CHAPTER IV

LINGUISTIC BRIDGES OF INDIA

The geographical distribution of various linguistic minorities discussed in the last chapter reveals that a major part of each linguistic minority moves only a short distance and is dominant in the border regions of the neighbouring states. This short distance migration is of great significance in the sense that the border regions of any or more number of states have a zone of contact in between their major languages. This border zone, thus becomes a bridge between two cultural groups favouring a great amount of linguistic and cultural exchange which leads to progress and enrichment of both groups.

India is considered a land of linguistic diversities. 'The large number of its languages had always been cited in the past to be a hindrance to Indian Unity' (Kuriyan, p. 191). But as a matter
of fact, there is an underlying unity in them as they belong to Indo-Aryan or Dravidian family of languages. These two families include all languages of India. Kashmiri, the only member of Dardic family, belongs to the Indo-European family in which is included the whole family of Indo-Aryan languages.

The following broad classification explains that there are only two language families in our country.

1
Indo-European family

2
Dravidian family

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dardic branch</th>
<th>Indo-Aryan branch</th>
<th>Andhra language</th>
<th>Dravida languages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kashmiri</td>
<td>Hindi, Urdu</td>
<td>Telugu</td>
<td>Tamil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Punjabi</td>
<td></td>
<td>Kannada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rajasthani</td>
<td></td>
<td>Malayalam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gujarati</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Marathi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bengali</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oriya</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assamese</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The first family includes ten languages and the second is comprised of the remaining four. Though there are linguistic differences, these two families of languages have a common linkage, though not a common source, through the classical language of India, namely, Sanskrit. As two cultural groups, they have been in contact with each other for centuries together and a great amount of exchange in the form of language, religions, and the culture as a whole has taken place between them so as to give rise to the present composite Indian culture. This cultural intermingling has been discussed in greater details in the next chapter. The present chapter deals with two aspects: The border areas of our linguistic states have considerable mixture of two or more than two groups of people speaking different languages. They form a substantial proportion in the population in these areas. An attempt has been made here to define the geographical extension of such areas where a linguistic minority forms more than 15% of the population of a region, which are, except for Urdu, found near the borders of its home state. For example, Telugu minority forms more than 15% of the population of areas in Karnataka, which are located near the borders of Andhra Pradesh because, as Ravenstein puts it 'the great body of
migrants proceed only a short distance' (Bogue, p. 755).
The minimum proportion of 15% of the population of a region
has been chosen as the basis for delimiting such areas
because this proportion has been accepted by the Government
of India as the minimum proportion of a linguistic minority
for issuing hand-outs, publicity material and government
notices in that minority language (Deccan Herald, Apr. 19,
1978). The geographical extension of such areas reveals the
extent of movement of people belonging to one language group
to areas outside their home-regions, their significance as
linguistic minorities and the amount of inter-mixture of
two cultural groups.

There are some areas in our country,
where no majority or minority language group taken into con­sideration in the present work form more than 15% of the
population of those particular regions. In these areas,
languages other than these fourteen significant tongues
form majority. For example, in the border tract between
Marathi and Gujarati, both these languages are spoken by
less than half of the population and a tribal language
called 'Bhili' is spoken by the majority. In such a case,
it is not possible to show the geographical extension of
areas in Gujarat where Marathi language is spoken by more
than 15% of the population and vice versa. The language 'Bhili' is said to have a mixture of Gujarati and Marathi and thus may be considered a link between these two languages. In the same way each language of India is connected with its neighbouring major languages through mixed dialects. These dialects would form linguistic bridges if the meaning of the term is taken literally. In that case, the border areas, where the linguistic minorities form 15% or more, could be called as 'Cultural bridges'. But since language is taken as the basis for putting them into different cultural groups, they have been considered as the communities forming linguistic bridges between various languages, so far as the present study is concerned. In the foregoing discussion, efforts have been made to give a synthesized account of both types of linguistic bridges, with the aim of bringing out the mutual relationships of Indian languages and linguistic intermingling of different language communities.

**Indo-Aryan languages**

The language history explains that the present languages of Indo-Aryan family have a common origin. They have all descended from Sanskrit, which was the only spoken and literary language of India during
1500 B.C. - 500 B.C. This was the only classical language in those times and had three spoken forms, namely, north-western dialect, Madhyadeshi and Eastern dialect:

Sanskrit (1500 B.C. - 500 B.C.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classical</th>
<th>Spoken forms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North-western dialect</td>
<td>Madhyadeshi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The spoken form of Sanskrit changed to a considerable extent by 500 B.C. and was then called Pali. During 500 B.C. - 100 B.C. the number of its dialects increased to four on account of the addition of southern dialect. Pali was changed to Prakrit during first century B.C. and fifth century A.D. During fifth to sixth century, the number of spoken forms increased to six from which originated the present languages of Indo-Aryan family. The following illustration will make it clear that all these languages have Sanskrit as their parent form of speech. These languages developed as independent regional languages during tenth to thirteenth century firstly as a result of anti-Sanskrit movement. The invasions of Muslims were also responsible for the development of these speeches.
In this background, the following discussion will make it clear that all these languages are mutually related with each other. Hindi is the direct descendent of the Shaurseni form of spoken Sanskrit. The following description explains how it is related to other languages of Indo-Aryan family. Hindi is spoken over a wide geographical area extending between Himachal
on the north and Vindhya-Satpuda ranges in the south. Its east-west extension may be roughly decided by 72°E. to 88°E. longitudes including the states of Rajasthan, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar. Geographically this includes the North Indian plains of Ganga-Jamuna rivers and the plateau regions of Malwa, Bundelkhand and Baghelkhand. On account of its widespread character, a number of varieties of Hindi have developed in various regions. These are all mixed with each other in their border areas thus forming a continuous link between Hindi and the other Indo-Aryan languages. Grierson has classed Hindi into two broad groups, namely, Western Hindi and Eastern Hindi. The former is spoken in the region lying to the west of 80°E. longitude while the latter to the east of this boundary line. Western Hindi gradually merges into Eastern Hindi through its various dialects. Eastern Hindi further gets mixed with Bihari and through Bihari it merges into Bengali. Westwards, it is linked with Punjabi and Rajasthani through various dialects of Western Hindi as classed by George A. Grierson. Though he has mentioned that there is no link between Hindi and Marathi, one finds that Hindi and Marathi have been connected with each other either
Linguistic bridges of India

through mechanical mixtures or through the direct influence of Hindi on Marathi. In the Census of 1961, Rajasthani was considered to be an independent language while in 1971, it has been included in Hindi. Therefore, the present discussion considers it a separate language and the figures for this language have been taken from 1961 Census. In 1961, about 97 forms of speech were grouped under Hindi as its dialects (Census of India, 1961, I, II-C, p. 45). Broadly, Hindi may be classified into following forms on the basis of Grierson's classification:

**HINDI**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Western Hindi</th>
<th>Eastern Hindi</th>
<th>Bihari</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard</td>
<td>Standard</td>
<td>Bhojpuri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Literary Hindostani) dialect</td>
<td>dialects</td>
<td>Maithili</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

dialects

Bangaru  Awadhi

Braj Basha  Bundeli

Bundeli  Bagheli

Kanauji
Western Hindi has in all five dialects (LSI, IX, I, p. 1). The standard dialect has been named as Literary Hindostani, which has been further classed as Hindostani, Hindi and Urdu. The area in which this form is spoken (Map 5a) forms the core region of Hindi speaking tract. It occupies the upper Gangetic doab extending from Ambala (Haryana) in the north-west to Rampur (Uttar Pradesh) in the south-west and Saharanpur in the north to Delhi in the south (Map 5a). On the west, it has been connected with Punjabi through its dialect called Bangaru or Hariani. Bangaru, alongwith another dialect of Hindi, Braj Bhasha, connects Hindi with Rajasthan. The latter dialect gradually merges into Bundeli dialect of Hindi, which further extends southwards in Madhya Pradesh to meet Marathi (Map 5a). Eastwards of the Standard Hindi tract, the Braj Bhasha dialect merges into Kamauji, the fifth dialect of Hindi, which is linked with Awadhi dialect of Eastern Hindi (Map 5a & 5b). The southern dialect of Western Hindi, namely, Bundeli merges into Bagheli form of Eastern Hindi, spoken in Baghelkhand region. The Awadhi dialect further eastwards changes into the Bhojpuri form of Bihari (Map 5b). In the eastern part of Bihar, Bhojpuri changes into Maithili in the northern part of the state and in Maghahi in the southern portion.
Hindi merges into Bengali and Oriya
The Maithili speaking tract of Eastern Bihar forms a bridge between Bihari and Bengali. Magahi spreads southwards and then merges into Bengali on one side and Oriya on the other. Thus Magahi and also the Nagpuria dialect of Bihari form bridge between Bihari, Bengali and Oriya (Map 5b). In the extreme east of Bihar, Maithili links Bihari with Bengali and further eastwards in the valley of Assam, it merges into Assamese. Thus Hindi is connected with all other languages of Indo-Aryan family.

