Chapter - V
MEASUREMENT OF LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY

Linguistic diversity, a unique socio-cultural feature of the Indian population, manifests itself glaringly in predominately multi-speech areas as encountered in Manipur. In terms of speech, tribal areas are, contrary to the general impression, neither contiguous nor homogeneous. The degree of internal socio-cultural diversity, is very significant. It is therefore attempted in this exploratory study, to examine the degree and intensity of mother tongue diversity in the state.

The magnitude of diversity is analysed on the basis of the data for (1961, 1971 and 1981) census points at 3 different levels. First, at the state level in general, then a comparative analysis of the districts, and finally, at the micro-level taking the sub-divisions. The main conclusions from this explorative analysis are described in the subsequent chapters.

The purpose of examining linguistic diversity is to depict the presence of involute ethnolinguistic mosaic, usually overshadowed by seeming homogeneity in racial, religious and other social features among the various speech communities. Within this ‘thought-to-be ethnolingually homogeneous’ area, certain insidious social patterns are encountered. Such within differences separate individuals and communities, thereby creating social isolates and boundaries. The likely link between linguistic diversity and regional development is also tested in this study.

As illustrated in chapter III, Manipur, though comparatively a small area in terms of population, territory, etc. is ethnolinguistically a highly diverse area, e.g., in 1961, about 85 mother-tongues were reported to have been spoken albeit quite a few of them with insignificant speakers. However, a few of them were later reclassified with other cognate dialects/languages. The number of mother-tongues dropped to 52 in 1971, comprising of 13 Indian languages, 3 foreign

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languages, 24 nativdialects and 15 new mother-tongues. Besides the listed 52
mother-tongues, an unclassified ‘Others’ with a population of 63,128 persons was also entered. In 1981 also the total number of mother-tongues (with ‘Others’) remained the same. But in 1981, there were some more newly added mother-tongues, accompanied by ‘Others’ which constituted about 3.11% of the total population (44,252 persons). It is interesting to note that most of the prominent ethnolinguial groups are not listed separately or mentioned in the census, since 1971. Each census year has additions and omissions of languages.

V.1. METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES:

From the above brief description of the ethnolinguial situation in the state, one can visualize the intensity and degree of diversity in the state. Hence, to understand and illustrate the actual nature of diversity inside Manipur, a method formulated by J.H. Greenberg (1956) is applied. Of all the methods, his Method-A (MONO-LINGUAL NON-WEIGHTED METHOD) is used. This measurement allows the quantification of diversity on a continuum ranging from complete diversity to homogeneity. As Greenberg puts it, about the mechanisms of this method:

If from a given area we choose two members of the population at random, the probability that these two individuals speak the same language can be considered a measure of its linguistic diversity. If everyone speaks the same language, the probability that two such individual speak the same language is obviously 1, or certainty. If each individual speaks a different language, the probability is zero. Since we are measuring diversity rather than uniformity, this measure may be subtracted from 1, so that our index will vary from 0, indicating the least diversity, to 1, indicating the greatest.

2. Informations relating to the languages/mother-tonges for 1971 are taken from Census publications (Socio-Cultural Tables).
The formula is as below:

\[
A \text{ (diversity)} = 1 - \sum_{i=1}^{n} (i^2)
\]

This may be illustrated by a simple hypothetical example. If in a population 1/8 speak M, 3/8 speak N, and 1/2 speak O, then

\[
A = 1 - \left( \frac{1}{8} \times \frac{1}{8} + \frac{3}{8} \times \frac{3}{8} + \frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{2} \right) = 1 - \frac{26}{64} = \frac{38}{64}, \text{ or } .593...
\]

Fasold (1984) described the method and application of this formula in the following words:

In the last example, we ended up with 26 chances out of 64 that the two speakers we draw at random will speak the same languages. Obviously, the left over probability that the two speakers drawn will speak different languages. How do we find the left over probability? If there are a total 64 out 64 chances in the first place (64/64=1, of course) and 26 of these chances are the probability of getting two speakers who speak different languages. Arithematically this calculation: 64/64-24/64=38/64. Converting the fraction to its decimal equivalent, we get a value of 0.594...this represents a level of diversity somewhat more than halfway between no diversity and total diversity.

Diversity is quantified through the use of the A index. Besides, the measure operationalises diversity by giving the probability that randomly paired members of a nation will have different mother-tongues. Lieberson (1969) described the utility of Greenberg’s method A this way:

The advantage of this measure is that it permits quantitative description of the degree of mother-tongue diversity existing in a given area as well as allowing comparison between areas. In addition, this measure has been extended to permit quantitative determination of the degree of mutually shared mother-tongues between two separate populations or groups. Clearly, the operational meaning given to the A index is not intended to describe reality since it is unlikely that all residents will interact with one another with equal frequency. Rather, because of spatial and social integration, residents will tend to interact with mother-tongue.....

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### INDEX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. no.</th>
<th>Type of Linguistic Areas</th>
<th>A-Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Area of Very high diversity</td>
<td>above 0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Area of High diversity</td>
<td>0.60-0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Area of Moderate diversity</td>
<td>0.40-0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Area of Low diversity</td>
<td>0.20-0.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Area of Very Low diversity</td>
<td>below 0.20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig.no.11.
V.2. NATURE AND INTENSITY OF MOTHER-TONGUE DIVERSITY:

Manipur has a population of 1,420,953 persons in 1981, proportionately distributed in 6 districts. The entire population appears to be speaking about 60 different mother-tongues. These dialects and languages are sparsely or densely scattered in various areas. However, almost all speeches have discrete or delimitable areas of own. But in all the districts atleast 20-40 tongues-native as well as non-natives, can be found. In most cases, the native tongues usually outnumber the non-natives. The presence of several dialects in each area and the ensuing impact on the different ethnic communities make the study and understanding of linguistic diversity, the extent of societal multilingualism, important and essential. As will be seen in the preceding analysis, the degree or intensity of diversity of an area is interrelated or has direct effect upon the ethnic mosaic.

