



A Sociolinguistic Survey of Barwani District, Madhya Pradesh

**Scaling up Early Reading
Intervention (SERI)**

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Jawaharlal Nehru University

“This report is made possible by the support of the American People through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The contents of the report are the sole responsibility of Room to Read and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.

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Background

This study defines language as a **multilingual, multimodal, and multi-semiotic**, meaning-making resource. It's fluid across language boundaries and is relatively stable in its reified forms of varied languages. India is home to thousands of such languages which are used for making sense in everyday lives of the speakers. Frequent in- and out-migration of different social and linguistic groups enhances the linguistic fluidity as well as **heteroglossic language practices** in our country (Pattnayak, 1981, 1984; Mohanty, 1994, 2018; Agnihotri, 2016; 2007; Benthien & Oranskaia, 2016; Kochru, 1978; Panda, 2012, 20015, 2016). The languages that evolve in these everyday multilingual, multi-semiotic spaces are distinguished by the speakers for their social distinction and identity. Speakers are exposed to more than one language and draw on an expanded multilingual repertoire to make grammatically meaningful utterances for communication. Agnihotri calls this faculty '**multi-linguality**', Garcia and Wei describe this language behaviour as '**translanguaging**' and Mohanty, Skutnabb-Kangas, Pattnayak and others term this phenomenon '**multilingualism**'.

The phenomenon of translanguaging, as used by Wei and Garcia, denies all forms of boundaries between languages. According to them, children have one complete linguistic repertoire and one mental grammar that help them construct numerous grammatically meaningful utterances. Both the authors question the existence of discrete languages as they assume that the brain has only one grammatical structure. In psycho-linguistic term, the brain is mono-lingual. According to MacSwan, translanguaging is rooted in a unitary model and the political use of languages can and should be distinguished from social and structural idealizations used to study linguistic diversity (1917). He rejects the

monolingual assumption of the brain and advances an integrated multilingual model of individual bilingualism. Contrasting his theory with the unitary model and dual competence model, he argues that grammar should be distinguished from linguistic repertoires. Multilinguals have a single linguistic repertoire but a richly diverse mental grammar (MacSwan, 1917). He calls this a multilingual perspective on translanguaging. The Rajasthan study by Panda (2016) reveals several multilingual speech forms that are relatively distinct from each other with porous borders. These multilingual speech forms have specific names (Panda, 2016) and the speakers are aware of the different grammatical features of sound, syntax and meanings of those languages. Depending on the sociolinguistic context of the interlocutor(s) and the self, the speakers translanguaging, code-switch or translate. Most speakers have metacognitive awareness about their linguistic behaviour in terms of grammatical elements involved in their multilingual utterances.

This study looks at the sociolinguistic profiles of parents, teachers and children in **Barwani district of Madhya Pradesh**. It documents the basic lexical categories in the **Nimadi, Bareli and Rathwi** languages and discusses the linguistic features of these three languages along with those involved in trans/multilanguaging.

Barwani is a southwest district of Madhya Pradesh with extraordinary ethnic and linguistic fluidity contributed by its unique location as it **borders Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Rajasthan**. The Narmada, flowing along the northern region makes the district a fertile land and a destination for the nomads and pastoralists from the neighbouring states.



Sources: <https://www.mapsofindia.com>

One of the youngest districts in the state, Barwani was carved out of West Nimar (Khargone district) only in May 1998. According to the 2011 Census, Barwani had a population of 13,85,659 (males: 6,99,340 and females: 6,86,541), of which 70.3 percent were tribals, and 6.3 percent were Scheduled Castes. The current population of Barwani as of 26.07.2018, is 15,82,488 (<http://www.districtbarwani.com/Index.aspx>; 26.07.2018). According to the 2011 Census 2011, almost half the population of Barwani was illiterate (literacy rate was 50.23 percent). Barwani has four divisions, seven blocks, nine tehsils, eight towns, and 716 villages. Being mostly a tribal district, people are primarily into agriculture with farm labourers outnumbering the landowners (Census 2011).

Among the tribes in the district, **Bhils** are the largest numerically as the **Barelas, Bhilalas, and Patlias or Puliyas** are the subgroups of Bhils. The Bhils are the largest ethnic group who migrated to Barwani from Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Punjab, and also other parts of Madhya Pradesh, and acquired several of these names in the process of settling down in this area. While the Bhilalas speak Nimadi, the Bhils speak Bhili and the Barelas speak one of the

following languages: Bareli, Bareli-Rathwi, Bareli Pauri and Bareli Paliya. According to Ethnologue (2003), the Bhil languages have mutual intelligibility varying between 62 percent and 78 percent. According to Census 2011, among all these sub-languages, the Bhilali/Nimadi is the largest numerically with 11, 50, 000 speakers, followed by the Bareli Pauri with 1, 75, 000 people using this language. The third largest is the Bareli-Rathwi which is spoken by around 64,000, and the Bareli Paliya has only about 10,000 speakers. Hindi, Marwari, Gujarati, Marathi, English and Urdu are also spoken in this district.

