CHAPTER II

LINGUISTIC MINORITIES AND THEIR GENERAL DISTRIBUTION

Nine-tenth of the total Indian population speaks either of the fourteen languages, which may therefore, be called as Majorities.

The fourteen languages as Linguistic majorities These also include speakers of Urdu, constituting 5.31 per cent of the entire population and ranking sixth among the language groups. Thus, though Urdu has got no home region where it is more dominant than other language groups, it has been included in Majority languages. However, it is not a state language in any part of the country. Leaving aside Urdu, all the remaining thirteen speeches have been recognised as state languages in the Eighth Schedule of Indian Constitution.* Hindi has been shared

* Though Naganese has been recognised as the state language of Nagaland, it is not taken into consideration firstly because it is very insignificant as a minority language and secondly, it has been included in Assamese in the Census of 1961, on which the present work has been based.
Linguistic minorities: General distribution

as the state language by Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh. The other state languages are: Telugu (Andhra Pradesh), Bengali (West Bengal), Marathi (Maharashtra), Tamil (Tamil Nadu), Gujarati (Gujarat), Kannada (Karnataka), Rajasthani (Rajasthan), Malayalam (Kerala), Oriya (Orissa), Punjabi (Punjab), Assamese (Assam) and Kashmiri (Jammu and Kashmir) (Map 1). The speakers of Urdu are found in largest number in the state of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar but even in these states, they have been surpassed by those of Hindi. As a result, though Urdu ranks as one of the major languages by its number of speakers, it has not been a state language anywhere in the country.

A general study of Map 1 would reveal that the Indo-Aryan family of languages occupies a wide geographical area extending from 15° N. latitude to 33° N. latitude. It extends nearly over the entire northern and central parts of the country. Dravidian languages are spoken in South India in an area extending between 8° N. - 20° N. latitude and 74° E. - 85° E. longitude. Kashmiri is the only member of the Dardic family in India. Therefore, this family is confined only to the state of Jammu and Kashmir.

Let us now consider the geographical extents of the home states of the thirteen major
Linguistic minorities: General distribution

language. Hindi is spoken over the widest geographical area covering a little more than one third of the total area of the country. The home region of Hindi, thus, has got an area of more than one million sq. km. At the other extreme, Malayalam has the smallest area as its home state covering about 39,000 sq. km. which is about 4% of that of Hindi. The population of these thirteen language groups also differ widely. Hindi is spoken by 33% of the entire population (1971) of India, whereas Assamese forms only 1%. These points should be borne in mind while studying these language groups as minorities. The following diagram shows the percentage of speakers of each language to the total population of our country:

Fig. 1
In this figure, except I, Y and S, the letters represent the first letter of the respective languages. Since the letter 'T' has been appropriated for Telugu, the letter 'I' has been selected to represent Tamil. Some justification for this can be claimed from the general preference for 'ai' endings of place-names, witness for example, 'Chennai' for Madras, 'Tanjai' for Tanjore, 'Kovai' for Coimbatore, 'Nellai' for Tirunelveli, 'Nagai' for Nagappattinam etc. Similarly, the sound 'Y' is used very frequently alongwith 'u' in Malayalam, especially while making past-participles like 'poy' (gone), 'chey' (did or made), 'gay' (found), 'paray' (said) and so on. 'S' is the only letter in the word 'Kashmiri' which has not been used for any other tongue and therefore, has been selected to represent that language.

Taken together, these fourteen languages account for 90% of the total population of the country. Leaving aside Urdu, they are spoken by majorities in their home states and thus enjoy the status of majority as well as state languages. The following discussion relates to each of these languages as a minority language in the rest of the country outside the home state. The term 'Linguistic minority' has been defined in general so as to make it clear.
The fourteen language groups as linguistic minorities:

The proportion of a majority language group in the total population of an area gradually falls down as a rule from the core towards the margins of its home region. Outside the home state, this proportion rapidly falls below 50% and another language group becomes more dominant. The former, thus, becomes minor as compared to the latter and it is then called a minority. Therefore, the term 'linguistic minority' of a state may be defined in general as a group of speakers of a language forming either less than 50% of the total population of an area or less than the proportion of the majority language where the majority language group itself forms less than 50%. The constituent states of our country have been formed on the basis of linguistic majority, for example, all villages having more than 50% of their total population speaking Oriya have been included in the state of Orissa. But it is obvious that the speakers of this language are not strictly confined to the home state. They are also found in areas outside Orissa. There, they form only a small fraction of the total population of those regions and thus become a linguistic minority. In some exceptional cases in a few regions, however, the
Linguistic minorities: General distribution

speakers of a language are found in majority outside the home state e.g. it would seem paradoxical that Telugu minority forms 53% (55% - 1971) of the district population of Kolar in Karnataka state. But leaving aside such exceptions, the majority language areas having continuity of geographical conditions, mainly physiographic, have been put together to form the various states. The historical factors have also been taken into consideration. Since long, Kolar has been a part of the Karnataka state and the large number of Telugu speakers is only the result of recent movement of unskilled and semi-skilled workers from Andhra Pradesh towards the gold field area. In general, the proportion of various minorities of our country varies from 0.0 to 49.9% of the population of respective regions. A general discussion about the factors leading to the formation of linguistic minorities would make the concept more clear.

Though the boundaries of linguistic states of India have been delimited chiefly on the principle of linguistic majority of the areas, on account of considerable amount of intermingling of languages near the borders, it is inevitable that some arbitrariness is involved in fixing them. The language boundaries are always indistinct because, the geographical distribution of any language is a result of historical,
geographic, economic and cultural factors. If the languages spoken in areas adjoining each other belong to one single family, as it is the case with Indo-Aryan languages, the boundaries are still more difficult to be defined. Even in case of languages descending from two different sources, one finds a great amount of intermixture of languages in the border zones, which make it difficult to draw the lines of separation between them. In the border regions, both languages influence each other and the groups exchange ideas, customs and manners resulting in more or less composite culture.

The following table gives the total number of speakers of each of the fourteen languages staying outside their home state as minorities. These figures are for the country as a whole and have been arranged in a descending order.

**Table 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Minority population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Urdu</td>
<td>23,323,518</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Hindi</td>
<td>18,417,971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Telugu</td>
<td>6,733,234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Bengali</td>
<td>4,453,011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Rajasthani</td>
<td>3,547,001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Linguistic minorities: General distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Minority population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Punjabi</td>
<td>3,470,870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Marathi</td>
<td>3,007,858</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Tamil</td>
<td>2,546,551</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Kannada</td>
<td>2,044,074</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Gujarati</td>
<td>1,631,742</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Oriya</td>
<td>1,275,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Malayalam</td>
<td>950,042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Assamese</td>
<td>19,194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Kashmiri</td>
<td>18,298</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Urdu ranks first among the minorities with its more than twenty-three million speakers widely distributed over various parts of India. But it should be borne in mind that Urdu has got no home state and therefore is a minority everywhere in the country. Its absolute number of speakers concides with the total population as minority. Hindi follows Urdu with its about fourteen million speakers staying outside the home region. These two minority language groups together constitute about 70% of the total linguistic minority population of about 54 millions. Telugu minorities lead among the Dravidian languages with about seven million speakers. Bengalis are the next dominant minorities of our country and number about a little less than four and a half million. Next in the order of
Linguistic minorities: General distribution

importance is Rajasthani to which belong the Marwari community. It is known for its widespread distribution and dominance in retail trade. Punjabi is also significant for far and wide spread. Its importance as a minority language group may be appreciated by comparing the total population of Punjabis inside the home state and outside. As a whole, Punjabis form 2% of the entire population of our country, whereas as a minority group, they account for 5% of the total minority language population. Punjabi is followed by Marathi with a little lesser number. Tamil and Kannada stand next in this order. Gujarati out-migrants are well-known over the country for their special role in wholesale trade. The speakers of Oriya are found in quite large numbers outside their home state as compared to the total minority population which has immigrated to Orissa. The Oriya out-migrants number more than a million while the in-migrants have been enumerated to about some thousands. The total of the minority group of Malayalam is a little less than a million. Assamese and Kashmiri are least significant both as majority as well as minority language groups of our country.

