

LINGUISTICS IN BIHAR

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ABSTRACT

Bihar is a linguistic phenomenon and a real area of typical sound which has been found among peoples and cultures. There are twenty-nine states in INDIA. One of them is Bihar; its heritage fragrance makes us active and responsible. The language of Bihar is Indo-Aryan. Spoken languages in BIHAR are BIHARI. Bihari language is spoken in INDIAN STATES as Jharkhand, West- Bengal and Uttar Pradesh. One and only one the HINDU country of the world is NEPAL in which Bihari dialects or public concerning different types of language is spoken. Bhojpuri, Chhaparia, Shahabadika, Maithili, Angika, Bajjika, Magahi and Dehati are spoken by a large number of peoples. Bhojpuri is spoken in Kaimur, Rohtas, Bhojpur and Buxar. Magahi (Hindi) is spoken in Patna, Nalanda, Jahanabad, Nabada, Gaya and Aurangabad. Maithili is subdivided into five types as Central Maithili, Thethi Maithili, Western Maithili, Angika Maithili and Wajjika Maithili. Central Maithili is spoken in Madhubani, Sheohar, Sitamarhi, Darbhanga, Samastipur, Begusarai, Supaul, Madhepura, Saharsa, Arriya, Kishanganj, Purnia, and Katihar. Angika Maithili is spoken in Bhagalpur and Banka. Thethi Maithili is spoken in Lakhisarai, Munger, Jamui and Shekhpura. Western Maithili is spoken in Muzaffarpur and Vaishali. Wajjika Maithili is spoken in W. Champaran and E. Champaran. Chhapariya (Hindi) is spoken in Gopalganj, Siwan and Saran. These languages are dialects of Bihar. Maithili is recognised constitutionally via 92nd amendment to the constitution of India, 2003. Maithili and Bhojpuri have been constitutional in Nepal.

Geographical Distribution of Bihari Dialects

1. Nepal and
2. India

Bihari languages have been simplified and explained in A COMPARATIVE DICTIONARY OF THE BIHARI LANGUAGE by Hoernle, A.F. Rudolf (August Friedrich) and Grierson, George Abraham, Sir.

Hindi is an official language in Bihar in 1981 and Urdu is a second official language also. One of Bihari languages, Maithili is the sweetest and it is the language of Goddess SITA.

Key-words: Language, Bihari, Maithili, Bhojpuri, Dialects, Sita and so on.

The Bihari Languages are very impressive on every step of life that is identical and pleasing to ensure the educational and professional interests with the null hypothesis of our research. Hindi is not a language of knowledge anymore. Mediocrity has stifled its soul.

Forty five years ago, External Affairs Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee sent his own poem for publication to the Hindi weekly Saptahik Hindustan in 1977. Unfortunately his poem did not find space in this weekly magazine. He wrote a letter to its editor Manohar Shyam Joshi, who was yet to write his path-breaking novels but had already become a leading journalist. "Dear Mr Editor, I had dispatched a poem to you a few days ago. I don't know if you received it. Kindly publish it if you find it interesting, or else, throw it in the bin," Atalji wrote to a journalist. The journalist was a decade younger to him.

Joshi's subsequent reply through a prism of a letter, one can see the fall of Hindi from the authority it had commanded not long ago. It is now inconceivable that any Union minister would humbly send his poems to a Hindi publication only to find them unpublished for long. Atalji's humble prayer gives right directions to every author and publishing his masterpieces.

In Bihar, several languages are spoken by the people except Hindi, our mother tongue. Since the late 1980s, Hindi has considerably ceded its intellectual and social status, I read in a recent article, that eventually caused the first defeat of secularism in the Hindi heartland. Before English media began blatantly supporting the Hindutva forces and major Hindi publications had already caved in.

And yet, the importance of Hindi in building a vibrant national discourse and safeguarding constitutional values cannot be underlined enough. Admittedly, it is just one of the many Indian languages, but it is too geographically vast, culturally diverse, commercially viable and electorally dominant to be ignored.