Research Objectives and Design

1. Undertaking a socio-cultural analysis of the major tribal communities in Barwani district
2. Studying the pattern of language use, choice and attitude among the parents, teachers, and students in the district
3. Analysing the sound system and syntactic structures of major tribal languages spoken in Barwani

4. Studying the grammatical features involved in trans-/multi-linguaging
5. Documenting the lexical categories and the word lists of tribal languages

The study is based on a survey that covered **209 people** of which 99 were students (90 Bhilalas, 3 each Barelas and Bhils, and 6 non-tribals), 60 were parents (14 Bhilalas, 43 Barelas, and 3 non-tribals) and 50 were teachers (17 Bhilalas, 7 Barelas, and 26 non-tribals). A purposive sampling technique was used to identify the respondents. The students and teachers were drawn from six government schools located in the Pati and Sendhwa blocks. The students and parents were selected from 12 villages-Singun, Budi, Jhopali, Kasel, Ujwani, Pati, Ranipura, Avli, Semali, Chauki, Savriyapani, and Dervaliya.

The survey included separate interview schedules for the students, teachers and parents. Language data were collected from native speakers of the Nimadi, Bareli and Rathwi languages using the **Abbi's data elicitation tool**. The narratives for the socio-cultural profiles of the Bhilalas, Barelas and the Bhils were collected from adult villagers. Finally, all the data gathered were analysed using both qualitative as well as quantitative methods.

This study unravels the deep-seated tension between the actual language practices and language policies in our country. Assumptions of monolinguality are unfounded in domains other than homes.

Heteroglossic ideology is found to pervade the lives of people in Barwani. Thirty percent of interactions in rural tribal homes, 50 percent classroom interactions, 70-80 percent market interactions and 70 percent panchayat interactions are in more than two languages. Our survey shows that around 80 percent of the teachers, 70 percent of the students and 50 percent of the parents understand two or more languages. Over 70 percent of the parents and students converse in two or more languages in markets and many of them **code-mix** when the interlocutor doesn't understand their language.

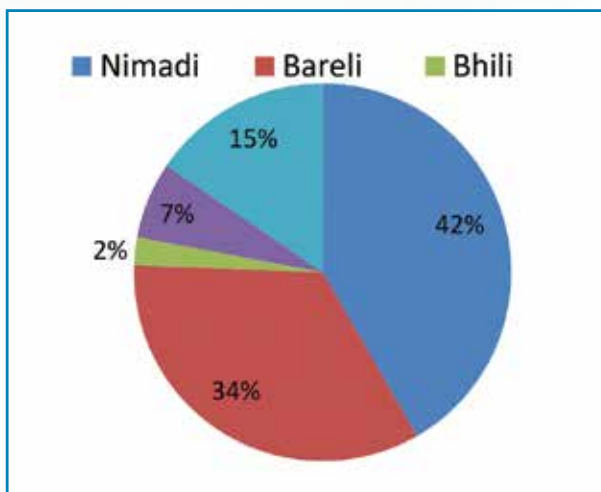
The impact of the status-bearing, modern traits of the Hindi language on the language choice and language use behaviour of the tribal parents, students and teachers is evident. Many tribal teachers and students maintain a separation between their everyday multilinguality and classroom instructions. Parents with no formal education want classroom instructions to be only in Hindi and reject code-mixing in classrooms almost entirely and equate "**school education**" with "**Hindi proficiency**". Fifty percent of the surveyed teachers support using children's languages in informal interactions in the schools but not in classroom instructions. The other 50 percent want Hindi as the primary language for instruction and tribal languages as support languages in the classrooms, and they favour translanguaging for clearing students' doubts or explaining concepts.

Specific Findings of the Study

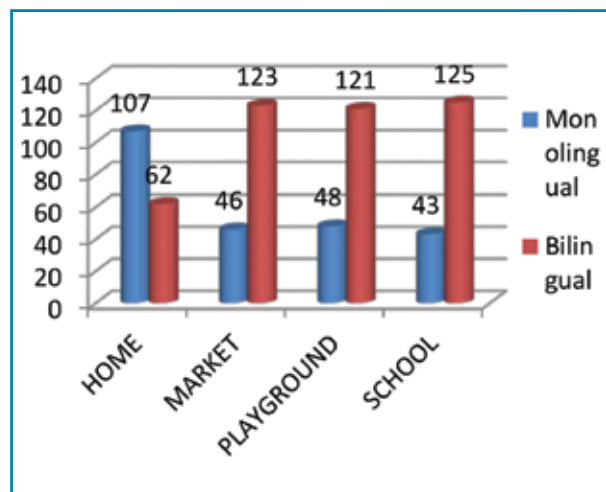
Language Use and Language Choice among the Barelās and Bhilalās

When students, parents and teachers were asked to list their mother tongues, all of them named the language/s that their ethnic group speaks. While the Bhilalās

named Nimadi, the Barelās reported Bareli or Rathwi as their language. But when they were asked about the languages they use at home, a complex multilingual picture emerged. Around 30 percent of the students and the parents, and two-thirds of the teachers claimed to be using two or more languages at home. But these numbers dipped in favour of multilinguality when



