CHAPTER- 6

LANGUAGE CONTACT, CHANGE AND BORROWING

6.1 LANGUAGE CONTACT

Language contact takes place between speakers of different languages in contact situations. In order for communications to take place, speakers must arrive at certain degree of comprehension of the other language and must acquire a degree of facility in producing utterances that will be comprehensible (Weinreich, 1953). In due course, some speakers will be able to alternate between languages and become bilinguals.

Language contact occurs under various conditions such as migration, neighbourhood, conquest, and political unification of different ethnic-linguistic groups under multinational states. Where two ethnically different communities come into contact with each other under anyone of these conditions, linguistic contact takes place out of the need for establishing communication between the members of these communities. Language contact is speech communication between different linguistic communities (Rozenevejg, 1976).

In a contact situation like migration in which one ethnic group comes into contact with another, the host society often exerts cultural influence on the immigrant group in terms of ideological and value system. Acculturation thus results from the coming together of societies with cultural traditions. Consequently, the socio-cultural life of the immigrants undergoes change based on the patterns or models set by the host
society. Socio-cultural contact thus introduces two simultaneous processes in a contact situation of which language contact is just one aspect of it (Weinreich, 1953). It has also been pointed out that in the process of linguistic assimilation of one language into another, the rate of assimilation is directly related to the rate of cultural assimilation (Reyburn, 1975).

Language contact results in the language change at Phonological, Morphological, Syntactical and Lexical levels. Language contact plays significant role in bilingualism, interference, code switching, code-mixing and borrowings. All these factors may be responsible for language changes.

Bagri, a dialect of Rajasthani is spoken in Sri Ganganagar and Hanumangarh districts of Rajasthan; Sirsa and Hissar districts of Haryana; and Faridkot, Firozpur and Bhatinda of Punjab. Due to its strategic geographical location, Bagri has been in stable contact with languages like Punjabi, Haryanavi, Hindi, Urdu. These languages spoken adjacent to Bagri might have caused language change in Bagri at various levels. Bagri speaking area has seen several socio-politico-historical upheavals in the past. Before the partition (1947) of the nation, Bagri speaking area was arid and underdeveloped. As it lies adjacent to present day Pakistan, a sizeable number of Muslims were residing in and around Bhatner (Hanumangarh). Their mother tongue was Urdu with high borrowings from Punjabi. After the partition Muslims migrated to Pakistan thereby breaking the direct contact of Urdu with Bagri. After the introduction of several irrigational facilities in the early fifties, this area turned into fertile one. Consequently several people from Haryana, Punjab, and other parts of Rajasthan started migrating in this area and settled here. They brought with them
their respective mother tongues. As a result of all these developments, Bagri came in direct contact with languages like Punjabi, Haryanavi and Marwari, and indirectly in contact with English, Hindi, and Urdu.

Due to language contact, there has occurred changes in Bagri within and without. Bagri speakers are now bilinguals or multilinguals as a result of language contact. The other factors responsible for the language contact of Bagri with other languages are said to be political, social, economical and several others.

6.2 LANGUAGE CHANGE

Language moves down time in a current of its own making. It has a drift. Nothing is perfectly static. Every word, every grammatical element, every location, every sound and accent is a slowly changing configuration, moulded by the invisible and impersonal. Of all linguistic elements, meaning is probably the least resistant to change. There is a proverb in Indian, villages which says that language changes every six miles. Language is modifiable, extendible, and changes in time and space.

Living language, indeed never hold still. All of them are continually changing their sounds, their grammars; their vocabulary and their meaning for various reasons. The changes in language are gradual, systematic and minor. They are so natural that they escape our attention as they occur and remain imperceptible. Over a span of centuries, however, cumulative effect is noticeable.

It is held that language of tendency to change from complexity towards simplicity, from length towards precision from difficulty towards ease, from disorder towards order. Language changes because of linguistic, social, cultural, and psychological and historical factors too. According to Saucer, language changes due
to the innovations of individuals and of community, and historical reasons. Neighbouring language and dialects also affect language. Language change may be very broadly divided into two sub-categories-external change and internal change. Borrowings in all its forms are instances of external change. Changes that do not come about through borrowings may be called instances of internal change. Some forms of internal change are addition and loss of sounds, and lexical items coinages and extensions. Bilingualism plays a significant role in language change.

In Bagri, there has not occurred much language change at phonological, morphological and syntactic levels. Only sporadic examples are found at these levels. It could be due to the fact that the surrounding languages of dialects are of the same Indo-Aryan family to which Bagri belongs.

### 6.2.1 Phonological changes

At the phonological level, very few examples are there to show language change due to language contact with Punjabi, Haryanavi, Marwari, and Hindi.

Due to language contact of Bagri with Punjabi the following words of Bagri have been changed phonologically. Usually the medial /a/ becomes /ə/ and word final /o/ becomes /u/ whereas word final /ɛ/ changes to /l/.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bagri</th>
<th>Bagri</th>
<th>Punjabi</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ɡhaːt</td>
<td>ɡhət</td>
<td>(less) ɡhət</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kilo</td>
<td>kilu</td>
<td>(kilogram) kilu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ɖolo</td>
<td>ɖolu</td>
<td>(pot) ɖolu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>holɛ</td>
<td>holi</td>
<td>(slowly) holi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Whereas, contact of Bagri with Haryanavi, the Bagri demonstrative pronouns are changed by losing /i/.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bagri</th>
<th>Bagri</th>
<th>Haryanavi</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ï təriä</td>
<td>&gt;I tərā (like this)</td>
<td>ï tərā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bĩ təriä</td>
<td>&gt;bi tərā (like that)</td>
<td>bĩ tərā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kĩ təriä</td>
<td>&gt;ki tərīä (like what)</td>
<td>kĩ tərīä</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ji təriä</td>
<td>&gt;ji tərā (like that)</td>
<td>ji tərīä</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CVCVV changes to CVCØV and becomes CVCV

Language contact of Bagri with Hindi brings about some phonological changes in initial vowels of Bagri and /I/ changes to /ə/.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bagri</th>
<th>Bagri</th>
<th>Hindi</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>indo</td>
<td>òndo (egg)</td>
<td>ònda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>imrēt</td>
<td>òmrat (elixir)</td>
<td>amrīt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nimēk</td>
<td>nēmēk (salt)</td>
<td>nēmēk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.2.2 Morphological changes

Due to language contact of Bagri with surrounding languages / dialects very few morphological changes in Bagri have been noticed. The further marker in Bagri was syū which due to contact with Hindi has changed to ūga. This is the noticeable morphological change in Bagri:
Old Bagri                      New Bagri
mē jasyū                        mē jaunga
I go-fut.1s                    I go-fut.1s
mē khasyū                        mē khaunga

This change is uniformly found in all varieties of Bagri.

6.2.3 Syntactical changes

No syntactical changes have been noticed in Bagri so far due to its contact with other languages.

6.3 BORROWING

When any part of the structure of a language is changed by importation of features, whether from some other part of the language or from some external source, the imported features are said to be borrowed (Hall, 1969:35).

Borrowing is a very common linguistic phenomenon. In all probability, no language is completely free of borrowed forms. Language change through the influence of other languages. Some languages borrow too largely, other only to a limited extent. Borrowing is never a linguistic necessity, since it is always possible to extend and modify the use of existing lexical items to meet new communication needs.

A common cause of lexical borrowing is the need to find words for objects, concept and places. It is easier to borrow an existing term from another language than to make one up. The path of lexical borrowing is reflected to a certain extent the paths of cultural influence. For example Bagri has borrowed from English words as radio, television, telephone, rail, signal guard, conductor, and so forth.
After the independence of the nation, Hindi has been the medium of the education in this area and English has also been adopted as a medium of instruction in the public schools. Due to the continuous contact of Bagri with Hindi, Punjabi and English, a high borrowing from these languages has been noticed. Besides Bagri has also received a large number of Punjabi lexicon in its basic vocabulary. After development of irrigational facilities in this region as mentioned earlier, a large population from Punjab, Haryana, and other parts of Rajasthan migrated to Bagri speaking area. They brought with them their respective languages and consequently Bagri has also borrowed from the languages of these immigrants. But the major borrowing is from Hindi because of its the medium of education, newspapers, films and court. The new generation prefers to speak in Hindi and feels with the mainstream. There seems to be no encouragement for the speaker of Bagri. Even in the rural areas, people prefer to speak Hindi over Bagri and one is asked to name his mother tongue the answer would usually be Hindi. Due to western influence on the education, the Bagri has begun borrowing heavily from English too. The status of Hindi, Punjabi loan-words vary, ranging from the established loan-words in general usage which have displaced their Bagri counterparts, to loan transfers and marginal loans, which co-occur with their Bagri counterparts. The loan words may be morphologically assimilated affecting the morphophonemic organization of the language, or may remain unchanged.

The largest proportion of the loan vocabulary is from Hindi consisting mainly of material artifacts introduced to the Bagri speakers in their interaction with their people educated through Hindi medium.

(jat ‘caste,’ sona ‘gold’, niwas ‘abode’, patrika ‘magazine’)

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Apart from material artifacts much of the basic vocabulary from divergent semantic domains has also been incorporated as, Kinship terms (caca ‘uncle’, didi ‘sister’, pitaji ‘father’, aurot ‘wife’), animal names (lomori ‘fox’, kuto ‘dog’, dhenu ‘cow’), household terms (cim’t ‘tongs’, ple ‘plate’, pres ‘iron’, kular ‘cooler’), and colour terms (nil ‘indigo’, blu ‘blue’) which have completely displaced their Bagri counterparts. The borrowing from Punjabi is related with agricultural activities. These are:

- plau ‘plough’
- tota plau ‘double plough’
- jhon’ ‘rice husk’
- khal ‘rivulet’
- suhaga ‘roller’
- ha’di ‘winter crop’
- korak ‘wheat’

The borrowed terms from Hindi and Punjabi are mainly nouns followed by adjectives, such as

- sundør ‘handsome’
- gæbru ‘stout’
- occha ‘good’
- cænga ‘good’