals, eleven bilinguals, twenty -five trilingual and seventeen quadrilingual amongst them. Interestingly, five respondents with Khortha as their L1 could speak four additional languages. Four of them knew Kudmali as they sang festival songs in the language. Apart from Khortha and Kudmali these four were proficient users of Santhali, G-Bangla and Hindi.

Table 4: Linguistic diversity among grandparents of students from MS Kurumdiha and UMS Baddiha.

No. of languages	Total No. of speakers	No. of speakers (students) per language combination
> 4	05	4 - [Khortha, Kudmali, Santhali, G-Bangla, Hindi]
		1 - [Khortha, G-Bangla, Santhali, Magahi, Hindi]
4	17	7 – [Khortha, Magahi, Hindi, Bhojpuri]
		5 - [Khortha, Hindi, G-Bangla, Santhali]
		5 - [Santhali, Khortha, Hindi, G-Bangla]
3	25	10 - [Khortha, Hindi, Santhali]
		7 - [Santhali, Hindi, Khortha]
		5 - [Santhali, Khortha, G-Bangla]
		3 - [G-Bangla, Khortha, Hindi]
2	11	4 - [Khortha, Hindi]
		3 - [Santhali, Hindi]
		2 - [Santhali, Khortha]
		2 - [Magahi, Khortha]

1	06	00 - [Hindi]
		3 - [Khortha]
		3 - [Santhali]
	Total = 64	

Source: Survey data, 2021-22.

4.3 Indigenous counting system

Santhali and Kudmali, two indigenous languages spoken primarily in the eastern regions of India, exhibit unique counting systems reflective of their cultural heritage as well as need based circumstantial linguistic evolution. Their numerical systems encapsulate not just the mathematical aspect of counting but also embody the cultural influences and historical nuances. In Kudmali, with a north-to-south spread of linguistic region on the map of Jharkhand (, the counting system demonstrates a fusion of indigenous route and external linguistic borrowings (Fayez & Mahto, 2021-22) in its present form. With the introduction of modern education, Kharia and Kurux, over a period of time, have switched over to the IA system of counting . In Santhali, an AA language with the speech community predominantly in the states of Jharkhand, Odisha and West Bengal, the counting system reflects the community's strong connection to the surrounding environment and the traditional ties in their lives. The intricacies of their counting system facilitate invaluable insights into not just the linguistic diversity but the cultural richness of these communities as well. Table 5 lists the cardinal numbers (from one to ten) in both Kudmali and Santhali.

Table 5: Cardinal numbers in Kudmali and Santhali.

Numbers	Santhali	Kudmali
1	*mɪʈ*	*əna:*
2	*ba:r*	*ðɔna:*
3	*pe*	*ʈena:*
4	*pu:ŋ*	*tʃa:ra:*
5	*mɔ̃ŋe*	*ma:tʃa:*
6	*ʈʊrʊy*	*dʒʰedʒ*
7	*eya:y*	*ga:ɪ*
8	*ɪra:l*	*ʌʈʰa:ɪ*
9	*a:re*	*nəʊ*
10	*gel*	*sɪra:m*

Source: Survey data, 2021-22.

Our survey findings indicate that school-going children who are the native speakers of Kudmali or Khortha in the Giridih and West Singhbhum districts were unaware of these numerals, which were from their own mother-tongue. This observation can be attributed primarily to the TLMs and the medium of instruction being Hindi in the educational ecology. Nonetheless, a large number of their grandparents exhibited a commendable understanding of the indigenous counting system. In fact, the two L1 Kudmali speakers from the grandparent's generation in West Singhbhum who were conversant in seven languages (see table 2) informed of proverbs and couplets involving the cardinal numbers to count the spiral laps at the time of tilling their farms. Modern singular medium education took away the counting system while the

introduction of tractors supplanted the spiral laps. Consequently, the cultural repository of counting-related proverbs also faded into obscurity.