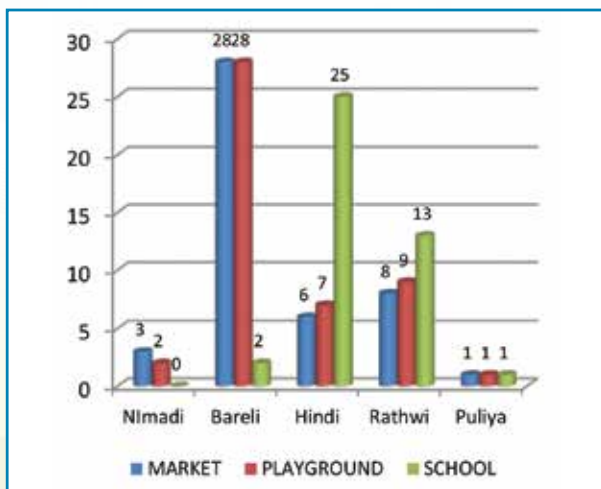
Pie Chart 1: Mother Tongue of the Students



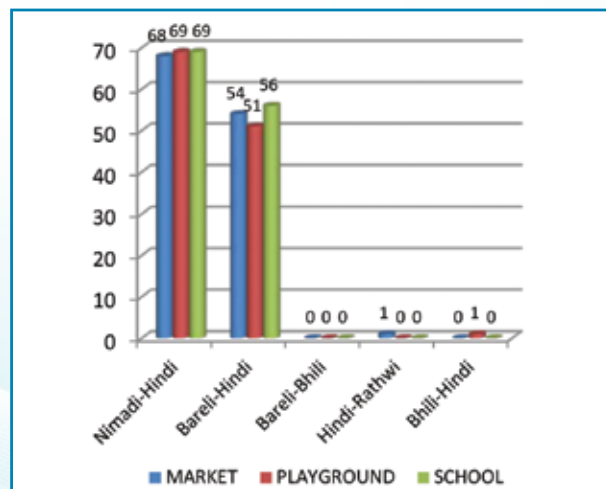
Pie Chart 1: Mother Tongue of the Students

applied to markets, schools and panchayats. Around 25 percent of the students use only

one language in the market, playgrounds and schools, while the remaining 75 percent



Bar Graph 2: Students Using One Language in Domains Outside Home

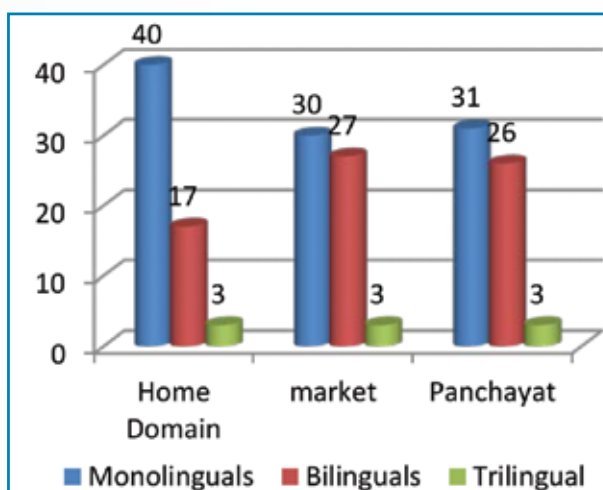


Bar Graph 3: Students using two Languages in Domains outside Home

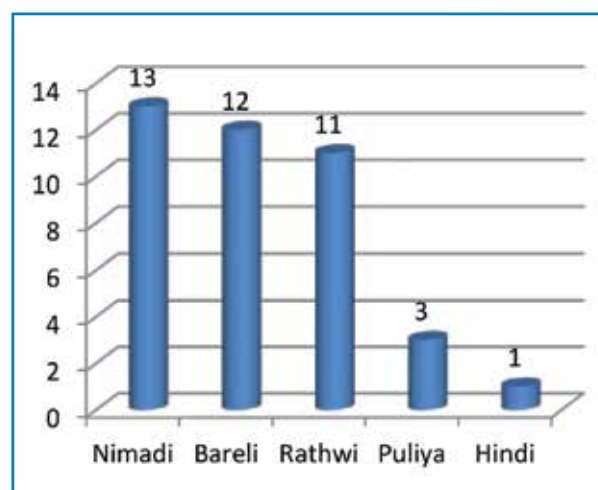
of the students use at least two languages in these places. Majority of the teachers (around 50 out of the total 60) use two or more languages both at home and in the school. One-third of the teachers use as many as three to four languages. The trends are not very different for parents except in homes where the majority speak one language. They call their home language either by name say Nimadi, Bareli or Rathwi, or by the term *apanaa adivasi bhasha* (our own tribal language). Only some educated parents and teachers use the word *Maatru bhaasha* or mother tongue, while others use expressions like *gharka bhaasha* (the language of the home) or *hamara adivasi bhasa* (our tribal language).

Even if the lexical categories show 67-78 percent similarities between different Bhili languages spoken in Barwani, the speakers of these languages maintain distinct social group identities based on ethnicity and language. The Barelas who speak Bareli distinguish themselves from the Barelas who speak Rathwi even though they live in the same village.

When it comes to language usage, an inter-tribal group difference has been found. More than 90 percent of the Nimadi and Rathwi speakers prefer to use tribal language in their homes and Hindi in the schools. The Bareli speakers prefer Bareli-Hindi or Hindi-Bareli bilingual communication in all four domains and also for classroom instruction.