The above order is changed if the relative proportions of speakers of these languages inside and outside their home states are considered.
Total population of a language group = 100 percent

1. Percent of the total strength inside the home state
2. Percent of the total strength outside the home state

Language Groups - Relative Proportion As Minorities
Linguistic minorities: General distribution

(Graph 1). Here also Urdu ranks first as it has got no home state and therefore, all Urdu speakers are to be considered as minority in every part of the country. In this respect, Urdu may be considered distinct from other minorities. Among the language groups having home states, when we consider in this respect, interesting features may be noted. Here, Hindi does not lead the list of minority languages though it ranks first in total numbers among the minorities other than Urdu. If we consider the relative proportion of speakers of minority languages outside the home states and the strength of respective language groups inside the home regions, Punjabi heads the list, even though in total numbers the speakers of this language form only 5% of the minority population of the country and only 2% of the entire population. It is quite remarkable that 30% of the total Punjabi population resides outside the state of Punjab. Rajasthani follows Punjabi with similarly high proportion of the minority in its total population. Out of about 5 speakers of Rajasthani, one stays outside Rajasthan. Rajasthani minority mainly consists of Marwaris who are found in remote parts, even in villages of our country as small retailers and money lenders. Telugu occupies fourth place with 18% of its total population found outside Andhra Pradesh. It is again followed by Bengali as in the
Linguistic minorities: General distribution

respect of total minority population (Table 1). Though the total number of Marathi minority is greater than that of Kannada, the former is surpassed by the latter if one considers their respective proportions to the total strength of respective language groups. 13% of the Kannada population stays outside Karnataka, while the proportion for Marathi is 9%. Hindi has the same percentage as that of Marathi. As compared to the total Hindi population, a relatively small number of its speakers stay outside its home region. But it should be taken into account that the entire Hindi population itself is much larger than that of other language groups. In relative proportions, Punjabi, Telugu, Bengali, Kannada and Marathi surpass Hindi. Tamil, Oriya and Gujarati have same proportions accounting 8% each. The speakers of Malayalam contribute about 2% of the total population of India. But as a minority language, it is significant in the sense, that 6% of its total number of speakers are found outside Kerala. Kashmiri and Assamese lag considerably behind all others with the former having only 1% of its total number of speakers staying outside the state of Jammu and Kashmir, while the latter with almost a negligible proportion residing outside Assam. Though Assamese surpasses Kashmiri in the
Linguistic minorities: General distribution 26

absolute number of speakers found outside the home region, it is surpassed by Kashmiri if their relative proportions as minority groups to the total strength of the respective language groups are considered. The probable reasons which account for the relative insignificance of these two linguistic minorities as compared to the other groups have been explained in the next chapter.

Thus, the following two orders of significance are found among the fourteen minority groups if they are looked at with two different aspects. These orders may be compared with the total number of speakers of these languages in the country.

Table 2

A : The order of significance on the basis of the total number of speakers in the country (Fig. 1)
1 : The order of significance based upon total minority population of each language (Table 1)
2 : The order of significance based upon relative proportions of minorities to the total strength of the language group (Graph 1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Fig. 1)</td>
<td>(Table 1)</td>
<td>(Graph 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Hindi</td>
<td>Urdu</td>
<td>Urdu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Telugu</td>
<td>Hindi</td>
<td>Punjabi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Linguistic minorities: General distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A (Fig. 1)</th>
<th>1 (Table 1)</th>
<th>2 (Graph 1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Bengali</td>
<td>Telugu</td>
<td>Rajasthani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Marathi</td>
<td>Bengali</td>
<td>Telugu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Tamil</td>
<td>Rajasthani</td>
<td>Bengali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Urdu</td>
<td>Punjabi</td>
<td>Kannada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Gujarati</td>
<td>Marathi</td>
<td>Marathi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Kannada</td>
<td>Tamil</td>
<td>Hindi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Malayalam</td>
<td>Kannada</td>
<td>Tamil, Oriya, Gujarati</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Oriya</td>
<td>Gujarati</td>
<td>Malayalam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Rajasthani</td>
<td>Oriya</td>
<td>Kashmiri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Punjabi</td>
<td>Malayalam</td>
<td>Assamese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Assamese</td>
<td>Assamese</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Kashmiri</td>
<td>Kashmiri</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Urdu stands first in the total minority population and all of its speakers are included in this as there is no home state. Punjabi and Rajasthani surpass Telugu if the relative proportions inside and outside the home are considered. Telugu is spoken by the second largest number of the entire population of the country. In the list 1 i.e. total minority population, it follows Hindi as in the list A. But it has fourth order of significance in the list based upon relative proportions. In list 2, seven language groups surpass
Hindi. But it should be borne in mind that the total Hindi population is much larger than any of these groups and so it is in no way less significant even if a relatively smaller proportion is found outside the home region. In the same list, Punjabi and Rajasthani surpass Hindi, Telugu and Bengali while Kannada scores over Marathi. The Oriya emigrants may even be compared with those of Punjabi, in the sense that though their absolute number as a minority group is lesser than Tamil and Gujarati, it is of the same order of significance if the criterion of relative proportion to the total strength is applied. Marathi has almost the same order of importance in the second and the third list.