**Hindi and Rajasthani**

Till 1961, Rajasthani was considered a separate language, while in 1971, it was included in Hindi. Grierson mentions that in the district of Hissar, Hindi appears in the form of Hariani and Rajasthani in the form of Bagri dialect (LSI, IX, I, pp.66-67). As a result, in this intermediate zone, Hariani (i.e. the present Hindi of Haryana) is influenced in its grammar by Bagri in Hissar and by Ahirwati dialect of the same language in the district of Gurgaon. Ahirwati is a form of speech mixed partly with Hindi and partly with Rajasthani. Grierson has classified it as a form of Mewati dialect of the latter but has mentioned that it can almost be classed with any of these two. (LSI, IX, I, p. 66).
Similarly, there is no hard and fast line where Hariani ends and Bagri begins. The change in Hariani is found in pronunciation of vowels, which becomes broader than in that language. Hariani element is also introduced in Bagri. The Braj Bhasha dialect of Hindi also forms a connecting link between Hindi and Jaipuri form of Rajasthan. About half a million people speak this language in the district of Bharatpur in Rajasthan. In the district of Gurgaon, Hindi merges into Rajasthani through the Mewati dialect of the latter language which is spoken by about fifteen thousand persons in that area (Census of India, 1961, I, II-C (ii), p. 86). Since Rajasthani is included in Hindi in the Census of 1971, it has been included with Himachal Pradesh and Haryana in the map showing areas in Hindi tract where Punjabi is spoken by more than 15% of the population (Map 6). This map also shows those areas in Punjab, where Hindi is the mother-tongue of more than 15% of the respective district population. Accordingly Hindi minority is very dominant in all districts of present Punjab state except in that of Sangrur, Bhatinda and Amritsar, where it forms less than 15% according to the 1971 Census. The following table gives
information regarding the districtwise proportion of Hindi and Punjabi minorities forming the bridge between these two languages spoken in two different regions:

Table 7

Areas in Punjab where Hindi minority forms more than 15% of the district population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>% of Hindi speakers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Gurdaspur</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Hoshiyarpur</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Jullundar</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Ropar</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Patiala</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Firozpur</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Ludhiana</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Kapurthala</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Amritsar</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Sangarur</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Bhatinda</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is revealed in the above table that Hindi minority formed more than 15% of the population in every district of Punjab. This is the only area
Linguistic bridges of India

in our country, which has such a high proportion of a linguistic minority. On account of formation of Hariana as an independent state in 1966, a large number of Hindi speakers might have moved to the new home state by 1971. As a result, their proportion decreased invariably in all districts of Punjab. The first eight districts in the above table still have more than 15% of their population speaking Hindi while in the last three districts, the proportion has decreased to less than 15%.

In contrast to far and wide dominance of Hindi minority in the state of Punjab, Punjabi minority is confined to the border districts of Himachal Pradesh, Hariana and Rajasthan, located near Punjab, if the criterion of 15% is applied. This is probably due to the fact that Hindi as a language group in the country forms 30% of the population, whereas Punjabi contributes only 2%. Consequently, though the latter has spread all over the country, its proportion is apparently less. The following table gives the proportion of Punjabi minority population in the districts of Hindi speaking tract.

Table 8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>% of Punjabi minority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Hariana</td>
<td>Hissar</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Map 6
The geographical extent of linguistic bridge between Hindi and Punjabi

- Areas in Punjab where Hindi minority forms more than 15% of the population
- Areas in home states of Hindi having more than 15% of their population speaking Punjabi
State | District | % of Punjabi minority 1961 | 1971
--- | --- | --- | ---
2. Himachal Pradesh | Bilaspur | 18 | 35
3. Rajasthan | Ganganagar | 28 | 25
Haryana | Ambala | 30 | 14
Himachal Pradesh | Chamba | 16 | 3

All districts mentioned in the above table had more than 15% of their population speaking Punjabi, whereas during 1961-71, their proportion decreased in the districts of Ambala in Haryana and Chamba in Himachal Pradesh. At present, the district of Hissar in Haryana, Bilaspur in Himachal Pradesh and Ganganagar in Rajasthan have more than 15% of their district population speaking this language. The geographical distribution of these areas have been shown in Map 6. The former administrative linkages, urban and industrial development of Punjab explain why this state has attracted more Hindi population than the Punjabi minority attracted towards the home region of Hindi.

Hariani - a dialect, connecting Hindi and Punjabi

Though Hariani was not surveyed as a
special dialect of Hindi in the Census of 1961, Grierson has explained how it forms a link between Hindi and Punjabi. It is a dialect of Hindi spoken in the major part of present Haryana. It is also called Bangaru or Jatu. In 1901, it was reported by about two million persons as their mother-tongue (LSI, IX, I, p. 1). The tract extending from Ambala district in the north and Rohtak district in the southern part of Haryana is the meeting ground of Punjabi and Hindi. In the district of Hissar, Hariani dialect of Hindi and Malvi dialect of Punjabi influence each other in vocabulary and grammar. In Map 6, it can be seen that Punjabi population forms 15% of the population of the district. Thus, this district is the bridge area between Hindi and Punjabi in both senses, i.e., the area where two languages merge into each other and the minority forms a substantial proportion of the population. In this district, another dialect of Punjabi named Rathi or Pachhadi is spoken by Musalmans in Ghaggar valley. This is also a mixed form of dialect influenced by Hindi.