Effectively, in Bihari Languages Hindi the new freedom movement being talked about now will not arrive without a massive transformation of Hindi Media and publication sphere. The Hindi belt is formidable enough to pull down whatever resistance other states put up. Hate the language if you wish, but if the collapse begins in its zone, the resurrection cannot but arrive from the Ganga-Yamuna doab — an endeavor that requires strong financial and intellectual investment from various spheres.

Also read: Don't blame only the English elite. Indian secularism failed in Hindi heartland first

A language of knowledge

A few years after the 1904-05 Japanese-Russian war, which devastated Russia, American literary critic William Lyon Phelps wrote an extraordinary essay, Russian National Character as Shown in Russian Fiction. Noting that the war had “left Russia in a profoundly humiliating situation,” he wrote: “If the greatness of a nation consisted in the number and size of its battleships, in the capacity of its fighting men, or in its financial prosperity, Russia would be an object of pity.”

“But,” Phelps continued, “the real greatness of a nation consists in none of these things, but rather in its intellectual splendor, in the number and importance of the ideas it gives to the world, in its contributions to literature and art, and to all things that count in humanity’s intellectual advance. When we Americans swell

with pride over our industrial prosperity, we might profitably reflect for a moment on the comparative value of America’s and Russia’s contributions to literature and music.”

Hindi is the soul of Bihari Languages. Peoples feel happiness speaking Bihari language mixing of Mother Hindi. Many votaries of Hindi today boast that during the last three decades, Hindi has become the dominant language of a flourishing market of over 500 million people, as evidenced in the sales of newspapers and bestsellers in what is now termed as “new Hindi”.

However, it is solely reflective of the vast geography and population it covers, and has no link with its literary or intellectual clout or output. The language of the market is different from that of creativity and knowledge. The respect a language enjoys is a function of the knowledge it produces, not of its economic growth.

The first investment is required in the media sector. One must discount the media houses that colluded with the government but a greater duty now rests with the English ones that also have a Hindi wing, apparently to tap its vast market. Instead of making their Hindi publications and news portals a poor translation of the flagship English counterpart, editors must invest in original reporting and writing. In Bihar the Hindi market accepting Local and Vocal Dialects is too vast to be surrendered to easy translations. A translated product may not even yield the desired commerce. Investment in Hindi is both good business as well as resistance politics in our state Bihar. Seaking of Bihari languages is unique and popular among peoples of Bihar

Spiritual Languages of Bihar

Maithili

The Hindi media sphere cannot be left at the mercy of Dainik Jagran and Aaj Tak. The readers and viewers of Hindi need a formidable alternative in their own language; they do not want the English media houses to treat Hindi as a translated venture hub. Maithili is spoken in sixteen districts of Bihar. Those districts are

Dabhanga, Madhubani, Samastipur, Muzaffarpur, Sitamarhi, Begusarai, Purnia, Katihar, Kishangang, Sheohar, Bhagalpur, Madhepura, Araria, Supaul, vaishali, and Saharsa. The cultural and linguistic centers of BIHAR are Darbhanga and Madhubani. Maithili has a rich heritage of literature. It dates back to the fourteenth centuries. Varna Ratnakara is the earliest known text in the language. It is an Eastern indic language that makes it different from Hindi. It is derived from Avahatta, Maithili Apbhrashtra is derived from Magadhi Apbhrashtra. It is accepted by the Sahitya Akademi in 1965. It was recognized in the schedule 8th of the Indian Constitution in 2003. 20.2 Million people speak Maithili in the world.

Bhojpuri

Bhojpuri is the popular language in Bihar. There are 160-180 Million speakers in the world. Kaithi and Devanagari are used to write Bhojpuri. Nowadays It is suitable in the Film Industry because 40 crore people watch BHOJPURI- FILM. In India the speakers of BHOJPURI are found in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. The Bhojpuri folklore of Eastern U.P. is the story of veer Lorik. The famous book of Bhikari Thakur is BIDESIYA. The first Bhojpuri novel is BINDIA which was written by Ram Nath Pandey in 1956.