The Rajasthani and Punjabi minorities should be specially considered in context to their total strength. Rajasthani forms only 3% of the total Indian population but as a minority, it stands at the fifth place in total minority population and third in the list of ranking of the groups according to their proportion outside the home state. Punjabi is still more significant because this group forms hardly 2% of the entire population of the country but as a minority, it follows Rajasthani and in relative proportion, it even surpasses that group. All these facts may be explained as the results of following causes:
The large scale emigration of Rajasthani and Telugu population is probably due to the precarious conditions of climate in their home regions. These people can adjust themselves in any region of the country and are very hard working. Among Rajasthanis, Marwaris have a special preference for retail trade. Because they can adjust themselves anywhere, they are found even in remote villages. The Telugu 'Vadars' have monopolized the occupation of stone breaking, especially in Maharashtra and are always preferred to local labour. The spread of Urdu, Hindi and Marathi minorities is mainly due to the historical incidences. Punjabis and Bengalis have out-migrated on account of instable conditions of life at their homes specially during the pre-independence and post-independence period (1940-1950). In case of other minorities which include Kannada, Tamil, Gujarati, Malayalam, Oriya, Assamese as well as the above-mentioned groups, economic opportunities offered by industrial and commercial centres have greatly encouraged the outward movement.

So far, the significance of these minority groups has been discussed by taking into account their total population found outside the home regions in the country as a whole. Their statewise distribution would be greater interest, for it
Linguistic minorities: General distribution reveals the relative importance of various states receiving the minority population. As a rule, every minority is more dominant in the neighbouring states of its home region and gradually becomes less dominant in remote areas. Dr. Zachariah has stated in his work 'A historical study of internal migration in the Indian Subcontinent, 1901-1931' that 'short distance migration almost universally constitutes the major component of the total population movement in India on account of poor transportation system and low education level'. But it has been mentioned as a universal rule by Ravenstein in his theory of migration that 'the great body of migrants only proceed a short distance'. In our country, the movement of people is becoming more and more prominent with the economic and cultural development of various parts of India.

Graph 2 presents the total population of each linguistic minority in each state of our country, both arranged in descending orders. Accordingly, the Statewise distribution of Linguistic minorities of Rajasthan has the largest minority population. Hindi forms the largest portion of this and probably includes Urdu. There is some amount of ambiguity in the Census figures in this case (ref: Census of India, 1961, Vol.I, II-C(ii), p.xxii). The
Statewise distribution of Linguistic minorities

I - Tamil
Y - Malayalam

Other letters represent first letters of the respective language names.

Million speakers

- Orissa
- Kerala

= Less significant minorities.
Million speakers

Including Hindi
Excluding Hindi

Graph 2a - Linguistic minorities of Rajasthan
Linguistic minorities : General distribution