**Hindi and the Eastern group of Indo-Aryan languages**

It has been already mentioned that Hindi merges into Bihari, Bengali, Oriya and Assamese
through a chain of mixed dialects (Map 5a & 5b). Standard Hindi changes into the Braj Bhasha dialect on the east which further merges into Kanauji dialect of the same language i.e. Western Hindi. Kanauji merges into the Awadhi form of Eastern Hindi which is mainly found in the eastern part of Uttar Pradesh (Map 5a). Awadhi is mixed with Bhojpuri dialect of Bihari which merges into Maithili form of Bihari further eastwards. The following diagram will simplify the above discussion.

Linguistic bridge between Hindi and Bengali

Maithili was reported by about two and a half million people in Bihar state as their mother-
tongue in 1961. It is a form of Hindi spoken in the eastern part of Bihar and is most near to Bengali. The Sirpuria of Eastern Purnea is also an intermediate form between Hindi and Bengali. In the district of Malda, Purnea, and Santal Parganas, many dialects, in which one finds a mixture of Bengali and Bihari and Hindi is found.

There is no geographical area which can be represented on a map with more than 15% of its population speaking Hindi in the state of Bengal, except Calcutta, where Hindi minority accounts for 19% of the population. This does not mean that Hindi minority is not dominant in the border areas of West Bengal like in Punjab, but on account of larger population the proportion of Hindi speakers is reduced. At the same time, it is true that Hindi minority is evenly distributed over various parts of Bengal as it sweeps over Punjab. The movement of Hindi speaking population in West Bengal is for the economic opportunities offered by the commerce and industrial development in that state, while in Punjab, Hindi minority has been moving towards irrigated agriculture areas since early decades of this century and therefore has settled in large numbers in various parts of the state. Calcutta can be called a geographical area
The geographical extension of linguistic bridge between Hindi and Bengali.

Areas in Bihar having more than 15% of their population speaking Bengali as mother-tongue.

Areas in West Bengal, where Hindi is spoken by more than 15% of the total population.

Map 7
in West Bengal, where Hindi minority forms a substantial part of the total population. The Bengali minority, on the other hand, is dominant in three districts of Bihar.

### Table 2

Districts of Bihar where Bengali minority forms more than 15% of the total population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>% of Hindi speakers to district population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Singbhum</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Dhanbad</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Santal Parganas</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These areas have been shown in Map 7 as areas of Bengali minorities in the state of Bihar forming more than 15% of the population of the district.

**Bridge between Hindi and Marathi**

There are many dialects intermediate between Hindi and Marathi. Bundeli and Chattisgarhi forms of Hindi spoken in southern parts of Madhya Pradesh have influenced the Marathi of Nagpur region. Halbi form of speech, which has been included in Marathi as its dialect is a mixture of Marathi, Hindi and Oriya. According
to 1961 Census, the district of Bhandara in Maharashtra had 16% of its population speaking Hindi. In 1971, however, Hindi minority accounts for less than 15% in this district and in all other areas of its dominance. On the other hand, Marathi is the most significant minority in the southern part of Madhya Pradesh. It forms more than 15% of the population in the following districts of this state:

Table 10

Marathi minority in Madhya Pradesh

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Taluka</th>
<th>% of Marathi population to the respective total population, 1961</th>
<th>1971</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Balaghat</td>
<td>Balaghat</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Waraseoni</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Betul</td>
<td>Multai</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bhainsdehi</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Chhindwara</td>
<td>Amarwara</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Khandsa (East Nimar)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The geographical extent of linguistic bridge area between Hindi and Marathi.

- **Hindi**
- **Marathi**

**Legend:**
- Area in Maharashtra, where Hindi forms more than 15% of the population.
- Areas in Madhya Pradesh, where Marathi minority accounts for more than 15% of the population.

Map 8
The geographical extension of bridge area between Hindi and Marathi has been shown in Map 8.

**Influence of Hindi in Marathi**

Grierson has mentioned that Marathi of Betul, Seoni, Balaghat and Raipur has been influenced by the neighbouring dialects of Eastern Hindi (LSI, VII, p. 218). The 'Marheti' dialect of Balaghat, he explains, has been influenced in its vocabulary and grammar by the dialects of Hindi spoken in this region. Besides this, Marathi spoken in the northern parts of Maharashtra also shows a deep impact of Hindi and Urdu. One finds that Hindi words are frequently used by the speakers of Marathi and the effect of the former is clearly seen in the grammatical forms of the latter language. The cultural impact of Hindi in Maharashtra has been discussed in the next chapter.