Bar Graph 4: Language Use in Different Domains among Parents

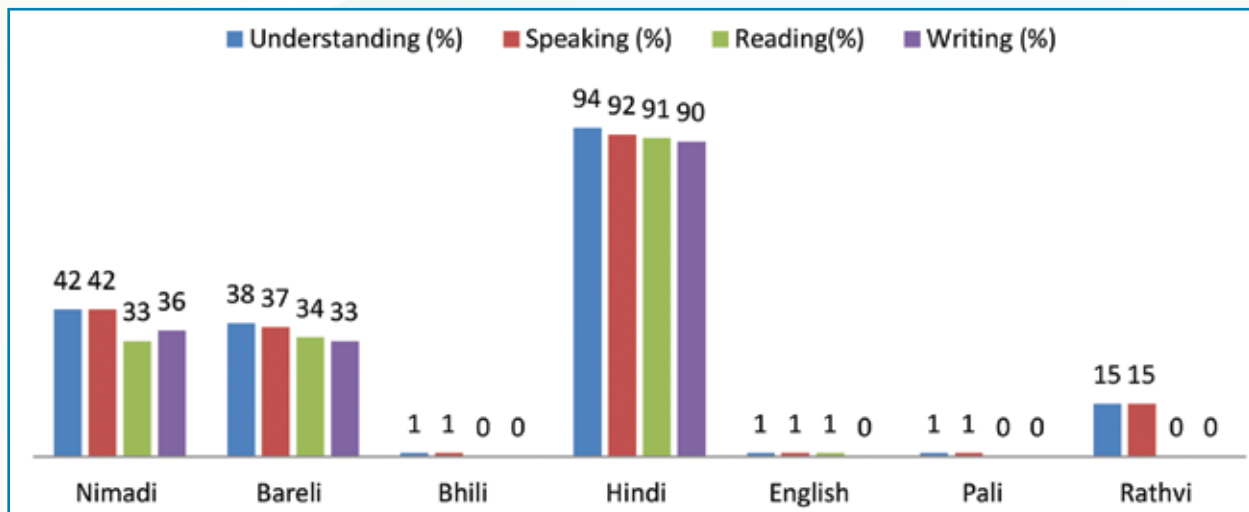


Bar Graph 5: Parents Speaking only one Language at Home (N= 60)

Language Skills: Understanding, Speaking, Reading and Writing

All the students understand and speak their respective tribal languages. Around 90 percent of them understand, speak, read, and write in Hindi. Only around 10 percent

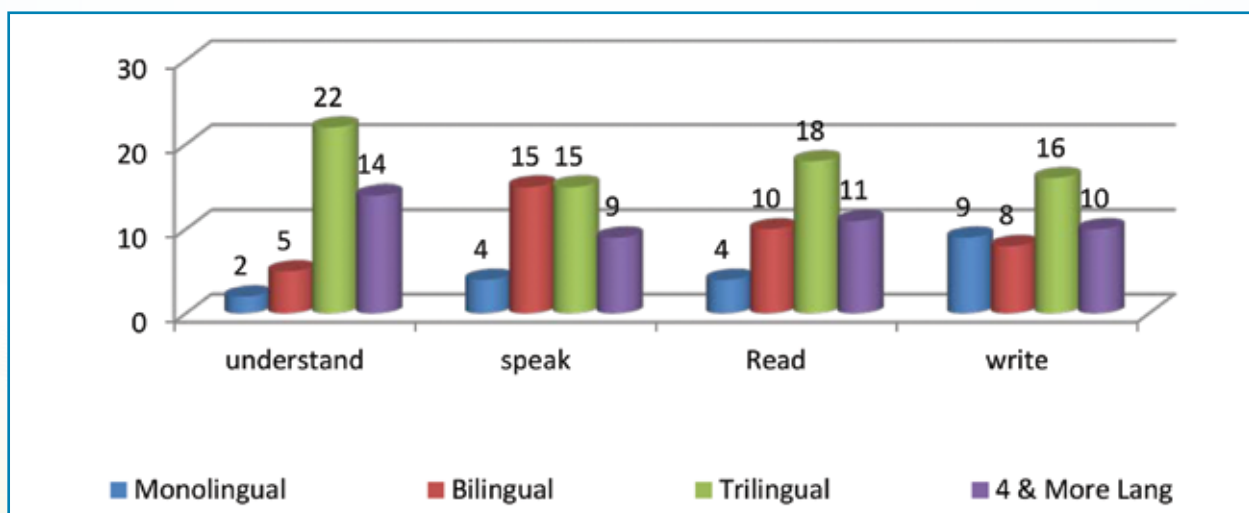
(17 out of 169 students) students can't understand, speak, read or write in Hindi. More than 50 percent students can read and write in their home/tribal languages.



Bar Graph 6: Language Skill among Students

All the teachers understand, speak, read, and write in Hindi. Only 17 out of the 60

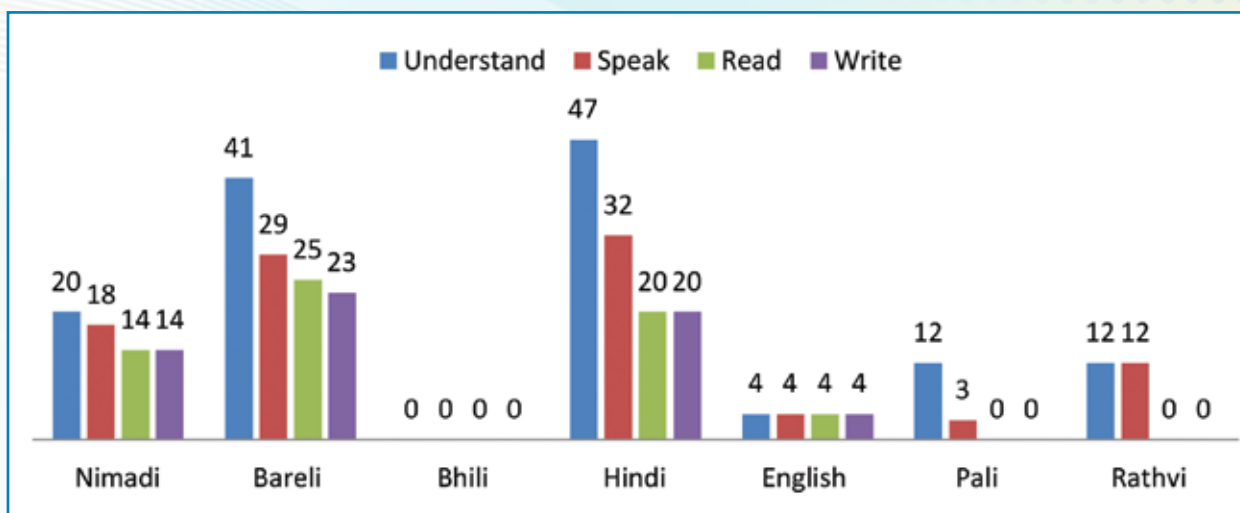
parents can read and write in Hindi.



Bar Graph 7: Language Skill among Teachers

Twenty out of sixty parents understood Nimadi but only 18 could speak and only 14 could read and write this language. There were only 12 parents who could understand

and speak Rathvi Forty seven parents could understand Hindi but out of them only 32 could speak and only 20 could read and write the language.



Bar Graph 8: Language Skill among Parents

Bilinguals in a Tribal Language and Hindi

The preference for Hindi over other tribal languages is evident in the language behaviour of the communities. Many tribal parents, teachers and students claim to be bilinguals - not in two tribal languages but in one tribal language and in Hindi. Though both Bareli and Rathwi speakers live in the same village in the Pati block, they don't speak each other's language. When they meet, they speak in their respective languages but understand each other's language. This shows the high level of multilingual competence even though both the groups claim that it is difficult to speak the other language as the phonetic difference is significant. The linguistic survey conducted by the Tribal Research Institute (1995) and Ethnologue (2003) present these Bhili languages as mutually

unintelligible. The findings reveal that both the Rathwi and Bareli speakers project themselves as Rathwi-Hindi or Bareli-Hindi bilinguals but not as Rathwi-Bareli bilinguals. Similarly, a majority of the Nimadi speakers express themselves as Nimadi-Hindi speakers rather than as Nimadi-Bareli or Nimadi-Puliya speakers.

Language of Instruction in Classroom

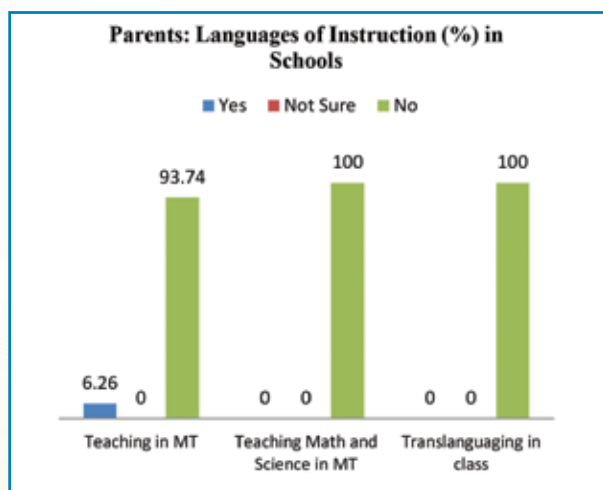
A majority of parents, teachers and students prefer Hindi over local tribal languages for classroom instruction. The parents with no formal education (43 out of 60) want the language of instruction to be only Hindi at all three levels of education - primary, middle and higher education.

Level of Education	N	1 st MoI in Primary School		2 nd MoI Primary School		1 st MoI Middle School		2 nd MoI Middle School		1 st MoI in College		2 nd MoI in College	
		Bareli	Hindi	Hindi	English	Bareli	Hindi	English	Bareli	Hindi	English	Bareli	Hindi
No Formal Education	42	Bareli	8	Hindi	0	Bareli	0	Hindi	0	Bareli	8	Hindi	8
		Hindi	34	NA	31	Hindi	34	NA	29	Hindi	32	NA	25
				Bareli	2			English	3			English	5
				English	1			Bareli	2			Bareli	2
										NA	2	NA	2

Table 1: Choice of Language medium of Instruction among Parents with no Education

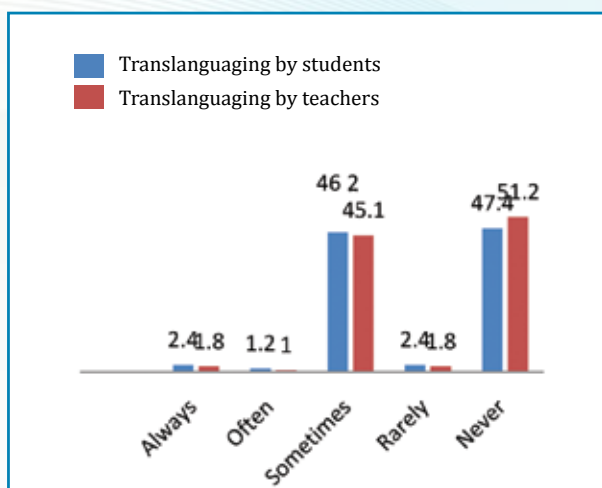
But parents with some level of formal education want the medium of instruction to be bilingual. Even though 25 percent (17 out of 60) parents want both Bareli and Hindi to be the languages of instruction, a vast majority of (94 percent) tribal parents reject the idea of teachers and students code-mixing or translanguaging in the class as they believe that code-mixing will interfere with the learning of Hindi.