Diversity in the state has been analysed for 1961, 1971 and 1981 census. Computation of indexes till the sub-divisional level for each decade is done so as to illustrate the trend and depict a synoptic view of the intensity of diversity among the areas. Such exploration at different levels will highlight the nature and comparative idea can be fully understood. Barring 1961, calculation is done for all the districts and sub-divisions. Data for each decade has been extracted from language tables as given in the censuses. Results obtained from the various areas show interesting patterns. Fig. no. 11 shows areas linguistic diversity.

7. Till 1961 Manipur was Union Territory and most of the present districts were small administrative units without sub-divisions, especially the hill areas. Only after 1971 a proper sub-divisional demarcation was done with separate administration. Therefore, sub-divisional analysis could be done from 1971 onwards.
V.2.(i). Linguistic Diversity in the State:

Diversity indexes, as reflected by the different results, obtained for the 3 periods indicate more or less a constant picture. There appears to be no substantial change in the levels of diversity since 1961. In 1961 the diversity index was a moderate 0.56. Again, even in 1971 there was no significant change in the diversity level (see Fig.no. 14). The index value was only 0.58, an insignificant increase of .02. This slight increase in diversity value is minimal and does not explain much. But in 1981 there has been substantial increase in the index. Value for the overall mother-tongue diversity in the state reached a higher level of 0.61. With this increase, the diversity attain the level of ‘high’ category. Fig. no. 12 and 13 illustrate nature of linguistic diversity for the years 1971 and 1981 respectively. Fig. no. 15 also shows changes in Linguistic Diversity for 1971 and 1981. The table below shows the values of diversity in the state since 1961.

COMPOSITE DIVERSITY INDEX (since 1961)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Index Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(i) 1961</td>
<td>0.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) 1971</td>
<td>0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) 1981</td>
<td>0.61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table No. VI(A). The table above shows decadal changes in the levels of diversity for 1961, 1971 and 1981. As illustrated the differences are not very great. But 1981 it crossed the 0.60 mark and reached the ‘high’ diversity level.

The values obtained for the years 1971 and 1981 represent level of diversity which is somewhat more than halfway between no diversity and total diversity. This means that till 1971 diversity of the state was only ‘moderate’. However, the direction is towards diversity. The ‘midway’ situation between the two extremes of total uniformity and total diversity can be explained. The moderate or midway
level is as indicated by the values which range midway between 1.0 and 0.0. The most plausible explanation for this situation, despite the presence of more than 50 mother tongues in the state, is due to dominance and large size of Meitei population or speakers. Such dominance greatly neutralises the communication gap among the numerous medley population. Meiteis alone account for more than 60 percent of the total population in the state. Because of this phenomenon, great numerical strength of one language community, the degree of diversity in Manipur is or have been tremendously minimised. However, in general linguistic diversity is gradually moving towards greater complexity. The movement towards this direction can be attributed to the gradual increase in the population of various communities. The other factor contributing to this effect could be the presence of new mother tongues in each census. Since 1961 many new speech/languages have been included while some old ones disappeared in the following census year. Besides these ‘short-lived’ languages, there are numerous ‘minority dialects’ emerging from the tribal areas. From the census reports it is seen that some new minority dialects keep appearing every year.

According to Stephens (1976) minority languages/dialects refer to ‘indigenous and, in some cases, to autochthonous population, or to communities so well established that they can be regarded as the historic occupants of the territories in which they lived”. In the case of Manipur most minority languages do not appear in the language tables, or they disappear later. The census also fail to explain such incidents. However, the reasons are quite obvious to those who fully understand the socio-cultural situation in the state, especially among the natives in the hilly areas. Besides, some of the communities are closely related but prefer to be treated as independent speech groups. Wardhaugh (1987) believed that such events are common and experienced world wide, and often

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8. Likewise, in other areas also if one dialect is exceedingly dominant, then ‘index of Diversity’ is very low. Communicativity is therefore high.
9. The following mother-tongues were listed in 1971—Arabic, Banupriya, Dimasa, Naga, etc. In 1981 also there are few new mother-tongues entered—Anai, Kachha-Naga, Limbu, Zemi-Naga, etc.
INDEX

A-Value Category
above 0.80 Very high diversity
0.60 - 0.80 High diversity
0.40 - 0.60 Moderate diversity
0.20 - 0.40 Low diversity
below 0.20 Very Low diversity

Fig.no. 12.
with a purpose. To him "...minority languages come into existence when their speakers use them to express their identity as a group, an identity which may be tied concurrently to feelings about a shared racial origin or to a desire to attach themselves to a particular place, religion, or way of life. There must also be a recognition that there is some other group—or other groups—that the speakers of the language want to unite against if they are not to be submerged, possibly numerically, culturally, politically, and so on, but most certainly linguistically". Yinger also feels that "...language often becomes the key symbol of ethnicity and the focal issue in such rallies". As experienced in Manipur, a shift in language or dialect (i.e. claiming to speak different tongue) is basically a shift in identity. Such changes or shift in claims of new identity or nomenclature ensued to emergence of many new ethnolinguial names or groups, as illustrated by the census reports. Ultimately, it affects the intensity of linguistic diversity and widen inter-ethnic relationships. Fig. no. 16 illustrates the overall linguistic diversity in the state since 1961.

V.2.(ii). Intensity of Diversity in the Districts:

An interesting pattern of diversity indicating degrees of intensity has been depicted by the diversity indexes or values from the 6 districts. Most of the districts, barring 2, seem to have more intense diversity throughout the decades, higher than the state’s average. Many districts have very high range of diversity index values - i.e. within the range of 0.80 to 0.90. Except in the central and east districts, where diversity values are constantly much lower than the other areas, all the other districts possess index value much higher than the state’s index.

Out of the 6 districts, 4 of them have diversity value above the state value, for all the years. These are mainly tribal districts. In 1961, the state’s diversity value

13. As pointed out in chapter III, shift in ethnicity or claiming to speak a new different dialect - not related to the previous one or any of those listed earlier - is reported in all census years. The recent most case, occurred in Tamenglong (East) district, and in North district. In West district, many ethnic communities claim other identity which greatly reduce the tribal population.
INDEX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>A-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Very High diversity</td>
<td>above 0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. High diversity</td>
<td>0.60 - 0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Moderate diversity</td>
<td>0.40 - 0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Low diversity</td>
<td>0.20 - 0.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Very Low diversity</td>
<td>below 0.20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
was a mere 0.56. However, most of the areas reflect much higher indexes. Districts with every high diversity are North, South, and Tengnoupal. Interestingly, East district - the core territory of the Tangkhul population - recorded the least diversity index/value and moved closer towards homogeneity. It has value nearer to 1.0 indicating speech uniformity. In 1961 the index value was only 0.27, very less as compared to other tribal areas. Surprisingly the value was even less than that of Central district which recorded a diversity value of 0.40.

In 1971 the diversity mosaic though more or less constant, illustrated a mixed situation. The state diversity index also recorded a higher value of 0.58. So also the various districts have higher indexes. Only 3 districts have values above the state’s average. As usual South district’s value of diversity remained the highest with 0.83, North district followed with 0.81 value. Other 3 districts showed incidence of lower diversity. Central had the least with only 0.14, East with 0.31 and West district also with a comparatively low value of 0.37. The situation for West is quite remarkable since the value showed a great shift towards uniformity. In 1961 it was 0.62 and decreased to 0.37. The possibility of such fluctuations are elaborately examined in the following sub-sections.

The situation in 1981 appears to be more interesting than the previous decades. Except for Central district, all the other districts depict substantial shift towards greater diversity. The state’s diversity value was 0.61, which is also an increased index since 1961. South district continued to top the diversity with 0.90 value - the highest index so far, and close to the extreme situation of ‘no common tongue’ or total diversity. This situation reflects the actual mosaic as encountered in reality, in South district.14 The other districts with high index values are North(0.82), West(0.81), and Tengnoupal(0.87). Although East district is a tribal area it has a very low value with 0.30. The value indicates a sizeable rise since 1961, where it was 0.27 and well below 0.30 mark. Central district continues

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14 As encountered in reality, South district should have the highest diversity index. The actual situation in this area is that about 15 prominent Kuki-Chin communities and other speech groups intermingled speaking their own but related mother-tongues. The district is very much a multispeech area.
MANIPUR
CHANGES IN LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY.

1971

1981

Fig.no.15.
DECADAL CHANGE IN LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY

MANIPUR

1961:

No. of Districts

Very Low (<0.2)
Low (0.2-0.4)
Moderate (0.4-0.6)
High (0.6-0.8)
Very High (0.8-1.0)

CAT

1971

Very Low
Low
Moderate
High
Very High

1981

Very Low
Low
Moderate
High
Very High

fig.no.14.
to be the least diverse area with a value merely 0.13,\textsuperscript{15} the least since 1961. The values reflect sharp decline - from 0.40 in 1961, 0.14 in 1971, and to 0.13 in 1981. It indicates that Central district is the only district which is almost (more or less), linguistically a homogeneous area. The table below illustrates the nature of diversity in the various districts.

**COMPOSITE DISTRICTS DIVERSITY INDEXES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>1961</th>
<th>1971</th>
<th>1981</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>0.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tengnoupal</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>0.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>0.61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table No. V(B): It shows decadal change in the levels of mother tongue diversity. The above values indicate a gradual move towards greater diversity for most of the districts and periods.

One of the most significant outcome from this analysis of mother-tongue diversity is obtaining results which favours the following research guesses:

i). Linguistic diversity appears to be much more intense in tribal areas than in other parts of Manipur. Therefore, a positive relationship between diversity and tribal areas seems to hold true from this analysis.

ii). Mother-tongue diversity in tribal areas is further associated with its ethnic components and history.

iii). If the degree of dominance of a particular dialect/language is very high

\textsuperscript{15} It may be hard to stand by the conclusion that Central district has the least linguistic diversity index throughout. Undeniably more than 35 mother tongues are spoken and most of them with substantial population, like Meitei, Bengali, Nepali, etc. However, besides Meitei-lon no other languages have great proportion, large enough to influence the ethnolinguial situation. Other communities notably constitute 5 per cent of the population. Such unequal distribution lowers diversity to great extent.
MANIPUR
INDEX OF LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY

1961

1971

1981

North  West  South  Tengnoupal  Central  East
D  I  S  T  R  I  C  T  S

Fig.no.16.
in an area the density of diversity is exceedingly low. It could reduce the
diversity level to a great extent - like in East and Central districts.

iv). generally, ethnicity and identity are indicated or expressed by the language
one speaks. When people claim to speak a new dialect, due to some
differences, a shift in ethnicity occurs. It therefore affects the interethnic
relations and intensity of diversity of that area, and

v). the mere presence of many dialects/languages in an area seems not to
affect the diversity index, especially if most of the dialects are numerically
insignificant. What ultimately determines the degree of diversity is rather
the strength or size of speakers of different dialects/languages in the area.