state of Uttar Pradesh accounts for the second largest minority population which is enumerated to about 8.5 million. Urdu is the only dominant language group constituting about 93% of the total population of minorities (about 8 million). The other minorities together form only 7%, in which Punjabi accounts for more than one-half i.e. 4% and Bengali for 1%. The rest of the minority groups including Marathi, Gujarati, Tamil and others together form the remaining 2% of the total minority population. This means that excluding Urdu, Punjabi and Bengali, the minorities have almost a negligible proportion in this state. As a language, Urdu is not much different from Hindi and therefore is not a stranger in Uttar Pradesh where Hindi is the majority language. This matter has been dealt with in greater details in the fourth chapter. Punjabis are found in large numbers because Uttar Pradesh is a neighbouring state of Punjab. The other minorities have a very little scope to immigrate in this state as it is one of the thickly populated regions in the country. Besides this, the adjoining states of Madhya Pradesh lying to the south and Bihar to the east have Hindi as their majority language. Consequently, Uttar Pradesh becomes a remote state for the minorities migrating, especially from south. The studies in migration
reveal that Uttar Pradesh had been an area of heavy out-migration during 1901-31, when many people migrated from this state to the capital city of Delhi and to Punjab. The national capital was shifted from Calcutta to Delhi in 1911. This encouraged westward movement. Many migrants were attracted to the areas of Punjab where irrigation was being developed during this period. A large number of emigrants proceeded to the Bombay industrial area. Thus, economic opportunities elsewhere favoured the out-migration (Zachariah, I, p. 200). The similar type of movement might have resulted in a large amount of immigration of Hindi and Urdu population in various parts of the country. In Greater Bombay, for instance, Hindi minority was doubled in number during 1911-61 (Census of India, 1961, I, II-C(ii), p. xci). This explains that the state of Uttar Pradesh is rather a contributor of minorities than being a receiver.

Maharashtra and Karnataka - Leading receivers of Linguistic minorities

If we leave aside the influence of Hindi in Rajasthan and Urdu in Uttar Pradesh which account for these states heading the list of largest minority population areas, the states of Maharashtra and Karnataka would appear to receive a larger number and a
greater variety of outside language groups and thus stand out dominantly as the leading recipients of linguistic minorities.

Much has been said about the linguistic parochialism of Marathi speakers and their agitation for unilingualism at the time of States' Reorganization in 1956. In spite of these facts, Maharashtra is, at present, the leading recipient of linguistic minorities as Bombay is the commercial capital of the country. Maharashtra has been bordered by Gujarati on the north-west, Hindi on the north and east, Telugu on the south-east and Kannada on the south. As a result, a larger number of speakers of these neighbouring languages have immigrated in this centrally located state of the country. Even the members of remote language groups like Punjabi, Bengali, Tamil and Oriya are found in considerable numbers. Urdu and Hindi minorities are spread widely over the state. Kannada, Telugu and Gujarati speakers are more numerous along the respective border regions while Bengali, Punjabi, Malayalam speakers concentrate in urban areas. In general, the more dominant minorities are distributed widely over rural and urban areas due to their large population, whereas the minorities having smaller number cluster around cities for jobs in industries. This is
mainly true about Bombay and Poona. In total numbers, Urdu is followed by Hindi, Bengali, Kannada, Telugu, Tamil and Malayalam in order.

Telugu dominates among the minorities of Karnataka because, of all the neighbouring states, Andhra Pradesh shares the largest boundary with this state. There are no physiographic barriers between these two states. Consequently, easy communication had led to close contact. Besides this, Kannada and Telugu are the only languages in Dravidian family, having nearly identical script. A comment made in the first part of second volume of Mysore Gazetteer, 1930 upon the co-existence of Telugu with Kannada may be noted in this context:

'Besides Telugu and Kannada having a common alphabet these two languages have had a long and continuous intercourse with each other. They have been co-existing in practically the same areas, they being separated by no geographical barrier. Their territories have been subject to a common or allied sovereignty.' (p. 443)

Urdu is the second significant minority language of Karnataka. Its dominance is due to the fact that this region was under Muslim rule since fifteenth century. Similarly, the significance of Marathi is the result of Maratha rule during the 17-18th century. These three languages have been followed by
Tamil and Malayalam. The speakers of Gujarati are also found in large numbers. As compared to Maharashtra, Bengali is less significant in the state of Karnataka, the probable reason being linguistic affinities between Bengali and Marathi and the absence of the same between Bengali and Kannada. It is remarkable that Marathi minority outnumbers that of Tamil in this state.