However, among Santhali speaking cohorts, the awareness of their counting system was quite better than the Kudmi-Mahtos though it cannot be considered at par as per the sociolinguistic parameters. Around 38% of the interviewed grandparents informed their knowledge of the counting system in Santhali in comparison to the 22% of the present school-going Santhali speakers who, in both Giridih and West Singhbhum, demonstrate a limited acquaintance with numerical understanding in their mother-tongue. This correlation underlines the pivotal role played by educational frameworks and instructional material in shaping linguistic and numerical competence of the youth in Jha**3**rkhand.

4.4 Semantic domain of body parts

The semantic domain of body parts encompasses a rich and intricate network of linguistic and cultural significance. The diversity of terminology used to describe body parts reflects the unique perspectives and priorities of different societies. It is in this context that we find the use of fingers for counting of paramount importance. Using fingers as a counting tool has been and continues to be a practical and intuitive method. This is a versatile method particularly useful in basic arithmetic to more complex calculations and help in counting small quantities for keeping track of items. Upon this realisation, we grew keen on the linguistic side of it – the name of the fingers. We expanded our survey to understand their competence in knowing the names of the fingers in their mother-tongues. Table 6 lists the name of the fingers in both Kudmali and Santhali.

Table 6: Names of fingers in Kudmali and Santhali.

Sl. No.	Name of the finger (in English)	Name of the finger (in Kudmali)	Name of the finger (in Santhali)
1.	Thumb	*ṭʰepɔ*	*bʊɖha: ka:ʈʊp*
2.	Index finger	*repɔ*	*ʊðʊk ka:ʈʊp*
3.	Middle finger	*ri:ya:*	*ṯa:la: ka:ʈʊp*
4.	Ring finger	*ma:ni:*	*mʊða:m ka:ʈʊp*
5.	Little finger	*ka:ni:*	*sɪp ka:ʈʊp*

Source: Survey data, 2021-22

Fingers are not merely anatomical entities but bear symbolic and linguistic significance deeply intertwined with belief systems and societal norms. The thumb has become the most used finger in the present-day social media and social life in the form of 'like' or thumbs up. However, it has been a traditional marker of negation among the Santhals and Kudmis. In addition, the thumb is an integral element in several proverbial usages to indicate negation and denial. Thus, the term for it, i.e., *ṭʰepɔ* and *bʊɖha: ka:ʈʊp*, respectively for Kudmali and Santhali, were present with a good majority. Although a little above 80% of the children could name the thumb as *ʌŋgu:ʈʰa:* in Hindi, 60 and 70 percent of them returned *ṭʰepɔ* and *bʊɖha: ka:ʈʊp* in Kudmali and Santhali, respectively. Barring a couple of them, a large section of the Kudmi school-going youth, however, was unable to name the rest of the four fingers. On the contrary, a good 70% of the septua and octogenarians could name all the fingers in their mother tongue Kudmali.

The Santhal school-going youth, on the other hand, had a better knowledge about the name of their fingers in comparison to the Kudmis. Almost all knew *ka:ʈʊp* the Santhali lexical item for finger. However, the prefixial qualifiers to demonstrate the eldest, the middle, the youngest and the two intermediaries between the three were not there in their repertoire. Therefore, apart from *bʊɖha: ka:ʈʊp* and *sɪp ka:ʈʊp*, the other three did not have much recall value for them. In total, 26% of the Santhal school-goers could tell the name of all the five fingers, 38% could name three and 36% could name two of them. The older grandparent generation of the community, however, showed a cent percent competence in naming them.

In 2003, the government of India included Santhali in its scheduled list of languages making it the 22nd. Ever since Santhali has seen sunny days in terms of reception as well as its overall development through textbooks and other TLMs, opening of new departments for study of its literature and culture in colleges and universities across several states including Jharkhand, new media, computerized fonts, etc. Such institutional patronisation has been the primary demand of the speakers of the remaining PTG languages. Apart from Santhali, the state of Jharkhand presently has fifteen languages as the second official languages of the state including some of the PTG languages.

5.0 Conclusion

Linguistic diversity is not merely a matter of words but a reflection of cultural identity and heritage. The erosion of indigenous languages threatens to sever the cultural roots that bind communities together, erasing centuries old traditions and knowledge systems in the process. Moreover, the loss of multilingual capabilities hampers inter-tribal/community communication through the young generation, hindering the transmission of cultural heritage from the elders to the younger generation. In both the districts in our study, Giridih and West Singhbhum, we found that the younger generation is less equipped not just in terms of number of languages but also in terms range of vocabulary in the languages they claim to be theirs. This study shows that the multilingual capability among the younger generation has declined in terms of number of languages they have in comparison to the older generation. The young generation's lack of knowledge in their indigenous counting system and name of fingers is going to mark departure of these concepts by the time they become grandparents.

Indeed, there is a pressing need for policy level intervention to promote multilingual education and linguistic diversity in schools. Ideally, it should include integration of indigenous languages into the school curriculum, training the teachers in multilingual pedagogy, and paving the path forward for the resources and development of TLMs in these languages. Furthermore, there is an acute urgency for a greater representation of these indigenous languages in the public discourses and mainstream media. The media outlets can play a crucial role in promoting linguistic diversity by featuring content in these languages and provide support to publication in languages that are local. By providing a platform to the voices of local communities through their mother tongue/s, media hubs can contribute towards the revitalisation of indigenous languages in Jharkhand.

The declining multilingual capabilities of the Jharkhandi youth is a pressing issue that demands immediate attention and concentrated action. By embracing linguistic diversity as a source of strength and resilience, Jharkhand can reclaim its rich heritage and ensure that its indigenous languages continue to resonate for generations to come.

Notes

- 1. UDISE - Unified District Information System for Education (UDISE) is a database about schools and students in India. It was developed by the National University of Educational Planning and Administration, New Delhi on behalf of the Ministry of Education, Govt. of India in 2012-13. All the schools in India have their respective UDISE codes and provide information related to student enrolment, dropout, pass percentage, number of teachers in place, etc. on annual basis.

- 2. Survey data- The authors conducted a mother-tongue survey in the middle schools of Giridih and West Singhbhum in 2021-22. A structured questionnaire was used for the primary data collection w.r.t. the first language of the students. The authors can be approached for the raw data.

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Field Report

Bharat Bhushan

The Korwa people (Pahadi Korwa/ Bhasi)are a designated Scheduled Tribe in India, meaning they're an indigenous community with a distinct culture and heritage. The Korwa people are an indigenous tribal community primarily found in the states of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, and Odisha in India. They belong to the Austroasiatic language family and are known for their unique cultural practices and traditions. The Korwa tribe traditionally inhabits forested regions and relies on agriculture, hunting, and gathering for their livelihoods. They have their own distinct language, known as Korwa, and rich oral traditions, including folklore, music, and dance. The Korwa community faces various socio-economic challenges, including access to education, healthcare, and infrastructure, and efforts are being made to preserve their cultural heritage and improve their quality of life.

In pursuit of enriching linguistic resources and understanding the Korwa language spoken by the Korwa tribe residing in Korba district, Chhattisgarh, India, a field trip was done by Dr Pramod Kumar, the Principal Investigator(P.I.), and Bharat Bhushan, the Resource Person, under the aegis of the SPPEL, CIIL. Left for Korba on the 2nd of March,2024, it was 180 km approximately from Indira Gandhi National University (IGNTU), Amarkantak, so after the 4-hour journey, we reached Korba. A magnificent industrial city. We stayed in Korba for the night, to start the journey, the next morning.

The fieldwork commenced with a departure from Korba at 8:00 AM, aiming to establish initial contact with Korwa language informants in the Tittardandh and Pendri Dih villages. However, due to travel distances, data collection was postponed to subsequent days. The Korwa tribe predominantly inhabits the forested regions of Korba district. Data collection commenced with the recording of sociolinguistic data focusing on topics such as the bow and arrow with Dukhna, followed by a session with Singlu Ram where sociolinguistic data and a vocabulary list related to life stages were documented. Despite initial weather hindrances, data collection proceeded inside the Anganwadi building. (For the data collection, word list and sentence list were given by SPPEL.)

The next day, in the remote village of Khara Khet, nestled beside a mountain, word list data collection was conducted with informants Bodhan and Mangal Singh, contributing to the linguistic corpus of the Korwa language.The next morning, efforts were dedicated to obtaining official permission for data collection from the Korba district's Tribal Welfare Department. The application was submitted and acknowledged, paving the way for future data collection endeavours.

Next few days the fieldwork faced challenges such as the unavailability of travel assistants and informants, hindering data collection opportunities. Despite setbacks, efforts were made to navigate through unforeseen circumstances and maintain the momentum of the fieldwork. Data collection resumed with the completion of the sentence list with informant Ganga Ram, emphasizing the collection of standardized word lists and cultural song recordings, providing multifaceted insights into the Korwa language and culture. A visit to Khamhon village facilitated the successful collection of cultural songs, accentuating the diverse cultural expressions within the Korwa community.

Informant's details and distances covered during the Field work

Date	Visits (Distance Covered)	Informants
3 March 2024	Korba to Patarpali (30km) Patarpali to TittarDandh(30km) TittarDandh to Syang Hostel(20km) Syang to PendiDih(20km) PendriDih to Syang (20km)	
4 March 2024	Syang to TittarDandh TittarDandh to Syang (30km)	Bankhi Bai Single Ram Dukhna
5 March 2024	Syang Hostel to Korba Collectorate office and back(150km)	
6 March 2024	Syang to Kharakhet and back (35km)	Bodhan Mangal Singh
7-10 March 2024	On the 8th went to: Syang to TittarDandh TittarDandh to Syang (30km)	
11 March 2024	Syang to TittarDandh TittarDandh to DhauraBari DhauraBari to Barpali Total travel: 66km	Bisun Ram Biru Ram
12 March 2024	Barpali to Kharakhet(via Syang) Kharakhet to Syang	Mangal Singh Jogi Ram
13 March 2024	Syang to Khamhon Khamhon to TittarDandh TittaarDandh to Syang Total travel: 82km	Ganga Ram
14 March 2024	Syang to TittarDandh and back Total travel: 32km	Ganga Ram
15 March 2024	Syang to Khamhon and back Total travel: 55km	
16 March 2024	Syang to Korba (Road) 80km Korba to Bilaspur(Train) Bilaspur to Pendra Road(Train)	End of the visit

Note: *Distances mentioned are approximate*

The fieldwork concluded with farewells to hostel staff and travel assistants, followed by a journey from Korba to Bilaspur and onward to Pendra Road, marking the end of the current field visit for Korwa language data collection on 16th March 2024.

In conclusion, the fieldwork aimed at documenting the Korwa language spoken by the Korwa tribe in the Korba district, Chhattisgarh, India, has been an enriching and multifaceted journey. From initial challenges to eventual successes, each step of the fieldwork has contributed to a deeper understanding of the linguistic and cultural landscape of the Korwa community. The fieldwork commenced to establish initial contact and collect linguistic data from Korwa language informants in the Tittardandh and Pendri Dih villages. Despite setbacks such as weather hindrances and unavailability of informants, the team persevered, adapting strategies and navigating through unforeseen challenges. Data collection sessions, spanning topics from sociolinguistic inquiries to the documentation of cultural songs, provided a rich tapestry of linguistic resources and cultural insights. The support of local community members and hostel staff underscored the collaborative spirit essential for such endeavours.

The fieldwork not only contributed to linguistic research but also fostered connections and exchanges between researchers and community members. The acknowledgment of local traditions, such as the celebration of "Chatham" and the exchange of contact information with potential future informants, exemplifies the mutual respect and understanding nurtured during the fieldwork. Looking ahead, the collected data, including word lists, sentence lists, and cultural recordings, will serve as invaluable resources for linguistic analysis and preservation efforts. The transcription and analysis of this data will further illuminate the nuances of the Korwa language, paving the way for future research and documentation initiatives. In essence, the fieldwork to document the Korwa language has not only been a scholarly pursuit but also a journey of cultural exchange, collaboration, and appreciation. By bridging the gap between academia and local communities, such endeavours contribute to the preservation and celebration of linguistic diversity, enriching our collective understanding of human language and culture.

पुस्तक परिचय

राजी भाषा का शब्दकोश : अभिनव प्रयोग

उमा भट्ट

यह तो सर्वविदित ही है कि वैश्वीकरण के इस दौर में संसार की कई भाषाएं विलुप्ति के कगार पर हैं। ऐसे में उत्तराखण्ड की भाषाएं भी अपने समाज तक सीमित होती जा रही है। इन्हीं में से एक विलुप्तप्राय भाषा राजी भी हैं जो उत्तराखण्ड के पिथौरागढ़, चम्पावत तथा उधमसिंह नगर जिलों के सीमान्त और सीमित क्षेत्रों में बोली जाती है। राजी भाषा बोलने वालों की संख्या यद्यपि अत्यल्प है परन्तु यह सुखद है कि उनकी जनसंख्या में निरन्तर वृद्धि हो रही है। 2001 की जनगणना के अनुसार राजी जनसंख्या 517 है। 2011 में यही 732 हो गई है। पिथौरागढ़ जिले के अस्कोट क्षेत्र में कार्यरत गैरसरकारी संगठन अर्पण द्वारा 2022 में किये गये सर्वेक्षण के अनुसार राजी जनसंख्या 1075 है।

उत्तराखण्ड की भाषाओं में कुमाउंनी, गढ़वाली, जौनसारी तथा रङल्यू के शब्दकोश बने हैं। जौनपुरी, जोहारी तथा बंगाणी में भी शब्द-संकलन के प्रारम्भिक प्रयास हुए हैं। इस बीच राजी भाषा का पहला शब्दकोश प्रकाशित हुआ है। लखनऊ विश्वविद्यालय में भाषा विज्ञान विभाग की प्रोफेसर कविता रस्तोगी पिछले पच्चीस वर्षों से निरन्तर राजी भाषा पर काम कर रही हैं। सोसायटी फॉर एनडेन्जर्ड लैंग्वेजेज (सेल) नामक संस्था के माध्यम से भी वे काम कर रही हैं। राजी समुदाय के साथ संवाद कायम करते हुए उन्होंने इससे पूर्व 2010 में राजी वर्णमाला तथा 2012 में राजी भाषा के व्याकरण की दो पुस्तिकाएं प्रकाशित की हैं।

राजी जनजाति के लोगों को सूचक बनाकर कविता रस्तोगी ने राजी भाषा का शब्दकोश तैयार किया है जिसे दून लायब्रेरी एन्ड रिसर्च सेन्टर, देहरादून तथा मैसर्स बिशन सिंह महेन्द्र पाल सिंह, देहरादून ने प्रकाशित किया है। इस किताब में एक ओर से राजी-हिन्दी शब्दकोश (125 पृष्ठ) है तथा दूसरी ओर से राजी इंग्लिश डिक्शनरी (122 पृष्ठ) है। इस प्रकार से वह त्रिभाषी शब्दकोश है तथा इसमें देवनागरी, रोमन और आईपीए (इन्टरनेशनल फोनेटिक एल्फाबेट) तीनों लिपियों का प्रयोग किया गया है। यद्यपि देवनागरी उत्तराखण्ड की विभिन्न भाषाओं की ध्वनियों का यथार्थ प्रतिलेखन करने में असमर्थ है परन्तु वर्तमान में देवनागरी को ही एकमात्र लिपि के रूप में स्वीकार कर लिया गया है। राजी इंग्लिश डिक्शनरी में राजी शब्दों को आईपीए में लिखा गया है जिससे शब्द का सही उच्च्चारण सम्भव है। इसके अतिरिक्त एक अन्य विशेषता इस कोश की यह है कि इसमें अधिकांश शब्दों के चित्र भी दिये गये हैं।