From this study of the interrelationship between linguistic diversity and
ethnic components certain patterns emerge. As stated earlier, tribal areas have
higher values of diversity. But further demarcation can be culled within the tribal
areas. Interestingly, the intensity of diversity appears to be more intense or values
much higher in those areas where the Kuki - Chin group are predominant. In
areas where the Naga tribes are dominant, the diversity index seems to be
slightly lower or show trends towards more uniformity. This generalisation may
appear to be surprising or contrary to the understanding that Nagas have more
dialects even within a tribe. Usually the Nagas have (within or between) lesser
common languages and greater unintelligibility or non-communicativeness
due to the presence of many patois or village speeches. However, the reason
for more uniformity and lesser diversity indexes is that many of the unclassified
dialects and its speakers claim to speak the dialect of the dominant and related
mother-tongue (to the census enumerators). The predominant dialect is used as
the lingua franca in the district. Such use or maintenance of lingua franca for
wider/mutual intelligibility is not the standard practice in Kuki-Chin areas. In the
Kuki-Chin territories most of the speeches are cognate variety (‘genetically
related’). Besides, each speech community has substantial population
comparable to other groups. Hence all the different groups prefer to be identified as having separate identities. Due to this phenomenon Kuki-Chin areas have usually higher diversity values than the medley Nagas, despite greater homogeneity in their speeches. In other words, it may be said that in these areas ethnic competitions and etnocentrism is very pronounced and intense.

Fluctuation in the values of diversity in West district can be imputed to resurgence of new identity or ethnicity which have political underpinnings.\textsuperscript{16} Values of diversity for 1961 was 0.62, then a mere 0.37 in 1971, and it shot up to a very high level of 0.81 in 1981. Except West district no other area has such fluctuation. A clearer picture and nature of such fluctuations and its relationship with the ethnic components, shifts, etc., will be discernible and unfolded when dilating on the sub-divisional diversity indexes.

V.3. EXPLORING NATURE OF LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY IN THE SUB-DIVISIONS:

A brief description outlining the diversity index for different states shows that the study area is a multispeech area encompassing medley ethnic communities, each possessing its own dialect boundary. Therefore, the term 'tribe' in such situation can refer to both individual language/dialect unit and composites of these units sharing similar culture. Generally, tribe refers to a distinct culture-bearing entity. In the case of Manipur tribes, most of them do not conform to the definition of tribe. Here, the so-called tribes are rather patois units or dialect sub-groups. Mother-tongue is differentiated on mutual unintelligibility and not on the origin and degree of similarity.

Mainly, the intention in this section is to illustrate the differences in diversity

\textsuperscript{16} The fluctuating phenomena since 1961 can be explained as a case of gradual shift in ethnicity, or break-up from the earlier listed groups. The shift or change experience in the area is vividly illustrated by the computations and census reports. It will be pertinent to mention that in each census years since 1961 the numbers of dialects and its population keep fluctuating. e.g. in 1961 the following mother-tongues are reported spoken in West districts: Gangte (1183), Kabui (20,565), Kocha-Naga (7999), and Thadou (4587); In 1971 Kabui (35159), Kuki (3896), Meitei (1155), Thadou(5076), Zemi-Naga (4976), and Others (1789). Such shifts affect the diversity indexes and greatly reduced ethnic component in the area. Hence, the tribal population had been dramatically lowered to 46.97 \% from 97.82 \% in 1971. As pointed out, certain sections claimed new names other than those which are already listed or 'recognised' in the state. Such is the impact and ethnic scene in the different areas of Manipur.
at the micro-level. Also, to see the density of ethnic concentration in rural areas. The ranges in diversity values will reflect whether a particular sub-division is inhabited by myriad ethnolinguial communities or is ethnically homogeneous.

As in the previous case, computation for the sub-divisional diversity indexes is done for 1961, 1971, and 1981. However, detailed analysis is possible only after 1971. Changes in the administrative boundaries do not permit analysis for 1961. At a glance, the general picture seem to suggest an oscillating pattern. In most sub-divisions the values are itself diverse, some recording near uniformity while quite a few illustrate trends of diversity. Generally, sub-divisions in Central, East, and West districts exhibit more homogeneity than other areas. In such situations, the areas index values are less than the districts averages. In the subsequent sections a piece-meal analysis of the different sub-divisions is attempted.

V.3.(i). North District:

Values of diversity index for this district since 1961 depicts high diversity. The values for the various years are 0.78 in 1961, 0.81 in 1971, and a slight increase to 0.82 in 1981. Though the values are very high for each unit, they all fall below the districts average. Only the sub-division of Mao-Maram\(^{17}\) seems to reflect constant uniformity in the diversity values. The other two have high index values indicating non-uniformity, namely the units of Sadar Hills-East and Sadar Hills-West. Fig. no. 17 shows the nature of diversity as in 1971 & 1981.

(a) Mao-Maram Sub-division:

In this sub-division the values indicate homogeneity rather than diversity. In 1971, the diversity index was only 0.14, which experiences a sharp increase to 0.36 in 1981. However, the values are much less comparatively. The reason for such "near homogeneity" is the presence of only few dialects, and the dominance of Mao population. Mao speakers constitute about 65% in the sub-division. On the other hand the other

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17. In 1971 the sub-divisions were named as (i) Mao West, (ii) Mao East and (iii) Sadar Hills. Later the names were changed to - Mao-Maram, Sadar Hills-East and Sadar Hills-West, the areas remaining the same.
NORTH DISTRICT
LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY

1971

1981

A - Value/index

North dist.
Mao-Maram
Sadar Hills-E
Sadar Hills-W

S U B - D I V I S I O N S

Fig. no. 17.
mother-tongues have negligible population. The prominent ethnolinguial
groups in the area are Mao, Nepali, Meitei, and Zemi Naga.

(b). Sadar Hills-West:

In this sub-division the main mother-tongues spoken are Nepali,
Kabui, Kacha-Naga, Kuki, Mao, Meitei, Maring, Thadou and Vaiphei. Of
these, the most predominant ones are Nepali, Kacha-Naga, Kuki and
Thadou. Therefore, diversity is quite high. The share of each community in
the total population is quite substantial. Diversity values for the past 2
decades are 0.73 in 1971 and 0.80 in 1981. The 1981 value puts this sub-
division among the highly diversified areas in the state. Thadou and Nepali
are two mother-tongues having the largest speakers in the sub-division.

(c). Sadar Hills East:

Here, the diversity is the greatest for both 1971 and 1981. Diversity
values have not changed. It remained constant during both the years at
0.83. This sub-division has the highest value and is, hence, the most diverse
area of the district. Diversity is caused by the presence of many mother-
tongues having more or less equal population. Major mother-tongues
found are Kuki, Nepali, Kabul, Meitei, Tangkhul, Thadou, and Vaiphei. None
of them have exceedingly high share in the population. Hence, this sub-
division is one of the most diverse area in the state.

### DIVERSITY IN NORTH DISTRICT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-division</th>
<th>1961</th>
<th>1971</th>
<th>1981</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) Mao-Maram</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Sadar Hills West</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Sadar Hills East</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0.78</th>
<th>0.81</th>
<th>0.82</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>District’s total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table No. V(C): shows the changing diversity index of the
district and its sub-divisions. Sadar Hills East has the highest diversity value which is above
the district’s average.
V.3.(ii). West District:

Each of the 4 sub-division has low diversity value, mostly the district’s average. Interestingly, the district also has diversity values fluctuating greatly. In 1961 it was 0.62, in the range of ‘high’ category. However, in the successive year the index dramatically decrease to only 0.37. But in 1981 the diversity value shot up to 0.81. Such fluctuating phenomenon indirectly indicates the possible instability of socio-cultural or ethnic situation in the district. It appears to suggest that ethnicity in the area among its population is flexible and shifts are frequently encountered. Therefore, the district experienced varying index of diversity every decade. Fig. no. 18 depicts linguistic diversity in the district.

(i). Tamenglong North:

In this sub-division the diversity remains ‘moderate’. The index of diversity for 1971 and 1981 are 0.46 and 0.51 respectively. In 1971, it had recorded a much lower value. This was because of the dominance of Kaccha-Naga speaking population in the sub-division. The value of diversity for 1981 was below the district’s average.

(ii). Tamenglong West:

This sub-division is another area of ‘fluctuating’ diversity. In 1971 and 1981 the values were both well below the district’s mark. In 1971 the value was a mere 0.20, the least in the district. But in 1981 it experienced a quantum leap to 0.74, due mainly to the shift and changes in ethnicity. To substantiate this point, in 1971 Kabui was the only main dialect which constitute about 89 percent of the population. But, by 1981 the share of Kabui declined considerably to just 30 percent. Besides, many new speech communities with equally large strength emerged. The most prominent new dialect is Zemi-Naga with 4865 speakers—accounting for 36 percent.

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18. Highly variation in the diversity values in 1971 and 1981 are mainly due to the emergence of new mother-tongues or ethnic identities. In 1981 Zemi-Naga with sizeable population (4865 speakers) surfaced. Also, in 1971 Kacha-Naga (a tribe) was not listed but entered as mother-tongue in 1981. Such changes affect the diversity level in the state and district. In 1971 only Kabui accounted for nearly 80 of the population.
WEST DISTRICT
LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY

A-Value/index

1971

1981

WEST dist
Tamenglong North
Tamenglong West
Tamenglong Central
Nunba

West dist
Tamenglong North
Tamenglong West
Tamenglong Central
Nunba

SUBDIVISIONS

Fig. no. 18.
Kaccha-Naga and Kuki also have more than 1000 speakers. Due to such incidence of ethnic resurgence and shift, the area have higher index of linguistic diversity.

(iii). Tamenglong Central Sub-division:

Although this division is the district’s headquarters the intensity of diversity remains unaffected. The sub-division has overall lowest value with 0.32 in 1971 and 0.36 in 1981. Among the areas, Tamenglong Central appears to be the most homogeneous area. The major mother-tongues spoken is Kabui, which constitute about 81 percent. Other dialect groups are very insignificant, except Thadou which accounts for about 7 percent. From the computed values it appears that this sub-division is the least diverse area in the district, despite the urban centre.

(iv). Nungba Sub-division:

Nungba division’s diversity falls under the moderate category. Its index values are always below the district’s mark. The 1971 index showed a higher value of 0.46 than that of 1981 where it was 0.44. The constantly low index in this sub-division is also due to the dominance of Kabui.

It should be noted that in most areas diversity ranges between moderate and high category. The overall situation is generally more homogeneous. But this does not suggest that other minority dialects or patois, often unintelligible speeches, are totally absent. West district as a whole comes under ‘low’ in 1971 and jumped to ‘very high’ in 1981. Tamenglong Central is the least fluctuating area in the district.