Around 94 per cent of parents believe that their children should not be taught in their mother tongue/home language. All 60 parents reject the idea of teaching mathematics and science in children's mother tongue/home language or in trans or multilingual modes. They fear that the children may not learn Hindi well if they are taught in their home language or in mixed modes. Fifty five percent parents in the Pati block relate school education to learning Hindi. They believe that the acquisition of Hindi will help the children in future for higher education and employment.



Bar Graph 9: Parents' Preference for Language of Instruction in Schools

Teachers display another kind of dichotomy in their choice of language when it comes to classroom instruction with around 70 percent preferring multi-/trans-linguaging while talking to students and 90 percent want their children to use and develop their home languages but don't support the use of tribal languages for instructional purposes.



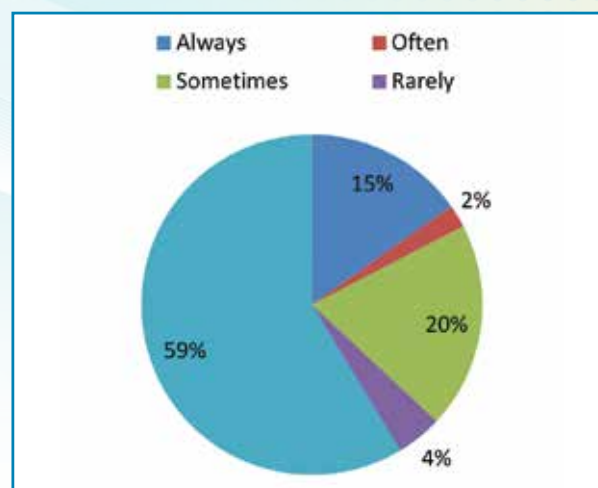
Bar Graph 10: Frequency of translanguaging by students and teachers

The students view Hindi as the language of the future but want their home languages to be used along with Hindi for classroom instructions. Around 50 percent students admit that they multilanguage in the classrooms. Teachers mix two codes and or digloss while talking to students in lower classes and code-switch between tribal language and Hindi while helping them learn specific registers in Hindi for reading and examination. The tribal teachers engage in inter-sentential code-switching more as they have the knowledge of both their own tribal languages and Hindi.

A comparison between three tribal communities reveals that the Nimadi speaking Bhilalas prefer Hindi for classroom transactions, the Bareli-speaking Barelals like/use both Bareli and Hindi and Rathwi speaking Barelals prefer Hindi over other local languages. None of the tribal groups prefer English for classroom transaction.

Critically Vulnerable Student Cohort

Twenty nine of the 169 students (or 17 percent of the survey universe of the students)



Pie Chart 2: Teachers' attitude towards children's home language in class

don't understand, speak or use Hindi in any domain. It is this cohort of 29 students that is academically and psychologically most disadvantaged and marginalised in a "Hindi only" classroom. It is important to study how these students cope with classroom activities and continue for years without participating in teaching and learning activities in the class. What pedagogic plans do teachers employ to help these children? What kind of correspondence do we need between language practice and language-in-education policy so that these students are able to truly access school education?

Phoneme, Syntax of Bareli, Rathwi, Nimadi

A phonetic (how sound is produced, transmitted and perceived) analysis of Bareli, Rathwi, and Nimadi shows that there are 33 consonant and 10 vowel sounds in Bareli, 31 consonant and nine vowel sounds in Rathwi and 34 consonant and nine vowel sounds in Nimadi. Though the sound inventory of all these three languages is similar to that of Hindi, there are sounds that are peculiar to these languages; e.g. the voiceless velar fricative (a consonant

pronounced with the back of the tongue close to, or in contact with, the soft palate) can be seen in Bareli while the retroflex alveolar approximant (speech sounds that are pronounced with the tip of the tongue raised and bent backward) is peculiar to Nimadi. Vowel sounds are almost similar in all the three languages.

The **syntax** of these languages is, to a great extent, similar to Hindi and other surrounding languages. The Bareli, Rathwi and Nimadi languages follow SOV (Subject – Object – Verb) word order which is similar to Hindi. For constructing a negative sentence, the Bareli usually takes /nih/ before the verb; for negation of imperative sentences /ma/ is used. This is similar to Hindi negation marker /mat̪/. In Rathwi, /ni/ is used to make negative sentences. In the case of negative imperatives, the Rathwi speakers use /g^hɔn/ 'do not', while the Nimadi speakers commonly use /nāĩ/.

There is **no equivalent** word for 'please' in Bareli and Rathwi. However, the emotion related to the word is expressed via other supra-segmental features (like tone and intonation) and body language. This is not the case with the Nimadi, where instead of please, /t̪um/ 'you' is used in the subject position which is honorific in Nimadi. /Tum/ shows respect toward the addressee.