Magahi

Magahi is a dialect of peoples in Bihar. It is spoken in nine districts of Bihar. Gaya, Patna, Jahanabad, Aurangabad, Nalanda, Sheikhpura, Nawada, Lakhisarai and Arwal in which people speak this language fluently. There are two crore seven lacs

speakers of Magahi in the world. It has been derived from Magahi Prakrit. It has been spoken around the world also. It has a rich and old tradition of folk songs and stories. Its area is the south of the Ganges and east of the Son River. It was legally sorbed under Hindi in the 1961 census. This language is written in Kaithi script. It is a second language of Jharkhand in 2018.

Angika

Angika is a popular speech among people in Bihar. Anga Lipi is for it. It is written with help of this Lipi. 30 million people speak this dialect in the world. Its previous script is Kaithi. Nowadays Devnagri script is used to write Angika. It appeared first in the 1961 census. The linguistic survey of India conducted under the supervision of George A. Grierson mentions Angika as Chika-Chiki Boli. It is spoken in 15 Districts in Bihar. It is said that Bihar is a multilingual state.

Bajjika

Language family Bajjika is an Indo-Aryan language of the Bihari languages group spoken in northern Bihar, India and Nepal (Madhesh Province). The name of the language is derived from the ancient republican city of Vaishali, which formed part of the Vajji janapada, one of Indian mahajanapadas in Bihar. It has over 15-20 million speakers (the total number may exceed 50-70 million due to presence and use with Hindi and other languages) across India and as well as Nepal. Mainly it is spoken by people residing in Samastipur, Sitamarhi, Muzaffarpur, Vaishali and Sheohar district or regions. Although classified as a Maithili dialect by Ethnologue, many linguists and the Hauts Plateaux Division in Government of Bihar consider it its own distinct language intermediary between Bhojpuri and Maithili, sharing features with each including simpler polypersonal agreement.

Unrecognized in India, the land—which is dominated by Hindi—the culture of Bajjika struggles with erosion even as it thrives. In Nepal it was granted status after the constitution of 2015. The language lives orally in folk songs, poetry and everyday life, but the script is not standardized, nor taught at schools. Revivalist movements range from community-based efforts to achieve autonomy, literature and media. Linguistically dense with aspirated consonants, Bajjika retains agricultural idioms and promotes regional solidarity in the face of Hindi's dominance.

LINGUISTIC CLASSIFICATION

In Bihar Maithili, Bhojpuri, Magahi, Angika, Brajjika, Chhaparia, Shahabadika, Dehati and so on are languages of Bihari inhabitants. Here Hindi is the first official language and Urdu is the second official language.

Also read: Translate 'Gaay hamari mata hai'. That's the secularism gap between English and Indian or Bihari languages

Building a scholarly base

The Hindi publishing industry also needs an urgent overhaul. The dearth of quality work on social sciences is a perpetual lament in the Hindi sphere. The hidden fact is that the first language of some 528 million people (2011 Census) doesn't have a single peer-review journal. In no publishing house, a board of editors rigorously read and approve the manuscripts. The manuscripts are sent to the press after a few occasional comments by a friendly editor and a routine proofread.

I have published a book in English and two in Hindi. I received absolutely zero editorial interventions for the Hindi manuscripts; these were published verbatim. Whereas the English manuscript was marked with significant queries and suggestions by the publisher that helped me improve the text.

This, of course, is no comment on the talent in Hindi. The work culture, sadly, lacks the requisite rigour and professionalism, which is also reflected in poor salaries in

media and missing royalties in publishing — ironically, these publications boast far greater sales than the English ones.

The rise of English, be in media or publishing, is aided by professionalism and heavy investment in quality. Few writers and journalists are born genius; most are carefully groomed by editors and peers over the years.

The grooming an English journalist or a writer receives from veterans is absolutely unmatched in today's Hindi world. Haruki Murakami wrote in his novel 1Q84: "One of an editor's greatest joys is nurturing a young writer over time. It's a thrill to look at the clear night sky and discover a new star before anybody else sees it."

I am not sure how many Hindi editors have had this moment of joy in the last three decades. The Hindi zone is teeming with ideas, its publishing houses badly need legendary editors like Ravi Dayal, Rukun Advani and Salima Tyabji to whom veteran writers like Ashis Nandy, Ramachandra Guha and Amitav Ghosh never tire of expressing their gratitude for lifting their manuscripts several notches above the bar.

Quality books and newspapers in a language enrich its readers and, eventually, the society in deeper and profound ways. Whereas, mediocre books gradually destroy the ability of the people to think and live critically. The absence of good books

and journals leads to a servile society. Given the blind adherence of the Hindi society towards the Sangh Parivar, one wonders whether the turn Hindi media and publishing have taken in the last few decades is deliberate, part of a larger strategy.

I have recently floated an idea in the Hindi circle that since the publishers may not change their operations soon, a bunch of writers-journalists-scholars may form an informal and voluntary group that reads and prunes manuscripts, as well as commissions quality writings on various issues before these texts are sent to publishers.

Also read: Secularism gave up language of religion. Ayodhya bhoomi puja is a result of that

Hindi versus English

Hindi also needs to get rid of its resentment towards English, a tendency that has intensified in the recent decades following high asymmetry between job opportunities and salaries in the two languages. Besides consuming a considerable energy of Hindi speakers, the resentment fuels the Hindutva's flawed contention of 'the revenge of the subaltern' against the elite English. One must oppose the English's arrogance, but to term it a "language of slavery" insults all those Indians who have worked in the language and enhanced the understanding of this nation.

The cause of this resentment perhaps lies elsewhere. Speaking to me, veteran poet-critic Ashok Vajpeyi, with a touch of melancholy and regret, once described the contemporary Hindi literary-scholarly sphere as "a reign of mediocrity".

This mediocrity, together with an inferiority complex vis-a-vis English, has stifled the language's soul in the last few decades. It cannot be cured by social media activism or publishing cheesy bestsellers, but only through an urgent introspection and course correction.

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Conclusion:

The linguistic tapestry of Bihar is a rich testimony to the state's multi-layered history, with ancient droplets of Magadhi Prakrit reverberating amidst a colourful spread of contemporary idioms. From the elite Maithili of Mithila's courts to Bhojpuri in rural heartlands, Magahi's philosophical cadence around Patna and the hardy Angika and Bajjika in eastern enclaves, these languages — a smorgasbord springing from the four branches of Indo-Aryan — house within them centuries of migration, empire and cultural couplings. Urdu's poetic flourish, Santali's Austroasiatic depth and sprinklings of Bengali, Punjabi and Tamil add to the mix, affirming Bihar's status as a meeting point of South Asia.

However, this richness also is marked with struggles. Clumped under Hindi as "Bihari dialects" systemized this marginalization, although the pioneering colonial legacy of George Grierson's surveys. Hindi now prevails over officialdom and the education system, sidelining mother tongues and driving a shift away from local languages among urban youth and diaspora communities — from Fiji Hindi to Nepali border dialects. And Maithili's costly certification of Eighth Schedule status in 2003 heralds the march of progress, but Bhojpuri and Magahi remain in advocacy limbo, over one hundred millions first language speakers waiting for their voice in policy.

In short, the linguistics of Bihar is not a dead weight but a living force that powers literature, identity and resistance. Urgent action is required to defend these endangered languages: inclusive curricula, digital archiving and constitutional recognition can help end their homogenization. In embracing such polyphony, Bihar can recover its own history — from Ashoka's edicts to the dialogues of tomorrow — so that its voices resound through all time in the symphony of tongues called India. In linguistic vitality, is cultural sovereignty: Let Bihar lead in the chorus.

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