**Hindi and Gujarati**

None of these minorities form more than 15% of the population in other territory. The mountainous tract which obstructs the large scale migration explains these relative insignificance of these minorities. But it should be noted that Hindi merges into
BHILI - A Linguistic Bridge

- 1000 speakers of Bhili
- 10,000 speakers of Bhili
- Line enclosing region of Bhili

Total Bhili population in M.P.

276,213

875,916

Total Bhili population in M.P.

0,000 speakers of Bhili

MARATHI

GUJARATI

RAJASTHANI

HINDI
Marathi through Gujarati and the Gujarati language, therefore, is the connecting link between these two speeches. The following figure will illustrate this fact:

```
Hindi
  
  Rajasthani
    
    Gujarati
      
      Marathi
```

Besides this, all these languages have been connected by the Bhil dialects, the geographical distribution of which has been shown in Map 9. While dealing with the Bhili language, Grierson mentions that the northern and eastern dialects of this language connect Gujarati with Rajasthani, now a form of Hindi. There exists a continuous line of dialects southwards towards the broken dialects of Marathi in Thana. (LSI, IX, III, p. 6). This discussion will make it clear that though the people speaking Hindi are not dominant in any part of Gujarat or vice versa, these two languages are mutually related to each other.

**Hindi and Assamese**

As the Assamese minorities have not
moved in large numbers even in their neighbouring states, they do not form substantial proportion of the population in any region. Hindi minorities have moved to Assam but everywhere they form less than 15% of the population. Hence, there is no bridge area between these two language regions as such. But it may be noted that as a language, Hindi merges into Assamese through the following chain of dialects

```
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sanskrit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North-Western dialect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern dialect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shaurseri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ardha Magadhi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaudi Magadhi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assamese</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
```

The movement of Hindi minority to the state of Assam is purely of economic nature. As a result, they are significant in the tea growing districts of Assam, though their proportion is relatively small.
Hindi and Oriya

There is no tract between Hindi and Oriya speaking regions which has more than 15% of its population speaking the respective minorities. Their percentage is less than 15%, the exception being the Chaibasa division of Singhbhum district in the state of Bihar, where Oriya minority forms 21% of the population of that division. As a language, Oriya and Hindi have been linked with each other through Bihari and Eastern Hindi. The linguistic influence of Hindi in Oriya is seen in the extreme western part of Orissa. On account of the influence of the Chhattisgarhi dialect of Hindi, letter 'a' is not pronounced at the end of a word as it is done in Oriya. Thus in Raipur, speakers of Oriya do not say 'sānā' (younger) but 'sān'. Apparently also the sound of the vowel 'a' gradually loses the tone of 'ā' as we go westwards and approaches the sound of 'a' proper which it has in Chhattisgarhi. In the north-eastern part of Bastar, a dialect of Oriya named 'Bhatri' is spoken by about 42,000 persons (1961). This is a true dialect of Oriya, which forms a connecting link between Oriya and Halbi, the latter being a mixed form of speech of Hindi, Marathi and Oriya (LSI, V, II, p. 370).
Bengali and Assamese

Assamese is the most eastern outpost of the eastern group of the Indo-Aryan languages of which Bengali and Oriya are the other members (LSI, V, I, p. 393). Though Assamese has been recognized as an independent language, if merely its grammatical form and vocabulary are considered, it would not be denied that it is dialect of Bengali (LSI, I, I, p. 24).

The Assamese alphabet is the same as that of Bengali and the only exception is that Assamese has a separate sign for the sound 'w', which when it occurs in Bengali has to be represented by a clumsy composition of two separate letters. The non-initial forms of the vowel and the compound consonants are the same as in Bengali (LSI, V, I, p. 399).

Besides these similarities between these two languages, along the borders of Assam and West Bengal, one finds a dialect which is a compound mixture of Assamese and Bengali. This dialect has been named as Rajbangsi or Dekhari or Koch and was reported by about ten thousand persons in West Bengal in 1961, as their mother-tongue. It is a form of Bengali spoken in the
north-eastern part of West Bengal. It extends into the Goalpara and then into Kamrup district of Assam where it shades off into Assamese. It would be more correct to say that Assamese merges into Bengali in this region and more and more from east to west, because Rajbangshi influences Assamese, rather than getting influenced. In this region of Assam, though the language is Assamese, the pronunciation of vowels appears to approach more nearly to that of Bengali than to the standard form of the former (LSI, V, I, p. 163). Through the present country of Bangla Desh on the east, Bengali extends into lower Bramhaputra valley in Sylhet district and in Cachar, where a dialect called Jharwa forms a bridge between Assamese and Bengali as it is a mixture of the two (LSI, V, I, p. 394). The Khasi dialect of Assamese has borrowed many words from Bengali. It is spoken in Khasi and Jaintia hills, Shillong being the headquarter (LSI, II, p. 56).

Bengali minority forms 19% of the state population of Assam. This would emphasize the high extent of significance of this minority in this state. The following table gives the areas in Assam where this minority group forms more than 15% of the population.
Map 10 - Bengali minority in the state of Assam

areas in Assam where Bengalis form more than 15% of the population
Table 11
Bengali minority in Assam

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>% of Hindi speakers to district population.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Cachar</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Nowgong</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Goalpara</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In all other districts of this state, Bengali minority forms a substantial proportion in the district population, though it is less than 15%.

**Bengali and Oriya**

While explaining the mutual relationship between Bengali and Oriya, Grierson writes, 'In general, the grammatical construction of Oriya closely resembles that of Bengali. Both languages have a weak sense of gender. When the plural has to be signified, it has to be done with the aid of some noun of multitude. Regarding the verbal system, Oriya has a simpler system of verbs than Bengali. Oriya spoken in Singhbhum is considered to be standard but even in this, Bengali character is used in writing. The Oriya of Cuttack is
to a certain extent affected by Bengalism, owing to the residence thereof a number of Bengalis who have settled in the district for some generations. The Oriya of north Balsore, which lies near borders of Bengal shows signs of being Bengalised and as we cross the boundary between Balsore and Midnapur, we find at length almost a new dialect of Oriya which is a mechanical mixture of Bengali and Oriya. One begins a sentence in Oriya, drops into Bengali in the middle and goes back to Oriya at its end. The vocabulary of this dialect of Oriya freely borrows from Bengali (LSI, V, II, 369). Geographically, though these two minorities form a large proportion of the border regions between the two states, bridge area cannot be delimited on the basis of 15% of the population speaking the respective minority language.

From Marathi towards Gujarati

Though Gujarati and Marathi minorities do not form more than 15% of the population in the respective states of Maharashtra and Gujarat, there exists a chain of broken dialects which links these two languages. In the district of Thana in Maharashtra bordering Gujarat, a number of dialects are spoken which
have been now classed as the dialects of Marathi but had either a Bhili origin or Gujarati influence. Among these, the significant dialects are Thakri, Katkari or Kathodi, Samvedi, Kolis or Parbhi, Vadaval, Varli and Mangela (LSI, VII, p. 130). Thakri is spoken in Thana and Nasik. In Thana, Thakurs are chiefly found in the hilly country in the south-east and south. There is a slight admixture of Gujarati in their dialect (LSI, VII, p. 113). Kathodi is originally a Bhil dialect closely related to Khandeshi but has now been so much influenced by Marathi that it has been now classed as a dialect of that language (LSI, VII, p. 130). The Kolis and Parbhis of Thana speak Marathi in which a great proportion of Gujarati words are used (LSI, VII, p. 93). Samvedis are the farmers and gardeners of Bassein and Mahim talukas of Thana. They speak a dialect, the chief component of which are the current Marathi of Thana and have a mechanical mixture of vulgar Gujarati (LSI, VII, p. 148).

The speakers of Vadaval are supposed to have immigrated from Gujarat to Bassein, Mahi and Dahanu talukas of Thana located near Gujarat border. Varlis are found in Maharashtra as well as Gujarat. In Thana, the dialect follows Marathi in grammar while the Gujarati element is seen in the vocabulary. In the extreme northern parts
of Thana towards Gujarat border, Marathi is gradually superseded by Gujarati (LSI, VII, p. 153). The minor caste dialects are often of a more or less mixed form. Among these are included the Mangelas, a tribe of fishermen of Mahim, Bassein and Dahanu. Their dialect is a form of Marathi with a strong admixture of Gujarati (LSI, VII, p. 153). Thus Marathi is slowly changed into Gujarati or the other way round in the border region between Maharashtra and Gujarat. In the district of Dhulia, it has been observed that a dialect called Gujari also has strong admixture of Gujarati or is almost a dialect of Gujarati as indicated by its name. Similarly, the dialect 'Ahirani' is a compound mixture of Marathi, Gujarati and Hindi.

**Marathi and Dravidian languages**

Marathi is bordered by Kannada on the south and Telugu on the east. Naturally it comes in contact with these two languages of Dravidian family more than does any other member of Indo-Aryan family. There is no dialect as such connecting Marathi either with Kannada or Telugu. This is one of the reasons why there exists an acute boundary dispute between Maharashtra and Karnataka. It is very difficult for the
people speaking languages which belong to altogether
different families to adjust with each other as the
alphabets, script, vocabulary and grammar differ and
become unintelligible to each other. In spite of all
these facts, Marathi does not escape dravidian influence
along its southern and eastern border.