The **interrogative sentence structure** of these three languages is quite similar to Hindi where the default position for question word is the preverbal position, unlike in English where the question word appears at the beginning of the sentence. In the case of 'yes' or 'no' answer type questions /kai/ (kya in Hindi) is used in the initial sentence position. All the three languages have case markings like that of Hindi with one exception; Bareli and Rathwi do not have ergative case marking while Nimadi does have ergative case marking.

Eco-formation is a type of reduplication which is an areal feature of South Asian languages. In this process, reduplication of a complete word or phrase happens, with the initial segment of the reduplicant being overwritten by a fixed segment. In Bareli, the initial segment of the reduplicant is overwritten by /h-/. In Rathwi, the initial segment of the reduplicant is replaced by /m-/. We can see some variations though where instead of /m-/ another segment /w-/ is also found. This could be an outcome of the influence of Hindi. In Nimadi, the initial segment of the reduplicant is replaced by /m-/.

A **compound verb** is a multi-word compound that functions as a single verb, and compound verbs are very common in Indo-Aryan languages. Similarly, compound verbs are very common in all the three tribal languages described here.

In case of **pluralisation**, with the limited set of data, we have found that in Bareli, the suffix -a or -e is usually employed to make a plural of nouns. In Rathwi, plural word formation is quite similar to Bareli while in Nimadi, this is done by adding the suffix -a' for masculine gender and 'f' suffix -'nə' for feminine gender.

Trans-/Multi-linguaging in Barwani

The multilingual practices show a **predominant use of code-mixing** by the Nimadi and Bareli speakers especially when the interlocutor is a non-native speaker. The adult speakers don't seem to be conscious of code-mixing though they identify it at the level of lexicons and borrowing of noun and verb phrases. The incidences of **code-switching** are **relatively low** except in classrooms where teachers use some sentences in Hindi and other sentences in a mix of Hindi and the local languages. They

often engage in what can be called diglossia (the existence of a formal literary form of a language, considered more prestigious, along with a colloquial form used by most speakers and considered of lower status). Most women teachers switch between everyday Hindi and textbook Hindi. The motive behind such a practice is to remain comprehensible to the tribal students and yet help them develop skills in formal, academic Hindi.

In the **language contact situation** of Barwani, where Bareli, Nimadi, Rathwi, Paliya/Puliya, Hindi, Urdu, Marathi, Gujarati and many other Rajasthani languages co-exist, it is imperative to analyse how people express themselves linguistically when the interlocutor speaks in another language. We have studied the nature of language borrowing when people multilanguage or translanguage in a multilingual space. The grammatical items studied to analyse the structure of trans-/multi-linguaging include sentences, clauses, phrases and words. We have tried to reflect on how the tribal speakers integrate two or more grammars in their multilingual discourse.

There are general conceptions that the Bhili languages like Bareli, Rathwi, and Nimadi are not mutually intelligible (see reports by TRI, Bhopal and Ethnologue). Our study shows an enormous amount of **linguistic diversity** as well as **fluidity** in this region and how languages remain mutually intelligible at a functional level. When speakers of two different Bhili languages speak to each other, they don't switch over to Hindi or to each other's languages but speak in their respective home languages and get a good sense of what the other is saying in his/her home language. If their knowledge of Hindi is good, they try to speak in Hindi to those whose home language is Hindi, otherwise they engage in code-mixing where they borrow some Hindi words into their Bareli and Nimadi.

The boundaries between the Bhili languages, Hindi and Marwari are porous.

Our observation data from the Pati block show that by engaging with each other, the speakers of these languages create a shared inter-lingual and intentional space where the languages start acquiring ontological qualities. These languages get reified to provide a distinct identity to their speakers. The multilingual speakers have meta-cognitive awareness about how they change the structure of their multilingual utterances if the interlocutor speaks in another language. In the conversations recorded between Hindi and Nimadi speakers and a Hindi interlocutor, we have found that in over 80 percent of the sentences, the speakers engage in code-mixing, while in under 20 percent of utterances, they switch languages between the sentences. The analysis of spontaneous language data shows various linguistic adaptive behaviors among the Nimadi and Bareli speakers as they are not conscious of this code-switching process except when they are interrogated. Adult speakers identify borrowing of lexical categories from other languages and adjusting them to the noun and verb phrases of Hindi by code-mixing. The Nimadi and Bareli speakers display frequent code-mixing in noun and verb phrases. For example, the Nimadi speakers use head nouns sometimes in Hindi (*ləkəpəti log*) and some time in Nimadi-English (*č^hətt^hosem*). Similarly, the Bareli speakers also use head nouns in Bareli-English (*k^haʃosəbjekt*) within a sentence with Bareli word order and Bareli verb and object.

The Nimadi and Bareli speakers frequently code mix within a verb phrase

(*suruhoirō*. <*suru horahih*>). While talking to Hindi speakers, the Nimadi speakers borrow Hindi pronouns like /*vo*/ {*vohətai dio* (*use hata dia*)} and Hindi auxiliary verbs like /*he*/ /*hona*/ {*tə yo səhi nai hoyo* (*to ye sahi nai hua*)}. Similarly, a Bareli speaker borrows Hindi auxiliary verbs like /*he*/ {*t^horo k^haʃo*

səbjekt he (thora halka vishay hai)} while speaking to a Hindi speaker. The adjective */bəhuṭ sara/* is not there in Nimadi but is borrowed from Hindi and is used especially when they interact with Hindi speakers.