The plausible reasons for such fluctuating situation of linguistic diversity in this district are shift in ethnic loyalty for better socio-political benefits, internal differences, and high incidence of dialectal similarity leading to ‘fluidity’. Fig. no. 24 shows the identified etholingual areas.
DIVERSITY IN WEST DISTRICT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District/sub-division</th>
<th>1961</th>
<th>1971</th>
<th>1981</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WEST</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Tamenglong North</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>0.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Tamenglong West</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Tamenglong Central</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Nungba</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>0.44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table No. V(D): It illustrates decadal fluctuations in the overall diversity indexes. Cases of sharp decline and spurts are encountered. In 1981 none of them have values above the district’s mark.

V.3.(iii). South District:

Manipur South district is apparently the most linguistically diverse district in the state, also in other socio-economic aspects. It is the most developed area and encompasses complex environs. As indicated by the computed values the level of diversity is quite high. Diversity indexes are 0.86 in 1961, 0.83 in 1971, and a very high value of 0.90 in 1981. The 1981 value puts the district closer to total diversity category. In each of the year (1971 and 1981) only two sub-divisions have values below the district’s average. Fig. no. 19 depicts nature of linguistic diversity in the district. Fig. no. 25 shows the patterns of different Kuki-Chin etholinguual groups in the districts: This is also the dialect/speech areas.

A). Tipaimukh Sub-division:

The sub-division is the core area of the Hmar speaking population. Since 1971 it has very low diversity values, and appears to be the most uniform unit of the district. The values are 0.14 in 1971 and 0.33 in 1981. Such low index is due to the predominance of Hmar speakers and its geographical location. Tipaimukh is therefore in the ‘very low’ range in 1971 and shifted to a higher ‘low’ category in 1981.

B. Thanlon sub-division:

For both the years this sub-division has index value which can be
termed moderate or within the two extremes. The computed values are 0.60 for 1971 and 0.65 in 1981. Predominant mother-tongues spoken in this area are Paite and Vaiphei, of which Paite population has a very large share.

C. Churachandpur-North (Henglep):

In both the years 1971 and 1981, the diversity values are above 0.70, putting the division under the ‘high’ range. The 1971 index was slightly higher than the 1981 value. In 1971 it was 0.73 and it dropped to 0.72 in 1981. Major mother-tongues with sizeable speakers in the area are Thadou, Vaiphei, and Kabui. Besides it has a large chunk of unclassified ‘Others’ mother-tongues. All these contribute to the area’s diversity.

D. Churachandpur Sub-division:

Values of diversity appears to be the highest for all times in this sub-division and also in the district. In 1971 the index value was 0.85 which further increased in 1981 to 0.90, the highest and at par with the district’s value. This area has the headquarters, Churachandpur town, and is inhabited by medley clans or branches of Kuki-Chin communities. The area has high incidence of multi-lingualism. The main dialect groups are Paite, Hmar, Lushai or Mizo, Kuki, Meitei, Thadou, Vaiphei, Kom, etc. Each of them has more or less equal proportion, except Paite which has bigger share in the population. Incidence of multilingualism is best experienced in this area. Even in the market places more than 5 dialects are used. Multiplicity of dialects/speech groups can be better grasped from Fig. no. 23.

E. Singhat Sub-division:

Index of diversity Singhat falls in the ‘high’ category. In 1971 the index value was 0.63 and increased to 0.72 in 1981. The computed indexes suggest the presence of many speech communities. Main mother-tongues are Paite, Vaiphei, Thadou, and ‘Others’. Comparatively speaking, the sub-division is not as diverse as Churachandpur, nor as homogeneous as
SOUTH DISTRICT
LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY

A - Value/index

1971
1981

SOUTH dist. Tipaimukh Thanlon Churachandpur-N Churachandpur Singhal

SUBDIVISIONS.

Fig.no.19.
Tipaimukh sub-division.

Unlike the other districts South represents greater diversity and most of the ethnolingu al communities seem to have proportionate representation. It is therefore a multi-speech area, consisting of many tribal groups. One of the most unique and peculiar character observed in the district is that though diversity is great the intensity of interethnic speech intelligibility is also very high, unlike as experienced in Naga inhabited areas. Spurts in the levels of diversity occurred due to the resurgence or yearning for separate identity and ethnicity for smaller communal advantages or interests. And such moves have been usually successful. It ensued to break-up in socio-political and other cultures of the related communities.

**DENSITY OF DIVERSITY IN SOUTH DISTRICT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-division</th>
<th>1971</th>
<th>1981</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Tipaimukh</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Thanlon</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Churachandpur North</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Churachandpur</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Singhat</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SOUTH</strong></td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1961)

**Table No.V(E):** From the values, diversity is the greatest in Churachandpur and lowest in Tipaimukh, also 'very high' for the district.

V.3.(iv). Tengnoupal District:

Till 1971 Tengnoupal was part of Central district. Later with 3 tribal areas it became a separate district. Analysis is however done since 1961 to derive a more meaningful comparson. The district is a tribal core, inhabited by both tribes of Kuki-Chin and Naga communities. Each group is interspersed with a clear delineable core and periphery. Fluctuations in the computed values suggest
Fig. no. 20.
high density of non-uniformity. In 1961 index value was 0.82 which dropped to 0.75 in 1971. However the index value sharply rose to an all time high of 0.87 in 1981. In general, the district can be placed under ‘very high’ category. The main mother-tongues found spoken are Thadou, Maring, Kuki, Anal, Ao, Zou, and Meitei. Though the district diversity values are high none of the sub-divisions appears to level the district averages for all periods examined. (See Fig. no. 20).

(a). Tengnoupal Sub-division:

In this sub-division the diversity indexes are high but below the district average. The year 1971 registered a lower index value of 0.68 which increased to 0.83 by 1981. Taking the 1981 index value it can be put under ‘very high’ category. About 4 major mother-tongues with large population dominate the area. They are Kuki, Meitei, Maring, Thadou, and Others. Maring has the largest number of speakers. In fact the sub-division has the highest index of diversity in the district.

(b). Chandel sub-division:

This area has diversity which is not very high, and can be placed in the ‘high’ category. Index values for both the years are 0.62 in 1971 and 0.72 in 1981. Mother-tongues prominent in the area are Anal, Ao, Maring, and a large unspecified group. Population size of the sub-division is also quite small and the presence of many large communities speaking different dialects affect the overall diversity in the area.

(c). Chakpikarong sub-division:

This sub-division has about 4 major mother tongues. Since most of them have sizeable speakers, their share in the population affects the level of diversity. In 1971 index value was 0.74 which marks slight increase to 0.74 in 1981. These figures make the sub-division one of the ‘high’ diversity areas.
### DIVERSITY SCENARIO IN TENGNOUPAL DISTRICT

**Table No. V(F):**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-division</th>
<th>1961</th>
<th>1971</th>
<th>1981</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Tengnoupal</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Chandel</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Chakpikarong</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TENGNOUPAL</strong></td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The overall index of Tengnoupal reflects that the values of diversity for all areas increase each year. Tengnoupal division has the highest value.

### V.3.(v). Central Districts:

Central district is the most developed area and covers all the plain areas of the state. It has 5 sub-divisions, each more or less equally developed and socio-culturally homogeneous. Homogeneity in linguistic aspect coupled with availability of economic infrastructures contributed to development of the areas. The high level of development is indirectly suggested by the various values of diversity obtained since 1961. In 1961 the index of diversity value was 0.40. But in the subsequent years its experience gradual decrease to 0.14 in 1971 and further to 0.13 in 1981. Such instances of low index values are also indicated by the sub-divisions. These low values illustrate a situation of almost complete linguistic homogeneity, a trend not seen in any areas of the state. Besides, the sub-division indexes are more impressive in which some areas have diversity values close to zero (indicating least diversity). The only wide spread and predominant mother-tongue found in the district is Manipuri or Meitei-ion. It accounts for about 93 percent of the district population. Though there are quite a few other mother-tongues reported to be spoken, they are largely insignificant and do not affect the overall diversity. Another advantage and factor that accentuates linguistic is the presence of many urban centres and their influences.

Nature of mother-tongue diversity in each sub-division is dilated upon for
Fig. no. 21.
two points of time, 1971 and 1981. (the diversity is depicted by Fig. no. 21).

(i). Imphal East Sub-division:

The diversity values of this area are quite low depicting homogeneity. Diversity indexes are well below 0.20 range, as shown by the computed values. In 1971 it was a mere 0.10 and slightly rose to 0.16 by 1981. For both the decades the indexes are comparatively low making this unit one of the least or 'very low' diversity area. This entire sub-division is under urban environment or influence.

(ii). Imphal West Sub-division:

This area also has values of diversity in the lowest category, i.e. below 0.20 mark. In 1981 the value was 0.13, a slight decline from 0.17 in 1971. With this figure it can be placed among the 'least diverse' or near homogeneous areas. The dominance of Meitei is so great that it could sideline the influence or presence of other linguistic groups.

(iii). and (iv). Bishenpur and Thoubal Divisions:

These two sub-divisions are treated together for their likeness in linguistic character. Both the areas have the lowest diversity indexes throughout, and the values are nearly zero. In 1971 the values for Bishenpur and Thoubal were a mere 0.05 respectively. Bishenpur has higher index of 0.08 in 1981, while for Thoubal it further declined to 0.04. The diversity values obtained clearly depict that these two areas are the most, linguistically, homogeneous or least diverse areas in the whole state. The low values categorise them under the 'very low' diversity. Hence, a totally uniform area (their index values are more or less zero). In each area Meitei-Ion speakers constitute more than 95 percent - in Thoubal it was 97.7 percent of the total population.

(v). Jiribam Sub-division:

Among the sub-divisions in Central district, Jiribam is the only unit having the highest diversity value, above the 0.50 mark. In 1971 the index
value was 0.68 and dropped to 0.62 in 1981. Based on the 1981 value this sub-division come within the 'high' diversity category. However, compared to other districts the diversity is not unusually complex. Unlike the other sub-divisions in the district it has higher diversity index which has been contributed by the presence of some tribal dialects (Hmar, etc.), Bengali and Meitei population. None of them have a dominant share in the population.

From this brief study on the diversity mosaic in Central district, two important features are discernible. First, the area depicts 'near homogeneity' as experienced in the sub-divisions of Bishenpur and Thoubal. Such situation has not been encountered in other areas. Lastly, this district has mainly non-tribal population and many insignificant other mother-tongues. Meitei-Lon is the single most dominant mother-tongue accounting for more than 95%. This suggests that areas inhabited by Meiteis are usually linguistically much more homogenous than areas peopled by other ethnolinguial groups.

OVERALL DIVERSITY INDEXES IN CENTRAL DISTRICT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-division</th>
<th>1961</th>
<th>1971</th>
<th>1981</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Imphal East</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Imphal West</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Bishenpur</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Thoubal</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Jiribam</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>0.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CENTRAL</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table no.V. (G): The table depict incidence or uniformity rather than diversity, unlike other districts. Barring Jiribam all the sub-divisions have very low index values, some almost touching zero (indicating least diversity).

V.3.(vi). East District:

Yet another interesting trend and nature of linguistic diversity is observed
EAST DISTRICT
LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY

1971

A - Value/index

0.1
0.2
0.3
0.4
0.5
0.6
0.7
0.8
0.9
1.0

East dist.
Ukhrul-North
Ukhrul-Central
P-Phaisat
K-Chassad
Ukhrul-South

1981

East dist.
Ukhrul-north
Ukhrul-central
P-Phaisat
K-Chassad
Ukhrul-south

Fig.no. 22.
in East district. Though this district is entirely a tribal core area the intensity of diversity, at least at the surface, is very low. The different values computed point towards homogeneity in all the areas. The diversity values are as follows - 0.27 in 1961, 0.31 in 1971, and a slight increase to 0.33 in 1981. All the computed decadinal index values which indicated homogeneity may appear incongruous for tribal areas associated with multilingualism and greater diversity. Besides, in East district almost every village is said to possess a different ‘indigenous’ speech or patois unintelligible even to the nearest village. The reason is rather simple. The most plausible explanation forwarded for emergence of such uniformity in the midst of diversity is due to claimance of the lingua franca - Tangkhul dialect - as their actual mother-tongue rather than the dialect spoken at home.19 This also reflects that bilingualism (of local speeches) is high in the area. Therefore, due to such claims or shift the actual intensity of diversity has been greatly. However, such shifts can become effective in integrating myriad communities into one larger ethnic group especially if the various communities speak cognate dialects and are ethnolingually belated. Fig. no. 22 shows the nature of linguistic diversity in the district.

Most of the sub-divisions reflect low range of diversity values, mainly within 0.30 - 0.50. This area is therefore in the ‘low’ and ‘moderate’ category of diversity. It also reflects their adherence to a large common ethnic identity. A clearer picture of overall diversity is illustrated in the detail sub-divisional analysis.

(i). Ukhrul North Sub-division:

Values of this area reflect low diversity. In 1971 it was at par with the district average (0.31), but below the average in 1981 at 0.26. This trend towards uniformity is due to the dominance of Tangkhul dialect which reduces other mother-tongue’s significance. Diversity value of 1981 placed

19 Grierson (1904) examined linguistic features of about 5 villages in Ukhrul area, those close to the present Ukhrul town and reported the presence of sharp differences in dialectal features. The villages he had studied are Tusom, Phadang, etc. (in LSI, Vol. III, Pt. I).
the sub-division in the 'low' category, for which the value was also the least in the district.

(ii). Ukhrul Central sub-division:

In both the years - 1971 and 1981 - diversity values are below the district mark. Values remained unchanged at 0.30 for both the years. Diversity indexes suggest uniformity and at 0.30 the unit has a 'low' diversity.

(iii). Phungyar - Phaisad Sub-division:

This sub-division is also not a diverse area. The 1971 value was greater than 1981, suggesting dispersion from diversity. In 1971 the diversity value was 0.32 and decreased to 0.28 in 1981. Low diversity in the area is mainly due to cohesive ethnicity and predominance of Tangkhul speakers.

(iv). Kamjong - Chasad sub-division:

Although this area has the highest index value of 0.52 in 1971 and 0.56 in 1981, it does not really depict or suggest intense diversity like in other districts. The values are 'moderate' or midway between the two extremes. This slighty greater rate of diversity as experienced is mainly due to the presence of Thadou and Kuki population. Besides Tangkhul, no other speeches tongues have sizeable speakers.

(v). Ukhrul South sub-division:

In this sub-division also index of diversity has been comparatively low. The value remained constant at 0.41 for both the decades. Though it appears to be the second highest diversity area in the district, it falls under 'low/high' category. The other mother-tongues spoken or found, besides Tangkhul, are Kuki and Thadou. No other speeches have significant population.
DIVERSITY IN EAST DISTRICT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-division</th>
<th>1971</th>
<th>1981</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Ukhrul North</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>0.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Ukhrul Central</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Phungyar-Phaisat</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Kamjong-Chassad</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Ukhrul South</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

EAST 0.27 0.31 0.33 (1961)

Table No. V(H): Diversity in this district is, unlike in other tribal areas, comparatively very low. This district is therefore the second least diverse area, next only to Central district.

V.4. CONCLUDING STATEMENT:

Exploration of linguistic diversity in this district highlights some unique ethnolinguistic mosaic. The prominent features illustrated are:

(a) tribal areas can be equally uniform linguistically, depending on the ethnicity and other socio-cultural pressures.

(b) unlike South district, even areas with urban centres reported low level of diversity, and

(c) intensity of diversity can be greatly shaped by the ethnic component of the area. Only sub-divisions having some other mother-tongues illustrate slightly higher values.

The analysis of linguistic diversity in the various areas consisting of many unrelated speech communities indirectly cautions that mere similarity in racial, religious, and other socio-cultural ethos do not indicate uniformity in speech or other innate traits. It appears that language/dialect played a vital role in determining societal integrity.

Sorensen (1967) in his study on multi-lingualism in Amazon encountered
similar situation. He observed that "Homogeneity of culture in this does not mean homogeneity of language. And to speak of one language is not to speak of one entire culture." 20 Besides, as discernible from the tribal areas, bilingualism is usually high but towards or in favour of other ethnic dialects. This exploration of diversity in unrelated ethnic areas suggest that "ethnicity maintains boundary between groups and binds individuals into solidarity groups on some cultural basis, accelerated by pressure from outside" (Hechter: 1974, p.1152). 21 Therefore, unless serious steps and concerted efforts are undertaken, linguistic diversity in tribal will continue to perpetuate incommunicado leading to misunderstanding of socio-cultural mosaic of the people.

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