Urdu ranks first among the minority languages of Bihar as in Uttar Pradesh. It has been followed by Bengali, Oriya and Punjabi. Urdu contributes the major portion (about 76%) of the total minority population. Bengali accounts for about 23% while Oriya, Punjabi and others together form less than 1%. Thus, Urdu and Bengali may be considered the most dominant minorities of Bihar. Among the speakers of remote language groups, Punjabis are more numerous than Gujarati, Telugu and Tamil. Therefore, though the total minority population is large, this state has only four significant minorities, namely, Urdu, Bengali, Oriya and Punjabi. The mining and industrial areas of Singhbhum and Ranchi districts have attracted invariably all minorities coming from remote areas. Bengali is more dominant in the eastern part of the state while Urdu is widely spread over the whole of the state.
Tamilnadu ranks next to Bihar in the total population of speakers of minority languages. Telugu dominates the minorities of this state like Urdu dominating those of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Kannada follows Telugu while Urdu is placed at the third rank. Telugu forms about 63% of the total minority population whereas Kannada forms about 15%. Urdu contributes a little less than Kannada i.e. about 12%. Malayalam accounts for 8% and has been scored over by Urdu. The rest of the minorities including Marathi, Hindi, Gujarati and others together form less than 2% of the total minority population in the state.

Andhra Pradesh has a smaller minority population but has a greater variety of minor languages than Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Tamilnadu on account of its nearly central location in the country like the state of Maharashtra. In all, eight languages have been represented in this state, viz. Urdu, Tamil, Kannada, Marathi, Oriya, Hindi, Gujarati and Malayalam. Except the last two, these are the neighbouring languages of Telugu. In the respect of variety of linguistic minorities, Andhra Pradesh follows Maharashtra. Still, Urdu is much more dominant than
other minority groups and contributes about 62% of the total minority population of Andhra. This influence is due to the Nizam's rule in this region during 15th-17th century. The minorities of Tamil and Kannada rank second and third respectively forming 12% and 8%. The greater linguistic affinities explain why these two are more dominant in Andhra than Marathi (6%) and Oriya (5%) though they are also the neighbouring languages of Telugu. Hindi minority is relatively less significant and forms 3% of the minority population. Gujarati, Malayalam, Punjabi, Bengali and others together account for the remaining 3%.

Hindi dominates among the linguistic minorities of West Bengal and contributes about 40% of the entire minority population in the state. Urdu accounts for 23% and stands as the second significant minority. The neighbouring language group, namely, Oriya is also significant and has been followed by Telugu. Being a border state of India with high density of population and always exposed to the natural hazards like floods and cyclones, West Bengal attracts a relatively small proportion of minorities of our country. In spite of these facts, a large number of people speaking outside languages have been attracted
by the industrial activities in and around Calcutta during 1931-61. Consequently, most of the minorities are found in Calcutta and its environs with the exception of Urdu, which is widely distributed over the various parts of the state. Though Assamese is found in a small number, the significance of West Bengal lies in that, it is the sole receiver of this minority group.

Madhya Pradesh is the most centrally located state of India but it receives a lesser number and a lesser variety of linguistic minorities than Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. The speakers of Marathi are most dominant and are followed by those of Urdu, Oriya, Gujarati and Telugu. Punjabi and Bengali are represented at the major urban centres. The dominance of Marathi is confined to those portions of the state which formerly belonged to the dominion of Peshwas. Gujaratis are more numerous in western part while Bengalis and Oriyas in the eastern i.e. in the respective border regions. Thus, leaving aside Urdu, in all the remaining four significant minorities, namely, Marathi, Gujarati, Oriya and Bengali, the effect of the neighbouring states is clearly seen. The reasons why, on the whole Madhya Pradesh receives a smaller portion of the total minority population of the country
in spite of its central location may be explained as follows: Among the seven bordering states of Madhya Pradesh, two states, namely, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar enclosing the whole of northern and most of the eastern boundary of Madhya Pradesh have Hindi as their majority language as in this state. Rajasthani minority is found in considerable numbers but has been dealt with separately at the end of this chapter. The northern and eastern borders being closed, the minority groups have easy access only from the states of Maharashtra, Gujarat and Orissa located to the south and south-west and south-east. Andhra Pradesh shares a small portion of the boundary with this state. The speakers of Telugu have penetrated into the southern parts. The central Indian mountain system might have hindered the northward movement of people to some extent. Besides this, the relatively lesser development of Madhya Pradesh in the industrial sector than its surrounding states is probably responsible for attracting only a small number of outsiders.

Bengali is the first significant minority of the state of Assam. It forms 75% of the total minority population of this state and has been followed by Hindi, which accounts for 18% and Oriya contributing
The minorities are attracted mainly to the tea estates in the state. Bengali, Hindi and Oriya minorities are widely scattered over the valley of Brahmaputra whereas others are concentrated in the district of Lakhimpur. The remoteness from the rest of the country, mountainous topography, excessive rainfall and dangers of floods and also lack of industrial development are the geographical factors which explain the relative insignificance of this state in receiving minorities other than Bengali, Hindi and Oriya.

