Assessing Vitality of Languages Spoken by Less than 10,000 Speakers in India.

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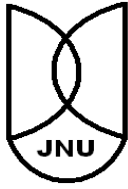
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DECLARATION BY THE CANDIDATE

This dissertation titled **"Assessing Vitality of Languages Spoken by Less than 10,000 Speakers in India"** submitted by me for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy, is an original work and has not been submitted so far in part or in full, for any other degree or diploma of any University or Institution.

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Dedicated to the tribal population of India struggling

for their rights to water, land, forest and dignity.

Chapter 1

Introduction

In the last two decades, the dramatic loss of linguistic diversity became an issue of serious concern among linguists, NGO's, Governmental bodies and International organizations. Krauss (1992) estimates that 90% of world languages may not survive the turn of the century. Such languages are said to be Endangered languages. Universally acceptable definitions of Endangered languages are scares however the following are the commonly accepted characteristics of an endangered language: dwindling speaker's population, restricted use of language in the speech community, and disrupted intergenerational transmission; and the consequences of these is the language shift: a situation where the language is no more spoken as the first language. While language shifts are not a new phenomenon, the rate at which these shifts are occurring today is a concern. These shifts in languages are not natural and gradual as they used to be rather they stem from uneven concentrations of power and widespread inequalities forcing people to abandon the use of their heritage languages for a dominant language. In this context, preserving linguistic diversity became the key agenda of various governmental and inter-governmental organisations focused on social justice. The first step in any a language maintenance project is language vitality assessment. The assessment of language vitality is important as it helps the concerned bodies in identifying priorities for the allocation of scares resources. While there is non consensus on the best method to assess a language vitality the following factors are generally taken into considerations to identify a vitality of language : sociolinguistic, economic, political, and social factors that affects a community's perception about their language and culture. A language that exhibits high vitality is considered to be a safe language with extensive use like Hindi. On the other hand, there are languages with low vitality: these languages are considered as endangered languages with restricted use like Greater Andamanese (Abbi 2007). Therefore a language vitality is considered as a continuum with safe languages on one end and with endangered languages on the other end and in between are the varying degrees of language vitality.

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1.1 Aims of the Study

For a successful positive intervention experts and government agencies dealing with language maintenance require an effective method to assess a vitality of language to establish priorities of actions. Fishman's Reversing Language Shift (1991), was the first focused attempt in providing an action plan for language revitalisation. As part of this classical work Fishman introduced GIDS-Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale: the first attempt at developing a method for assessing a vitality of language. Since then methods of language vitality assessment has undergone various improvisation. UNESCO's Ad Hoc Expert Group on Endangered Languages recommended 'Language Vitality and Endangerment' guidelines (2003) and Ethnologue's EGIDS- Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale, developed by Lewis and Simons (2009) mark significant advances in language vitality assessment methods by successfully tackling various complexities generally associated with theses methods. However these methods are still inadequate to capture the vitality of language for various methodological reasons. The chief reason among these is the failure to characterise multilingualism, and the dominance of monolingual model of language in their assessment methods thereby treating multilingualism as threat. For instance, in this study 156 languages with less than 10,000 speakers in India are considered, of this vitality of only 70 languages are assessed by both UNESCO and Ethnologue. In the UESCO Atlas of World's Language in Danger vitality of 35 languages that are considered here are assessed using UNESCO's LVE guideline and similarly Ethnologue in its 16th edition, using EGIDS presented vitality status for 63 languages under consideration in this study. In total both these methods together have assessed 70 languages with less than10,000 speakers in India, among these assessed languages there are 28 languages that have been assessed by both the methods. The results of these assessments when compared using the comparative scale suggested in Lewis and Simons (2009) came to be contradictory with each other. Except one language, the assessment of the rest of the 27 languages using both these methods show contradictory results thus creating confusion and chaos in setting the priories right.

1.2 Relevance of the study

Any effective language revitalisation measures are possible only when we can effectively plan and allocate our scare resources, for this we need to set a clear priorities of action. However as seen above there are numerous discrepancies and methodological problems in the existing methods of language vitality assessment. Hence this research is theoretically relevant in its effort to improve the methods of language vitality assessment to suit the needs of multilingual ecology. Further it is of the top most priority to develop a method to assess a vitality of language that suit the needs of the Indian ecological conditions as going by UNESCO's Atlas of Endangered Languages (2010) India tops the list of endangered languages with 197 languages. If effective language revitalisation programs are not initiated then we are at the risk of losing many of these languages. Moreover the following are pertinent to a language vitality assessment method for an effective language revitalisation measure as per Fishman (1991):

1. Firstly, language revitalisation or Reversing Language Shift is like any other social policy it involves 'prior value consensuses among who advocate, formulate, implement and evaluate it'.

2. Secondly according to Fishman, "the early and felicitous setting of priorities is of exceptional importance, precisely because time is short (language erosion is going on all of the time) and defeats or failures are not only demoralising for the few who are committed to RLS but they are seized upon and played up by the many who are the active or passive opponents of RLS".

3. Thirdly, efforts of language revitalisation vary according to the problems faced and opportunities available. In this context, an accurate measure of language vitality assessment will give us a clear picture of the problems faced by Indian languages.

4. Fourth, a threatened language is not necessarily similarly or equally threatened in every community hence tailor-made efforts are needed to suit the needs of

the languages. This is possible only when the languages are assessed using an vitality assessment method that is holistic.

Therefore the research in this dissertation is relevant for not only its theoretical merits but also for planning, implementing and executing a successful language revitalisation program.

1.3 Methodology

In order to seek a plausible solution to the problems of assessing language vitality any work demands a method that treats multilingualism as a norm as opposed to monolingualism, and it also requires a method which would take a holistic approach as opposed to a reductionist approach. Therefore this work approaches the problem of endangered language and the methods of assessing the language vitality from the theoretical perspectives of 'Ecology of language' (Haugen 1972).

Ecology of language as a method to the study of language was first developed by Einer Haugen. Haugen (1972) in his essay titled 'The Ecology of language' outlines the programmatic goals of Ecological approach to language as the study of '*interactions* between any given language and its environment' (The Ecology of Language, 1972). In this approach the environment is defined not as the referential world to which the language provides index, rather it is defined as the society in which the language is used. Further he also states that the ecology of a language is part Psychological and Sociological. On the one hand it is psychological in a sense as this approach focuses on the role of language in the interaction between the world and mind and also on the interaction of the given language with other languages in the mind of a bi- or multilingual speakers, and on the other hand it is sociological in its focus on the interaction of a given language with its society where it functions as the one of the medium of communication. The basis of this approach as Haugen (1972) notes stems from his dissatisfaction in the way in which 'language' is conceptualized within the discipline. These following lines make it explicative about Haugen's (1972) dissatisfactions:

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"The concept of a language as a rigid, monolithic structure is false, even if it has proved to be a useful fiction in the development of linguistics. It is the kind of simplification that is necessary at a certain stage of a science, but which can now be replaced by more sophisticated models. "

Therefore on the one hand the emphasis on placing language at the intersections of human interactions and language's environment and on the other hand, the treatment of language's environment as '*the society that uses it as one of the codes'* provides linguist the necessary fabric for a holistic approach to account for the problems in the methods of assessing language vitality.

1.4 Data

This work relays extensively on the secondary data collected through various catalogs and archival source and government resisters. However only a few important source are worth a special mention: they are *UNESCO's Atlas of World's Languages in Danger (2010), Ethnologue 16th Edition, Languages and Scripts: People Of India National Series Volume IX, Glottolog 2.3, and the notice board in the Corridor of Department of Linguistics, University of Kashmir with the list of all the languages spoken in the State*[*].

UNESCO's Atlas of World's Languages in Danger (2010) is a comprehensive collection of endangered languages known to the linguistic community. It is complied with an intention to 'raise awareness about language endangerment and the need to safeguard the world's linguistic diversity'. It list about 2500 languages in the Atlas. Valuable information like name, country or countries in which the language is spoken, iso639-3 code, degree of endangerment, alternate name if any, number of speakers, population and the source of information are provided for each of these languages in the online interactive version. In this list we can find 196 languages spoken in India of which 44 languages are spoken by less than 10,000 speakers.

Ethnologue, a comprehensive listing of known living languages of the world, is intended to be more as a catalogue than of as an encyclopedia. Thus, it provides

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[*]   I express my gratitudes to Prof. Dr Nazir Ahmad Dhar, Dept. of Linguistics, University of Kashmir for providing me the permission to use the data.

summary data on the languages identified so far. The latest edition of Ethnologue (16th Ed) lists about 6,909 languages. Out of this India is home to about 440 languages. Of these 440 languages 63 languages are spoken by less than 10,000 speakers. The following valuable information are available through Ethnologue's catalog: Primary Language Name, ISO639-3 code, Alternate Names, Population, Location, Language Maps, Language Status, Classification, Dialects, Typology, Language Use, Language Development, Language Resources, Writing, and Other Comments. The section 'other comments' provides the scheduled status of the communities, their religious belief, and any other relevant information.

Languages and Scripts: People Of India National Series Volume IX was part of a massive project titled 'People of India' carried out by the Anthropological survey of India. It has generated a wealth of information on the hundreds of communities, caste and tribes which exist in India. The volume titled 'Languages and Scripts' presents a comprehensive survey of India's languages and describes the distribution of these languages. In this volume valuable information on the 325 identified languages and dialects spoken by 4635 communities are presented. This is the first and the most detailed work to provide evidence for linguistic heterogeneity that is typical of the Indian linguistic scene. For instance. Appendix *I 'The communities, Languages and their distribution'* of this book gives us information on languages of both in-group and intergroup communication used by the communities. Based on the information presented in Appendix *I* one can obtain the following data: Name of the community, Subgroup, Status, language(s) used for in-group communication, language(s) used for intergroup communication and the State(s) in which the community is located. These and many other valuable information present in this volume attests this as a major contribution to the survey of Indian languages alongside G.A Grierson's *'Linguistic Survey of India'*.

Glottolog 2.3 is a bibliographic database of world's lesser known languages. It is a comprehensive database with 180,000 bibliographical references linked to 21,000 languoids (language families, languages, dialects). The main aim of Glottolog is to provide a total bibliographical coverage of descriptive resources to languages of the world. Glottolog is more reliable than other catalog for the following reasons: it only accept languages which the editors have been able to confirm as exist and distinct; it

classifies languages into families which have been demonstrated to be valid; and extensive bibliographic information are provided, especially for lesser-known languages. Thus through Glottolog one can ascertain the reliability of the data by cross verifying them with existing bibliographies.

The notice board in the corridor of the Department of Linguistics, University of Kashmir is one interesting source of data. It is basically a list of languages spoken in the state with other demographic and genealogical information like language family, location of the language and the approximate speaker's strength. This list and the subsequent interaction with the former HOD of the Department of Linguistics, University of Kashmir, Dr Nazir Ahmad Dhar forms the main source of data for the state of Jammu and Kashmir. This list is produced as a part of the Report of Mother Tongue Survey of India which is not available for consultation for reasons beyond reason. Thus this makes the information on the notice board the only source of data, although without any verification.

1.5 Organisation of the Study

The present study is organised into four chapters. Apart from the introductory chapter it has three major chapters, each systematised and organised on the following basis: Review, Description and Recommendation.

In chapter 2 '*Assessing Language Vitality: A Methodological Review*' a review of the methods of assessing language vitality is presented for languages with less than 10,000 speakers in India. It focuses on the methodological assessment of the existing methods, viz. Fishman's GIDS (1991) UNESCO's LVE (2003) and Enthnologue's EGIDS (2009). Through the review we can observe the recurrence of a methodological problem, 'Monolingual Dominance'. Monolingual dominance was inherent in the existing methodologies of vitality assessment. All these existing methods approached the question of 'vitality' from a rigid monolingual framework, the result of which is clear discrepancies in their respective analysis of vitality. Apart from this Ethnologue's EGIDS and UNESCO's LVE had problems of their own: for instance on one hand UNESCO's LVE lacks clear definitions for terms like 'speaker'

and 'community' and concentrates on 'availability' rather than 'accessibility' to the technology of education and literacy in the respective language and on the other hand Ethnologue's EGIDS totally ignores ecological condition of languages, allots undue weightage to literacy and reduces assessment to mere demographic profile.

Followed by this a description of the ecological conditions languages with less than 10,000 speakers in India is presented in Chapter 3 *'Ecology of languages spoken by less than 10,000 speakers'.* Ecological conditions of the languages with less than 10,000 speakers in India discussed in the Haugenian framework with empirical evidences in chapter 3 shows that the characteristic features of the ecology of these languages are: (a) Language shift to and expansion of dominant languages, (b) Subjugation of these languages by undermining the vitality of minority languages through policies and political ideologies, and (c) exploitative attitude through colonialism and establishment of nation states.

Finally in Chapter 4, '*Indicators of Language Vitality in Linguistically Heterogeneous South Asia',* after considering several languages of the Indian continent and the methodological flaws in the existing methods, identifies three chief methodological concerns in assessing a vitality of language in the Multilingual Ecology of India: *Hegemony of Monolingual Ideologies; Graphocentric Conjecture; & De-contextualisation of language from speakers' socio-economic condition* and proposes the mechanism for assessing vitality of languages relevant and suited within the Indian multilingual 'Ecology' of languages.

Chapter 2

Assessing Language Vitality: A Methodological Review

2.1 Introduction

Of the 7105 languages listed in the 17th edition of Ethnologue 33.5% of them are said to be endangered languages. Endangered languages are those that are under the threat of losing it's speakers by choice: as language shift wherein the number of speakers dwindles with in the ethnic community. Speakers of these endangered languages cease to speak their heritage language in favor of languages that are socially, politically and economically dominant.

Language shift and language loss are not a new phenomenon, historically many languages have been lost through a process of gradual shift or change, but what worries us is today's language shift occurs as speakers cease to speaking their heritage language in favor of the another dominant language. What are the reasons for such language shifts or loss? In very rare instances language loss occurs as a result of loss of entire population through natural disasters or war. The most common form language loss result from language shift and attrition, a more gradual kind of loss, where speakers of a language make a conscious decision to stop using their language or stop speaking it to their children. In such case of language loss, speakers shift or abandon their languages as they see their heritage language as an obstacle to socio-economic mobility, and instead prefers to use language of a dominant group. In cases like India language shift is motivated as result of flawed educational policy which until recently restricted the use of minority language in educational institutes[1]. Most scholars(Krauss (1992), Crystal (2000) Fishman (1991), and others) have acknowledged that the language loss is not a new occurrence, but the rate at which it

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1 National Policy on Education 1968, adopted the All India Council for Education 1956 recomendationof the Three Language Formula (TLF) 'which includes the study of a modern Indian language, preferably one of the Southern languages, apart from Hindi and English in the Hindi speaking states, and of Hindi along with the regional language and English in the non Hindi-speaking states at the Secondary stage.' However,the recent National Curriculum framework 2005 on other hand has laid the foundation for Multilingual Education.

is presently happening. The reason of language shifts are motivated by a complex set of systemic nurtured factors stemming from local language ecologies to regional, national, and global levels.

As Grenoble(2011) notes motives of language shift, often centers around uneven concentration of power and prestige between the minority language and culture on the one hand and the languages of wider communication and dominant cultures on the other hand. While the specifics of such power equation may vary by situations, three common overreaching motives are identified in Grenoble (2011) a) *Urbanization*, b)*Globalisation*, and c) *Social and Cultural Dislocation*.

In the modern times, *Urbanization*, emerges as one of the key causes, brings people from different language and culture in to the same working space. They are necessarily required to communicate with each other,and so they turn to an established liungua-franca or a language of wider communication. Similar to Urbanization, *Globalisation:* the modern practice of trade and commerce demands that all those who are indulged in it communicate with each other in a global language as opposed to the traditional setup where only the key figures in the state were expected to be able to communicate in a global language, this puts a pressure on the weaker sections of the population to communicate in a global language as a skill to communicate in a global language in the developing nations, today is seen to be a prerequisite for economic 'success'. Therefore Urbanization and Globalisation have in a way achieved a socio-cultural homogenization by favoring few languages. This unequal distribution of privilege and power leads to *Social and Cultural Dislocation*. Lack of prestige and power is one of the most powerful motivating factor for language shift. This situation often stems from unequal levels of power often results in minority community being socially and economically disadvantaged. Disadvantaged in concert terms means that the minority community as compared to the dominant community are politically powerless, and are less educated and less wealthy[2]. One common outcome of this is the change in attitudes towards heritage language of a minority

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2   Harbert, Wayne. "Endangered Languages and Economic Development." The Cambridge Handbook of Endangered Languages. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011. 403-422.

community. Members of the minority community often view the knowledge of their heritage language and culture as an impediment to socio-economic development, further knowledge of the dominant language comes to be perceived as the key to socio-economic development:result is the renunciation of heritage language and culture, thus this situation has been called *social and cultural dislocation.*

2.2 Assessing Language endangerment:

In this context, Language endangerment: threat with extinction of language, may be conceptualized as a continuum of language vitality; at one end of the continuum there are languages that are dominant: like Hindi, the 3rd largest spoken language of the world, an official language of the Indian State[3], broadly used in the media and education, and the sole lingua-franca in most part of the India, and at the other end there are languages that are on the verge of extinction or languages that are extinct languages like Present Greater Andamanese, a language spoken in the Starit Island of Andaman Islands, India. Its speakers have shifted to Andamanese Hindi, a language of the dominant class and a State language of Andaman and Nicobar, showing only a symbolic fluency in their heritage language[4]. In between these there are languages of varying degree of vitality. Therefore Grenoble (2011) states, these tools assessing Language endangerment must at least be characterized along three important parameters: 1) the nature and number of persons who identify themselves with the language (ethno-lingusitic population), 2) domains of use (function) and 3)internal and external pressures/support that exist for a language.