कोश के आमुख में प्रसिद्ध भाषावैज्ञानिक प्रो. अन्विता अब्बी लिखती हैं, 'बहुभाषिक, बहु-लिपि वाला, सचित्र कोश एक ऐसी भाषा में बनाना जो लेखिका द्वारा लिपिबद्ध करने के पूर्व मात्र मौखिक रूप में विद्यमान थी, अपने में एक सराहनीय प्रयास है। भाषा की शब्दावली स्वयं एकत्रित करने के उद्देश्य से कविता रस्तोगी द्वारा हिमालय के निचले दुर्गम क्षेत्रों में किये गए कार्यों पर आधारित यह कोश, भाषाविदों और राजी समुदाय, दोनों के लिए अतुलनीय सौगात कही जा सकती है।'

कोशकार ने प्रारम्भ में संक्षेप में राजी जनजाति का परिचय, उसकी आनुवंशिक सम्बद्धता, राजी भाषा की वर्तमान स्थिति तथा उसका संक्षिप्त व्याकरण दिया है। लेखिका ने राजी भाषा को तिब्बती-बर्मी परिवार की केन्द्रीय हिमालय शाखा से सम्बन्धित माना है जो अपनी पड़ोसी कुमाउंनी, नेपाली, हिन्दी और तिब्बती बर्मी परिवार की भाषाओं से प्रभावित हुई है। कुछ समय पूर्व राजी जनजाति के लोग अन्य समाजों से दूर एकान्त में जंगलों में रहने के आदी थे परन्तु जब से बाहरी समाज के सम्पर्क में आये हैं, उनकी शब्दावली मिश्रित होती जा रही है। राजी की निकटवर्ती भाषा कुमाउंनी है। उत्तराखण्ड में माध्यम भाषा के रूप में हिन्दी व्यवहृत होती है। जिस प्रकार कुमाउंनी में हिन्दी की पर्याप्त शब्दावली प्रयुक्त हो रही है, उसी प्रकार राजी में कुमाउंनी की पर्याप्त शब्दावली प्रयोग में लाई जा रही है

प्रस्तुत कोश में 1256 शब्द हैं। शोभाराम शर्मा मानते हैं कि राजी भाषा का शब्द भण्डार सीमित है। भाव, दशा और गुण आदि की अभिव्यक्ति करने वाले शब्दों की राजी भाषा में अत्यंत कमी है (उत्तराखण्ड की भाषाएं, 2014)। इन 1256 शब्दों में से लगभग 180 शब्द ऐसे हैं जो कुमाउनी में भी किंचित उच्चारण भेद के साथ विद्यमान हैं। जैसे राजी का शब्द हज्जे। यह कुमाउंनी में शज्य या शज्जि है और संस्कृत में शय्या। कुमाउनी की सीराली बोली की तरह राजी में भी आदि श का उच्चारण ह है। जैसे- हकलकंद शकलकंद, हालो-शालो, हरम-शरम, हडे-संग, हाहो-शशा। देखने में आया है कि कुमाउनी के प्रायः अकारान्त तद्भव शब्दों में ङ जोड़ा गया है। जैसे दुधङ (दुग्ध, दूध), घमङ (घर्म, घाम), घुमङ (गोधूम, गेहूं), फुलङ (फुल्ल, फूल)। तद्भव शब्दों के अतिरिक्त राजी-कुमाउनी में बहुत से समान शब्द ऐसे हैं जिनको कुमाउनी में रूढ़ या अज्ञातव्युत्पत्तिक माना गया है। जैसे गड़ गोड़ि (खेत), कुच-कुचा या कुच्चा (झाड़ू), जाम्मै जम्मा (सब), झट्ट झट्ट (शीघ्र), गाज-गाजी (झाग), झिक झिक्कल (अधिक) धोल-ठौल्या (होंठ)। ऐसे शब् है। यह आदान-प्र में भी हो सकता है।

इस प्रकार एक मृतप्राय भाषा को जीवित रखने का यह प्रयास अत्यन्त सराहनीय है। राजी भाषा के अध्येताओं के लिए तो यह महत्वपूर्ण है ही, राजी भाषा बोलने वालों के लिए भी उत्साहवर्धक है।

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