The Nimadi speakers also use Hindi adverbs like */roj/* and */jāḍāṭār/* in a multilingual context (*Eax. hā gaw mā bəhuṭ sara puriya raiṭā rojkirkeṭ k^helāi*). The postpositions like */jāse ki/ /se/* etc. are Hindi postpositions and are not found in Nimadi. But the Nimadi speakers use these post positions now and especially when they speak to outsiders.

The classroom observation data show that if the teacher understands and speaks the home language of the students, she/he engages both in code-mixing and code-switching. While the explanations are more in tribal languages, the formal questions and responses are in Hindi so that the children can remember them in Hindi and reproduce them in examinations. If the teacher doesn't understand the students' home languages, she engages in the diagnostic use of lower Hindi and standard Hindi and encourages children to code-mix in lower grades and speak more in Hindi in higher grades. The teachers who speak Hindi and believe that other languages shouldn't be used in classrooms digloss between higher and lower versions of Hindi. The everyday Hindi of the teachers is the local variant of Hindi with significant phonetic and lexical borrowings from Marwari, Nimadi, Bareli and other languages. This version of Hindi (not textbook Hindi) is already a multilingual tongue that is less foreign to these students than standard Hindi. Most importantly, the children are not discouraged from speaking to each other in their home languages both inside and outside the classrooms.

Recommendations

Multilingualism and heteroglossic ideology are commonplace in Barwani.

The strongest language for Class 1 & 2 students is their home language. Early reading activities can, therefore, be carried out in a multilingual mode with an emphasis on children's home language. The classroom communications can be in multilingual modes. Since over 50 students are non-tribals in a place where 90 students are tribals (in the rural schools of Pati and Sendhwa blocks), the non-tribal teachers may be encouraged to translanguage in early grades so that children understand the curricular transactions. The classroom pedagogy in early grades can build on the expanded multilingual repertoire and skills of the students and teachers.

Research shows that multilinguaging or translanguaging doesn't negatively affect Hindi if a good multilingual pedagogy is employed (Panda, 2012); instead, it enhances classroom dialogues, participation of students and reading pedagogy. Since most parents and some teachers think otherwise, an informed dialogue is necessary both at the level of the community and in schools on the need to use children's multilingual repertoire or the strongest languages for instructional purposes in early grades. Use of multilingual materials and pedagogy enhances children's participation, skills and perceived self-efficacy among the students.

For developing early grade reading materials, the frequently occurring common lexicons from children's languages can be used to establish a sound-orthography mapping. Some unfamiliar words with pictures will not intimidate the students if the classroom dialogue remains heteroglossic. A mix of familiar and unfamiliar words and phrases maintains the curiosity level of the students and enhances collaborative exercises among them and the teachers.

An adequate number of short stories in children's languages including

Hindi should be made available in the classroom. Some story books can have illustrations with word names in Hindi and brief texts in children's mother tongue and vice versa. The commonly expressed fear of developing semi-lingualism in an early grade multilingual class can be addressed by enhancing multi-voiced classroom dialogues and prodding interesting reading materials in different languages in the classroom. The fear of one language interfering with another in a materially and pedagogically rich classroom is not backed by any research.

Teachers should be trained or sensitised to the phonetic variations and continuity between the languages that are employed the most. They can familiarise themselves with command, interrogative and other prototypical sentences needed for talking to the tribal students in early grades. Multilingualism can be used as an overall paradigm for laying down effective language pedagogy in the classroom. Communication can be built around children's spontaneous utterances. If the pedagogy for early grades is based on the principle of using the expanded linguistic repertoire of children, the pedagogy for the higher classes can focus on how to train students to suppress some of the linguistic features of translanguaging so that they communicate in a shared academic language of Hindi or English.

This study shows no dearth of multilingual resources at the oral level to start a meaningful conversation in a class unless there is a negative attitude towards using children's own multilingual repertoire for classroom interaction. **Parents need to be informed about the social, psychological**

and linguistic advantage of teaching their wards in a multilingual mode in early grades. They may be informed about a pedagogic plan to suppress some of the features of multilingualism in higher classes so that children start using Hindi without rejecting their multilingual utterances completely. Use of children's languages in the classrooms will enhance mutual engagement between the teachers and the students, develop positive relationships between them, improve perceived self-efficacy among students apart from establishing multiple contact points between every day and school knowledge.

The early grade reading materials need to be designed according to this new paradigm of "multi-/trans-languaging". Poor teacher-student interactions can be reversed in favour of deeper interaction between them using multilingual utterances. **Learners' fears and alienation can be reduced using the principles of multi/translanguaging.** The emergent literacy inputs acquired from the everyday world are generally in multilingual, multi-semiotic modes. Employment of multilingual paradigm will enhance the collaborative processes between the students and the teachers in early reading programmes. Besides this, classroom interventions in MLE plus programme in Odisha reveal the power of metacognitive approach in a multilingual programme. Metacognitive approach is shown to work well in a multilingual class that respects children's cognitive-linguistic resources, socio-linguistic identities, learning potential, creativity and freedom (Panda, 2016). It also enhances self-efficacy beliefs among children.

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