Nature and number of the speaker base is one of the most significant factor in measuring the vitality of the language. A language is endangered when fewer and fewer people identify with it and hence they neither uses it nor pass it on to the next generation. On the dimension of domains of use, a language used in fewer and fewer domains of daily activity gradually lose the characteristic of being closely associated

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3   Through Article 343 of the Indian constitution the State has declared Hindi as the official language and English as the co-official language.

4   Anvita Abbi, Bidisha Som and Alok Das "Where Have All The Speakers Gone? A Sociolinguistic Study of the Great Andamanese ", Indian Linguistics; 68.3-4: 325-343

with the community and when it finally losses the 'Home' domain it ceases to exist. Finally one of the most important factors that motivate language shift are *internal and external pressure or support that exist for a language.* By EXTERNAL pressure or support here Gernoble refer to the governments attitudes and policies toward minority languages: in a state were all languages are given an equal status minority languages have an external support, on the contrary if a States treats few or one language as official and the rest as subordinate, then the speakers of the minority languages are under constant pressure to adapt to the language of the dominant class. On the other hand INTERNAL pressure or support refers to the communities' attitude towards their heritage language: a positive attitudes towards their heritage language will be a support, while a negative attitude will act as pressure.

The main concern in assessing language endangerment lies at interpreting these factors. While authors vary in number of factors, they all agree that no one common factor can be pointed as the reason for language loss. These factors are not solely restricted with the demography of the speakers, and the language use, they are multifaceted in nature. Further they also agree that these factors are not universal rather they are dependent on the 'language ecology[5]' in which the said language is spoken. The greatest challenge that one immediately faces in assessing language endangerment in India and in South Asia at large is the 'societal multilingualism'. Societal Multilingualism refers to the linguistic diversity present in a society. The multilingualism in these societies are self regulated through social institution, Pandit (1972) illustrates this through a classic case of a 'spice vendor in Bombay'. Further Pandit clearly establishes that societal multilingualism in India is functional and additive multilingualism. Therefore any tool that seeks to assess endangerment in the Indian context must have incorporated the parameters identified by Gernoble and it must also shed the traditional 'Europeanized' notion of 'language' and 'language use' before it can take the work in hand

The sections below in this chapter, will provide a methodological overview of the vitality assessment tools, then a case assessment of two broadly used tools in Indian

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5   *As conceptualized by Haugen in his seminal paper The Ecology of Language (1971).*

settings: Ethnologue's EGIDS- Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale and UNESCO's LVE-Language vitality and Endangerment Index is presented, followed with a critical appraisal of EGIDS and UNESCO's LVE and finally these tools are evaluated according to Indian scenario.

2.3 Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale:

Fishman's 1991 'Reversing language shift' is one of the earliest work to offer a detailed treatment on issue of language maintenance and endangerment assessment. In this work he introduces *Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale* as a tool to assess the disruption or endangerment among minority languages. For this purpose he identifies the following parameters: Domains of Use, Users base or Speakers' Generation, Literacy and Intergenerational transmission. Based on this four factors he creates the GIDS to classify the languages under consideration. GIDS is a 8 point scale with ascending order of maintenance. The following table provides a summary of the levels:

Table 2.1: Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (Fishman 1991)

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
1	The language is used in education, work, mass media, government at the nationwide level
2	The language is used for local and regional mass media and governmental services
3	The language is used for local and regional work by both insiders and outsiders
4	Literacy in the language is transmitted through education
5	The language is used orally by all generations and is effectively used in written form throughout the community
6	The language is used orally by all generations and is being learned by children as their first language
7	The child-bearing generation knows the language well enough to use it with their elders but is not transmitting it to their children
8	The only remaining speakers of the language are members of the grandparent generation

It can be seen from the Table above that the first three levels takes into account the spread of domains of use, and these levels indicate that the language is a dominant

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and vibrant language; levels 4 and 5 pay more attention to literacy and indicates at a relatively stable conditions; whereas the final three levels 6,7, and 8 exclusively deals with Intergenerational Transmission and indicates and include majority of the minority languages whose maintenance is disrupted. Therefore languages in the higher levels are stable, as we move down in the scale we will find that there are tendencies of language shift and finally languages classified in the lower level indicates language loss and shift.

Of the four factors identified for assessment in GIDS, Intergenerational Transmission is given more importance. According to Fishman (1991) Intergenerational Transmission marks a vital milestone in the path towards language shift. This implies that individuals and domains of home and local community is the locus of any attempt at revitalization.

2.4 Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale

In the seventeenth edition, Ethnologue introduced a new category of information: Language Status, providing a summary of the status of the language use in a country. As per Ethnologue's website, the status element of a language entry includes two types of information: The first is an estimate of the overall development versus endangerment of the language using the Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (Lewis and Simons 2010), and the second is a categorization of the Official Recognition given to a language within the country.[6] In the treatment below a summary of the Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale is provided.

Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale, according to Ethnologue *"provides both an estimate of the level of endangerment of languages which are losing ground and an estimate of the state of development of those languages which are gaining functions in the communities where they are used."* [7]EGIDS was developed by Lewis and Simons (2010) based on 'Graded Intergenerational

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6   http://www.ethnologue.com/statistics/status
7   http://www.ethnologue.com/about/language-status

Disruption Scale' first developed by Joshua Fishman. The disruption of intergenerational transmission was the only factor used to create a typology of language endangerment in Fishman's GIDS, whereas EGIDS according to its developers is an attempt to expand the scope of these categorisations.

An Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale according to Lewis (2009) is an attempt to measure and organise languages vitality on a 13 grade scale (level), starting from zero (safe) to ten (extinct), based on data that are indicators of two major dimension of language use: *absolute number of speakers and the use of language in certain domains or functions.* Each of this level (graded scale) is given a distinct one or two word label that identifies with the major functional category of the level. A summary of these levels are given in the table below.

Table2.2: Levels in Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale

Level	Label	Description
0	International	The language is widely used between nations in trade, knowledge exchange, and international policy.
1	National	The language is used in education, work, mass media, and government at the national level.
2	Provincial	The language is used in education, work, mass media, and government within major administrative subdivisions of a nation.
3	Wider Communication	The language is used in work and mass media without official status to transcend language differences across a region.
4	Educational	The language is in vigorous use, with standardization and literature being sustained through a widespread system of institutionally supported education.
5	Developing	The language is in vigorous use, with literature in a standardized form being used by some though this is not yet widespread or sustainable.
6a	Vigorous	The language is used for face-to-face communication by all generations and the situation is sustainable.
6b	Threatened	The language is used for face-to-face communication within all generations, but it is losing users.
7	Shifting	The child-bearing generation can use the language among themselves, but it is not being transmitted to children.
8a	Moribund	The only remaining active users of the language are members of the grandparent generation and older.
8b	Nearly Extinct	The only remaining users of the language are members of the grandparent generation or older who have little opportunity to use the language.

Level	Label	Description
9	Dormant	The language serves as a reminder of heritage identity for an ethnic community, but no one has more than symbolic proficiency.
10	Extinct	The language is no longer used and no one retains a sense of ethnic identity associated with the language.

2.4.1 Assessment using EGIDS

According to Lewis and Simons (2010) the current status of a language can be assessed by answering a set of five key questions about community and language use. These questions are based on a set of seven parameters of language endangerment (lewis 2008): 1) Age; 2) Demography; 3) Language use; 4) Language Cultivation/Development, Literacy, and Education; 5)Status and Recognition; 6) Language Attitudes; 7) Amount and quality of documentation. Answers to these five key questions according to its developers, identify some of the major factors that need to be addressed in any language maintenance, revitalization, or development project. These factors are identity, vehicularity, the status of intergenerational transmission, literacy acquisition status, and a societal profile of generational language use. The section below is an adaptation from Lewis (2008).

Key Question #1: What is the current identity function of the language? There are four possible answers to this question: Historical, Heritage, Home, and Vehicular.

Table2.3:Key Question #1: What is the current identity function of the language?

Answer	Description	EGIDS Level
Historical	The language has no remaining speakers and no community which associates itself with the language as a language of identity.	EGIDS Level 10 (Extinct).
Heritage	There are no remaining L1 speakers, but there may be some emerging L2 speakers or the language may be used for symbolic and ceremonial purposes only .	EGIDS Level 9 (Dormant).
Home	The language is used for daily oral communication in the home domain by at least some. Here the trajectory of language shift or retention becomes an important factor in order to determine	Answering Key Question #3 is necessary to determine the EGIDS Level

Answer	Description	EGIDS Level
	the EGIDS level; answering Key Question #3 is necessary.	
Vehicular	the term vehicular refers to the extent to which a language is used to facilitate communication among those who speak different first languages. If a language is characterized here as being Vehicular, it is used by others as an L2 in addition to being used by the community of L1 speakers. The language has an identity function that goes beyond the local community most closely associated with it.	When this response is selected, Key Question #2 must be answered in order to determine the EGIDS level.

Key Question #2: What is the level of official use? This question helps to distinguish between the possible EGIDS levels when a language is serving the Vehicular identity function. There are four possible answers which correspond to EGIDS levels 0 through 3.

Table 2.4: Key Question #2: What is the level of official use?

Answer	Description	EGIDS Level
International	The language is used internationally as a language of business, education, and other activities of wider communication.	EGIDS Level 0 (International).
National	The language has official or de facto recognition at the level of the nation- state and is used for government, educational, business, and for other communicative needs.	EGIDS Level (National).
Regional	The language is officially recognized at the sub-national level for government, education, business, and other functions.	EGIDS Level 2 (Regional).
Not Official	The language is not officially recognized but is used beyond the local community for intergroup interactions. These may include business (trade), social or other communicative functions.	EGIDS Level 3 (Trade).

Key Question #3: Are all parents transmitting the language to their children? This question must be asked when the answer to Key Question #1 is Home. There are two possible answers.

Table 2.5: Key Question #3: Are all parents transmitting the language to their children?

Answer	Description	EGIDS Level
Yes	Intergenerational transmission of the language is intact, widespread and ongoing.	One more question (Key Question #4) must be answered in order to determine if the community is at EGIDS Level 4, 5, or 6a.
No	Intergenerational transmission of L1 is being disrupted. This response would characterize incipient or more advanced language shift.	One additional question must be answered (Key Question #5) in order to determine if the community is at EGIDS Level 6b, 7, 8a, or 8b

Key Question #4: What is the literacy status? If the response to Key Question #3 is "Yes", then the status of literacy education in the community needs to be identified. There are three possible answers to this question.

Table 2.6: Key Question #4: What is the literacy status?

Answer	Description	EGIDS Level
Institutional	Literacy is acquired through a system of education supported by a sustainable institution. This is typically the government education system, though other community-based institutions (such as church or cultural organization) may provide literacy education.	EGIDS Level 4 (Educational).
Incipient	Literacy in the language has been introduced into the community but has not been acquired by most	EGIDS Level 5 (Written).

	community members through well-established publicly-accessible institutions.	
None	There is no significant literate population, no organized means of acquiring literacy skills, or those who are literate read and write only in a second language. There are no institutions supporting local-language literacy or if such institutions exist they have not yet had a significant impact on the community .	EGIDS Level 6a, Vigorous.

Key Question #5: What is the youngest generation of proficient speakers? When the response to Key Question #3 (Intergenerational Transmission) is "No", it is necessary to know how far along language shift has progressed in order to assess the current EGIDS level. The youngest generation of proficient speakers in an unbroken chain of intergenerational transmission provides an index to the progress of language shift. By "proficient speaker" we mean a person who uses the language for full social interaction in a variety of settings. Specifically excluded is the partial and passive ability that typically characterizes the first generation that embraced the second language.

Table 2.7 :Key Question #5: What is the youngest generation of proficient speakers?

Answer	*Description*	*EGIDS Level*
Great Grandparents	The youngest proficient speakers of the language are of the great grandparent generation. Language shift is very far along.	EGIDS Level 8b (Nearly Extinct).
Grandparents	The youngest proficient speakers of the language are of the grandparent generation. Language shift is advanced.	EGIDS Level 8a (Moribund).
Parents	The youngest proficient speakers of the language are the adults of child- bearing age. Language shift has begun and is clearly in progress.	EGIDS Level 7 (Shifting).

Children	The youngest proficient speakers of the language are children. However, language shift may be in its beginning stages since full intergenerational transmission is not in place (Key Question #3).	This corresponds to EGIDS Level 6b (Threatened).

According to it developers EGIDS is proposed as a harmonization of then existing three evaluative methods: GIDS, UNESCO, and Ethnologue's vitality categories (old) to assess the language vitality and evaluate a language status by answering the above five key questions regarding the languages' identity function, vehicularity, state of intergenerational language transmission, literacy acquisition status, and a societal profile of generational language use. This status according to Ethnologue provides the base line information for language planners and policy makers in their projects to revitalize endangered languages.

2.5 UNESCO'S Language Vitality and Endangerment

At the 31st Session of the UNESCO General Conference (October 2001), all the state members unanimously-adopted 'Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity' and recognized a relationship between biodiversity, cultural diversity and linguistic diversity. UNESCO's action plan recommends that Member States, in conjunction with speaker communities, undertake steps towards:

sustaining the linguistic diversity of humanity and giving support to expression, creation and dissemination of the greatest possible number of languages;

encouraging linguistic diversity at all levels of education, wherever possible, and fostering the learning of several languages from the youngest age;

incorporating, where appropriate, traditional pedagogies into the educational process with a view to preserving and making full use of culturally-appropriate methods

of communication and transmission of knowledge, and, where permitted by speaker communities, encouraging universal access to information in the public domain through the global network, including the promotion of linguistic diversity in cyberspace.

To attain these goals, an ad hoc expert group on Endangered languages was constituted, to assess language endangerment and urgency of the need for documentation. The ad hoc group identified six factors to evaluate a language's vitality and state of endangerment, two factors to assess language attitudes and one factor to evaluate the urgency of the need for documentation. Taken together, these nine factors are considered useful for characterizing a language's overall sociolinguistic situation. Except one factor, the rest of the eight factors are graded on six point scale 5 (safe) to 0 (extinct).

2.5.1 Six Factors of Language Vitality Assessment

Factor 1: Intergenerational Language Transmission

The most commonly used factor in evaluating the vitality of a language is whether or not it is being transmitted from one generation to the next (Fishman 1991). Endangerment can be ranked on a continuum from stability to extinction.

Table 2.8: Factor 1- Intergenerational Language Transmission

Degree of Endangerment	Grade	Description
Safe	5	The language is spoken by all generations. There is no sign of linguistic threat from any other language, and the intergenerational transmission of the language seems uninterrupted.
Unsafe	4	Most but not all children or families of a particular community speak the language as their first language, but it may be restricted to specific social domains (such as at home, where children interact with their parents and grandparents).
Definitively	3	The language is no longer being learned as the

endangered		mother tongue by children in the home. The youngest speakers are thus of the parental generation. At this stage, parents may still speak the language to their children, but their children do not typically respond in the language.
Severely endangered	2	The language is spoken only by grandparents and older generations; while the parent generation may still understand the language, they typically do not speak it to their children.
Critically endangered	1	The youngest speakers are in the great-grandparental generation, and the language is not used for everyday interactions. These older people often remember only part of the language but do not use it, since there may not be anyone to speak with.
Extinct	0	There is no one who can speak or remember the language.

Factor 2: Absolute Number of Speakers

This is the only factor which is not in an interpretable scale, as the expert group believes 'it is impossible to establish a hard and fast rule for interpreting absolute numbers, but a small speech community is always at risk. '

Factor 3: Proportion of Speakers within the Total Population

The number of speakers in relation to the total population of a group is a significant indicator of language vitality, where 'group' may refer to the ethnic, religious, regional or national group with which the speaker community identifies .

Table 2.9: Factor 3-Proportion of Speakers within the Total Population

Degree of Endangerment	*Grade*	*Description: Proportion of Speakers Within the Total Reference Population*
Safe	5	All speak the language.
Unsafe	4	Nearly all speak the language.
Definitively endangered	3	A majority speak the language.
Severely endangered	2	A minority speak the language.
Critically endangered	1	Very few speak the language.
Extinct	0	None speak the language.

Factor 4: Shifts in Domains of Language Use

Where, with whom, and the range of topics for which a language issued (domains of language use) directly affects whether or not it will be transmitted to the next generation.

Table 2.10: Factor 4-Shifts in Domains of Language Use

Degree of Endangerment	Grade	Description: Domains and Functions
Universal use	5	The language is used in all domains and for all functions
Multilingual parity	4	Two or more languages may be used in most social domains and for most functions.
Dwindling domains	3	The language is used in home domains and for many functions, but the dominant language begins to penetrate even home domains.
Limited or formal domains	2	The language is used in limited social domains and for several functions
Highly limited domains	1	The language is used only in a very restricted number of domains and for very few functions.
Extinct	0	The language is not used in any domain for any function.

Factor 5: Response to New Domains and Media

New areas for language use may emerge as community living conditions change. While some language communities do succeed in expanding their own language into new domains, most do not. Schools, new work environments and new media, including broadcast media and the Internet, usually serve only to expand the scope and power of a dominant language at the expense of endangered languages. If the communities do not meet the challenges of modernity with their language, it becomes increasingly irrelevant and stigmatised.

Table 2.11: Factor 5-Response to New Domains and Media

Degree of Endangerment	Grade	Description: Domains and Functions
Dynamic	5	The language is used in all new domains.
Robust/active	4	The language is used in most new domains.
Receptive	3	The language is used in many new domains.
Coping	2	The language is used in some new domains.
Minimal	1	The language is used only in a few new domains.
Inactive	0	The language is not used in any new domains.

Factor 6: Availability of Materials for Language Education and Literacy

Accessibility to education in the mother language is essential for the measure of language endangerment similarly literacy plays a vital role in language vitality. There are language communities that maintain strong oral traditions, and some of them do not wish their languages to be written. In other communities, literacy in their language is a source of pride. In general, however, literacy is directly linked with social and economic development. Books and materials on all topics for various ages and language abilities are needed for accessibility to education, therefor the Factor 6 seeks to assess these as follows:

Table 2.12: Factor 6-Availability of Materials for Language Education and Literacy

Grade	Accessibility of written Materials
5	There is an established orthography and a literacy tradition with grammar s, dictionaries, texts, literature and everyday media. Writing in the language is used in administration and education.
4	Written materials exist, and at school, children are developing literacy in the language. Writing in the language is not used in administration.
3	Written materials exist and children may be exposed to the written form at school. Literacy is not promoted through print media.
2	Written materials exist, but they may only be useful for some members of the community; for others, they may have a symbolic significance. Literacy education in the language is not a part of the school

		curriculum.
1		A practical orthography is known to the community and some material is being written.
0		No orthography is available to the community.

2.5.2 Language Attitudes and Policies

The maintenance and abandonment of languages are not just dependent on the Language use and Users, Language attitudes and policies by the dominant and the State plays a crucial role in influencing the linguistic choice of a community. Linguistic attitudes can be a powerful force either for promotion or for loss of a language. Similarly community member's attitude towards their own language also plays crucial role in accessing the vitality of a language. Factor 7 and 8 seeks to incorporate these two in accessing the Language endangerment.

Factor 7: Governmental and Institutional Language Attitudes and Policies, Including Official Status and Use

A country's government may have an explicit language use policy for its multiple languages. At one extreme, one language may be designated as the sole official language of the country while all others are condemned. At the other extreme, all languages of a nation may receive equal official status. Governments and institutions have explicit policies and/or implicit attitudes towards the dominant and subordinate languages. These can be graded as follows:

Table 2.13: Factor 7-Governmental and Institutional Language Attitudes and Policies, Including Official Status and Use

Degree of Support	Grade	Official Attitudes towards Language
equal support	5	All languages are protected.
Differentiated support	4	Minority languages are protected primarily as the language of private domains. The use of the language is prestigious.
Passive	3	No explicit policy exists for minority languages; the

assimilation		dominant language prevails in the public domain.
Active assimilation	2	Government encourages assimilation to the dominant language. There is no protection for minority languages.
Forced assimilation	1	The dominant language is the sole official language, while non-dominant languages are neither recognized nor protected.
Prohibition	0	Minority languages are prohibited.

Factor 8: Community Members' Attitudes towards their Own Language

Members of a speech community are not usually neutral towards their own language. They may see it as essential to their communities' identity and promote it; they may use it without promoting it; they may be ashamed of it and, therefore, not promote it; or they may see it as a nuisance and actively avoid using it. When members' attitudes towards their language are very positive, the language may be seen as a key symbol of group identity . However if members view their language as a hindrance to economic mobility and integration into mainstream society, they may develop negative attitudes towards their language. To access this the following grades are provided as per the category:

Table 2.14: Factor 8-Community Members' Attitudes towards Their Own Language

Grade	Community Members' Attitudes towards Language
5	All members value their language and wish to see it promoted.
4	Most members support language maintenance
3	Many members support language maintenance; others are indifferent or may even support language loss.
2	Some members support language maintenance; others are indifferent or may even support language loss.
1	Only a few members support language maintenance; others are indifferent or may even support language loss.
0	No one cares if the language is lost; all prefer to use a dominant language.

2.5.3 Urgency of the Need for Documentation

Factor 9: Type and Quality of Documentation

As a guide for assessing the urgency of the need for documenting a language, the type and quality of existing language materials must be identified first. Of central importance here are written texts, including transcribed, translated and annotated audiovisual recordings of natural speech. Such information is important in helping members of a language community to formulate specific tasks and enables linguists to design research projects together with members of a language community.

Table 2.15: Factor 9-Type and Quality of Documentation

Nature of Documentation	Grade	Language Documentation
Superlative	5	There are comprehensive grammars and dictionaries, extensive texts, and a constant flow of language materials. Abundant annotated high-quality audio and video recordings exist.
Good	4	There is one good grammar and a number of adequate grammars, dictionaries, texts, literature and occasionally updated everyday media; adequate annotated high-quality audio and video recordings exist.
Fair	3	There may be an adequate grammar or sufficient numbers of grammars, dictionaries and texts but no everyday media; audio and video recordings of varying quality or degree of annotation may exist.
Fragmentary	2	There are some grammatical sketches, word-lists and texts useful for limited linguistic research but with inadequate coverage. Audio and video recordings of varying quality, with or without any annotation, may exist.
Inadequate	1	There are only a few grammatical sketches, short word-lists and fragmentary texts. Audio and video recordings do not exist, are of unusable quality or are completely un-annotated.
Undocumented	0	No material exists.

2.6 Assessment Case Studies

EGIDS and UNESCO's LVE has been widely applied to assess the vitality of Indain Languages. This section assesses the strength and weakness of these two tools, UNESCO's LVE and EGIDS were applied to three languages and the result is a summarized below:

Angika: An eastern Indo-Aryan language spoken in Norther Bihar and some parts of Nepal. Gondi: A Central Dravidian language spoken in Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Andra Pradesh, and Kachchi a western Indo-Aryan language spoken in the Rann of Kach area of Gujarat. Data for this purpose are collected from various sources: Census of India, Glottolog, http://rni.nic.in and from the participants of SPPEL Jaipur 2013.

Table 2.16: LVE score sheet & EGIDS

Factors	*Angika* *Iso 639 Code anp*	*Gondi* *gno*	*Kachchi* *kfr*
Intergenerational Language Transmission	5	4	4
Absolute Number of Speakers	725,000	2,050,000	823,000
Proportion of Speakers within Total Population	3	3	3
Trends in Existing Language Domains	3	3	3

Factors	Angika Iso 639 Code _anp_	Gondi _gno_	Kachchi _kfr_
Response to New Domains and Media	2	2	1
Materials for Language Education and Literacy	2	1	0
Official Status and Use: Governmental & Institutional Language Attitudes, Policies	2 Government encourages passive assimilation to the dominant language. By classifying Angika under Hindi.[8]	2	2
Community Members' Attitudes toward Their Own Language	1	-	-
Amount and Quality of Documentation	1[9]	3[10]	0[11]
EGIDS[12]	Status 5 (Developing)	Status5 (Developing)	Status 6a (Vigorous)

2.6.1 Analysis:

From the table above it can be seen that Angika as assessed by LVE is *safe* when 'intergenerational Language Transmission' is considered (factor 1), a look at the other crucial factors(3&4) dose not give such a hopeful picture. However an overall assessment of Angika, is Vulnerable even though intergenerational transmission of the language remains strong. If the language is to thrive new language domains are needed, and additional documentation would be advantageous. Gondi and Kachchi are *clearly endangered;* Vulnerable from the perspective of Factor 1 and coupled with loss of speaker base (factor 3), dwindling domains (factor 4) and lack of educational

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8   "Languages in the Eighth Schedule". Ministry of Home Affairs. Retrieved on 18-11-2013
9   http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/angi1238 Retrieved on 18-11-2013
10   http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/gond1265 Retrieved on 18-11-2013
11   http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/kach1277 Retrieved on 18-11-2013
12   As per information provided in http://www.ethnologue.com

material (factor 6) puts both these languages in *Definitively Endangered* categories.

On the other hand, application of EGIDS, places Angika and Gondi in Status 5 based on the response to key questions: the Intergenerational Language Transmission is being carried forward without any disruption; Kachichi is placed in Status 6(a) Vigorous even after evidences suggesting otherwise. While the child-bearing generation is no longer transmitting the language, the only reason to place it under Status 6(a) is the availability of written materials.

2.7 Appraisal of the Methods

<u>UNESCO's LVE framework</u> had several crucial caveats according to Dwyer (2011) and Brenzinger & et.al (2003):

- None of the factors should be used alone, they should be used together to assess language vitality.

- All the nine factors cannot be treated equally, they have to weighed as per their relevance. Factor 1, 3, & 4 are of crucial importance to all languages.

- The grades from the assessment of factors not meant for quantitative analysis, rather they are indicators for qualitative interpretations.

Apart from the above caveats there are certain shortcomings in the frame work:

1. Lack of clarity in the definition of notion 'speaker' and 'reference community' makes the task in hand difficult. At one hand, it is very difficult to identify the total number of speakers: while working with minority groups data from reliable source are mostly scarce in nature. On the other hand, whom to include in the reference community is a question left unanswered. When in a country like India attitude such as pride and shame are associated with

language loyalty even acquiring a rough estimate of the number of speakers is a difficult task. Secondly the guide line is silent on the ethical standards: for example during authors interaction with the speakers of minority languages certain sections of these community choose to consciously claim the majority language as their native language, on such occasions what should be the researcher's stance must be cleared by established ethical guide lines. Can researcher question a speaker's identity claim?

2. It would be more insightful in assessing whether materials for language educations and literacy are actively accessed by the community than assessing their availability and if not what are reasons for such inactions. In the case study above for Angika and Kachchi orthography is available, yet the total number of publications and other activities associated with literacy does not show an active community participation[13].

3. Reminiscence of the western dominance of One Language, One Nation and/or community was found throughout the tool. It fails to take in to account the societal multilingualism while assessing language vitality. Thus this is a major set back in the Indian context, multilingualism has been the norm, languages here coexist in an additive[14] framework. There is no way through which we can measure the stability of multilingualism in the present tool.

4. The tool relays heavily on secondary data, from sources like census and other governmental agency, accuracy of the data from these sources is not guaranteed. Further the available data is also not adequate, and relaying on data from a single informant does not yield consistent response across the community. Thus a detailed field work is necessary.

Lewis & Simons (2006) EGIDS proposal heavily focuses on Intergenerational

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13 Only four Magazines are published in **Angika** http://rni.nic.in/rni_display_language.asp Retrieved on 18/11/13, and in **Kachchi** none are to be found http://rni.nic.in/display_state.asp Retrieved on 18/11/13.
14 Additive multilingualism produces not just a numerical increase in languages, but the added languages add new nodes to the existing network of languages . Annamalai (2003)

transmission, it provides a more detailed description of the levels of endangerment based on the language use patterns and the speakers base. As noted by Dwyer (2011) EGIDS provided a detailed description of the levels and the distinctions between them like Dormant and Extinct. These distinctions are important for revitalization programs to set achievable goals.

However, there are several major shortcomings in this tool:

- Focusing on the language speakers base and language usage patterns results in total ignorance of the ecological condition of the language and their communities.

- EGIDS proposal reduces assessment, in the sense it does not take in to account the difference between the absolute and relative speakers' strength, community's language attitude, government's policies, and existing documentation.

- It pays undue weightage to literacy acquisition (level 4 & 5). The case assessment above shows the contrary: availability of literacy does not ensure the retention of language or language development.

- The notion of language and language use is 'Pre-Andreson[15]' and their strict adherence to the monolingual model[16] highly constrains it reliability.

- Further a close look at the tool gives a feeling that the whole tool is constructed around the easily available data like those of that are available from the census.

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15 Andreson in his milestone work clearly demonstrates how 'Language' as tool for the formation of Nation-state: one language, one nation.

16 "….through the description of some direct measures of language vitality such as changes in the number of speakers or in the use of the language in certain domains or functions. Less directly, an increase in bilingualism, both in the number of bilinguals and in their proficiency levels,....."http://www.ethnologue.com/endangered-languages Retrieved on 18/11/13.

2.8 Critical Evaluation of the Methods

Along with the traditional 'societal multilingualism' found in India, the post-colonial Indian scenario is marked by rapid Industrialization, Urbanization and Globalization, therefore any assessment tool must take into account these modern developments to get a clear picture of language vitality and maintenance. In this context, Grenoble (2011) observation of uneven concentration of power and prestige as the main motive of Language Endangerment, and subsequently the three parameters: 1) the nature and the number of persons who identify themselves with the language, 2) the domains of use and 3) internal and external pressures/support that exist for a language identified provides the key to solve one part of our problem. Special attention of these three parameters implies that any attempt at a characterizing language endangerment must stop treating language in isolation and it should be seen in the context in which they are used. Moreover, it also implies that locus of any positive intervention must not just be among individuals, within the home domain and local community but also on clearly articulates need for intervention in the State policies. However, the Multilingual side of our problem still remains exposed. By taking into cognizant the role of the State in negotiating the power relations between linguistic commodities, she has laid the foundations for tackling the multilingual side of the problem.

Fishman's Graded Intragenerational Disruption Scale(1991), was the first attempt in addressing the issue of vitality and language maintenance. His work, now considered a milestone in language endangerment studies, identifies four parameters: a)domains of use, b)Users' base or Speaker's generation c)Literacy and d)Intergenerational transmission. Importance to these parameters implies that the locus of all revitalization activities are individual and communities choice. This further goes on to imply that the role of the State idealogical apparatus and machineries neither play a crucial role in language maintenance nor are they significant for any revitalization activity. Thus one could conclude that Fishman's GIDS only partially fulfill Grenoble's criteria. Moreover the western 'one nation one language ideology' seems to fuel his notion of Language and Language Use.

UNESCO's Language Vitality and Endangerment tool (2003), is novel in considering all the three criteria suggested by Grenoble (2009). The guide line was also path breaking on various aspects: (1)Considering not only existing but also new language domains (Factor 5) breaks the conservative notion of Language as 'static'; (2) Assessing both absolute and relative population of the linguistic (Factors 2 & 3) may be ambitious however such assessment at a diachronic level will help us find the direction a language heading towards in the language vitality continuum; (3) internal and external prestige (language attitudes and policies, Factors 7 & 8) acknowledges the role of State in language maintenance and provides us with the ability to assess the role of State policies in maintaining linguistic diversity and (4) finally, the amount and quality of documentation (Factor 9) helps the concerned bodies to priorities and form an action plan for revitalization activities. The UNESCO tool as observed by Dwyer (2011) is broad and gradient enough to have a language show comparative strength in some areas (such as the intergenerational transmission of Kuchchi), while overall showing a more problematic picture on the other (as kuchchi scores zero in several other key domains). The strength of the UNESCO model is that, it does not just look at languages and their usage pattern for the threat of disappearing rather it looks for the stability in the language's socio-political context that renders the sustainability of language impossible. On the downside as guideline document we can find several key notions lacking clarity. Similarly the tools failure to assess the stability of societal multilingualism implies that the notion of plurality in language use is exotic, reflecting the ideological grounding of the expert committee.

Lewis & Simons's Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (2006), claims to be a homogenization of the previously existing tools (GIDS and LVE) but it does not live up to this claim. While Fishman's GIDS and UNECOS's LVE together fulfilled the Grenoble's (2009) criteria its supposed homogenization EGIDS is backtracked. EGIDS as tool did expand the scales presented in Fishman (1991) but they failed to incorporate the intellect accumulated since Fishman. The seven parameters identified as crucial for EGIDS, provides only a description of the current status of the and lacks any evaluative criteria implying a clear lack of principal position on the linguistic diversity. Above all the parent organization of Ethnologue

SIL has an eighty year history of language documentation such an organization overseeing the multilingual reality seems to be more sinister than ignorance. In short I endorse Dwyer (2011) opinion: 'If only a rough estimate is desired then EGIDS is an easier and a faster alternative, but they may be misleading'.

Ecology of Languages Spoken by less than 10,000 Speakers.

3.1 Introduction

India's linguistic and cultural diversity has been put under a constant threat by global economic forces and shifting patterns of life style. With 190 languages India tops the UNESCO's list of nations with highest number of endangered languages. While pre-colonial South Asia was a thriving zone for linguistic diversity, post-colonial India seems to be changing into a death bed of languages. How did the linguistic scene change? What is the nature of Indian multilinguality that gave way for this instability? Large scale immigration and internal displacement of minority communities during the formative period of the state are said to have greatly altered and continue to alter the linguistic landscape of multilingual India. To understand the niche of this *multilinguality in flux* means to abandon attempts to view language as *monolithic structures*. Rather, I would like to argue that the consideration of ecological factors is a prerequisite to any account that seek to explain the 'multilinguality'.

Haugen, in his seminal paper '*The Ecology of Language'* (1972) express his dissatisfaction with the ways 'Language' has been conceived within Linguistics. The two main motivations for his dissatisfaction lies at the heart of the modern enterprise of objective study of language. Any modern scientific discipline, to an extent would accept idealisation as a theory building necessity, and views their object of study as largely static and fixed entity. Linguistics is no exception to this fallacy, as Haugen points out "linguists have generally been too eager to get on with the phonology, grammar, and lexicon to pay more than superficial attention to what I (Haugen) would like to call the 'ecology of language'" (Haugen 1972). He forwards *Ecology of Language* as a solution to this and goes on further to reject the treatment of language as static and fixed entity which put in his own words are as follows

"The concept of a language as a rigid, monolithic structure is false, even if it has

proved to be a useful fiction in the development of linguistics. It is the kind of simplification that is necessary at a certain stage of a science, but which can now be replaced by more sophisticated models. "

Haugen, Ecology of Language 1972

This implies rejecting the notion of idealization and de-contextualisation of language prevalent in Chomskyan linguistic (Chomsky 1965) and Saussurean structuralism, in favor of 'Language Ecology'. Then he provides various reasons why a linguist must pay attention to approaches to language that concentrates on the larger picture of languages in context. While defining ecological perspectives he rejects the narrow view that 'the referential world to which language provides an index' constitutes this environment; he states that 'the true environment of a language is the society that uses it as one of its codes' (Haugen 1972) Subsequent discussions in Haugen's work makes it clear that Ecology of a language is more than a sociology of language. The study of language ecology is a holistic discipline that involves various perspectives. This invitation to embrace ecological consideration is of particular interest for this work, as it would not just '*describe the social and psychological situation of each language but also the effects of this situation on the language itself*' (Haugen 1972). Sections in this chapter would at first demystify Ecological approach to language and the different type of language ecologies (Wendel and Heinrich,2012); secondly a description of ecology of language with less than 10,000 speakers in India, following Haugen's classical method is presented; and finally the described ecologies would be classified along the framework suggested by Wendel and Heinrich (2012).

3.2 Ecological approach to Language

As we saw above Haugen 1972 article is the first serious attempt to spell out a well defined program that would strive to contextualise the study of language. To achieve this like in any other approaches to language Haugen employs a metaphor: the metaphor of 'ecology' as a heuristic tool. Before we go any further it would be helpful if we understand and illuminate the role of 'ecology' metaphor in the study of

language.

The term 'ecology' was first coined in the mid nineteenth century by Ernst Haeckel a German biologist. Derived from the greek word $οἶκος$ 'house' implies, the emphasis is upon the holistic study of the environments within which lives are lived and intertwined . This is made clear from Haeckel's (1866) conceptualisation:

"By ecology, we mean the whole science of the relations of the organism to the environment including, in the broad sense, all the "conditions of existence."...Thus the theory of evolution explains the housekeeping relations of organisms mechanistically as the necessary consequences of effectual causes and so forms the monistic groundwork of ecology."[17]

Hence Haugen's use of the 'ecology' metaphor for the study of language is to be seen as an adaptation necessarily arising from the inevitable links between language, its speakers and the environment in which they are used. The below passage from Huagen (1972) would substantiate this claim:

"Language ecology may be defined as the study of interactions between any given language and its environment. The definition of environment might lead one's thoughts first of all to the referential world to which language provides an index. However, this is the environment not of the language but of its lexicon and grammar. The true environment of a language is the society that uses it as one of its codes. Language exists only in the minds of its users, and it only functions in relating these users to one another and to nature, i.e. their social and natural environment. Part of its ecology is therefore psychological: its interaction with other languages in the minds of bi- and multilingual speakers. Another part of its ecology is sociological: its interaction with the society in which it functions as a medium of communication. The ecology of a language is determined primarily by the people who learn it, use it, and

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17 This is a copy of Haeckel's original definition (Original: Haeckel, E. (1866) Generelle Morphologie der Organismen. Allgemeine Grundzige der organischen Formen- Wissenschaft, mechanisch begriindet durch die von Charles Darwin reformirte Descendenz-Theorie. 2 vols. Reimer, Berlin.) translated and quoted from Stauffer (1957).

transmit it to others"

Emphasis on placing language at the intersection of human interactions and language's environment is worth making a note. On the one hand, the treatment of language's environment as '*the society that uses it as one of the codes'* provides linguist the necessary fabric for a holistic account of Language in context. On the other hand, interaction conceptualised partly as psychological, that is, interaction with other (non-native) language of a bi- or multilingual brain, and other part as sociological, that is, interaction with the society in which it (language) functions as a medium of communication. Hence putting languages in its environment allows us to examine the role human agency over choices of language usage, that are necessary for language policy makers and linguistic rights activist. Further 'ecology' of a language is 'determined primarily by the people who learn it, use it and transmit it to other' Thus as a mentioned earlier the 'ecology' metaphor in this approach is a heuristic tool, and Fill and Mühlhäusler (2001) puts their view elegantly on embracing ecological metaphor as: "*Adopting the metaphor of ecology, we would like to argue, has helped considerably in advancing knowledge of human language and communication, and its potential is far from exhausted.*" Considering ecological factors for studying a language make this enterprise a 'dynamic science' with "the *interaction* of languages and their users" (The ecology of language, 1972) as it subject matter.

Additionally, Haugen's research agenda reproduced below makes the above claim of language ecology as a complex science explicit:

"*For any given 'language,' then, we should want to have answers to the following ecological questions:*

What is its classification in relation to other languages? This answer would be given by historical and descriptive linguists;

Who are its users'? This is a question of linguistic demography, locating its users with respect to locale, class, religion or any other relevant grouping;

What are its domains of use? This is a question of sociolinguistics, discovering whether its use is unrestricted or limited in specific ways;

What concurrent languages are employed by its users? We may call this a problem of dialinguistics, to identify the degree of bilingualism present and the degree of overlap among the languages;

What internal varieties does the language show? This is the task of a dialectology that will recognize not only regional, but also social and contactual dialects;

What is the nature of its written traditions'? This is the province of philology, the study of written texts and their relationship to speech;

To what degree has its written form been standardized, i.e. unified and codified? This is the province of prescriptive linguistics, the traditional grammarians and lexicographers;

What kind of institutional support has it won, either in government, education, or private organizations, either to regulate its form or propagate it? We may call this study glottopolitics;

What are the attitudes of its users towards the language, in terms of intimacy and status, leading to personal identification? We may call this the field of ethnolinguistics;

Finally we may wish to sum up its status in a typology of ecological classification, which will tell us something about where the language stands and where it is going in comparison with the other languages of the world."

Haugen, The Ecology of Language 1972.

3.3 Typology of Language Ecology

In the above cited Haugen's research agenda, the final agenda was not a research question rather it is a programmatic proclamation, that aims at classifying the ecological conditions in to types that would not just be a standard for comparisons

rather a predictive tool that could predict the possible path of languages in concern. Very little research (Dixon:1997; Mühlhäusler: 2000, 2005; Nettle:1999; Nettle and Romaine: 2000; and Mufwene: 2008;) has been undertaken to move forward in this direction. The latest in this line is *Wendel and Heinrich: 2012, A framework for langauge endangerment dynamic: the effect of contact and social change on language ecologies and language diversity:* attempts to introduce a new prescriptive to the study of language endangerment. In their paper Wendel and Heinrich proposes a unified framework that would account for language diversity loss along with the respective language ecologies. For this Wendel and Heinrich defines a language ecology as *"dynamic network of relationship and interdependencies between the socio-economic and environmental contingencies"*. Therefore based on these interrelationships they have categorised the ecologies in to two types: *Stable and Competitive*.

Stable Ecologies are found in multilingual societies where the network is essentially raised from the bottom. These are essentially bottom-up knowledge ordering models which are highly susceptible to local conditions. Further communities in a stable ecologies have small number of speakers this implies that no one community enjoys significant advantage over the others in terms of economic and technological strength. Therefore Dixon (1997) notes that communities in stable ecologies have a symmetrical power distribution among them and are in a state of Equilibrium. Equilibrium of the network in a stable ecology is principally influenced by the local conditions, such as climate change and changes in social organisation. Moreover the languages in Stable Ecologies compliments each other forming a network of interdependency and these languages and communication are basically esoteric in nature. A Stable Ecology can be further divided into Emergent Ecologies and Multilingual Ecologies.

Emergent ecologies are typically marked with the following features: migration into unoccupied territory and associated with hunters and gatherers and pastoralists. Similarly the *Multilingual Ecologies* are typically marked by the following features: Structured language layers in complimentary relational to each other, and includes

exotic-endemic communities.

Competitive Ecologies begin with the practice of agriculture which in turn initiate a change in the social organisation of communities: transition form hunters and gatherers to larger more sophisticated political units which laid the foundations unequal power distribution between the 'haves' and 'have nots'. Competitive Ecologies are essentially top-down knowledge ordering models with asymmetrical power distribution. Moreover communities in a competitive ecologies are in a hierarchal relationship and the languages and communication are exoteric in nature. A competitive ecology is typically associated with the following punctuation events, writing system, spread of literacy, industrialisation, emergence of standardised languages and the apex of any competitive ecology is the formation of a nation-state. These implies large scale migration of ethnic minorities, marginalisation of minorities communities with in a nation-state and finally language diversity loss are a result language shift to dominant languages at the expense of minority languages. A Competitive Ecology can be further divided in to three subtypes: Replacement, Exploitation and Glocalizing Ecologies.

Replacement Ecologies are associated with the following features: language replacement- a total collapse and replacement of the less powerful languages group by dominant language groups, and settlement colonialism and empires. *Exploitation Ecologies* can be observed to have the following typical features: Language shift to and expansion of dominant languages, polices and ideologies of the dominant linguistic groups undermines the vitality of minority languages, and finally these ecologies are typically associated with exploitation colonialism and nation-states. *Glocalizing Ecologies* in contrary to the other sub types are marked with both spread of dominant languages and revival of minority languages. These ecological conditions exhibit the following features: pluricentric languages, novel forms of contact and competition, evolved strategies for language maintenance and revival, and finally they are associated with globalisation transnational migration and urban centers.

The above classification of ecologies in to types by Wendel and Heinrich is unique for all practical purposes this the first diachronic approach to bring all the major ecological folds together. Their classification based on four parameters: Knowledge ordering, Distribution of Power; Social Order; and Communication Strategies, gives this framework an added advantage over the other in understanding the dynamics of language endangerment.

3.4 Ecology of Languages Spoken by Less than 10,000 Speakers:

This section is a description of the ecology of languages with less than 10,000 speakers. Haugen's programmatic questions are answered here with respect to these languages, for this purpose data from various government and non-governmental agencies and from academic publications are brought together.

3.4.1 What is its Classification in relation to other languages?

Based on the collated secondary data this work lists a total of 156 languages under the category of languages with less than 10,000 speakers.

Of the 156 language take into account 21 languages grouped under 'Unclassified' did not have any considerable linguistic description available to classify them, this category must not be confused with 'Language Isolate': languages which demonstrate no genealogical relationship with other languages. Nihali is the only attested Language Isolate found with in the category of languages with less than 10,000 speakers. Largest number of language in this category (32.05%) belongs to the Tibeto-Burman family with 50 languages, followed by the Indo-Aryan with 41 languages, Dravidian and Austro-Asiatic each has 17 languages, and all the three languages of the Andaman islands reports speaker with less than 10,000 speakers. Six languages of the least known Tai family is also found in the database. Their classification and distribution are as follows:

Graph 3.1 Genealogical distribution of Languages with less than 10,000 speakers
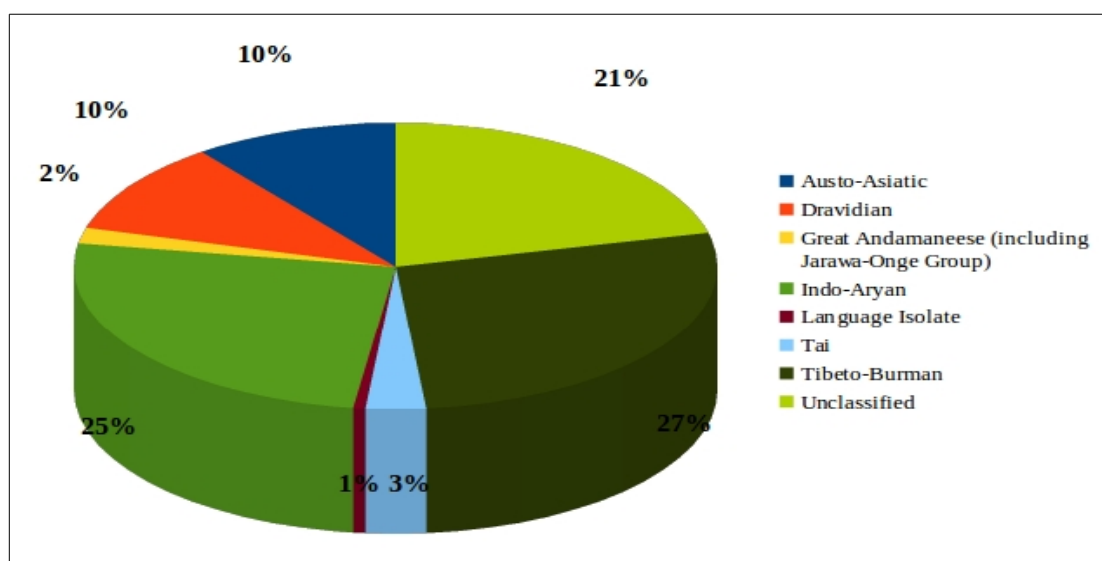
3.4.2 Who are its users?

Locating the users of a language is one the essential steps in contextualizing study of languages. While locating the users of a language we must locate them not in isolation, but in relation to the speaker local conditions. A de-contextualised location may be easier when compared to the 'locating in context' but it would be of little use in the larger endeavor. Hence this question who are its user must locate the users in the immediate socio-political context of the speakers. In the Indian context apart from the grouping suggested by Haugen (1971) it is mandatory that we add the 'Status' to our grouping.

3.4.3 Status:

The Indian constitution, through Article 343[18], declared Hindi in Devanagari script and English as the official language of the Union. Further during enactment of constitution a total of 18 languages, including Hindi, where recognized as Scheduled

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18 http://www.constitution.org/cons/india/p17343.html

languages through Eighth schedule of the Indian Constitution. At the time of enactment, inclusion in the list meant that these languages would be the source to enrich the official language of the Union Hindi. Since then the list has acquired further significance, creating a rift between Scheduled and Non Scheduled languages and introduced hierarchy among languages. Thus the Scheduling of the Indian languages has created a 'status' among Indian languages by privileging a few. Since its inclusion Eight schedule has been a powerful source as Sarangi (2009) notes for granting formal and constitutional recognition to various languages. Further as Sarangi (2009) observes language listed in the eight schedule has acquired significant cultural capital as they play a central role in the social mobility. Rest of the languages of India then classified in to Non-Scheduled languages are considered inferior to the language of the eight schedule. While census of India list the population of the Scheduled and Non Scheduled languages they do not publish the data on languages with less than 10,000 speakers. This arbitrary decision to exclude languages with less than 10,000 speakers thus creates another category: languages with less than 10,000 speakers. These languages are hence pushed to the lowest rank among the hierarchy of languages in India. As per the Census of India (2001) the total population of India stood at 1,028,737,436[19]. Of this 1,026,847,940 spoke one of the 122 languages listed in the census[20]. Table below will present a summary of the distribution of the speakers according to their broader status.

Table 3.1 India's languages by scheduling[21]

Language Status	No. of Languages	Population in Numbers	Population in percentage
Scheduled Languages	22	993,245,089	96.56%
Non Scheduled Languages	100	33,602,851	3.26%
Languages with less than 10,000 speakers	156	1,889,496	.183%

Abbi(2010) analysis of the above provides a fine grained distinction between the

19 http://www.censusindia.gov.in/Census_Data_2001/India_at_glance/popu1.aspx
20 http://censusindia.gov.in/Census_Data_2001/Census_Data_Online/Language/Statement1.htm
21 http://www.censusindia.gov.in/Census_Data_2001/Census_Data_Online/Language/data_on_language.aspx

privileged and non-privileged languages, divided in to seven categories with varying degree of socio-economic prestige. In the hierarchy established by her English occupies the highest position, followed by the Scheduled Languages and their dialects, then the Non-scheduled language and their dialects and finally at the bottom are the languages with less than 10,000 speakers. Even though they contribute to 57.49% of the languages spoken in India, they are spoken only by .183% of the total population. Further the denial to acknowledge their presence[22] by the government agencies virtually makes them no existent.

3.4.4 Locale:

Locale of languages and their geographical distribution with in a nation state is of a significance in studies that seeks to understand the state of a language. Considering locale of languages will help us in locating the minority languages and its users in with respect to other majority languages and their users. Following table presents us the geographical distribution of languages spoken by less than 10,000 speakers:

Table 3.2 Geographical distribution of languages spoken by less than 10,000 speakers.

Zones	No. of Languages with less than 10,000 speakers.
A&N	11
EC	18
N	14
N: J&K	41
NE	52
S	15
WC	7

Above seen zonal assignment are based on geographical locations and their bifurcations are arbitrarily decided. A&N includes the union territory Andaman and Nicobar; EC: East Central Zone includes the state of Jharkhand, Chattisgarh, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Bengal, and Bihar; N: Northern Zone includes the states of Himachal Pradesh, Uttranchal, Punjab, Haryana, and Uttar Pradesh; N: J&K includes the state of Jammu and Kashmir; NE: North East Zone includes the state of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura, and Sikkim;

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22 Languages with less than 10,000 Speakers are omitted from being reported by the government.

S:Southern Zone includes the states of Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh; and WC:West Central Zone includes the state of Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Daman & Diu, and Dadra.

India is federal of Union of states. These states were reorganised after the independence by the States Reorganisation Commission (SRC) 1953 on the linguistic lines. Apart from being a meer administrative unit 'States' have been at the center of identity and representation crisis in India since independence. Thus the State wise distribution of languages with less than 10,000 speakers are also of great significance to our present study. The are following table does not include trans-state languages.

Tabel 3.3 State wise distribution of Languages with less than 10,000 Speakers

State	No. of Languages with less than 10,000 speakers
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	11
Andhra Pradesh	1
Arunachal Pradesh	23
Assam	5
Bihar	-
Chandigarh	-
Chhattisgarh	-
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	-
Daman and Diu	-
Goa	-
Gujarat	1
Haryana	-
Himachal Pradesh	10
Jammu and Kashmir	41
Jharkhand	-
Karnataka	2
Kerala	6
Lakshadweep	-
Madhya Pradesh	1
Maharashtra	3

State	No. of Languages with less than 10,000 speakers
Manipur	12
Meghalaya	1
Mizoram	2
Nagaland	-
National Capital Territory of Delhi	-
Odisha (Orissa)	10
Puducherry	-
Punjab	-
Rajasthan	1
Sikkim	-
Tamil Nadu	2
Tripura	4
Uttar Pradesh	-
Uttarakhand	5
West Bengal	1

From table 3.3 it is clear that the distribution of languages under consideration are clearly uneven. Inaccessible Hilly terrains of the Himalayan states: Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Manipur, Mehelya, Mizoram and Uttarakhand appears to be the last refuge for most of these languages in main land India. Apart from these we also find Orissa and island archipelago of Andaman and Nicobar to offer refuge for these languages.

As mentioned above languages that are spoken in more than one states; Trans-state languages, deserves special attention. Their spread in more than one state indicates that these ethnic communities have either migrated or were forcefully displaced. In such cases same language spoken in different states must be considered as different entities as their socio-political-economical conditions are not identical. The following table is a list of 13 such languages that are found in the set.

Tabel 3.4 Trans-state Languages with less than 10,000 speakers.

States	Language(s)
Andhra Pradesh, & Maharashtra	Thoti
Assam, West Bengal, Manipur, & Meghalaya	Mech
Assam, & Meghalaya	Atong
Bihar, Chattisgarh ,Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, & Karnataka (barda) gujarat (barda) maharashtraWest Bengal	Birhor
Chattisgarh, & Madhya pradesh	Bhunjia
Jharkhand, Orissa, & West Bengal	Binjhia/birjia/brijia
Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, & West Bengal	Asur
Karnataka, & T.N	Toda
Karnataka, T.N., & Kerala	Kota
	Kurumba
Karnataka, Gujarat, & Maharashtra	Baradi
Kerala, & T.N	Mannan
	Eravallan

3.4.5 Social Stratification-Class/Caste/Tribe:

When scoio-cultural difference lead one group to establish dominance over others in terms of status, power and privilege it is called social stratification.[23] Social stratification as system thus involves "classification of people into groups based on shared socio-economic conditions ... a relational set of inequalities with economic, social, political and ideological dimensions"(Barker 2000). All modern societies are said to have one form or the other forms of social stratification. India as a Modern state is no exception to it.

 Caste system in India is one such form of social stratification that has been

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23   Barker, Chris. Cultural Studies: Theory and Practice. London: Sage. Pg no436.

traditionally followed since the vedic period. According to Dr. B.R Ambedkar "A Caste is an enclosed class"[24] which had its genesis in the classes of pre-caste India, this later during the vedic period due to strict imposition of endogamous matrimonial regime became Caste System, therefore he defines this form of social stratification as "the superposition of endogamy on exogamy means the creation of caste"[25]. Membership to privileged categories brings along with it better ecological conditions that help not just in sustenance rather prosperity to both the comminutes and their language.

In India, after independence, communities that were historically exploited subsumed the constitutional categories Scheduled caste and Scheduled Tribe[26]. Hence these terms are strictly an administrative, jural, and political concept which is applied over such sections of population that are relatively isolated and disadvantaged than the rest. However data presented in the seventh and the latest report of the National committee Of Scheduled caste and Scheduled Tribe: 2001-02[27], clearly demonstrates that the scoio-ecnomic condition of these two categories hasn't changed much as they still lack behind on several vital parameters. Apart from this the 2006 Government of India 'Social, Economic and Educational Status of the Muslim Community of India: A Report[28]' by Sarchar and et.al, clearly shows to that socio-economic condition of the Muslim comminutes in India is as bad as the Scs/Sts.

It is highly relevant for our present study to apprise the relative position of languages under consideration with in these social heirarchy. Further, due to the similarity in the socio-economic status in the present study the following three categories Scs, Sts, and Muslim minorities are treated as one categorie/class based on their relative position in the caste-class-religion milieu. Table below would show the distribution of linguistic comminutes among these categories:

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24 Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar. *CASTES IN INDIA:Their Mechanism, Genesis and Development*: inWritings and Speeches, Vol. 1. Bombay: Education Department, Government of Maharashtra, 1979.

25 Ibid

26   The constitution (scheduled tribes) order, 1950 & The constitution (scheduled castes) order, 1950: http://lawmin.nic.in/ld/subord/rule9a.htm accessed on 16/4/2014.

27 http://ncsc.nic.in/pages/view/212/211-seventh-report-2001-02 accessed on 16/4/14

28 http://www.minorityaffairs.gov.in/sachar accessed on 16/4/14

Table 3.5 Category wise distribution of Languages with less than 10,000 speakers

Category	No. of languages	In terms of%
SC/ST	99	63.46%
Muslim	37[*]	23.71%
NA	18	11.53%
OC	2	1.20%

It can be seen that from the table above that a majority of the languages 63.46% belong exclusively to communities that fall under SC/ST category; a significant number of languages belong to people of Islamic faith and two languages belong to communities to other than SC/ST communities. Unfortunately the category of 18 linguistic communities under consideration could not be ascertained due to lack adequate amount of data. Further the graph of category wise distribution of the languages clearly demonstrates the earlier proposition that membership to privileged categories brings along with it better ecological conditions that help not just in sustenance rather prosperity to both the communities and their language. It can be seen that almost nine in every ten languages with less than 10,000 speakers belong to the deprived.

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[*] Of the 37 comminutes identified to be followers of islamic faith only one community has been attested officially Islamic the others were identified as islamic after consulting Prof. Nazir Ahmad Dhar of University of Kashmir.

Graph 3.2 Category wise distribution of Languages with less than 10,000 speakers
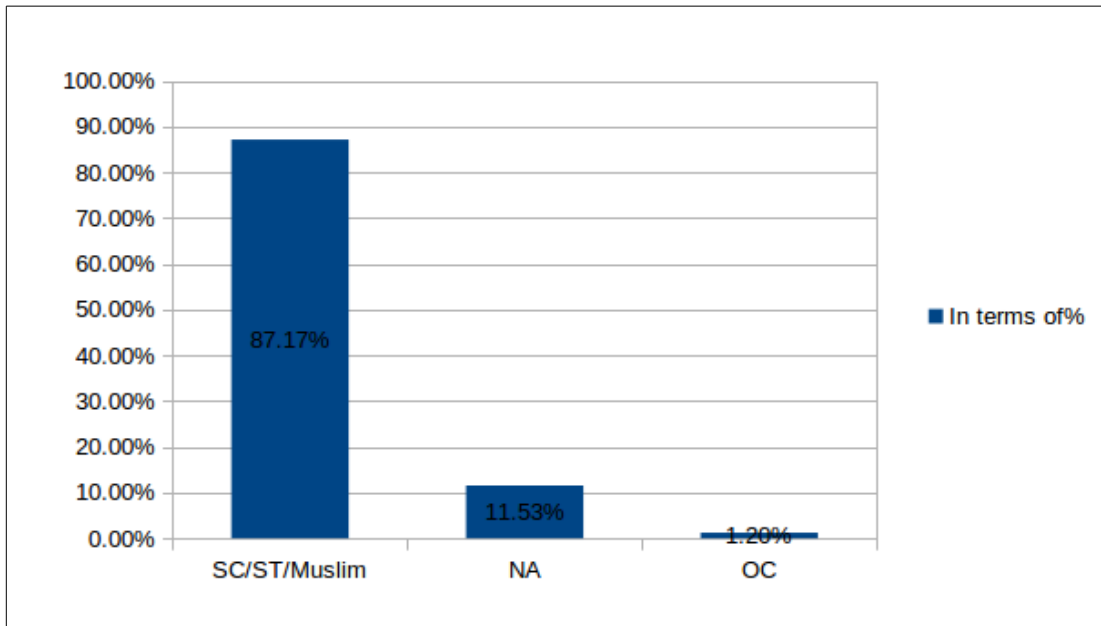
3.4.6 Language Use Pattern

Assessing Patterns of use of a language in a linguistically diverse state as India has its own challenges. All scholars agree on the fact that no one linguistic community in India is linguistically homogeneous. However any conclusive statement beyond this has been hard to come by. Any attempt at characterising the patterns of language use within communities has to grapple with, as Fishman (1965) points out "problem of how best to systematize or organize the manifold differences that are readily recognizable". How can one conceptualise patterns of language use? The basic problem in this juncture is What to include in and What not to while describing the pattern of language use. While for an in depth study Fishman (1977) suggest six domains Families, Friends, Acquaintance, Media, Religious ceremonies, and Occupation. Emphasis on these domains implies that undue importance is given to the langauge use in personal life over other formal and more state controlled domains of use like Education and Administration. On the other hand Haugen (1972) suggestions aims at broader outlook of the usage patterns along these three parameters 1) Domains of use, 2) Literacy and 3) Variation and Standardisation. Haugen's approach takes a holistic perspective of the language use patterns by considering *domains of use* along with literacy and variation, as later research in languages ecology (Muhlhasuler: 1996;

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& Wendel and Heinrich: 2012) has shown clearly that the domains of use are an emergent property of a language ecology and they either grow or diminish as per the changes in ecology of a language. Therefore this section of the chapter presents a description of the language use patterns of languages spoken by less that 10,000 speakers along the Haugenian lines. Scarcity of the data form the field made this a hard task however all the necessary informations are inferred from what is not said and as well as what is said.

Domains of use is the third question in Haugen's programmatic essay *The Ecology of Language*. "What are its domains of use?............... discovering whether its use is unrestricted or limited in specific ways;" It can be clearly seen from his words that the requirement here is to get a broader picture of the domains of use. Is the language used in restricted context? The languages of our interest are least documented hence a first hand, and verified data is not presently available however form the available resources (Commissioner for Linguistic Minority 49th Report 2013 ; Mishra: 2011; Ministry of Tribal Affairs Annual report 2012; Office of Registry of Newspaper for India) the domains in which the languages are not used are identified. Office of Registrar of Newspaper For India mandates that all the newspapers and periodicals printed and published in India must be registered under them. Their websites gives us access to a language wise list of newspapers and periodicals published in India. This list can be used to assess if a language is used in domain of print media. Similarly the annul reports of the Ministry of tribal affairs and Commissioner for linguistic Minorities provides us data on the various domains of languages use like Education and Administration. Based on the data available from these resources we can deduce if the language under considerations are currently used in the domains of Education, Administration, and Media. Of the 156 languages spoken by less than 10,000 people only ten languages were used in the domain Education. None of the 156 languages were used in the domain of media and administration. The following are the ten languages are used in the domain of education as Subject of instruction[29]: Bondo, Spiti Bhoti, Tai Rong, Onge, Tai Phak, Shompen, Tai Nora, Aiton Khampti, Munda, and Singpho. However the reliability of theses claims are questionable for instance

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29   Mishra 2011

while Mishra (2011) and CIIL[30] claims of making literacy and other material like primer available, a discussion with Prof Anvita Abbi, an expert in languages of the Andaman said that they are not taught in schools. Therefore with a pinch of salt, we can assume that language other than these ten are used only in the Domains of Home, and Traditional Knowledge.

Literacy, is largely defined as the ability read or write. Haugen deals with this in his 6th question "What is the nature of its written traditions? ....the study of written texts and their relationship to speech ." His approach seeks to unravel the relationship between written text and speech. Of the 156 languages the following language are given scripts after linguistic analysis: Aiton Khampti, Bondo, Great Andamanese, Jenu Kurumba, Munda, Spiti Bhoti, Tai Nora, and Onge[31]. While it is possible that other languages under consideration are being written using Devanagari, Bengali or Roman scripts it is not clear whether are theses scripts modified and adopted for the languages or are they just spelt using these scripts. Furthermore assigning scripts alone does not ensure literacy in India they are partly controlled and governed by socio-economic factors. Hence we have to assume that literacy even if they exist in these languages are minimal and limited.

Variation and Standardisation, Haugen dealt these as two different questions: "What internal varieties does the language show? This is the task of a dialectology that will recognize not only regional, but also social and contactual dialects; and To what degree has its written form been standardized, i.e. unified and codified? This is the province of prescriptive linguistics, the traditional grammarians and lexicographers;" While these two are treated as different questions Haugen's treatment of these elsewhere shows them to be otherwise. For instance Haugen considered standardisation as a means of felicitating communication through a unified code with in a nation, this implies that variation and standardisation are a product of the ecology of language. Further the standardised language is also to be considered as a variety of a language with in this framework.

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30 http://www.ciil.org/PubVideo.aspx
31 Ibid

While the lack of any documentation restricts us from commenting on the nature of variation found in the languages under considerations, it is, however, possible based on the available information to state conclusively that those languages taught as a Subject of Instruction are certain to have variations as the standardised language itself is one of the varieties and further it is a necessary prerequisite that a language be standardised before being introduced as a subject of instruction. Therefore of the 156 languages under consideration only ten languages that are taught in schools are considered to have a standardised variety and are recorded to have variation among them. The following are the those ten languages: Aiton Khampti, Bondo, Great Andamanese, Jenu Kurumba, Munda, Spiti Bhoti, Tai Nora, and Onge. Yet the picture on ground may be completely different as education as whole is known to suffer from a major shortage of teachers and teaching and learning materials.

3.4.7 Concurrent languages used by the speakers:

Lack of any documentation of languages spoken by less 10,000 speakers, does not permit us to pinpoint the concurrent language(s) used by this section of the population. However an extrapolation of the trends in the concurrent languages used by these communities are possible from previous studies in multilingualism in India by scholars like Anamalai, Kachru, Khubchandani, Pattanayak , and Sridhar.

Of the 156 languages under study 87.71% of the languages are spoken by ST's and the Muslim Minorities of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. In this context Ananmalai (1990) in his study of tribal bilingualism demonstrates "The largest other tongue of the tribal bilinguals is the dominant language of the state or region they live in." Similarly the UNDP- Report (2004) also observed that most tribes are involved in language acculturation in favour of the dominant languages of the region. Moreover Ishtiaq (1999) claims that socio-economic factors such as urbanisation, literacy in a second language, economy, changes in traditional work and belief system are accelerating language shift. This implies that the preference of choosing another tongue is constrained by the socio-economic context, and the language of the power is given more preference over the rest. Educational system has also aided this process of

unidirectional multilingualism, as seen above these languages has no place in the educational system in India, therefor the state language or Hindi or English becomes of the only medium of instruction. Beyond this state, a negative value is attached to most of these languages and it is also felt that there is no practical value in learning these languages (Sridhar 1989, 1991). Over all even if we have not pinpointed the concurrent languages used in communities the trend is clear: a general preference to the languages of the dominant and the powerful.

3.4.8 Institutional Support:

Socio-Economic disparities persisting during the end of colonial era saw the religious minorities demand for a separate nations and led to the partition of the country. More over the debates and discussions on the issue of national language also assumed a great significance in the formative days of the nation. Therefore the constitutional framers of this county incorporated certain safeguards to ensure the protection of interest of minorities. All the relevant provisions to safeguard the interest of the linguistic minorities are discussed below.

Linguistic Rights as Fundamental Right

Part III of the Indian Constitution guarantees Indian citizens six fundamental rights, violation of these results in punishments as prescribed by law. One of the six fundamental right is the Cultural and Educational rights(Article 29) preserving Right of any section of citizens to conserve their culture, language or script, and right of minorities to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice(Article 30).

In Section 1, Article 29 the constitutions provides the explicit guarantee to protect the right of any section of the citizens residing in any part of the country having a distinct language, script or cultures of its own, to conserve the same. Section 2, on the other hand Prohibits any discrimination based only on religion, race, caste, language or any of them in the matter of admission to State or State-aided educational institutions.

Article 29

1. Any section of the citizens of India or any part thereof having a distinct language, script or culture of its own shall have the right to conserve the same.

2. No citizen shall be denied admission into any educational institution maintained by the state or receiving aid out of state funds on grounds only of religion, race, caste, language, or any of them.

Section 1 of Article 30 provides that "all minorities, whether based on religion or language, shall have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice". According to Section (2) the State shall not, in granting aid to educational institutions, discriminate against any educational institution on the ground that it is under the management of a minority, whether based on religion or language.

Article 30

1. All minorities, whether based on religion or language, shall have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice.

1A. In making any law providing for the compulsory acquisition of any property of an educational institution established and administered by a minority, referred to in clause 1, the state shall ensure that the amount fixed by or determined under such law for acquisition of such property is such as would restrict or abrogate the right guaranteed under that clause.

2. The state shall not, in granting aid to educational institutions, discriminate against any educational institution on the ground that it is under the management of a minority, whether based on religion or language.

Special Directives

In addition to these, the constitution also includes certain special directives in Part XVII, Chapter IV, of the constitution which deals with issue of language usage and education.

Article 345 empowers a state to chose one or more languages that are in use in its state as the official language. However only languages used by more than 15% of the population of a state are eligible for this provision.

Official language or languages of a State Subject to the provisions of Article 346 and 347, the Legislature of a State may by law adopt any one or more of the languages in use in the State or Hindi as the language or languages to be used for all or any of the official purposes of that State: Provided that, until the Legislature of the State otherwise provides by law, the English language shall continue to be used for those official purposes within the State for which it was being used immediately before the commencement of this Constitution

Article 347 has special provisions to be made by the President to recognise a language for official purposes if substantial proportion of the population of a State desires its use:

Special provision relating to language spoken by a section of the population of a State On a demand being made in that behalf the President may, if he is satisfied that a substantial proportion of the population of a State desire the use of any language spoken by them to be recognised throughout that State or any part thereof for such purpose as he may specify CHAPTER III LANGUAGE OF THE SUPREME COURT, HIGH COURTS, ETC

Article 350 entails that every person has the right to submit representation in the language they use.

Language to be used in representations for redress of grievances Every person shall be entitled to submit a representation for the redress of any grievance to any officer or authority of the Union or a State in any of the languages used in the Union or in the State, as the case may be.

The 7th Amendment to the Indian Constitution added two articles (Article 350 A and 350 B) addressing the issue of language usage and education of the linguistic minorities. Article 350 A, issues a directive to the state that it shall be the duty of the state authorities to ensure the adequate facilities for mother tongue instruction at the primary stage of eduction for children of minority languages.

It shall be the endeavour of every State and of every local authority within the State to provide adequate facilities for instruction in the mother-tongue at the primary stage of education to children belonging to linguistic minority groups; and the President may issue such directions to any State as he considers necessary or proper for securing the provision of such facilities.

National commissioner for linguistic minorities is constituted under directives of Article 350 B, which issues a directive for the appointment for a special officers for linguistic and frames the duties and responsibility of the officer.

(1) There shall be a Special Officer for linguistic minorities to be appointed by the President.

(2) It shall be the duty of the Special Officer to investigate all matters relating to the safeguards provided for linguistic minorities under this Constitution and report to the President upon those matters at such intervals as the President may direct, and the President shall cause all such reports to be laid before each House of Parliament, and sent to the Governments of the States concerned.]

These provisions are unique and no such equivalents can be found in any other

constitution. Addition of these provisions to the fundamental rights, reassures the minorites that their language and culture which are central to their life will be safe under the constitution. However, a lack clarity on the definition of linguistic minority, coupled with the decision to exclude the languages with less than 10,000 speakers from the census of India and the imposition of dominant languages through the pseudo language policy of 'Three-language Formula' seems to be the source of problem.

National Policy on Education 1968, adopted the All India Council for Education 1956 recommendation of the Three Language Formula (TLF) 'which includes the study of a modern Indian language, preferably one of the Southern languages, apart from Hindi and English in the Hindi speaking states, and of Hindi along with the regional language and English in the non Hindi-speaking states at the Secondary stage.' This very nature of Three-language formula assured the imposition of dominant languages over minority languages by imposing either Hindi in Hindi-speaking states and regional languages in non-Hindi speaking states and nullifies Article 350 A directive's to the state that 'it shall be the duty of the state authorities to ensure the adequate facilities for mother tongue instruction at the primary stage of eduction for children of minority languages'. In this context, mother tongues of the minorities became the 'zero' language and Hindi and other regional languages became the first language making these constitutional provisions a mere political rhetoric. This failure of the language policy is also noted by Abbi (2009) as

"Ironically, these articles are merely statements on paper as the speakers of the so-called minor languages themselves do not wish to educate their children in their respective mother tongues. Nor has a minor language ever been used as the language of grievance, for example, in filing a petition in court, for fear of not being understood by the decision makers."

Similarly the failure of the states pseudo language policy 'three-language formula' is also made clear through the review of NCF: National Curriculum Framework for School Education: A Discussion Document   (2000), while reviewing the Three

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Language Formula, notes the followings

In a number of states/organizations/ boards, however, the spirit of the formula has not been followed and the mother tongue of the people has been denied the status of the first language … because of the changed socio-economic scenario, the difference between the second and the third languages has dwindled. Thus, in reality, there may be two- second languages for all purposes and functions. Some states follow only a two- language formula whereas in some others classical languages like Sanskrit and Arabic are being studied in lieu of a modern Indian language. Some boards/institutions permit even European languages like French and German in place of Hindi. In this scenario, the three-language formula exists only in our curriculum documents and other policy statement

Moreover the constitution of India while ensuring the rights of the linguistic minority does not define a linguistic minority. This leaves the notion of 'linguistic minority' open for various interpretation. For instance the dominant interpretation that seems to covertly influence all policy are the State Recognition committee's suggestions, with reference to language use in administration, that:

a) A State should be considered monolingual when about 70% or more of the entire population of the State speaks the same language;

b) A State should be considered as bilingual when about 30% or more of the entire population of the state speaks a language other than the language of the region;

c) The language of the minority should be used for conducting official business in district and not the official language of the State, if 70% or more of the population of the district speaks it;

d) In bilingual districts, municipal areas or in taluks, where minorities contribute 15% to 20%, documents like Government notices, electoral rolls, ration

cards, etc., are to be reprinted in both languages

The consequences of these recommendations as observed by (Benedikter, 2013) are:

(a) The responsibility of protecting the rights of the linguistic minorities are entrusted upon the state government and not on the central government,

(b) Defining linguistic minorities based only on the territory of reference creates problems as other factors like political, cultural and economic powers of the language are ignored. The case of English and Sanskrit is better example in this case while these languages are numerically minor but their role in daily life can hardly be put on the same level.

Thus even after Supreme courts interpretation[32] of minority languages as a separate spoken languages, even if the language does not have a separate script or has no script it seem that these support are not just rendered useless, these languages are eventually written off through covert policies.

3.5 Exploitation ecologies of Languages with less than 10,000 speakers

Haugen's final question in his programmatic proclamation, seeks to sum up the ecological condition of a language in relation to other languages. In accordance with Haugen's method the following observations can be made about the languages less than 10,000 speakers :

5. The distribution of languages with less than 10,000 speakers is uneven among language families. With 32.05% languages Tibeto-Burman tops the list of languages with less than 10,000 speakers. Moreover a total of 21 languages which are presently unclassified is expected to further add more members to the Tibeto-Burman families.

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32 Wisdom of the Supreme Court (AIR 1971 S.C. 1987)

6. The users of these languages amount only to 0.183% of this nation's population. As mentioned above the Scheduling of languages has created a hierarchy among languages and all these 156 languages belong to the lowest rank in the hierarchy.

7. The geographical distribution of these languages once again show an uneven distribution: North Eastern states of India and the State of Jammu and Kashmir together holds 93 languages of the 156 under consideration. Moreover the data also supports *Roy Burman's* (1972) hypothesis that the minority languages are mostly found in the buffer zones between larger politico-cultural communities.

8. 87.17% of these languages are spoken by speakers who belong to the sections of population who are historically deprived of all educational privileges. Theses categories as we saw above are SC/ST/Muslim. This uneven distribution of languages with less than 10,000 speakers among deprived section of the population makes these languages more vulnerable than the rest.

9. Section on Language use Pattern clearly shows a pattern of restricted use of language with less than 10,000 speakers. Of the 156 languages only 10 languages are used for educational purposes, and the rest of the language seems to be restricted to the domain of Home and Traditional Knowledge. However in the context of India Home domain has been a significant domain, as it has made it possible to retain the languages for thousand of years, and the Indian home domains are much broader than the 'European' conceptualisation. Furthermore as Abbi (2004) points this is trend of uninterpreted usage at home domains is now under extreme pressure and has also broken in several communities as various factors contribute to the unlearning of these languages.

10. While the exact concurrent language(s) used by theses ethnolinguistic communities is not known but the trends point out clearly to a dominant

regional language or language of the state and power as a concurrent language(s).

11. On the side of the institutional support things are however much brighter at the least on policy documents. The Indian Constitution under Article 29 & 30 declares the right to preserve and promote languages of the minorities as a fundamental right and the Special Directives under Article 345, 347, 350, 350A & 350B address the issue of use of minority languages in administration and education. However as noted above a lack of clear definition of linguistic minorities coupled with pseudo language policy of Three-language formula and the decision to write off languages with less than 10,000 speakers in the census as 'others' nullifies these provisions.

An assessment of theses observations along Wendel and Heinrich's three essential parameters: Knowledge ordering, Distribution of Power; and Social order; places the ecologies of languages with less than 10,000 speakers in Exploitation ecologies of the Competitive type.

Firstly on the Knowledge ordering parameters we find these languages to be predominantly influenced from the Top. For instance the decrease in the use of adjacent languages as concurrent languages and the increase in the use of languages of the dominant communities show that these communities succumb to the external pressure, such as education in the dominant language: a state ideological apparatus.

Secondly we could note a clear asymmetrical power distribution among the speakers of languages of various status groups. This corroborated by Abbi (2010) hierarchy of languages in India, we find that these languages occupy the bottom most level. Further the practice of scheduling of languages implies subjugation of the rest through policies and political ideology. Above all a high distribution of these languages among the Schedule Tribes is a clear indicator for this asymmetrical power distribution.

Finally, table 3.2 shows that highest concentration of these languages in conflict zones of India: Seven Sisters of the North East, Jammu and Kashmir and East central states of Jharkhand, Chattisgarh, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Bengal, and Bihar is a strong indicator for punctuation in the social orders of these communities. On the one hand conflicts in the state of Jammu Kashmir and North East of India is a direct fall out of separationist movements that accuse the Indian state for forced accession and on the other conflicts in the east zone centers around economic inequalities, exploitation and social justice and uneven power distribution between the tribal communities and the State, pointing towards as what Husnain (1997) aptly points out as Internal Colonialism.

With all these parameters in place, that the characteristic features of the ecology of languages with less than 10,000 speakers is of (a) Language shift to and expansion of dominant languages, (b) Subjugation of these languages by undermining the vitality of minority languages through policies and political ideologies, and (c) exploitative attitude through colonialism and establishment of nation states. However availability of adequate provisions in the Indian Constitution gives us a hope for moving towards Glocalizing Ecologies.

Chapter 4

Indicators of Language Vitality in Linguistically Heterogeneous South Asia.

4.1 Introduction:

In Chapter 2 (Assessing Language Endangerment: A Methodological Review) we considered the methodological assessment of the existing tools, viz. Fishman's GIDS (1991) UNESCO's LVE (2003) and Enthnologue's EGIDS (2009), and the ecological description of the languages with less than 10,000 speakers in India in Chapter 3 (Ecology of languages spoken by less than 10,000 speakers). In these chapters we saw that a methodological problem, 'Monolingual Dominance' was inherent in the existing methodologies of vitality assessment. All these existing methods approached the question of 'vitality' from a rigid monolingual model, the result of which are clear discrepencies in their respective analysis of vitality (see chapter 2 for a demonstration). Apart from this Ethnologue's EGIDS and UNESCO's LVE had problems of their own: for instance on one hand UNESCO's LVE lacks clear definitions for terms like 'speaker' and 'community' and concentrates on 'availability' rather than 'accessibility' to the technology of education and literacy in the respective language and on the other hand Ethnologue's EGIDS totally ignores ecological condition of languages, allots undue weightage to literacy and reduces assessment.

Ecological conditions of the languages with less than 10,000 speakers in India discussed with empirical evidences in chapter 3 shows that the characteristic features of the ecology of these languages are: (a) Language shift to and expansion of dominant languages, (b) Subjugation of these languages by undermining the vitality of minority languages through policies and political ideologies, and (c) exploitative attitude through colonialism and establishment of nation states.

At this context one question that would immediately arises is: Can't the ecological

conditions of the languages be taken as measure of language vitality? The answer is 'no'. Ecological conditions are a description of the language's nature of interaction with other languages, with the speakers and the society in which it is spoken. This description however well fitted in to a typological model (like *Wendel and Heinrich: 2012)* won't account for the vitality as they lack the standards for interpretation. Further vitality assessment is not theoretically driven and it would be foolish on our part to ask questions like: How diverse is a language's ecology? Instead, they are goal driven: to set priorities of action that would guide a language activist or a policy maker engaged in language revitalisation programs.

The present chapter, after considering several languages of the Indian continent and the methodological flaws in the existing methods, identifies three chief methodological concerns in assessing a vitality of language in the Multilingual Ecology of India these are: *Hegemony of Monolingual Ideologies; Graphocentric Conjecture; & De-contextualisation of language from speakers' socio-economic condition.* It further proposes the mechanism for assessing vitality of languages relevant and suited within the Indian multilingual 'Ecology' of languages.

4.1.1 Hegemony of Monolingual Ideology

The use of one language in a society to fulfill all it communicative and expressive needs is generally considered as monolingualism. During the emergence of modernity monolingualism gained more importance with the formation of nation states in Europe like France and Germany, as these nations were unified as one nation by evoking a sense of nationality through language. During these unifications Standard forms of languages rose and began to dominate the local vernacular with the help of print capitalism[33]. The vernacular languages were eventually subjugated as result of shift in attitudes and growing economic pressures. In short, monolingualism is a language ideology which favors homogeneity over heterogeneity and unification over diversification. This ideological belief is not the prevalent forms of language ideology

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33 Anderson, Benedict R. O'G. (1991). Imagined communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism. Gives a detailed account on the formation of the nation state, discuses the rise of nations based on linguistic ethnicity and the role of Printing press in aiding this process.

anywhere else outside Europe, however it came to be the dominant one because of Imperialism and 'unidirectional globalisation'. Negative effects of one language and one nation idea while language planning and policy making are well discussed in the context of multilingual countries. Such ideologies can also influence language vitality assessment methods.

One of the most damaging methodological concerns that is highly relevant in the Indian multilingual context is the hegemony of Monolingual ideology. Even while the developers claim that their methods are universal, both the methods discussed so far have assumed an evaluation of inherent monolingual community and designed their methods to suit its needs. This section points out certain glaring reflections of the influence of monolingual ideology in these methods and their consequences:

UNESCO's LVE's factor Shifts in Domains of language Use (factor 4) and Response to New Domains and Media (factor 5) are an instance of the monolingual hegemony. The choice of the word 'Shift' in factor 4 indicates at two presumptions a) all communities are historically monolingual and b) if a language is to be treated as vital and robust then it must be used in all domains of use. Therefore, any 'shift' is a sign for weakness. Further the evaluative hierarchy that accompanies factors 4 and 5 reinforces this claim: Placing the Monolingual model: 'Universal Use' at the peak of the hierarchy over and above the 'Multilingual parity' and in factor 5 we find that the evaluative scheme is completely biased toward languages which are only robust at home domains by placing them in the category of 'inactive'. These categorisations while may be suitable for monolingual communities, have serious implications on the assessment of multilingual communities.

Similarly, such biases towards multilingual settings are also observed in EGIDS, developed by Ethnologue. For instance, the following lines from Ethnologue's websites on endangered languages make this proposition true:

"Less directly, an increase in bilingualism, both in the number of bilinguals and in their proficiency levels, is often associated with these trends, though a high level of

bilingualism is not, in itself, a sufficient condition for language shift or death."

While these lines may add a cautionary warning at the end, the rest of the assumptions about language usage is pretty clear. The phrase 'an increase in bilingualism' shows that monolingual communities and their language behavioral patterns are assumed as normal and any deviation from it is assumed to be abnormal. This assumption would lead us to wrongly assess a language of the multilingual communities as weak and even at times as endangered languages.

4.1.2 Graphocentric Conjecture

Western society as Harris (1986) accused is 'script bias'. Western social institutions are obsessed with the primacy of the written word- this obsession often involve uncritical equation of knowledge of writing with development and progress of a society and considers non-literate societies as underdeveloped and backward. The act of according undue privilege to writing over oral traditions is called Graphocentricism.

The graphocentric western academia (Ong 1967, Goody 1968 and Oxenham 1980) have also discredited and stigmatised unwritten languages and their communities for being cognitively inferior in spite of an absence of clear empirical evidence. Further, all the cognitive skills considered to be of the higher order such as critical analysis, logical thinking and sustained reflective introspection as Pattnayak (2014) points out are also found in the Vedas and ancient oral traditions of Sanskrit which were sole 'oral' for centuries until they were scripted. Similarly research on oral traditions of endangered languages have shown the existence of well developed systems of organising knowledge and the intricate connection that exist between people and their traditions[34]. Further, as Panttanayak (2014) points out 'Literacy' aided by the political power becomes an instrument of oppression. Therefore, overlooking strong oral traditions and an urgency to introduce script as a strategy for language development or considering languages with script as 'developed', is what I refer to as

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34 Traditional Knowledge Digital Library is on such example which has detailed information on traditional medicinal knowledge of India which is mostly orla. http://www.tkdl.res.in/tkdl/langdefault/common/Home.asp?GL=Eng

Graphocentric conjecture. This conjecture based on language ideologies when it finds its way to the vitality assessment methods will have misleading results. Both UNESCO's LVE and Ethnologue's EGIDS have fallen for this conjuncture. The following will prove this:

UNESCO's LVE (Factor 6) 'Availability of Materials for Language Education and Literacy' is a prototypical example for the influence of Graphocentric ideology. A glaring reflection of this language ideology biases can be in the assignment of hierarchy for this factor, based on the assumption that 'literacy and is directly linked with the social and economic development'. At the top of this hierarchy according to their assessment, are languages with an established orthography and a literary traditions. While they note that in these factors some communities maintain strong oral traditional they fail to assess the strength of the oral traditions. Similar undue weightage to literacy can be noted in Ethnologue's EGIDS where literacy is synonymous to development. Such assumption of supremacy of written word over the oral is not just viable for vitality assessment but also for language revitalisation in the Indian multilingual ecology.

4.1.3 De-contextualisation of language from Speaker's Socio-economic condition:

The third concern that has a significant impact on the vitality assessment in the Indian subcontinent is the de-contextualisation of languages from its speakers. The modern enterprise of linguistic (as pointed out in Chapter 3) has begun with de-contextualisation of language from time and space and treating them as delimited entities. The dominant school for the study of language in today's academic milieu is represented by the Generative school (Chomsky 1965). The Ideal Speaker & Listener introduced by Chomsky de-contextualise the language from its speakers in a sense that all the shortcoming in the language production are treated as 'performance errors' and insisted that focus should be on the study of competence. Bracketing off variation or change in language structures as performance error has serious consequences for a Vitality Assessment Method and further the competence in a

language is also dependent on the ecological forces acting on the speakers. A speaker's competence in a language is dependent on the socio-economic forces that either supports or opposes language maintenance. Assuming contrary to this and an approach to language vitality assessment where in the role of ecological force is not assessed, such assessment will remain misguiding and misrepresenting. For example the Ethnologue's EGIDS is an outcome of de-contextualising ideology. EGIDS for it assessment only considers the following:

a) Identity Function

b) Level of official use

c) Literacy status

d) Language Proficiency

e) Intergenerational transmission.

The consequence of this assumption is EGIDS treats languages as a fixed entity and overlooks various ecological factors like the attitude of the speakers and the state's attitude toward minor languages. The outcome of this is inconsistency and gross misrepresentation of the reality (as seen in Chapter 2) that exists in the developing societies marked by age-old multilingualism maintained in oral tradition.

4.2 Vitals of a Language:

How do we shed these ideological biases? What should be the factors for assessing Language Vitality in the multilingual ecology of India? The following sections would deal with these questions and presents an assessment method that seeks to shed these problematic and damaging ideological biases and instead would adopt an ecological framework along the Mühlhäusler's (1992) line with an aim to assess the *active use, discourse, functioning patterns of transmission, and other supporting ecological forces.* These four parameters will be assessed based on the following eight vitals:

1. Intergenerational Transmission

2. Users Proportions

3. Patterns of Language Choice

4. Perseverance of Language Structures

5. Perseverance of Orality

6. Cohesiveness of Users Socio-Economic Conditions

7. Institutional Support and Attitude of the State towards linguistic diversity

8. Community Member's Attitudes towards their language

Based on the ecological approach these eight vitals will reflect the nature of the interaction a language has with other language in the ecology, with the speakers of target language and with the society in which it is spoken. Vitality of Languages can not be completely associated with the quantity of interrelationships with these vitals but the quality of positive and negative interrelationships with these vitals, provides us the measure of the Vitality of the target language along a Maintenance and Shift/Loss Continuum. The following sections will discuss each of these vitals and the evaluating scheme for the respective vitals are presented in the form of a continuum: At one end of the continuum are the positive and healthy indicators of

language maintenance and at other end are the negative and unhealthy indicators, e.g loss/shift.

4.2.1 Vital 1: Intergenerational Transmission:

Originally identified by Fishmann in 1991, Intergenerational Transmission is the earliest and the most relevant factor till date. If languages are to be considered as human body, intergenerational transmission is the pulse of the language. Fishman in one of his chapters of the book Reversing Language Shift, titled 'How Threatened is 'Threatened'? A Typology of Disadvantaged Languages and Ameliorative Priorities' presents *Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale* as a tool to assess the disruption or endangerment among minority languages (See Chapter 2 for a detailed treatment). The final three levels of GIDS (levels 6,7, and 8) are exclusively characterised by Intergenerational Transmission, as the failure of intergenerational transmission of language is the crucial turning point in the maintenance and loss continuum. Once when the intergenerational transmission is disrupted then the languages is in a downward spiral for doom, unless any positive intervention is initiated the language will soon become extinct. Since intergenerational transmission is the turning point in the life of a language it is an important factor and deserves its place in any assessment tool. However, a range of language planning initiatives have found it difficult to determine and difficult to plan any counter measures accordingly. Further, as Dorian (1977, 1980) demonstrates and as Gernoble and Whaley (2006) points out Intergenerational transmission need not be uniform across the speaker's population. Hence keeping these constraints in mind, it is proposed that Intergenerational transmission be seen in relation to other vitals; *The Domains of Language Use* and the *Perseverance of Language Structure*.

In this Vital *Intergenerational Transmission* the evaluator is looking at factors such as continuous transmission of a targeted language and the quantity and quality of such transmissions. Therefore the underlying question for intergenerational transmission are: (a) Is the target language spoken to the children by the adult members of the community? (b) Does the adult members of the community expose the child to all the

domains in which they use the language? (c) Are the Structures of the Language preserved while talking to the Children? With these questions in mind the hierarchy of the response is proposed. The Intergenerational Transmission of the Target Language is:

Optimum: if the adult members of the community use the target language to a child in all domains normally used by adults and the structures of the language used is similar to the structures used by the elder members of the community.

Restricting: if the adult members of the community uses the target language to a child only in some domains normally used by adults and the structures of the language used is moderately different from the structures used by the elder members of the community.

Failing: if the adult members of the community use the target language to a child only in few domains normally used by adults and the structures of the language used is radically different from the structures used by the elder members of the community.

Disrupted: if none of the adult members use the target language to the children.

4.2.2 Vital 2: Users Proportions

In an endangered language scenario one of the important vitals that gives the assessment of a vitality of language is Users Proportions. If the average age of the Users of the Target language is higher, then the language is said to be losing its users, as the increase in the mean age signifies a cease in the addition of younger users. To assess the proportion of users, the readily available terminologies, the speaker and the language community are problematic. As Grinevald and Bert (2011) notes there is no consensus on where to draw a line. Who should be counted as a speaker? And Who should be counted as member of the ethnolinguistic communities? Pioneering work by Dorian (1977, 1981) and the subsequent work by Dressler (1981) and Cambell and

Muntzel (1989) reveals the complexity involved in identifying the speaker. Their work clearly shows that speakers are not a homogenous group; intersection with various sociolinguistic and Language competence parameters produces different kinds of Speakers of varying nature.[35] Similarly the problem of a 'community' in an Endangered language context is another complex knot. The lack of description for most of the endangered and minority languages and the absences of uniformity that accompanies writing traditions and standardisation makes it impossible to resolve the confusion. Thus, to measure the proportion of users of endangered language in multilingual communities the readily available notions of Language Community and Speakers are a great hindrance. Therefore, this tool seeks to replace these notions with: Users and Ancestral Language Community.

Users: We have seen in Chapter 3 all language communities with less than 10,000 speakers are essentially multilingual. It comprises speakers of various kinds of the target languages and in many cases speakers of others communities use the target language in contact situations. In this situation adopting the terminology 'users' over 'speakers' gives us a clear picture of the vitality of the target language. The notion of 'Users' allows an evaluator of language vitality to study the effect of interactions with other vitals. (See below for the effects of interactions)

Ancestral Language Community: To resolve the language community problem, Dorian (1982) suggested two methods on arriving at a consensus: a) based on linguistic competence and b) based on ethnic and cultural identity. Using the ethnic and cultural identity one can arrive at a more proximate estimate of the population of the community as it includes marginal and non users of a language who associate them self with the Ancestral or Heritage Culture. Thus Ancestral Language Community is an inclusive notion that includes all different kinds of speakers who identify with the target language and its culture.

In this vital the evaluator is looking at factors such as the relative size of the users base and the quality and quantity of such users. As we have seen above proper

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35 For a detailed discussion on the Typology of Speakers see Grinevald and Bret (2011).

categorisation and proximate appropriation of the proportion of users is essential in understanding the vitality of the target language. The hierarchy below provides us a continuum of Users Proportion with 'Strong' -if the number of users of the target language is roughly the same or above as the Ancestral Language Community, and used it in all domains is on the safer end. On the other hand if the number of users of the target language is drastically low in comparison with the population of the Ancestral Language Community, and used it in only a few domains then the users proportion is fractured signifying either extinction or the last speaker stage. The hierarchy of this vital is as follows:

Strong- if the number of users of the target language is roughly the same or above as the Ancestral Language Community, and used it in all domains.

Weak- if the number of users of the target language is moderately lower than the Ancestral Language Community, and used only in some domains.

Fragile- if the number of users of the target language is lower than the Ancestral Language Community, and used only in few domains.

Fractured- if the number of users of the target language is drastically lower than the Ancestral Language Community, and shows only a symbolic proficiency.

4.2.3 Vital 3: Patterns of Language Choice

Language death as a result of shifts of domains of use is one of the significant reasons for language death(Crystal 2000). Hence most of the existing tools treat shift/loss in domains of use as one of the indicators of language vitality. However these treatments are based on the monolingual model of the west and are grossly inadequate as its emphasis is on 'shift' rather than the 'stability' of the patterns of language choice. Assessing patterns of languages choice has it own share of complexities, one of the important drawback noted in the review of the existing tools (Chapter 2) is the

eurocentric treatment of the notion 'domains' of language use. While assessing the vitality of multilingual communities, eurocentric attitude of 'one language one people and all domains' is a great hindrance, thus any tool which attempt to assess the patterns of language choice must at first shed these notions as the presumed domains of use like work, playground, religious institutions and etc based on 'European' model may not exist, and secondly, it must instead adopt a more detailed descriptive framework that accounts for the choices of languages in a multilingual community as a sociological regularities than as individual behaviors and finally, it must focus on assessing the stability of such choices rather than the shift in them.

In this regard Fishman's (1972) treatment of 'domains of use' offers us the base for this approach as he treats domains of use as 'Who speaks What language to Whom and When[36]. Further this approach doesn't universalise the domains of use as it takes in to consideration the socio-cultural dynamics of the speech community and moreover the evaluator is free to construct language specific domains as in this approach a domain is treated as a "Cluster of social situations typically constrained by a common set of behavioral rule" (Fishman 1972). Therefore, however rudimentary and complex it may sound the present tool discards the traditional assignment of domains like home, playground, school, and etc. which represent the eurocentric perception of social institutions and moots for a rather more traditional approach 'Who speaks What language to Whom and When', to obtain a detailed description of the pattern of language choice in a community.

In this Vital *Patterns of Language Choice* the evaluator has two tasks at hand: a) producing a detailed description of the patterns of language choice of the community. For this the evaluator must answer the following: While 'Who': is the members of the Ancestral Language Community (which is a constant), 'What': are the languages used by the members of the Ancestral Language Community during a speech event, 'to Whom': yields the participants of a speech event and 'When': encompasses the topic of the speech event, local institutional settings like *panchayats,* physical settings like

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36 Who speaks What language to Whom and When is the title of one of Fishmans' Article published in 1965

the participants of the speech event and style like formal and informal. Once when described, the evaluator must categorise the data to apprise for any patterns of language choice.

Once when the pattern of choices are described, the evaluator must categorise and apprise the patterns for regularities of the choice as Fishman (1972) notes that "individual choices being derived from stable patterns". In the context of societal multilingualism these patterns will be clear and well bound: i.e. the languages spoken by the speech community have their boundaries clearly marked and these norms are followed as judicial laws assuring continuous progression of all the languages used in the speech community. However if such patterns shows irregularities like overlaps of domains then the multilingual environment is volatile and susceptible for language shift. Its vitality heirarchy is as follows:

Stable: if there is regularity in the pattern of Ancestral language use.

Strained: if there is irregularity in the patterns of Ancestral language uses and such irregularities are not uniform across the speakers.

Unstable: if there is irregularity in the patterns of Ancestral language use and such irregularities are uniform across the speakers.

Volatile: if there is a note able reduction in the use of Ancestral language with in its domains.

4.2.4 Vital 4: Perseverance of Language Structures:

Language change as the result of contact may be common and generally it is considered that it takes generations for such changes to be conventionalised. But if a language changes under the pressure of a dominating languages such changes would be evident as irregularities in language structures distributed along the users' age

group. In a multilingual community like that of languages with less than 10,000 speakers in India, languages usage boundaries tend to be strong however if they are weak and one languages comes to dominate the patterns of choice in a speech community then the language endangerment sets in. One of the effects of language of endangerment and treated by some (Dorian 1980) as a cause of language endangerment is the loss of linguistic structures. Despite several lucid demonstrations of the effect of language endangerment on the language structures (Dorian 1980, Schmidt 1985, and Cambell and Muntzel 1989) all the existing tools throw a blind eye to this vital. However the present tool sheds this reluctance to treat loss in language structures as an indicator of language vitality and considers this as an early indicator of endangerment after considering the following cases: In the event of a contact situation it is shown that the language structures of the dominated have either changed or have lost their marked features in the face of threat from dominating languages. Such process of change are generally referred as homogenisations (Cook 1989). Similarly this effect of language endangerment on the language structure is made evident in Schmidt's (1985) loss of ergative marker in Dyibal and the continuum of the structural simplification established thereafter.

Thus in this Vital the evaluator asks: Is there any irregularities in the structures of language ? If yes, are such irregularities distributed across the age group of the users? The positive and the negative correlations for this vital are as follows:

Preserved: if the structures of the languages are same across all age groups.

Slightly Changed: if the Structures of the language of the children are different from that of the elders.

Changed: if the structures of the language of the children and the youth are different from that of adults and elders.

Lost: if the structures of the language of all age groups are different.

4.2.5 Vital 5: Perseverance of Orality

The existing tools of assessing language vitality don't consider orality as a factor indicating language vitality despite exhibiting strong cultural links with people. A flourishing oral tradition is a key sign for language vitality in the multilingual South Asia. People have found recourse in the oral traditions of their language in their fight against homogenisation and hegemony (Angihotri 2008). The Indian independence movement, the Santhal Hool and the Bhakthi movements have all exhibited the significance of the orality in the peoples struggles and oral traditions continue to occupy a key role in the fight against hegemony. Therefore graphocentric Western prejudices against orality has to be discarded and orality be treated as a 'vital'. A flourishing orality is a strong sign of vitality as it exhibits not just the creative and productive aspects of the language but also the people's effort to resist language and cultural loss.

In this Vital the perseverance of orality is measured across the users age group and domains by asking: Who are the practitioners of Oral Tradition? What are the domains in which the oral tradition is practiced? The term orality here encompasses the act of transmitting knowledge through 'speech' and it also includes all forms of verbal art and oral literary traditions, viz. folk literature in all its genres. The loss of orality should be treated in par with the Intergenerational Transmission as it provides a measure of languages' creative and productive skill and peoples' will to resist the homogenisation. A scale of descending perseverance of orality follows:

+ Continuous: If users of all age group practices oral traditions in the community and in all domains of knowledge.

Continuous: If users of all age group practices oral traditions in the community and its knowledge is used only in some domains of knowledge.

- Continuous: If users of all age group practices oral tradition in the community and

its knowledge is used only in few domains of knowledge.

+ Restricted: if the practices of oral traditions are restricted to the adults of the community and its knowledge is used in all domains of knowledge.

Restricted: if the practices of oral traditions are restricted to the adults of the community and thenknowledge is used only in some domains of knowledge.

- Restricted: if the practices of oral traditions are restricted to the adults of the community and its knowledge is used only in few domains of knowledge.

+ Confined: if the practises of oral traditions are confined to the elders of the community only and its knowledge is used in all domains of knowledge.

Confined: if the practices of oral traditions are confined to the elders of the community and its knowledge is used only in some domains of knowledge.

- Confined: if the practices of oral traditions are confined to the elders of the community and its knowledge is used only in few domains of knowledge.

+ Isolated: If the use of oral traditions are isolated with only few elder members of the community and its knowledge is used in all domains of knowledge.

Isolated: If the use of oral traditions are isolated with only few elder members of the community and its knowledge is used only in some domains of knowledge.

- Isolated: If the use of oral traditions are isolated with only few elder members of the community and its knowledge is used only in few domains of knowledge.

4.2.6 Vital 6: Cohesiveness of the Socio-Economic Conditions:

One of the biggest threat to the minor and indigenous languages comes from urbanisations and the disruption of local economy in the name of development (Crystal, 2000; Grenoble and Whaley 1998; Grenoble 2011.), however the existing methods seems to assign no priority at all to this motivation of language shift. In the Indian context, most of the languages with less than 10,000 speakers are spoken by Indigenous population and as per one report "The indigenous/ tribal peoples who constituted **8%** of the total population of India at 1991 census make up **55%** of the total displaced persons due to development projects up to 1990[37]" makes the alarming rate of displacement clear and evident. Such similar displacement stories are spread across the world. In this context with wide spread acknowledgment of the shifts in socio-economic condition as a motivation for language shift and death the following thesis is forwarded for this vital 'The probability of language maintenance is high in communities who's socio-economic conditions are cohesive'. Based on the above thesis in this tool the socio-economic conditions of the target communities are measured along a continuum of cohesiveness and separateness based on the parameters identified by Harbert (2011): a) demographic distribution and b) nature of the local economy. However, the complexities of the relationship between language and economy are not clearly understood so far, cases proving the converse of this thesis are also known (See Habert 2011) so the results of this vital must be seen in context with others. The vitality hierarchy is as follows:

Cohesive- if the ancestral language community live together in the ancestral land and continues to follow traditional economic patterns.

Diminished- if the ancestral languages community's population living in the ancestral land is diminished by migration and the remaining population continuous to follow the traditional economic patterns.

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37 Tribals: Victims of Development Projects-India's Forced   Displacement Policy and Practice. http://socialissuesindia.files.wordpress.com/2012/09/tribal-displacement-in-india.pdf. Accessed on 30-5-14

Displaced- if the ancestral language communities live together but are displaced from their ancestral land, and follow modern patterns of economy.

Separated- if the ancestral language community's population is scattered and displaced from their ancestral land and follows modern patterns of economy.

4.2.7 Vital 7: Institutional Support and Attitude of the State towards linguistic diversity:

Of all the factors one of the well established is the role of institutional support and the states attitude factors towards the minority language(UNESCO 2003). Most modern nation states formed on the principles of linguistics ethnicity have to address the issue of minorities with in the boundaries of their state or in extreme cases were at the risk of Balkanisation[38]. Hence, several states evolved safeguards to protect the interest of the minorities by introducing several provisions. However not all nations came with such practices as the UNESCO's (2003) ad hoc group states "A country's government may have an explicit language use policy for its multiple languages. At one extreme, one language may be designated as the sole official language of the country while all others are condemned. At the other extreme, all languages of a nation may receive equal official status." Therefore for this vital UNESCO's Ad Hoc groups assessment formulation is adopted as it is. It takes in to consideration the explicit polices and/or implicit attitudes of the government towards the dominant and subordinate languages. The hierarchy of this vital is as follows[39]:

Equal support: All of a country's languages are valued as assets. All languages are protected by law, and the government encourages the maintenance of all languages by implementing explicit policies.

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38 According to Encyclopedia of Britannica (http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/50323/Balkanization) it refers to the process of division of a multinational state into smaller ethnically homogeneous entities.

39 Brenzinger, M., and et.al. 2003. Language vitality and Endangerment. Paris: UNESCO Expert Meeting on Safeguarding Endangered Languages.

Differentiated support: Non-dominant languages are explicitly protected by the government, but there are clear differences in the contexts in which the dominant/official language(s) and non-dominant (protected) language(s) are used. The government encourages ethnolinguistic groups to maintain and use their languages, most often in private domains (as the home language) rather than in public domains (e.g. in schools). Some of the domains of non-dominant language use enjoy high prestige (e.g. at ceremonial occasions).

Passive assimilation: The dominant group is indifferent as to whether or not minority languages are spoken, as long as the dominant group's language is the language of interaction. Though this is not an explicit language policy, the dominant group's language is the de facto official language. Most domains of non-dominant language use do not enjoy high prestige.

Active assimilation: The government encourages minority groups to abandon their own languages by providing education for the minority group members in the dominant language. Speaking and/or writing in non-dominant languages is not encouraged.

Forced assimilation: The government has an explicit language policy declaring the dominant group's language to be the only official national language, while the languages of subordinate groups are neither recognised nor supported.

4.2.8 Vital 8: Community Member's Attitudes towards their language

As noted in UNESCO's Ad Hoc group (2003) recommendations community member's attitude plays a major role in language maintenance. However, these attitudes are partly reflections of the States language policies and are partly a response to the market forces. Therefore the thesis forward here is 'if the community member's have a positive attitude towards their language then the probability of language maintenance is high'. Thus based on this the hierarchy of relative vitality is as follows

Affirmative- if all members have a positive attitude towards their language and wants to promote their language and culture.

Positive- if only some members have a positive attitude towards their language and supports maintenance.

Indifferent- if only few members have a positive attitude towards their language and other are indifferent towards the loss of language.

Negative- if all members of the community prefer to use the dominant language and doesn't wish to support their language.

4.3 Statutory notes:

As one could of have noted by now the assessment of vitality of language is a complex task that simultaneously takes various factors into account. Therefore, a few statutory notes have to be kept in mind while using this method:

Firstly, as mentioned above one of the important caveats of this method is the emphasis on qualitative interpretation of the vital signs than the quantitative values. Therefore the seeming easiest ways of converting level of interrelationships into numbers have to be avoided at all cost.

Secondly, the next most important issue that has to be kept in mind while using this method is nature of the data. Secondary data required for this method is scarce and if available are highly unreliable for lesser-known languages. Therefore, the nature of the data for this method is essentially 'primary' like observation or questioner based elicitation from the field.

Thirdly, no vital is to be treated separately for the assessment. Only when all the vitals are considered the actual picture of a vitality of language will emerge. For example

one may observe healthy signs in the vital 'intergenerational transmission' of a language, however if other vitals like *Cohesiveness of the Socio-economic conditions and Community Member's Attitudes* towards their language are unhealthy then the language is in a clear state of danger, as only a holistic view can account for the volatile situations of language endangerment.

Finally, on the question of where to draw the line between safe languages and endangered languages, the proposed method does not want to impose any arbitrary values. Ideally a language is considered undoubtedly safe if all the vitals are healthy and strong, on the other hand if all the vital show signs of weakness then the target language is to be considered endangered and in between these are the varing levels of language vitality. Presenting universally well compartmentalised levels of language vitality like that of the EGIDS is impossible as there is no clear method to draw such boundaries between levels. Therefore the task of assigning the level/s of language vitality is left to the evaluator who has to develop methods of drawing boundaries between the safe and endangered languages after taking the local ecological conditions into considerations.

4.4 Concluding remarks

The objectives of the present study was to assess the adequacy of the available language endangerment assessment methods used to assess minority languages in a multilingual ecology like that of India, and to propose methodological recommendations to resolve the inadequacies observed.

To achieve this, the dissertation approaches the issue of language endangerment from the language ecological perspective. The thrust of this approach is that language endangerment assessment methods involves more than a count of number of speakers who speak the language and nature and number of functions in which the language is used. In addition, it is closely associated with the ecology of a language i.e., interactions between any given language and its environment in which the language is used. Therefore the aim of language endangerment assessment methods must be to

assess the vitality of language in a holistic perspective wherein the active use, discourse, functioning patterns of transmission, and other supporting ecological factors have to be taken into consideration.

With ecological perspective of Grenoble (2011) as its scaffolding in chapter 2 the existing methods were put through a litmus test. The method's suitability to assess the Indian minority languages with less than 10,000 speakers were assessed with Grenoble's (2011) three parameters: 1) the nature and number of persons who identify themselves with the language (ethno-linguistic population), 2) domains of use (function) and 3)internal and external pressures/support that exist for a language as the basic requirement and further the ability to assess the stability of societal multilingualism to suit the Indian multilingual ecology were also considered. By the end of the chapter 2 it became clear that UNESCO's LVE looks promising as it fulfills Grenoble's conditions. However UNESCO's LVE lacks the methodological understanding of multilingualism like all other methods to assess the stability of Indian multilinguality. Hence the need to develop new methods and approaches became apparent to solve this issue. To develop a new method, the ecological conditions of the languages with less than 10,000 speakers are described along the Haugenian lines in chapter 3. Haugen's (1972) programmatic approach to Language Ecology forms theoretical base of Chapter 3. The description of Ecology of languages with less than 10,000 speakers is then fitted to a typological model proposed by Wendel and Heinrich (2012) to further the understanding of these languages' ecology. Finally in Chapter 4, with the understanding of the ecological conditions of the languages with less than 10,000 speakers and of the methodological shortcomings of the existing methods a new method is proposed.

The method proposed in Chapter 4 is a synthesis of the success of the existing methods with a few new proposals. While this method borrows the LVE's methods of assessing *Language Attitudes and Policies* it fuses these with new vitals like *Perseverance of language structure, Perseverance of orality and the Cohesiveness of socio-economic conditions* and introduces a few minor methodological changes to other traditional vitals like I*ntergenerational Transmission, Users Proportion, and*

Patterns of Language Choice to suit the Indian multilingual ecology.

Conceptualised along a holistic and an ecological perspective the assessment of vitality of language through this method hopes to locate language endangerment in the larger structural problems that plague our societies. Urbanisation, Globalisation, and Socio-cultural dislocation have opened the flood gates of problems for minor ethnic communities. These processes when handled with least care as it has been in the past, sets our worlds in a collusion path. In the battle between the modern and indigenous, the economically prosperous modern society overpowers the indigenous with their surplus production capabilities. The result of it is not just the loss of linguistic diversity it is also the loss of bio-cultural diversity: the reduction of the biodiversity and the cultural artifacts worries us the most as these losses spell disaster for the humanity at large. In extreme cases like that of Greater Andamanese (Abbi et al 2007) and in many aboriginal tribes of the America and Australia the loss of their language is accompanied with the total loss of the civilisation itself. Thus this method to assess vitality of language contributes to the understanding of the dynamics of language endangerment. The role of uneven concentrations of power in a language's endangerment will be made lucid and clear by this method. Moreover, this method would also be the first to explore the role of orality as an indicator of vitality. These advances in the understanding of the dynamics of language endangerment hold the key to better and positives interventions in our efforts to revitalise the language and their communities.

Above all, the purpose of any language vitality assessment method is to assess and establish priorities of actions for an appropriate positive intervention. So is the main motive of the method proposed here, an appropriate positive intervention to arrest the loss of linguistic diversity in the Indian Multilingual context won't be possible if we were to decontextualise and reduce language in its structure and forms. Language vitality assessment methods closely associated with maintenance projects as Mühlhäusler notes would provide accurate picture of the endangerment scenario only when the ecology that sustains a language is also assessed along with the language. Only a measure of supportive ecology along with its language can give us a true

picture of vitality of language. Any assessment methods and even revitalisation measures must thus aim at the ecology of language: the fabric that holds a language at its place. The alternative is a scenario where languages are ants in a jar farm, without their keepers who maintains it, they could not survive for long.

Appendix

AA-   Austro-Asiatic

D-   Dravidian

GA-   Great Andamanese

IA-   Indo-Aryan

J&O-   Jarawa and Onge

LI-   Language Isolect

TAI-   Tar-Kadai

TB-   Tibeto-Burman

UC-   Unclassified

Languages with less than 10,000 speakers in India

Mother Tongue	No. of Speakers	State	Language Family	Language Vitality	
				UNESCO	**Ethnologue**
Aimol	2640	Manipur	TB	Critically Endangered	Status: 5
Aiton Khampti	1500	Assam	TAI	severely endangered	Status:6b
Ara Nadan	200	Kerala	D		
Asur	5	Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, and West Bengal	AA	definitely endangered	
Atong	4600	Assam,Meghalaya	TB	severely endangered	Status:7
Badkhi	5000	J&K	IA		
Baghati	31	Himachal Pradesh	IA	Critically Endangered	
Bagi	113	Arunachal Pradesh	UC		
Balastin	400-500	J&K	IA		

Mother Tongue	No. of Speakers	State	Language Family	Language Vitality	
				UNESCO	Ethnologue
Bangro	311	Arunachal Pradesh	UC		
Baradi	149 775 320	Karnataka (Barda) Gujarat (Barda) Maharashtra	UC		
Bateri	800	J&K	IA		Status 6a
Bawanjawali	3000-4000	J&K	IA		
Bawm	4440	Mizoram	TB	definitely endangered	Status:6b
Beda	128	J&K	UC		
Bhadraliam	300-350	J&K	IA		
Bhala	8670	Maharashtra (Bhalay)	IA		Status:6a
Bharmauri	3000	Himachal Pradesh	IA	definitely endangered	
Bharwad/Bharwadi	1619	Gujarat	UC		
Bhunjia	6790	Chattisgarh Madhya Pradesh	IA		Status:6a
Binjhia/Birjia/Brijia	5365 9479 1654	Jharkhand Orissa West Bengal	AA		Status:6a
Birhor	406 1744 7514 40 143 702 1017	Bihar Chhattisgarh Jharkhand Maharashtra Madhya Pradesh Orissa West Bengal	AA	critically endangered	Status:6a (Vigorous).
Bomrashi	4000-5000	J&K	IA		
Bondo Alternate Names: Bonda, Rimo	9000	Orissa	AA		Status:6a

Mother Tongue	No. of Speakers	State	Language Family	Language Vitality	
				UNESCO	**Ethnologue**
Brokskat	10000	J&K	IA		Status: 6a
Budhali	4000-5000	J&K	IA		
Bunan	2500	Uttarakhand	TB	definitely endangered	
Byansi	2000	Uttarakhand	TB	definitely endangered	
Chinali	750	Himachal Pradesh	IA		Status:6a
Chiru	7000	Manipur	TB		Status: 5
Chitodi/Lohar, Gade	1010	Rajasthan	IA		Status: 6a
Chothe	3600	Manipur	TB		Status 6a
Chrigodi	600-700	J&K	IA		
Dabali	6000-7000	J&K	IA		
Dargari	400-500	J&K	TB		
Darlong	6000	Tripura	TB		Status:5
Darmiya	1750	Uttarakhand	TB		Status:6b
Dhimal	450	West Bengal	TB		Status:6a
Eravallan	5000	Kerala, Tamil Nadu	D		Status:6a
Gahri	4000	Himachal Pradesh	UC		
Geta?	5000	Orissa	AA	severely endangered	
Gojapuri	2500-3000	J&K	IA		
Gokani	7000-8000	J&K	IA		
Gorum Alternate Name Didayi/Gata'	3060	Orissa	AA	definitely endangered	Status:6b
Great Andamaneese	43	A&N	GA	Critically Endangered	Status: 8b
Guali	5000-6000	J&K	IA		

Mother Tongue	No. of Speakers	State	Language Family	Language Vitality	
				UNESCO	Ethnologue
Gutob/Bodo Gadaba	8000	Orissa	AA	vulnerable	Status:6b
Hakkipikki	8414	Karnataka	D		Status:6a
Hasadi	500-600	J&K	IA		
Holiya	500	Madhya Pradesh	D		Status:6a
Hrusso	4000	Arunachal Pradesh	TB		Status: 6b
Idu	9350	Arunachal Pradesh	TB	definitely endangered	Status: 6a
Inpui	3600	Manipur	TB		Status: 6a
Jad	300	Himachal Pradesh	TB	definitely endangered	Status:6a
Jangali	670	Uttarakhand	TB		Status:7
Jangshung	1990	Himachal Pradesh	TB	definitely endangered	Status:6a
Jarawa	250	A&N	J&O	critically endangered	Status 6a
Jenu Kurumba	3500	T.N	D		Status:5
Kanashi	1400	Himachal Pradesh	TB	definitely endangered	Status:6a
Khagali	500-700	J&K	IA		
Khamba	1330	Arunachal Pradesh	TB	definitely endangered	Status:6a
Khamiyang	50	Assam	TAI		Status:8b
Khana	700-800	J&K	IA		
Khash	300-400	J&K	IA		
Khate	5000	J&K	IA		
Kheli	4000-5000	J&K	IA		
Khowa/Bugun	900	Arunachal Pradesh	TB	definitely endangered	Status: 6a
Kinnawari	6790	Himachal Pradesh	UC		

Mother Tongue	No. of Speakers	State	Language Family	Language Vitality	
				UNESCO	Ethnologue
Koireng	3000	Manipur	TB	critically endangered	Status: 6a
Kom	5000	Manipur	TB		
Komkar	1002	Arunachal Pradesh	TB		
Komti	9000	J&K	IA		
Kota	221 925 40	Karnataka T.N Kerala	D	critically endangered	
Kundal Shahi	500	J&K	IA		
Kurki	5000	J&K	TB		
Kurumba	2540 2174 5498	Kerala Karnataka T.N	D		Status: 6a
Kushwahi	400-500	J&K	IA		
Kutiya	2800	Karnataka	D		Status:6a
Lamgang	10000	Manipur	TB	critically endangered	Status: 5
Lamongse	400	A&N	AA	critically endangered	
Lishpa	1500	Arunachal Pradesh	TB		
Lisu	1000	Arunachal Pradesh	TB		Status: 5
Luro Alternate Names Powahat, Taihlong	2000	A&N	AA	critically endangered	Status 6a
Maduga	3370	Kerala	D		
Malasar	7760	T.N	D		Status:6a
Malayan	5696	Kerala	UC		
Manda	4040	Orissa	D	critically endangered	Status:6a
Mannan	7764 82	Kerala T.N	D		Status: 6b
Masidi	250-300	J&K	IA		

Mother Tongue	No. of Speakers	State	Language Family	Language Vitality	
				UNESCO	Ethnologue
Mech	1000	Assam, West Bengal, Manipur, Meghalaya	TB		
Meshabi	2000	J&K	IA		
Meyor	391	Arunachal Pradesh	TB		
Miji	6500	Arunachal Pradesh	TB	definitely endangered	Status: 6a
Milang	2000	Arunachal Pradesh	TB		
Momba	4712	Arunachal Pradesh	UC		
Mongsang	3200	Manipur	TB		
Moopan	3000	Kerala	D		Status:6b
Moyon	3700	Manipur	TB	definitely endangered	Status: 5
Mru	1230	West Bengal	TB		Status:5
Muduga	3370	Kerala	D		Status:5
Munda	4040	Orissa	AA		
Naa	1500	Arunachal Pradesh	TB		
Nihali	2000	Maharashtra	LI		
Nitiali	2000	Maharashtra	UC		
Noutia Kokborok	6655	Tiripura	TB	vulnerable	
Nuot	10000	A&N	AA		Status:5
Onge	96	A&N	J&O		
Paddri	2000-2500	J&K	IA		
Paharep	9000-10,000	J&K	IA		
Paliya	9520	Kerala	D		Status:6a
Paristani	2000-2500	J&K	IA		
Parmi	5000-5500	J&K	IA		
Pasi	1000	Arunachal Pradesh	UC		

Mother Tongue	No. of Speakers	State	Language Family	Language Vitality	
				UNESCO	Ethnologue
Payari	5000	J&K	IA		
Pengo	2000	Orissa	D	Critically Endangered	
Phakial (TAI)	5000	Assam	TAI		Status: 4
Poundsi	700-850	J&K	UC		
Pu	5000	A&N	AA	critically endangered	
Purum	503	Manipur	UC		
Purun	500	Manipur	UC		
Radwa	4000-4500	J&K	IA		
Ralte	900	Mizoram	TB		Status:7
Ranglong	8000	Tripura	TB		Status:5
Remo	1734	Orissa	AA	severely endangered	
Rongpo	7500	Uttarakhand	TB	vulnerable	Status:6a
Ruga	100	Meghalaya	TB		
Sanenyo	1300	A&N	AA	critically endangered	
Sarkuli	500-600	J&K	UC		
Saroori	2000-3000	J&K	IA		
Sentinalese	250 (approx)	A&N	UC		
Shantipuri	4500-5000	J&K	IA		
Sherdukpen	3100	Arunachal Pradesh	TB	vulnerable	Status:6a
Shompen	400	A&N	AA	critically endangered	Status: 6a
Sian	4000-5000	J&K	TB		
Simong	1105	Arunachal Pradesh	TB		
Singpho	2500	Arunachal Pradesh	TB	definitely endangered	Status:4
Siraju	700-850	J&K	IA		
Siram	2500-3000	J&K	IA		

Mother Tongue	No. of Speakers	State	Language Family	Language Vitality	
				UNESCO	Ethnologue
Smite	7150	Manipur	UC		
Spiti Bhoti	10000	Himachal Pradesh	TB	vulnerable	Status:6a
Sulang	5000	Arunachal Pradesh	TB		
Tai Nora	100	Assam	TAI		
Tai Phak	2000	Assam	TAI		
Tai Rong	100	Assam	TAI	Critically Endangered	
Takahanyilang	3000	A&N	AA	critically endangered	
Tangam	332	Arunachal Pradesh	TB		
Tarao	870	Manipur	TB	critically endangered	Status: 5
Tehgul	250-300	J&K	IA		
Tharua	453	Orissa	UC		
Thoti	2074 19	Andhra Pradesh Maharashtra	UC		
Toda	55 1560	Karnataka T.N	D		Status 6a
Toto	1000	West Bengal	TB		
Turi	5000	Orissa	AA	definitely endangered	
Uchai	2103	Tripura	UC		
Yobin/Yobin Liju	2105	Arunachal Pradesh	UC		
Zakhring	300	Arunachal Pradesh	TB		Status:7

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