Influence of Kannada upon Marathi

The Marathi of Pune is said to be
the true representative of that language. To the south
of Pune, however, the influence of Kannada is felt more
and more as one proceeds towards Karnataka border.
Grierson has commented upon this as follows:

'To the south of Poona, in Satara
and Sholapur, every short 'a' is fully sounded like that
in Kannada. Thus, 'visarā', he forgot; 'khallā', he
ate, etc. Still a final 'a' is, however, in most of
the cases silent. Further south in Kolhapur, the short
'a' is most strongly developed and even the short final
'a' is often fully sounded. Thus, 'donā', two (instead
of 'don'). Similar is the case with the dialect of
the Saraswat Brahmans of Karwar. This is all due to
Kannada influence' (LSI, VII, p. 21). In south Kolhapur
and Sholapur and in Bijapur, we meet with dialects, which have been influenced by Kannada. The chief result it has effected is a weakening sense of gender and a confusion between the active and passive construction of transitive verbs. For example, 'To ichchā kēlā' for 'Tyāne ichchā kēlī' (it was wished by him); 'To gruhaustha tyalā pathavālā' instead of 'Tyā gruhausthāne tyālā pāthavāle (He was sent by that gentleman), etc. (LSI, VII, p. 47). In the district of Dharwar in Karnataka, educated Marathi people speak standard Marathi, while other classes speak a dialect called Kulvadi (Kunbi Marathi), showing some traces of Kannada influence. The pronunciation is broad and rough as in Kannada. Genders and verbal constructions are sometimes confounded e.g. 'Tu mejāvānī dīle' instead of 'tu mejāvānī dīlī' (you gave a feast) etc. The weakening sense of gender is also the result of Kannada influence e.g. the word 'Malmatta' (property) which is feminin in Marathi is used with masculine gender. Similarly, the neuter word 'Ghar' (house) is changed into feminine (LSI, VII, p. 52-60). Marathi in Dharwar is more influenced by Kanarese than in Bijapur as the former lies away from Maharashtra border whereas the latter is located just on the border of the home region of Marathi (LSI, VII, p. 48-52). The proportion
of dravidian words in Konkani is also greater in North Kanara district and it increases southwards. In the extreme south in Mangalore district (South Kanara) of Karnataka and also among the Senvis of Karwar, we find the rule of pronunciation as in Kannada that no word can end in a pure consonant, a short vowel sound being always added. Thus, 'putu', sun; 'kes', hair etc.

In the district of Belgaum, Konkani dialect starts losing its characteristics and gets influenced by Kannada. (LSI, VII, p. 186). The Konkani dialect of Karwar uses Kanarese alphabet (LSI, VII, p.188).

The geographical extension of the areas of dominance of Kannada and Marathi minority respectively in the states of Maharashtra and Karnataka has been shown in Map 11. Accordingly, Kannada minority forms 38% of the taluka population of rural taluka of Jath in Sangli district. In the most southern district of Kolhapur, Kannada minority forms as high as 25% of the taluka population in Gadhinglaj and Shirol. It may be seen in Map 11 that Marathi minority is more significant in various parts of Karnataka as compared to Kannada minority in Maharashtra. The following table includes the areas of dominant Marathi minorities in the
The areal extent of linguistic bridge area between Marathi & Kannada

Map 11
Linguistic bridges of India

state of Karnataka:

Table 12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Taluka</th>
<th>% of Marathi population to the respective district or taluka population.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Belgaum</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Belgaum</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chikodi</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Bidar</td>
<td>Bhalki</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aurad</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Humnabad</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The cultural assimilation of Marathi and Kannada minorities have been dealt with in the next chapter.

Marathi and Telugu

Telugu minority forms 36 % of the total population of the Simoncha taluka in Chandrapur district of Maharashtra and 21 % in North Sholapur. Marathi minority forms more than 15 % of the taluka population of four talukas in the district of Adilabad of Andhra Pradesh, namely, Utnur (17 %), Asifabad (20 %), Sirpur
Map 12

The Geographical Extent of Bilingual Area Between Marathi and Telugu

- Areas in Andhra Pradesh where Marathi minority forms more than 15% of the population.
- Areas in Maharashtra, where Telugu minority forms more than 15%.
(19 %) and Mudhol (24 %). The geographical extension of this bridge area between Marathi and Telugu has been shown in Map 12. Grierson has mentioned that the Natakani dialect spoken in the Sironcha taluka has accommodated itself to and is to some extent influenced by neighbouring Telugu. The base is common Marathi but the character is changed. One comes across forms such as 'khaunu', we should eat; 'rahanu', we should remain etc. This final 'u' is due to Telugu influence (LSI, VII, p. 313). The Chandrapur District Gazetteer also mentions that Telugu has been mixed greatly with Marathi in this district. Many dialects like Salevari, Golari and others are spoken by a number of castes whose native Telugu has undergone some modification by being brought into contact with Marathi. In the same district, a fairly large proportion of Marathi speakers know Telugu and people speaking the latter language also speak workable Marathi (1973, p. 155).

**Linguistic bridge between Kannada and Telugu**

Map 13 represents the geographical extension of the bridge area between Kannada and Telugu. The areas in Karnataka having more than 15 % of their population speaking Telugu as their mother-tongue include:
The geographical extent of linguistic bridge area between Kannada and Telugu.

Areas in Karnataka where Telugu forms more than 15% of the population.

Areas in Andhra Pradesh where Kannada minority accounts for more than 15% of the population.

Map 13
Table 13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Taluka</th>
<th>% of Telugu population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Kolar</td>
<td></td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Bangalore</td>
<td></td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Raichur</td>
<td>Raichur</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Bellary</td>
<td>Bellary</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Tumkur</td>
<td>Pavagad</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Madhugiri</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Gulbarga</td>
<td>Sedam</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yadgir</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Chitradurga</td>
<td>Challakere</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jagalur</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Molakalmuru</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the other hand, Kannada minority forms more than 15% of the taluka population in Madak-sira (60%) and Raidurga (27%) in Anantapur district of Andhra Pradesh. The economic opportunities are more in Bangalore, Kolar and Chitradurga districts in Karnataka
than in Andhra Pradesh. The vagrrious climate in Andhra Pradesh has forced Telugu people to migrate on large scale towards this state. Thus, economic factors in Karnataka state are the 'Pull factors' and the adverse climatic condition in Andhra Pradesh has been the 'Push factor' in this migration of Telugu population.

**Telugu and Tamil**

The sweeping over of Telugu minority is a very remarkable feature of its distribution in Tamilnadu. The following table gives areas in this state, where Telugu minority accounts for more than 15 % of the population of the respective district or taluka.

**Table 14**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Taluka</th>
<th>% of Telugu minority (1961)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Coimbatore</td>
<td>Pollachi</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Udumalpet</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Avanashi</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Dharmapuri</td>
<td>Hossur</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Krishnagiri</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

... contd.
Areas in the state of Tamilnadu where Telugu minority accounts for more than 15% of the population.

Areas in Andhra Pradesh where Tamil minority constitutes more than 15% of the population.

Map 14
In contrast to this, Tamil minority forms 15% of the district population only in Chittoor in Andhra Pradesh. Puttur (27%), Sātyavedu (34%), Kuppam (21%), Chittoor (22%) and Bangarupallem (22%) are the talukas of this district, where Tamil minority dominates. Map 14 shows the geographical area of the linguistic bridge between Telugu and Tamil.

Tamil and Kannada

Bangalore is the only district which has more than 15% of its population speaking Tamil in
Areas in Karnataka state where Tamil minority is more than 15% of the population.

Areas in Tamil Nadu where Kannada minority forms more than 15% of the population.

Map 15
Linguistic Bridge between Kannada and Malayalam

Area in Kerala, where Kannada population is more than 15%.

Area in Karnataka having more than 15% of its population speaking Malayalam.

Map 15a
LINGUISTIC BRIDGE BETWEEN TAMIL AND MALAYALAM

Areas in Tamilnadu where Malayalees form more than 15% of the population

Areas in Kerala having more than 15% of their population speaking Tamil

Map 16
the state of Karnataka. Kannada minority accounts for 31% of the taluka population in Hosur of Dharampuri district of Tamilnadu which is located on the border between these two states.

**Kannada and Malayalam**

The districts of South Kannara and Coorg in Karnataka and Cannore district in Kerala are the bridge areas between Kannada and Malayalam because Malayalam minority forms as high as 15% and 18% (1971) respectively in the districts of South Kannara and Coorg. The proportion has increased in the former district especially during 1961-71, because in 1961, this region has 10% of its population speaking Malayalam.

**Tamil and Malayalam**

The talukas of Palghat, Trivandrum and Kottayam located near Tamilnadu border have a fairly high proportion of Tamil minorities in Kerala. Similarly, the Malyalees form more than 15% of the taluka population of Vilavancode (22%) in the district of Kanyakumari in Tamilnadu and their proportion is as high as 14% in Kalkulam taluka of the same district.
The next chapter deals with the cultural assimilation of linguistic minorities in the bridge areas and in the interior parts of various states.

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