Punjabi is the only significant minority in Jammu and Kashmir. Though Kashmir is called the heavenly gardenland of India, it has attracted the least number of migrants other than that of Punjabi and Hindi. The rugged topography and extremely cold climate are the two detrimental factors in this respect. Besides this, Kashmiri belongs to the Dardic family of languages and therefore, is not akin to any language group of our country. The political instability and lesser economic opportunities also supplement the above factors discouraging the minority groups.

Orissa has got even smaller minority population than Jammu and Kashmir but unlike the latter,
it presents a greater variety with Telugu, Urdu, Hindi and Bengali minorities. The total minority population is a little less than one million, of which Telugu forms 40%, Urdu, about 25% and Hindi and Oriissa Bengali, about 15% each. As compared to the other central states of India, Oriissa has received a smaller proportion of the total minority population of the country probably on account of its general economic backwardness. The minorities have concentrated in the mining areas of Sundargarh. Bengali and Telugu minority groups are represented in the north-eastern and southern border regions respectively.

In Kerala, the Dravidian language groups dominate among the minorities. Tamil alone accounts for four-fifth of the total minority population. Kannada and Telugu together form Kerala 15%. Besides the Dravidian group, Marathi is represented in considerable numbers which contribute about 3% of the state's minority population.

**Statewise distribution of Rajasthani minorities:**

Because Rajasthani has not been included in Table C-V (A) among the majority languages in the Census of 1961, it has been dealt with here
Statewise distribution of Rajasthani minorities

J.K. - Jammu and Kashmir
W.B. - West Bengal

Rajasthani minorities include the speakers of Malvi, Banjari, Lambhani, Marwari, etc.

Graph 2b
separately. Of about 15 million speakers of Rajasthani, four million stay outside Rajasthan and are widely spread over various parts of the country. Graph 3 shows the statewise distribution of Rajasthani minorities. Madhya Pradesh has about 1.6 million speakers of Rajasthani, mainly speaking the Malvi and Nimadi dialects of that language. Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh have a little more than half a million speakers each, who speak Banjari and Lamani dialects. The people speaking these dialects of Rajasthani are distributed over the Vindhya and Satpuda mountain ranges and the valleys of Narmada, Tapi and upper Mahanadi. It is remarkable that Rajasthani is the first significant minority of Madhya Pradesh and second only to Urdu in Andhra Pradesh. Karnataka and the state of Jammu and Kashmir have 0.3 million Rajasthanis, Banjaris being dominant in the former and Gujari in the latter region. Gujarat has received a relatively smaller number in spite of its proximity to Rajasthan. This is only apparent because probably the Rajasthani immigrants in this state might have switched over to Gujarati easily on account of the linguistic affinities between these two language groups. Among the Rajasthani minorities, Marwaris are wellknown over the entire country for their special role in retail trade.
Linguistic Minorities of Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh

Graph 2c
The linguistic minorities in the states of Punjab, Hariana and Himachal Pradesh

Punjab, Hariana and a few districts of present Himachal Pradesh together formed a single state of Punjab prior to 1966. Therefore, the data regarding minorities has been given under two headings, namely, Punjab state and the Union territory of Himachal Pradesh. These figures have to be separated district-wise in order to have the present picture in each of these states. According to the 1961 Census, Hindi is the only significant minority of the present state of Punjab obviously because the state of Hariana was a part of this state before 1966 and had majority of its population speaking Hindi. About 4 million speakers of Hindi reside in various parts of the state of Punjab.

Punjabi and Urdu are the two most significant minorities of the present state of Hariana. Punjabi is spoken by a million persons while Urdu is the mother-tongue of about half a million population.

Punjabi is the only linguistic minority of Himachal Pradesh and the other language groups form only a small fraction of the total minority population. The distribution of linguistic minorities in these three states has been represented in Graph 2c.
The above broad outline of the state-wise distribution of the various linguistic minorities would form a general background to the following discussion of the geographical distribution of each of the fourteen significant minorities in various parts of the country and the historical, political, economic and cultural factors which have been responsible for this pattern of distribution.

References:


